

RECONSTRUCTION OF TURKISHNESS
AMONG THE TURKISH IMMIGRANTS IN ROCHESTER

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BERKAY ORHANER

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof Dr. Ayşe Saktanber
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Prof. Dr. Recep Boztemur (METU, HIST) _____

Assoc. Prof. Erdoğan Yıldırım (METU, SOC) _____

Assoc. Prof. Ceylan Tokluođlu (METU, SOC) _____

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Name, Last name: Berkay Orhaner

Signature:

ABSTRACT

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Orhaner, Berkay

M.S., Department of Sociology
Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım

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This thesis examines the history of Turks migrated from Turkey to Rochester and their changing constructions of identities. In the early 1960's, there was only a small group of Turkish immigrants in Rochester, who were well educated professionals. After 1967, Turkish tailors and their families, who were seeking better employment in Western countries started to migrate to Rochester. Different than the common aspect of homeland based Turkish labor migration to West, Turkish tailors in Rochester came from different cities of Turkey. As a result of the communication between high skilled Turks and the tailor-migrants, Turkish Society of Rochester was founded as a distinctive immigrant association. This study focuses on Turkish Society of Rochester and the other Turkish organizations in Rochester which were established after 1990's, in order to investigate the role of ethnic, cultural and political identities on the formation of collective behavior of Turks in Rochester. The thesis

considers the concept of integration as a bidirectional phenomenon, whereby Turks can integrate with the larger American society and/or with the Turkish community within the US as well. This study has concluded that the religious identity is becoming more prominent within the changing social context of Rochester.

Keywords: Rochester, identity, labor migration, Turkish-Americans, migrant associations

ÖZ

ROCHESTER'DA YAŞAYAN TÜRK GÖÇMENLERDE TÜRKLÜĞÜN YENİDEN İNŞASI

Orhaner, Berkay

Yüksek Lisans, Sosyoloji Bölümü
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Bu çalışma, Türkiye'den Rochester'a göç eden Türklerin tarihini ve değişen kimlik inşası süreçlerini ele almaktadır. 1960'lı yılların başında, Rochester'da sadece küçük bir grup yüksek eğitilmiş Türk bulunuyorken; 1967'den sonra, Batılı ülkelerde daha iyi iş imkânları arayan terzi Türkler Rochester'a göç etmeye başlamışlardır. Batı'ya yönelik Türk işçi göçünün memleket bağı üzerinden gerçekleşen alışlagelmiş yapısının aksine, terzi Türkler Rochester'a Türkiye'nin farklı şehirlerden göç etmişlerdir. Yüksek eğitilmiş Türkler ve terzi göçmenlerin kurdukları iletişim sayesinde, Rochester Türk Cemiyeti kendine özgü bir göçmen kuruluşu olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu çalışma Rochester Türk Cemiyeti'ne ve 1990'lı yıllardan sonra Rochester'da ortaya çıkan diğer Türk kuruluşlarına odaklanarak, Rochester'daki Türklerin etnik, kültürel ve siyasi kimliklerinin, kitlesel davranışlarına ilişkin etkisini incelemektedir. Tez kapsamında bütünleşme kavramı iki yönlü bir olgu olarak ele alınmıştır; bu

kapsamda Trkler, Amerikan toplumunun geneliyle btnleŖebilecekleri gibi, Amerika toplumu ierisinde sadece Trklerle btnleŖmeye de ynelebilirler. Bu alıŖmanın sonucunda Rochester'ın deėiŖen toplumsal baėlamında dini kimliėin ne ıkan bir etkisi olduėu savına varılmıŖtır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rochester, kimlik, iŖi g, Trk-Amerikanlar, gmen kuruluŖları

To my grandfather İzzet, and granduncle Ayhan;
two tailors of my family...

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I went to Rochester for the first time in 2007, when I participated to an international program. Somehow, representatives of Turkish Society of Rochester learned that a group of the Turkish university students from Turkey arrived in Rochester. They invited us for a Sunday picnic. I remember how much we were impressed when we saw a lot of Turks from all ages, drinking tea from Turkish tea glasses, eating kebabs and listening Turkish music. I started to talk with a group of elder immigrants and learned that they all migrated to Rochester as tailors. Since that conversation, I have been keeping in my mind that the story of Turkish immigrants in Rochester is sociologically valuable.

Then I made a small research about Turkish immigrants in Rochester for a project paper which I presented to Yakın Ertürk in 2010. Her valuable comments on my topic encouraged me to work on Turkish history of migration to Rochester as my master's thesis.

First, I would like to thank my instructor Erdoğan Yıldırım, who supervised my research with his enlightening critiques and patience. He did not only guide me, but also shared his invaluable comments in many conversations.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATAA	Assembly of Turkish – American Associations
DRA	Department of Religious Affairs of Turkey
FTAS	Federation of Turkish American Societies
ICCR	Islamic Culture Center of Rochester
TCCR	Turkish Cultural Center of Rochester
TSOR	Turkish Society of Rochester
US	United States (of America)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Turkish government started to support labor migration, after 1961 labor recruitment agreement between Germany and Turkey. This migration flow established with the rotation principle, whereby Turkish workers had limited residence permit, considered as short term labor¹. However, most Turkish immigrants remained in Germany and the migration process continued in defiance of all inhibitive policies of the government of Germany and later the European Union. Turkish migration to Germany and many other European countries have never been totally welcomed by the host societies. Max Frisch summarized the reason of migration problem with his famous words; “We wanted a labor force, but human being came”².

Turkish workers’ migration to Rochester is a quite different case in terms of its characteristics. The migration flow initiated by the call of two different men’s clothing factories in Rochester. They invited Turkish tailors as semi-skilled or skilled workforce to United States. Therefore, as invited immigrants, Turkish tailors were welcomed with a green card which authorized them to live and work in US permanently. Moreover, as a country of migration, in the US, Turkish people could organize and set relationships with the larger community, more easily than their European counterparts.

Second and more important characteristic of Turkish migration to Rochester was related to the profession of the immigrants. Most Turkish labor migration processes to US are based on coincidental starting points and followed by the

¹ Sezgin, Zeynep. *Turkish Migrants’ Organizations Promoting Tolerance Toward the Diversity of Turkish Migrants in Germany*, International Journal of Sociology. Vol:38, No:2, Summer 2008, Sharpe Inc, p:79.

² The original sentence: “Manhat Arbeitskräfte gerufen und es kommen Menschen”. Source: <http://www.berliner-zeitung.de/archiv/der-schweizer-schriftsteller-max-frisch-1965-zu-m-thema-immigration-----und-es-kommen-menschen-,10810590,10247142.html>
Retrieved on: August, 2012.

call of other members of the family or hometown. The case of Yağlıdere³ people's migration US is stumping about this phenomenon. According to Güler, almost 15.000 Yağlıdere people live in US, which is more than the population of Yağlıdere⁴. A similar case can be found in Yuva (a village in Giresun) where almost all young people dream to migrate to US, benefiting from the connections of their relatives, who migrated before. According to DiCarlo, of the 243 houses in the Yuva district village of Pancar, 113 were the newly constructed homes of labor migrants in America⁵. However, in Rochester, Turkish migrants did not share a common background in terms of their relatives or hometown. Consequently, Turkish immigrants in Rochester needed to find some other uniting factors, in order to provide a basis for cooperation. This necessity strengthened the significance of their migrant associations in their social lives.

Thirdly, Turkish immigrants in Rochester were different because of their profession quality. According to Kaya, a political rapprochement appeared between Turkey and US with the Truman Doctrine in 1947, and the Turkey's inclusion to NATO in 1952. Thereafter, Turkish migration to US gained a new characteristic, since Turkish migrants were mostly very skilled and educated people, who aimed professional specialization in US. However, after 1980's the features of the Turkish immigrants in US changed again, and very diverse labor groups, who comprised unskilled and semi-skilled laborers, started to migrate to US⁶. On the other side, early Turkish immigrants in Rochester were neither skilled professionals, nor unskilled laborers. They had certain sartorial

³ Yağlıdere is a town and district of Giresun Province in the Black Sea region of Turkey.

⁴ Güler, Muzeyyen. *Turkish Immigrants in the United States: Men, Women and Children*. Turkish Migration to United States from Ottoman Times to Present. The University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin, 2008, p:152.

⁵ DiCarlo, Lisa. *Migration to America: Transnational Social Networks and Regional Identity among Turkish Migrants*. Tauris Academic Studies, London, 2008, p:1, 5.

⁶ Kaya, İlhan. *Shifting Turkish American Identity Formations in the United States*. Doctoral Dissertation to Florida State University, 2003, p:54.

skills; however, their qualifications mostly derived from their apprenticeship. They were unable to speak English fluently and they did not have any experience about living in a foreign country.

With all these characteristics, Turkish migration to Rochester stands as an original case of labor migration. Turks in Rochester experienced very different interrelationship patterns, whose only common feature -other than tailoring- was coming from the same country and speaking Turkish as a mother language. They established Turkish Society of Rochester (TSOR) in 1969 and this association became the central platform for their cooperation, social relations and also for their social conflicts.

This thesis focuses on how Turkish immigrants built their social identities throughout more than 40 years of their existence in Rochester, New York. The thesis mainly focuses on Turkish Society of Rochester and the other Turkish organizations in Rochester which were established after 1990's, in order to investigate the role of ethnic, cultural and political identities on the formation of collective behavior of Turks in Rochester.

In the second chapter, I will explain the methodology that I use to conduct this study. I will give details about how I designed my fieldwork which comprises deep interviews and participant observation. Moreover, I will expound, how I made the document analysis. Finally, I will explain my special experiences, which provided me more integration with the Rochester community and to observe the social dynamics of Turkish people in Rochester more deeply.

In the third chapter, my main focus will be the analysis of the social history of Turkish migration to Rochester. In this chapter, I will try to analyze the factors shaping the social relations and behavior of Turks in Rochester, with chronologically differentiated subchapters. First, I will reflect how Turks started to migrate to Rochester by providing general historical background. Second, a detailed subchapter will be about the establishment of TSOR. As the

third subchapter, I will try to analyze the importance of having a community house for the association. Fourth section will be about the big political crisis, appeared in 1996, and the separation of Turkish community in Rochester as a result of this conflict. In the final subchapter, I will try to understand TSOR and the social relations of Turkish people, after political crisis due to Islamist opposition and separation. In each section, my aim will be to provide sociological analysis, rather than writing a sole chronology. I will mainly use Bourdieu's theory of capitals, to differentiate the dominant social attitudes of Turks in each different period.

In the fourth chapter, my aim will be to understand the significance of ethnic identities among Turkish immigrants in Rochester. Comparing major ethnic identity theories, I will try to draw a frame to understand how Turkish immigrants restructured their identities. In the second part of Chapter 4, I will try to understand how Turkish people in Rochester have been considering themselves as migrants in US, and how their perception of migration affects their identities. In the last subchapter, my aim will be to associate Turkish immigrants in Rochester with the concept(s) of transnationalism.

In the fifth chapter, I will try to understand how social life practices of Turks changed throughout time. Using Ager and Alison's conceptual framework to understand the domains of integration⁷, I will try to draw a comprehensive picture about Turks in Rochester. I will mention ten different titles, and in each title, I will try to reflect the changing patterns of social life practices of Turkish people. In this chapter, the concept of 'integration' will be discussed on the axis of two polar directions: the integration with the larger American society or the integration with Turkish immigrant community

In the conclusion chapter, I will briefly summarize and identify the key findings and discussions of previous chapters. Additionally, I will draw a

⁷ Ager, Alastair and Strang Alison. *Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework*. Journal of Refugee Studies 21(2), 2008.

general comprehension about the changing identity of Turkish immigrants within the American context.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This thesis tries to uncover the collective identity formation of Turkish people living only in Rochester. As explained in the first chapter and will be explained in more detail in third chapter, TSOR has been the central platform for social relations of Turkish people. Therefore, in this study the social history of TSOR has been taken as the basis to understand the identity transformation of Turkish immigrants.

This thesis draws on the results of fieldwork, document analysis and other experiences:

2.1 Fieldwork

I have been in Rochester three times. In 2007, I met with Turks in Rochester for the first time in 2007 and listened to their story of TSOR from elder immigrants. Later, I went to Rochester again in November and December of 2010 with the intention of data gathering. Together with many correspondence and phone conversations with Turkish immigrants, I spent 12 days in Rochester for my research. My fieldwork could be classified in two titles.

2.1.1 Interviews

The main findings of this study were acquired from deep interviews with the Turkish immigrants. I directly interviewed 21 people. I tried to make interviews with the earliest immigrants and the important people, who shaped the conditions of Turkish immigrants in Rochester. Mostly my interviewees were active people in TSOR, one of them was the official imam of TSOR, who was employed by the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey. Additionally, I interviewed with younger people to uncover the ideas of new generations. I found some of my interviewees by snowball effect; because some immigrants referred me to other 'important people'.

Today, the Turkish immigrants are not only represented by TSOR. Islamic Culture Center of Rochester (ICCR) and Turkish Cultural Center Rochester (TCCR) appear as the two other associations of Turkish immigrants in Rochester. To understand their viewpoints and ideas regarding to TSOR, I made interviews from the representatives of each associations. Additionally, I made an interview with a young woman who has been living in Rochester for many years but does not participate in any of the Turkish associations, and a 10 year old child as a member of third generation Turkish immigrant in Rochester.

I generally asked their story of migration from Turkey to US to my interviewees. Although I did not ask any other fixed questions, we always came to the topics regarding to TSOR and changing means of being Turkish in Rochester. I spent from 1 to 3 hours for each interview.

I made two additional interviews in Turkey. One of them was in İzmir, to talk with the founder and the first president of TSOR Şahap Emirbayer⁸. The second was in Ankara, with Prof. Talat Halman⁹, who has a very important place in the beginning of Turkish migration to Rochester. I asked more detailed and specific questions to both of them.

In the thesis, I used ‘Talât S. Halman’, ‘Şahap Emirbayer’, ‘İshak Kızılaslan’¹⁰ and ‘Nuri Sabuncu’¹¹ as real names. All other names in the thesis are used as pseudonyms.

⁸ Şahap Emirbayer was born in 1924 and went to the US firstly in 1946. He educated electrical engineering and worked in various companies including Boeing, General Dynamics and Xerox. He went to Rochester in 1964, established the TSOR in 1969 and returned to Turkey in 1974. Currently he is living in İzmir.

⁹ Prof. Talât Sait Halman is a famous poet, translator and cultural historian. He is the first Minister of Culture of Turkey. He has thought at major Universities in the US, including Columbia University, Princeton University and New York University. Currently he is the dean of the Faculty of the Humanities and Letters at the Bilkent University. He published about three thousand articles and essays as well as 70 books in Turkish and English.

¹⁰ İshak Kızılaslan was born in 1973 and has been working as imam since 2003. As an overseas mission of the Department of Religious Affairs of Republic of Turkey he went to Rochester.

2.1.2 Participant Observation

During my field work, I stayed with a Turkish family, consisting of Rochester born parents and two children. Their daily lives involve numerous contacts with other Turkish people. I participated in their shopping, commuting and meetings with friends, which gave me the opportunity to have direct observation about their lives. That was a great opportunity for me since I found the chance to talk with a lot of people in addition to my interviewees. Although I was not able to conduct interviews with all of them, I could make small chats, which gave me numerous ideas about daily lives of Turks in Rochester.

I could observe various events in TSOR. I participated in Friday's prayer with members of the association and ate Turkish kebab after the prayer. Also I made some of my interviews in the tailor shops or other workplaces of Turkish immigrants. These situations enabled me to observe the work life of Turks in Rochester.

During my stay in Rochester, one Turkish immigrant faced difficulties regarding his family's residence permit in US. I accompanied that immigrant with one of the previous presidents of TSOR, while they were going to Buffalo Citizenship and Immigration Office. In this journey, I directly observed how Turkish immigrants cope with one of their most common problems.

2.2 Document Analysis

My thesis is theoretically based on Bourdieu's concept of capitals. Additionally, I made an intensive reading about migrant networks, Turkish

He continued his imamate in Rochester until 2011. Currently, he is the imam and preacher of Sultanahmet Mosque (a.k.a. Blue Mosque).

¹¹ Nuri Sabuncu went to the US to study civil engineering in 1957. He played Professional soccer in Syracuse and Rochester. He found his own construction company and actualized a lot of projects around Rochester. He is one of the most prominent, very active, famous and wealthy Turkish immigrants in the US. Currently he is spending his retirement still in Rochester.

migration history to US, collective identity formation, transnationalism, ethnic identity theories and social integration.

In addition to academic works, I searched many newspaper articles both from US and Turkey. I read some previous correspondence between some Turkish immigrants. I searched web sites and social media channels to find related content.

I kept two field journals to memorize both my interviews and details of my participant observation. One of the most primary works, in terms of document analysis, was the re-arrangement of these journals.

2.3 Experiences

Some of my personal features provided benefits for me as a researcher. First, without any doubt, my Turkish identity served me well to harmonize with Turks in Rochester. I observed that especially elder immigrants admire young people, if those young people can speak fluent English, although they still know Turkish culture and language very well. It was also important to understand the language of immigrants because very often, they may switch their language from Turkish to English and English to Turkish while never totally comfortable in either of them. A second reason for why I received that much sympathy from the elder immigrants was my familiarity with the 'tailoring jargon', since one of my grandfathers, my aunt and my granduncle were all tailors. Finally, I infer the Turkish people of Rochester think they are unique and significant in US; however their stories did not told yet. Therefore, they were very eager to tell me their life stories and special memories.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF TURKISH MIGRATION TO ROCHESTER

3.1 Beginning of Turkish Tailors' Migration to Rochester

Despite the fact that United States of America appeared in history as a migrant society, the migration from Turkey started quite late, comparing to European counterparts. According to Karpat, Turkish migration to US and South America began in 1860's and increased until 1920's. Estimations show that 400.000 Ottomans migrated to Americas between 1860 and 1920. These migrant group included Muslims and non-Muslims, also it is hard to identify ethnic Turks, because most of them identified themselves as Muslims. According to Karpat's most generous estimation, the total number of Turkish-Ottomans was not more than 15.000-20.000¹². These immigrants were mainly Anatolian farmers and shepherds. Most probably they experienced to live in a big industrial city, firstly in the US.

During my interview with Emirbayer, he recalled some of the first Turkish immigrants that he saw in Chicago in late 1940's. According to him, these Ottoman immigrants had come to US around 40 years ago, however they were very poor, uneducated and in a miserable condition, because they were almost illiterate to read Arabic or Latin alphabet. Kaya made similar comment on the first Turkish-Ottoman immigrants in the US, "The vast majority of early Turkish immigrants... had never seen a city or even a large village"¹³. According to Akçapar, early Turkish migrants failed to create successful

¹² Karpat, Kemal H. *The Turks Finally Establish a Community in the United States*. Turkish Migration to United States from Ottoman Times to Present. The University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin, 2008, p: 175.

¹³ Kaya, İlhan., op. cit., p:50.

organizations, because of the lack of leadership, temporariness, lack of interest and the pull factor of newly established modern Turkey¹⁴.

Studies show that most of these early immigrants either assimilated or came back to Turkey. The Great Depression was one of the pushing factors for these people; on the other hand the establishment of the Turkish Republic and the end of Turkish Independence War appeared as a pulling factor for them. According to the estimations, 86% of Turkish immigrants returned to Turkey during the years before and after the Great Depression¹⁵.

The second wave of Turkish migration to US occurred with a completely different motivation. From 1950 to 1970 a very skilled group of Turkish people, including doctors, engineers and technical personnel migrated to US for specialization or advanced training. Some also married with US citizens and stayed to replenish vacancies in their professions caused by war losses. Karpat estimates that their total number was probably not more than 10.000-15.000, however their impact was considerable¹⁶.

This migration wave changed the nature of Turkish people in US, from unskilled labor migration to migration of skilled professionals. Moreover these immigrants identified themselves as modern and westernized Turks, who did not share most of the characteristics of Turkish-Ottoman migrants¹⁷. These people desired to underline the secular and democratic characteristics of the modern Turkish Republic, and felt more sympathy to Western culture than traditional values.

¹⁴ Akçapar, Şebnem Köşer. *Turkish Associations in United States: Towards Building a Transnational Identity*. Turkish Studies. Vol. 10, No: 2, June 2009, p: 174.

¹⁵ Kaya, İlhan., op. cit., p:52.

¹⁶ Karpat, Kemal., op. cit., p: 177.

¹⁷ Ibid., p:179.

Some of the important people in Turkish community of Rochester arrived to Rochester as a part of this immigration wave. For example Emirbayer firstly migrated to US for educational purposes in 1946. According to him, a massive amount of young Americans came back to America after the end of World War II and US government provided very generous aids to ease the financial burden of the new educational life of ex-soldiers. Emirbayer benefited from these aids and completed also his graduate level of education as an engineer. In the following years, he was employed by corporations like Boeing and General Dynamics. Finally he came to Rochester to work in Xerox Company in 1964.

Another important figure in Rochester community, Nuri Sabuncu came to US in 1957 to study civil engineering in Syracuse University. Firstly, he came to Rochester to pursue his professional football (soccer) career as a university student, and then, he completely moved and established his own construction company in Rochester. Additionally, there were a few other Turkish engineers, doctors and other professionals in Rochester¹⁸; however they were not seeing each other in a regular basis.

The migration of Turkish tailors was closely related to the City of Rochester's national role in clothing industry. In the beginning of 20th century, New York's garment industry was comprised by a lot of small sweatshops with a few employees. On the contrary, in Baltimore, Chicago and Rochester had small number of larger manufacturers. It became a major urban center with rich social and cultural life with its dynamic economy and complex pattern of labor relations. The ethnic population of Rochester included significant numbers of

¹⁸ Return of one of the Turkish doctors reflected to Milliyet newspaper in 22.02.1971: "Dr. Kuddusi Gazioglu, Professor of Internal Diseases in New York Rochester University came back and started to cure his patients after 10 years of occupational studies in America" (Translated from Turkish).

Irish, English, Germans, Poles, Russians and Lithuanians however Italians constituted the most crowded ethnic population in the city¹⁹.

Italians were also the most crowded tailor group in Rochester. Most of the interviewees reasoned the dominance of Italian tailors in clothing factories as the main cause for the search of new tailors. Since Italian tailors were closely united, factory management was having difficulties to control over the employees. Managers could not adjust the wages of Italian tailors in their desired level and hardly dismiss an Italian from employment. Selahattin²⁰, who came to Rochester in 1968, explains this policy as an American phenomenon:

Indeed, tailoring was an occupation of Jews. Even some of us (Turks) learned this craft from our Jewish masters in Turkey. Here in Rochester, we learned that similarly the most of the tailors were Jews; however factories wanted to create diversity and break the dominion of Jewish workers. They called new tailors from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Italy. However, Italian tailors captured the factory this time. Even they became a thread for the factory. That's why they wanted the diversity again and opened the factory for Turks.

Yet, the initiation of Turkish tailors in Rochester clothing industry depends on two very interesting coincidences. The first coincidence was related to Prof. Talat Halman who was an academic in Princeton University in 1966. Halman reads the newspaper article below:

The shortage of skilled tailors in men's clothing factories, especially those trained to handle intricate hand tailoring, is forcing American manufacturers to import foreign workers for these jobs... 'The young Americans don't have an interest or desire to learn the fundamental tailoring trades' says Walter B. D. Hickey Sr., president of Hickey-Freeman Company, Inc., of Rochester N.Y. 'Abroad many people learn hand tailoring at a very young age.' Hickey-Freeman, a subsidiary of Har, Schaffner & Marx, has hired more than 1.500 tailors from outside the United States in the last 20 years and has even sent executives to Europe to recruit good men... Mr. Hickey of Hickey-Freeman believes that the employment of foreign tailors helps to provide work for

¹⁹ Martin, Christopher. *The Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in Rochester, New York, 1914-1929*, Labor History, Vol. 42, No: 3, 2001, p: 239-240.

²⁰ In 1966, Selahattin attended to the Bond's exam in Ankara. He came to Rochester in 1968. According to him, he was the first Turkish person organized marriage ceremony in Rochester.

American clothing factories as well. 'It insures jobs for Americans employed in related skills... Moreover, the children of these immigrants will be the citizens of the next generation. They're all making a contribution to the community.' Since many of the owners and executives of American clothing companies are immigrants or sons of immigrants who have already made such contributions, their attitude toward the hiring of foreign tailors is not surprising...²¹

After reading the article, Halman called Hickey-Freeman and achieved to talk with Mr. Hickey of Hickey-Freeman. He asked the possibility of Turkish tailors as the new employees of Hickey-Freeman. Since Mr. Hickey responds positively, Halman wrote another newspaper article and sent to Milliyet Newspaper. After six days the article was published like below:

American men's clothing industry has difficulties to find skilled and experienced tailors. The notables of the industry say the shortage comes to a critical position and they started to fill this shortage by bringing tailors from Europe to America... Some representatives of men's clothing industry say there are very few applications made from Turkey and they want to employ skilled and experienced Turkish tailors. Most of the skilled foreign tailors in America earn at least 5 thousand Turkish Liras at the beginning.²²

Many Turkish tailors started to their journey from Turkey to US after reading this article. For more than 40 years, Turkish people have been migrating to Rochester in order to work in Hickey-Freeman.

Other major destination for Turkish tailors was Bond's corporation. Established in 1914, Bond Clothes became the largest employer of textile workers in Rochester, employing more than 2.500 people in 1938²³. One of the managers of Bond's was Aziz Somalı, who was an Assyrian immigrant came from Mardin, Turkey. Information about him is very limited; however the first

²¹ Sloane, Leonard. *Shortage Bringing Many Skilled Foreign Workers*. The New York Times. Published: April 17, 1966.

²² Halman, Talât. *Amerika Türkiye'den Erkek Terzisi İstiyor*. Milliyet. Published: April 23, 1966 (Translated from Turkish).

²³ Source: <http://www.lib.rochester.edu/index.cfm?page=797>. Retrieved on: August, 2012.

Turkish immigrants are remembering him as a helpful man and the supporter of Turkish people.

Somali initiated the idea and convinced the manager of the factory about bringing tailors from Turkey. They contacted to Turkish Employment Institution to invite unemployed tailors into job examination. Interviewees Lutfullah²⁴, Selahattin, Vedat²⁵ and Semih²⁶ directly attended to the Bond's exam in Ankara. According to the results Turkish tailors started to be invited to the US. This process was also started with the cooperation of Turkish Employment Institution.

The representative of an American garment company named Bond's Stores, which made an attempt to bring 600 tailors from Turkey annually, Irving Moselowitz and the general manager of Employment Institution Naki Tezel met yesterday and compromised about the tailors who will send to America. Each week 10 workers will able to go America. The company will pay 1, 75 USD for an hour. Tailors would probably earn 400 USD (4 thousand Turkish Liras) and overtime payments.²⁷

According to Selahattin, the first group of Turkish tailors to work in Bond's arrived to Rochester in October 5, 1967. Second group arrived in November 1967 and the next one arrived in January 1968. These groups were comprised of 5-6 people; however they went to US in every month, rather than every week unlike in the newspaper article above.

²⁴ Lutfullah firstly applied to foreign employment in 1965; finally came to Rochester in 1968 to work in Bond's. He is still working in his own tailor shop.

²⁵ After attending to the Bond's exam conducted by Aziz Somalı in Ankara, Vedat came to Rochester in 1968. According to him he was the youngest (25 years old) among the founding members of TSOR in 1969.

²⁶ Semih came to Rochester in 1974. Like his father, he also attended to Bond's exam. He worked in Bond's for a while. Currently he is operating his own clothing shop.

²⁷ Kalpakçioğlu, Özdemir. *Amerika'ya Gidecek Terziler Belli Oldu*. Milliyet. Published: October 04, 1966 (Translated from Turkish with original parenthesis).

The first tailors in Hickey-Freeman went to US randomly and there is a lack of information about who were the first Turkish tailors who worked there. Although Turkish tailors started to apply for a job in Hickey-Freeman earlier than the Bond's, tailors of Bond's arrived to US earlier than Hickey-Freeman's tailors. Yet, these two processes actualized independently and tailors of both companies and other Turks who came to Rochester before did not meet to each other in their first years.

During their first years, Turkish tailors accommodated with their co-workers. They mostly shared their houses with Italians. Although Turkish tailors believe they were called to diminish the hegemony of Italian tailors, they became very close friends with them.

One important incident which brings a lot of Turks together was a sad happening. Daughter of an Armenian-Turkish immigrant was raped and killed²⁸. According to Vedat who was also housemate of that Armenian-Turkish family, a lot of people heard the news and attended to the funeral, and many people met with each other at the first time.

The first Turkish immigrants in Rochester shared very limited common features. First, they were all capable of sartorial skills. Second, they could all speak Turkish. Third, they were all Muslims and finally they know and celebrate the republican values of Turkey. One of the reasons for this common ground was their urban origin. As artisans of sartorial skills they were living in urban areas of Turkey before coming to Turkey. Other than these, other ethnic

²⁸ A small newspaper article covers this story: *Türk Asıllı Ermeni Kıza Tecavüz Edildi*, Milliyet, June 08, 1969.

Twenty days later another article states that 'The American who killed the Turkish girl condemned the heaviest sentence: *Türk'ü Öldüren Amerikalıya Ağır Ceza Verildi*. Milliyet, June 28, 1969 (Translated from Turkish).

Three months later another article remarked that on behalf of the Armenian-Turkish girl, the president of Bond's Company, Mr. Moselowitz established an education investment fund for the Turkish people that cover their 25.000USD for their study in USA: *Öldürülen Türk Kızı Adına Amerika'da Eğitim Fonu Kuruldu*. Milliyet, September, 20, 1969. (There is not any information whether this fund actualized or stayed as a gesture for Turkish workers).

values or their social links did not appear as their identity markers in their first years. Moreover, almost all of them were earning the same wage; therefore economic capital was also affectless to differentiate their social status.

Capital means accumulated labor according to Bourdieu, and he claims it is impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world, unless redefining capital in its all forms²⁹. As a type of capital, cultural capital covers a wide variety of resources like verbal facility, general cultural awareness, aesthetic preferences and educational credentials³⁰.

In this sense, the cultural capital theory provides an analytical approach to capture the differences and similarities in migrants' positions. While most of the labor migration is characterized by ethnic or religious identities, in Rochester, culture appears as more explanatory factor to understand the social relations of Turkish immigrants. According to Selahattin, first group of Turkish tailors went to Rochester from İzmir and Bursa; in the following groups, tailors came from various cities like Malatya, Giresun, Ankara, Konya and Istanbul³¹. Apparently, their social connections were apart and they did not know each other before coming to Rochester. Indeed, their life was mostly shaped by common grounds of artisan skills (as an educational qualification), urban lifestyle (as coming from various urban areas of Turkey, shown above) and shared values of the cultural life of origin country; such as eating habits, sources of national pride, general religious practices and artistic enjoyment.

²⁹ Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Forms of Capital*. Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education., ed: Richardson, J., Westport, CT, Greenwood, 1986. p: 241-258.

³⁰ Swartz, David. *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. The University of Chicago Press, 1997, p: 75.

³¹ Karpat asserted that "Turkish immigrants in Rochester, New York, are predominantly from the Black Sea Region while those on Long Island come from Anatolia" (Karpat, Kemal H., op. cit., p:175), however my research shows that it is not possible to generalize Turkish immigrants' hometown or region in Turkey.

3.2 Establishment of TSOR

Two years after the first Turkish tailors arrived, a considerable amount of Turkish immigrants accumulated in Rochester and increasingly they started to meet with each other. In 1969, Emirbayer met with the 5 early Turkish immigrants and become close friends with them.

According to Emirbayer, some problems appeared for Turks, which were mainly about integrating with the wider society and need for further cooperation. Considering this, he planned and offered to establish a migrant association.

For Emirbayer, the biggest problem of Turkish immigrants was their inability of getting driver license. Most of the Turkish tailors were living in very close dwellings near to factories. This means they lived where their bosses wanted them to live. However, Rochester was settled in a very large area and mass transportation was very weak. Therefore, Turkish immigrants were unable to discover new areas and recognize neighborhood. On the other hand, this inability made them more dependent to their factories, since they had very little chances to find another job in US.

Turkish immigrants were not capable of understanding English and their chance of passing the written exam for getting drivers' license was almost impossible. To overcome this difficulty, Emirbayer started to work voluntarily:

I ordered various books about drivers' license exam and started to translate them to Turkish. I also went to Department of Motor Vehicles in New York and explained the problem. They gave me the authority to conduct written examination in Turkish. After coming back to Rochester, using the facilities of Xerox, I multiplied the copies of books regarding the exam. At first I worked with 5 people as an experiment. All 5 of them passed the exam. After this all Turkish immigrants requested the same assistance from me. Moreover, I ordered a blackboard, traffic signs, maps and other books and transformed my garage into a classroom. I and my American wife started to give lectures about traffic, basics of English and general knowledge about American culture. Each day we were making lectures. They wanted to

give us some valuable gifts, but we accepted only cakes and pastries to eat all together.

One of the immigrants who passed the exam with the help of Emirbayer was Selahattin. He recalls his examination with laughter:

I studied for the exam with the help of Emirbayer. Then I became successful and get my driver's license. Later on, we learned that the grandson of Mr. Bond (The owner of Bond's Clothing Factory) also entered the same exam but he failed, we passed!

The idea of TSOR was an attempt to institutionalize these efforts. The success of Turkish immigrants, who acquired drivers' license, gave to Emirbayer a central role in Turkish community. Using his popularity, Emirbayer established and became the founder president of the TSOR in 1969 with a great support of Turkish immigrants, as well as other Turks living in Rochester. According to Emirbayer, the number of Turkish population had already reached 100 households during the establishment of TSOR³².

The following efforts was writing the bylaw of TSOR to designate the principles of the association and founding sub committees for various needs. The number of committees has changed throughout time; however the main ones and their functions are below:

- Greeting Committee: The members of this group welcome new comers and guide for them. They provide a general orientation for new immigrants to accustom them to living in Rochester.
- Delivery Committee: The communication was hard in the early years of Turkish immigrants. This committee works for distributing required documents and news to all Turks around Rochester.
- Purchasing Committee: They organize financial relation of the association

³² Karpas states that "in 1969 some twenty five members organized the Turkish Society of Rochester" (Karpas, Kemal, op. cit, p: 190), however Emirbayer underlines the number of Turkish households reached almost 100 and the majority of them directly involved in the establishment of the society.

- Religious Committee: While Turkish population was increasing, the religious needs of the community also appeared more. This group organized religious ceremonies like Friday prayers, holiday prayers and religious education in the following years.
- Entertainment Committee: Entertainment appeared as an important need for Turkish community, this committee tried to satisfy this need by organizing special events, picnics, shows, etc. to increase the morale of the Turkish community.

During these years, another need for Turkish immigrants was to get rid of their homesickness. A lot of tailors decided to turn back to Turkey after working a couple of years; however most of them came back to Rochester. Moreover, their companies helped them to bring their wives and families to US or allowed them to go to Turkey for holiday. If they were single, tailors used their holiday time to arrange a marriage from Turkey. After 2-3 month they could bring their newly wives to Rochester. As a consequence, Rochester became a place where Turkish families live, rather than a place where only male Turkish immigrants works for money.

Emirbayer recorded the list of TSOR's members in December 11, 1969. According to the list, TSOR had got 138 members. The 35 wives of the Turkish immigrants were also recorded as separate members. Therefore in 1969, members of TSOR reached 103 different households. According to Emirbayer, in 1969 the total population of Turkish immigrants, comprising non-members, wives and children, was around 320.

Turkish tailors helped to each other, and tried to cope with the problems all together. All of the old Turkish immigrants remember those years with great nostalgia and sentiency. On the other hand, Emirbayer became a very important person for this newly emerging community. He recalls those times:

They loved me so much. I was considered as the Turkish Government in Rochester. They sometimes asked me to solemnize them. Even they saw

me as if I am their leader of labor union. Sometimes Italian and Turkish tailors fight with each other. Most of the foremen in the company (Bond's) were Italians; therefore Turkish workers could not raise their voice. One day, factory managers fired a Turkish tailor for no reason, just because of slandering of Italians. I wrote a letter and said 'if you will not re-employ this man within 24 hours, I will make the withdrawal of all Turkish tailors from your factory'. Mr. Moselowitz feared and employed that Turkish tailor again.

Therefore, as president of TSOR, Emirbayer acted like a *de facto* union leader of Turkish tailors in Bond's Company. Similarly, it is also possible to consider the solidarity between Turkish tailors transformed them almost a union, because they could take risks collectively and manage to threaten their employer. Furthermore, this example clearly shows that TSOR not only acted as a culture oriented migrant organization, but also an organization about working life and economic integration to wider society. On the other side, as the leader of the organization, Emirbayer gained a significant social power.

Emirbayer wanted to advance the capabilities of TSOR even further and aimed to establish a financial cooperative. According to him, in the first years, Turkish tailors needed to acquire drivers' license and to recreate as a Turkish community. Since these needs were all satisfied, they could enter a new phase and starting to establish Turks' own company. Emirbayer wanted that that company may recruit some subcontract works in the textile sector. He explained this idea in the community; however some people, especially other high professional Turks blocked this intention by saying that 'when money appears in a somewhere, everything would be lost'. After this important turn, for the first time oppositions appeared against Emirbayer and some other candidates, who were also eminent members of the Turkish community as doctors and engineers, nominated themselves also for the presidency of the TSOR.

It is important to note that although the number of other professional Turkish people was very low, they were significant members of TSOR. Tailor members expected the leadership of those high professional Turks to coordinate social

and cultural functions of the association. Although the majority of Turkish population was tailors, the competition for election was held between Turkish doctors and engineers who were 8-9 families in total.

Later on, although he kept his enthusiasm towards TSOR, Emirbayer had some problems in his family life. His wife disturbed because Emirbayer dedicated almost his full time to TSOR. At last, Emirbayer and his wife got divorced, later on, Emirbayer decided to return to Turkey in 1974, and never went back to Rochester.

With the establishment of TSOR, the importance of social capital increases in Rochester community. As defined by Bourdieu, social capital is the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition³³. In Bourdieu's theory, types of capital differ in liquidity and convertibility. Economic capital is the most liquid and readily convertible form of capital for its transformation into social and cultural capital. By comparison, convertibility of social capital into cultural capital is more difficult, while transformation of cultural capital into social capital is easier³⁴. Emirbayer presents an example of the convertibility of cultural capital into social capital. His language skills, formal education and greater integrity into American life provide him resources to establish a migrant association and very important social position as the leader of Turkish community.

Lesage and Ha's research shows that out-migration has a negative impact on social capital³⁵. Turkish immigrants also lost their social capital in the Turkey, during their early years in Rochester. While the first years were mostly shaped

³³ Bourdieu, Pierre., op. cit.

³⁴ Anheier, H.K., Gerhards, J. and Romo, F. P. *Forms of Capital and Social Structure in Cultural Fields: Examining Bourdieu's Social Topography*. American Journal of Sociology, Volume 100, Number 4, January 1995, p: 862.

³⁵ Leage, J. P. and Ha, C.L. *The Impact of Migration on Social Capital: Do Migrants Take Their Bowling Balls with Them?* Growth and Change Vol. 43, No: 1, March 2012, p: 23-24.

by their cultural capital, the establishment of TSOR, as a result of Emirbayer's entrepreneurial skills, created new mechanisms to claim and transfer of social capital throughout all migrant community.

3.3 Buying a Community House for TSOR

After Emirbayer returned to Turkey, activities of TSOR did not stop. Turkish immigrants mostly came together for events like picnics and house visiting. Entertainment committee organized special programs for national holidays especially with children. TSOR was cooperated with other Turkish organizations in New York and hosted various activities like movies and concerts. However, most of these events were actualized in places which rented or reserved from various schools, saloons and churches.

Religious needs of Turks also increased. Then they started to use Interfaith Chapel of University Rochester for their religious ceremonies like holiday and Friday prayers. In mid-70's, Turkish people became the most crowded Muslim group in Rochester. According to Cevat³⁶, the Turkish population in 1976 reached almost 700. They also welcomed other Muslim Groups like Pakistanis in their prayers.

The need for a community house for TSOR has gradually become more apparent for the Turkish immigrants. Finally in 1979, TSOR bought a very old building of a church, especially with the financial aids of Sabuncu, who became a major contractor and businessman of Rochester. That building was in very weak condition and required a lot of repair. Turkish community worked hard to repair and clean the building. Additionally, they put a trailer near to the building to use for religious purposes. Therefore their dependence to chapels and schools to perform religious rituals has ended. In 1980, in order to teach a general knowledge about Turkish culture to the Rochester born Turkish

³⁶Cevat came to Rochester with his father who worked in Bond's in 1975. He is currently working as an American notary.

children, a Turkish course started in TSOR. Some Turkish university students in University of Rochester became voluntary to teach these lectures.

The house brings more recognition and prestige to TSOR. Following years, various other organizations started to visit TSOR regularly. They could cooperate with Turkish umbrella organizations Federation of Turkish American Societies and Assembly of Turkish-American Associations more comprehensively. Similarly their relations with the authorities of the City of Rochester also increased. According to Vedat, As TSOR with a community house, they became very distinguished and all important people started to visit them. Selahattin thinks that City of Rochester consciously encouraged Turks to intensify the activities of TSOR, because they wanted to see TSOR as the representative body of all Turks in Rochester. Furthermore, Selahattin thinks there was another major function of TSOR House:

We were getting used to American way of life, yet most of us illiterate about classy behaviors. We were hesitating to be ashamed. We improved our urban manners within ourselves. By doing this, we did not embarrass in front of other people.

Another development was the radio broadcasting. Again, with the sponsorship of Sabuncu, TSOR started to one hour of radio broadcasting in every Sunday in 1976. They played Turkish music, religious music and read news regarding the Turkish people. According to Sabuncu, “it helped dramatically to remind all Turks that they were not alone”. The radio broadcast has continued for 30 years and finished in 2006.

The function of TSOR became more culture and leisure time oriented after Emirbayer’s presidency. While in Emirbayer’s time, TSOR was even acting like a labor union; it became a center, organizing social events to unite all Turkish immigrants in Rochester. Almost ten years before, Turkish tailors were supporting to each other to protest just for one Turkish tailor’s unfair dismissal during Emirbayer’s most active times; however in the late 1970’s, they need to organize some ways to ‘remind Turks that they are not alone’. Many factors

including population growth and diversified jobs, a shift from socio-economic interests of Turks towards cultural needs was observed in TSOR's main function.

In 1979, Bond's clothing factory was closed in Rochester and in 1982 the company discharged completely. Most of the Turkish tailors transferred to Hickey-Freeman, however in 1980's gradually more Turks started to work in other jobs. They tried to work in better conditions mostly in the other big firms of Rochester, especially in Kodak and Xerox or they wanted to open their own tailor shops.

TSOR can be considered as a source for providing 'migrant social capital' starting from its establishment. According to Garip, migrant social capital is understood as "information about or direct assistance with migrating provided by prior migrants that decreases the costs of moving potential migrants" because "potential migrants access these resources through migrant networks"³⁷. TSOR served as the center for new immigrants to settle down to Rochester with its differentiated and sophisticated sub committees. Especially for the new tailor-migrants, TSOR reduced the expected costs of migration not only financially, but also socially and psychologically. It served as if it was a consultant agency for the orientation to socio-economic life in Rochester, giving answers and providing shortcuts to the newcomers to the questions like 'where to accommodate', 'how to go to workplace', 'how to make shopping'. However, with the expansion of population and diversified employment opportunities in Rochester, migrant social capital offered by TSOR became shallower, comparing with TSOR's first years with Emirbayer. On the other hand, it is possible to claim that these assistance gradually offered to wider range of Turkish people, comprising other tailors who were not working in Bond's, non-tailor immigrants, women and children.

³⁷ Garip, Filiz. *Social Capital and Migration: How Do Similar Resources Lead to Divergent Outcomes?*. Demography, Vol.45-Number 3, August 2008, p: 593.

According to Bourdieu, resulting from early socialization experiences, '*habitus*' transpires as a durable (lasting throughout agent's life time), transposable (generating practices in diverse and multiple activity) structured structures (inevitably incorporating the objective social conditions)³⁸. On the one hand, *habitus* gets structural limits for action; on the other hand, *habitus* generates perceptions, aspirations and practices that structure the properties of earlier socialization³⁹. Throughout the 1980's, a new generation has grown in the *habitus* of Turkish community of Rochester. The children of Turkish immigrants were either started to adopt American life or they were born in Rochester. However, in both alternatives, Turks in Rochester created a new synthesis of Turkish values and American culture. They were tried to preserve their Turkish customs and habits, while trying to adopt American way of life, mostly using TSOR's house and events as the trial and error stage. Turk's condition in Rochester started to be appearing as a taken-for granted acceptance. It was no longer a temporary destination of labor migration. Rather than evaluating its 'pulling factors', Rochester became a legitimate place in which economic and social inequalities were acknowledged and practical conditions of fundamental existence were accepted. The concept of *habitus* is functional to describe behavioral patterns of Turks in Rochester, because opposite to structuralism's viewpoint, which reduces the agent to mere bearer of unconscious expression of structure, it emphasizes the diverse available positions of agents, engaging in competition for control of the interests or resources⁴⁰.

According to Bourdieu, *habitus* offers the image of 'conductorless orchestration' to imply the regularity, unity and systematicity to practices,

³⁸ Johnson, Randal. *Editor's Introduction: Pierre Bourdieu on Art, Literature and Culture*. The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature, Pierre Bourdieu, Columbia University Press, 1993, p: 4-5.

³⁹ Swartz, David., op. cit., p:103.

⁴⁰ Johnson, Randall., op. cit., p:4-5.

without any conscious coordination⁴¹. In compliance with this metaphor, Turkish immigrants might cope with new situations; however they would generate their behaviors with a harmony, since they live within a *habitus*, or in other words, a kind of ‘deeply structured grammar’. A new ‘Turkish culture’ of Rochester developed for immigrants, guiding them about how to act like a successful modernized individuals in America, without forgetting their Turkish roots.

3.4 Political Crisis of Turkish Immigrants

The population of Turkish immigrants in Rochester has constantly increased as the new tailor groups were arriving. Cevat unofficially took a census for two times. According to him, the number of Turks was almost 700 in 1976, but the population almost duplicated by reaching to 1200 in 1984. In the meantime, Turkish migration to US has also increased and its characteristics have changed.

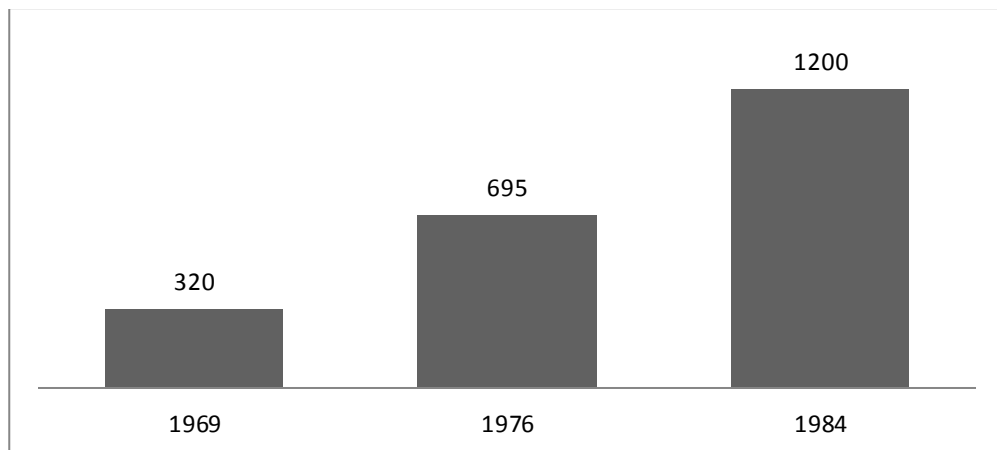


Figure 1: The unofficial population of Turkish immigrants in Rochester between 1969 and 1984⁴²

⁴¹ Swartz, David., op. cit., p:105.

⁴² Source: Interviews with Emirbayer and Cevat

Karpat differentiates a third wave of Turkish migration to US. Starting from the 1980's, Turkish workers faced with various restrictions in US, at the same time US could attract more and more Turkish immigrants both as workers and small-medium entrepreneurs. Possibly, a great diversity of individual differences could be expected, however, interestingly enough, Turks who came to the US originated mostly from the same social strata (workers or small and medium size entrepreneurs) and a few specific regions⁴³. This new wave of migration was mostly characterized by will to earn more and settling down in US. Therefore it is different than the second wave, which was comprised by mostly highly educated Turkish immigrants, who were seeking professional achievement.

The immigrants of two different migration waves were also different in terms of their identifications. While second wave migrants were mostly secular and westernized people who preferred not to emphasize their religious orientations; religion turned out to be an important factor for the identities of the third wave immigrants. According to Karpat the religious emphasis in the identity of these new immigrants can be attributed to “the revival of Islam in Turkey after the 1970's... a search for some spiritual nourishment amidst the materialism and social alienation promoted as secularism”⁴⁴. Karpat considers the ability of creating new communities of this immigrant wave as their most outstanding characteristic⁴⁵.

As catalysts of the Turkish communities, courses, schools and mosques played the central role for the redefinition of Turkish immigrants in US. In 1980, one of the most important Turkish religious groups in US, opened their first mosque in Brooklyn, New York. This community was organized with the

⁴³ Karpat, Kemal., *op. cit.*, p: 179.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p: 179.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p: 182.

motivation of following Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan's teachings, who was a Naqshbandi-Mudjadidi sheikh and a preacher, died in 1959. After 1980, Süleyman's followers –or otherwise known as *Süleymanlılar*- formed many mosques and cultural centers in the East Coast of US⁴⁶.

Following their expansion in US, *Süleymanlılar* also came to Rochester in the second half of 1980's. They visited TSOR and conversed with the Turkish immigrants in Rochester. According to Sabuncu, during their visit, as TSOR, they liked one of the preachers and offered him to stay in Rochester as the imam of TSOR. Afterwards, the religious activities of TSOR increased, involving religious education of the society and the number of religious rituals performed by the community. In this regard, imam gained an important position in the Turkish community, because he not only performed religious rituals, but also started to teach Turkish classes for the children. A lot of Turkish immigrants remember their first imam with gratitude and good memories. They think he influenced the Rochester community in a positive way, contributed to the morality of their children and educated the society about general knowledge regarding the Islam. Sabuncu evaluates the need for an imam as a natural result of the increased population. He thinks, in addition to educational purposes, some other issues such as burial procedures an imam was a certain requirement.

Instinctively, the existence of imam changed the atmosphere of TSOR. While in the previous years, Turkish culture courses were given by the upper class members of the society (engineers and doctors) or university students; after his coming, these lectures were started to given by the imam. Similarly, at the past, the community was taking advices from the upper class members of Turkish immigrants in Rochester; later on imam became the advisor of Turks about the morality of their everyday lives.

⁴⁶ Akçapar, S. K., op. cit., p: 177.

As the impact of the imam increases, some Turkish immigrants started to react against more religion oriented immigrants of Rochester. This disintegration became a major political conflict in a very short time. For most of the Turkish immigrants, that was a late appearing of political conflict and partisanship in Turkey occurred in 1980's⁴⁷. The tension between conflicting groups most clearly appeared during the election process. Although previous elections were mostly held under consensus, in 1995, the election process of TSOR passed very harshly. The anti-*Süleymanlılar* claimed that *Süleymanlılar* intentionally settled down in the Rochester and became members of TSOR in order to capture the management of TSOR. During the elections, on the one side, *Süleymanlılar* wanted to increase their impact on TSOR administration and propagate towards more right wing political tendencies; on the other side, other members who were remaining loyal to their secular values wanted to exclude *Süleymanlılar* out of TSOR. In 1996, a big final fight occurred between the same groups in one of TSOR's meeting. Conflicting parties even showed physical violence to each other. Consequently, the community around TSOR was divided into 5 different groups:

1. TSOR: Elder immigrants, secular members, left-wing people and Alevis remained as the members of TSOR. Most families who were supporting the association for a time, stayed under the name of TSOR. Their members continued to emphasize Turkishness and the republican values of Turkey such as secularism and democracy.
2. *Süleymanlılar*: The supporters of first imam of TSOR and other Süleyman followers significantly differentiated themselves from TSOR. They established Islamic Culture Center of Rochester⁴⁸, bought a house

⁴⁷ The 1970's of Turkish political climate were marked by very harsh right-wing/left-wing armed conflicts. According to estimations, more than 5000 people were killed during these upheavals. In September 12, 1980 the third coup d'état of the history of the Republic of Turkey was organized by the Chief of General Staff General Kenan Evren. Source: Ata, Gil. "La Turquie à marche forcée" Le Monde Diplomatique. February, 1981.

⁴⁸ Official name of the organization: Rochester İslam Kültür Merkezi.

and converted it into a ‘Hamidiye Mosque’. *Süleymanlılar* still gather in Hamidiye Mosque, provides religious education for children and administer all religious services, including cleansing ceremonies of deceased Muslims. This center is also member of United American Muslim Association, which acts as an umbrella organization of *Süleymanlılar* in the US.

It is important to note that for the names of their denotations, they preferred words related to Islam, rather than Turkishness. However, they used the word ‘Hamidiye’, which is used with reference to the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

3. A small group of Necmettin Erbakan⁴⁹ -a religious morality oriented, right wing political party leader of Turkey- supporters wanted to establish their own association, however they dissolved.
4. Rochester Turkish-Islamic Center⁵⁰ : This group followed the Nationalist Movement Party of Turkey⁵¹. Although they survived longer than Erbakan followers, they also dissolved.
5. A Group of Maraş Countrymen: A group of Turkish immigrants who were all born in the city of Maraş in Turkey and somehow relatives to each other, differentiated themselves and established a religion oriented closed community, which is still active. Their estimated number in 1996 was around 50-60 people.

⁴⁹ Necmettin Erbakan was born in 1926, educated mechanical engineering and became professor in the same field in 1965. He started his political career in 1969 as independent Member of Parliament. In 1973 and 1976, he took over the deputy prime ministry. After 1980 coup d'état he was arrested and banned from politics. In 1996, he became first Islamist-fundamentalist prime minister of Turkey. His political life continued until his death in 2011. Source: <http://www.konya.edu.tr/sayfa/erbakan>. Retrieved on: October, 2012.

⁵⁰ Officially their name was ‘Rochester Türk İslam Ocakları’.

⁵¹ Founded in 1969 by Alparslan Türkeş, Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), has been acting as the major conservative-nationalist party in Turkey. In general elections held in 2011, MHP received 12.99% of whole votes.

Source: <http://secim2011.ntvmsnbc.com>. Retrieved on: October 2012.

According to İdris⁵², the reason of original conflict was about building a mosque. Although City of Rochester allowed TSOR to build a mosque, Alevi faction opposed. He recalls:

Because of impossibilities, Turkish community was doing everything in the same house at the past. Some women were playing gambling with playing cards, some people were drinking beer and at the same time some people were praying. These were all side by side. That was an absurd image, since we did not have large facilities, we accepted this. However, this absurdity became the very culture of TSOR itself. Gradually we became capable of building a mosque; however a lot of people opposed to the idea.

According to İdris' ideas, 'playing cards', 'drinking alcohol' and praying cannot come together. For İdris, it was not possible to understand why TSOR did not try to build its own mosque, and intensify its religious functions although it became capable to do them. On the other hand, İdris thought that if it is possible, TSOR had to 'purify' its religious environment eliminating 'absurd' images like women playing cards or people, drinking beer.

Vedat remembers those times in a great sorrow:

I am very sorry about those years. We split. This association (TSOR) should serve as the gate of Turkish people even for those who will come to Rochester 100 years later. We could be more powerful. We could expand our efficiency. We could start to act as an important lobby group, supporting Turkish people in US. All those fights were search of personal interest. They pretended to fight for religion. They say nowadays 5000 Turks live in Rochester, so why only TSOR has 180 (family) members?

Probably TSOR served as a gate for Vedat when he was a young immigrant, and he remembers people who helped him from TSOR with a great respect. He wants to see TSOR in the future like in the past, helping and embracing everyone. He even wanted to enlarge TSOR's effect as dreaming the

⁵² İdris came to Rochester in 1970. Differently he worked another garment company named as Fashion Park with the help of one his friends. However, he could not work in Fashion Park and he also employed in Hickey Freeman. He is still working in his own tailor shop.

association as a Turkish lobby supporting all Turkish people in US. For him TSOR is a place for solidarity and cooperation. It is a kind of shame if anyone searching for personal interest. He thinks all the political fight occurred in TSOR was indeed some people's search for personal benefit. Obviously he thinks leaders of *Süleymanlılar* was not solely trying to expand their religious views, but also searching some benefits for their 'hidden agenda'.

Mutlu⁵³, who appears as one of the new generation administrators of TSOR and considered as one of the most active Turkish-Americans in Rochester, evaluates this division, as a very natural consequence of population growth. According to him, the diversity was inevitable; on the contrary, trying to satisfy everybody's needs is impossible.

Most of the immigrants regretfully remember the fights occurred in the conflict, regardless of their standing point. According to Idris, all those fights showed that 'Turks were not hungry anymore, since they dared to fight'.

Despite the disputes, TSOR attempted to build a mosque in Rochester, two years after the conflict. TSOR wanted to create their own alternative to Islamic organizations by organizing people under the name of a Turkish organization. They collected approximately \$300.000 for the building, again with the major financial support of Sabuncu; however they also needed a land. According to Sabuncu:

We found a land and I bought it by paying approximately \$225.000. However, local people started to resist the idea of mosque construction when they learned that we were Muslims. They produced very artificial excuses even saying that 'there is a special kind of bird living there, probably minarets would damage their life space', 'the shadow of the minaret might fall on private houses', etc. Because of various reasons

⁵³ Mutlu was born in Rochester in 1973. His father is one of the earliest immigrants came to Rochester to work in Hickey Freeman. He has graduation degrees both from US and Turkey. He worked in financial sector, currently operating his own business.

we could not build the mosque⁵⁴, however the land still belongs to me. I pay tax for that quite useless land, but it's all right, worth for Turkey.

In addition to groups appeared after the conflict in 1996, one more community appeared later in Rochester, namely Turkish Cultural Center of Rochester (TCCR). TCCR established as an extension Turkish Cultural Center New York, which is mostly associated with Fethullah Gülen⁵⁵, who is a controversial Islamic preacher of Turkey and supports interfaith dialogue in US. TCCR is mostly busy about dialogue projects between Turkish and American societies. Their activists are mostly Turkish university students around Rochester, rather than the Turkish immigrants. TCCR firstly opened as an educational institution about Turkey, afterwards they started to organize their two major activities; the friendship dinners, where TCCR meets with American elites and Ramadan dinners where TCCR welcomes Muslim and non-Muslim representatives of Rochester society. Apparently, TCCR is the most dedicated group which tries to reach politicians, officials, universities and other institutions in Rochester. TCCR is also member of Council of Turkic American Association, which is the umbrella organization of *Gülen movement* in America, trying to embrace all Turkic ethnicities more than Turks of Turkey in US. According to Cihat⁵⁶, who directly involved in the establishment of TCCR:

⁵⁴ “In 1998, the towns (Irondequoit) planning board rejected a proposal by the Turkish Society of Rochester to build a mosque.”
Source: *Residential Real Estate News Summary*. <http://www.btrca.com/news/res.html>. Retrieved on: August, 2012.

⁵⁵ Fethullah Gülen was born in 1941. He is a Turkish Islamic scholar, author, poet and preacher. However, he is also a controversial and powerful businessman. According to estimations there are somewhere between 3 million to 6 million Gülen followers exist. The worth of the institutions inspired by Gülen have ranged from \$20 billion to \$50 billion. His general philosophy was marked with the idea of interfaith dialogue.
Source: Claire Berlinski. http://www.city-journal.org/2012/22_4_fethullah-gulen.html. Retrieved on: October, 2012.

⁵⁶ Cihat firstly went to California, and then he decided to reside in Rochester in 2001. He tried various small businesses, currently operating his own clothing store.

Until now, TSOR was a place of coffee house, because their vision was not more than that. They needed to come together as Turkish immigrants here and they succeeded. However, second generation needs diversity. Division of TSOR is very normal and natural. Gülen society may fulfill this necessity. I am not against TSOR. They are all self-sacrificing people. They are also giving service to society, but they are lacking about vision.

Cihat thinks that TSOR is inadequate to set complex relationships with other institutions and groups like *Gülen movement* supporters. Their ‘vision’ is not comparable with them. On the other side, Cihat evaluates their relations with *Süleymanlılar* as saying that ‘although we have good relations with them, we are not best friends’. In holiday and Friday prayers they join mostly to the people of TSOR.

With the 2000’s, Rochester was no longer a place specific to Turkish tailor-immigrants, where they could depend on their Turkish identity as the very ground of group solidarity. With all of its diversity, it started to comprise very different political and religious orientations. According to Bourdieu, individuals and groups who are able to benefit from the transformation of self-interest into disinterest obtain a symbolic capital. It is denied capital, “it disguises the underlying interested relations to which it is related giving them legitimation”⁵⁷. Symbolic capital effectively embraces all the other forms of capital and it forms the most abstract form, constituted as it is within the recognition of others⁵⁸. Once considered as the only and natural representative of Turkish immigrants before, symbolic capital of TSOR decreased after the division of Turkish community, and establishment of other Turkish associations. It is possible to view social capital as a power that comes from social associations, such as membership of in various kinds of groups⁵⁹. In this regard, TSOR has also lost its position as a resource of social capital. To

⁵⁷ Johnson, Randall., op. cit., p:43.

⁵⁸ Hipsky, Marty. *Romancing Bourdieu*. Pierre Bourdieu: Fieldwork in Culture. ed: Brown, N., Szeman, I., Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000, p:192.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

conclude, towards 2000's, Turkish community in Rochester reached a complex structure, therefore the determinant of social relations can no longer defined only by social or cultural capital.

3.5 TSOR's New House and Management

The conflict happened in 1996 and the dissolution of Turkish community significantly affected TSOR. Especially, Islamic Cultural Center of Rochester and Turkish Cultural Center of Rochester appeared as more religious associations; however TSOR did not ignore religious services, on the contrary they emphasized its religious functions.

In 2000, TSOR contacted with the Directorate of Religious Affairs of Turkey (DRA), to request an imam to satisfy religious needs of Turks in Rochester. DRA approved this request and the first official imam of TSOR started to its mission in 2000. Since the imam was sent by the DRA of Turkey, this time TSOR found a way to legitimate its religious activities. This time, members of TSOR were more confident about new imams' approach, since imams would act with reference to DRA of Turkey.

Afterwards, TSOR's religious activities increased and became diversified. Imams opened new classes about religious and general knowledge. They started to act as the official imam of the Turkish population in Rochester.

The third imam appointed by DRA, Kızılaslan worked in Rochester from 2006 to 2011. Since he could play various musical instruments, he also opened musical classes. He found a religious music group, involved 25 people and even made a tour in neighboring cities, and he built good relationships with other Muslim and non-Muslim authorities in Rochester.

Kızılaslan enjoyed his position in Turkish community:

Indeed we cannot claim that TSOR as a religion-based association, rather it is a liberal (secular) organization. However, I received big respect here more than in Turkey. Even non-religious people, who do

not pray or fast, are very respectful to me. Also I have more authorities in New York than in Turkey. I can officially solemnize people here, not in Turkey.

According to Kızılaslan there are six important Islamic Centers exist in Rochester:

1. TSOR
2. Islamic Center of Rochester: Hamidiye Mosque of *Süleymanlılar*
3. Masjid-i Sabr: Followed by Maraş countrymen
4. Islamic Center of Rochester: This center is the most crowded Islamic organization in Rochester addressing to general Islamic community in Rochester, which established in 1975.
5. Masjid-i Sura: Religious center of Yemenite immigrants.
6. Another unknown masjid: Mostly followed by Iraqi Kurdish immigrants.

The imams of these groups also found a group named as ‘Greater Rochester Council of Imams’. The members of the council came together for idea exchange and establishing a platform to advocate Muslim population in Rochester. They organized a picnic in Islamic holiday time, trying to gather all Islamic population of Rochester (Ummah of Rochester) in 2009⁶⁰. However, the number of Turkish immigrants, attending this event was very low. According to Kızılaslan:

My biggest complaint about Turkish people in here is that they are the least interested group about other groups. Turks set relationships only if they have certain business interests.

Another major improvement of TSOR was its transfer to a new and bigger building in 2007, which is also located within a large garden area and car park. The new facilities enabled various new activities like open air picnics and

⁶⁰ The announcement of that picnic published in Rochester Islamic Center’s webpage: “Eid Picnic: Food, Drink and Desserts. Sports and Games for Kids. Family Entertainment. Tickets \$1/person. Sponsored by Greater Rochester Council of Imams”
Source: <http://their.org>. Retrieved on: September, 2012.

festivals, especially annual Turkish art & folk festivals. A big hall is reserved for religious activities to be used like a masjid; however in holiday pray participators may use the whole building depending on the crowd. According to Semih, who was one of the previous presidents of TSOR, in Saturdays TSOR mostly serves for women as its busiest day. In Sundays, children come to association for religious and cultural classes. TSOR is also open in Fridays for Friday pray and as one of the most important functions, participants can eat Turkish kebab after the prayer. In its open days, TSOR became the most important gathering spot of Turkish community of Rochester.

After the years with conflict and separation, these developments were actualized with a new generation of TSOR administration. This generation shares a very important characteristic with the first immigrants since some of them also experienced the culture of Turkey and the life in Rochester. Some of them spent their time in Turkey for education. Some came to Rochester as a groom or bride. They are not tailors anymore and most of them are successful people in different sectors. Sabuncu is very thankful for this generation:

God sent us a handful, very clever and hardworking young Turks. These people know both Turkey and USA. They worked hard and developed the association even buying its new land. They are also representing Turks in every occasion in Rochester.

According to Cevat, people who were born and raised in Rochester are not helpful at all, because they are not very eager to work about Turkish community. For him, people who experienced both Turkey and America are more capable and enthusiastic. The children of Turkish families in Rochester feel extreme comfort. They endeavor for nothing and place no attachment to the community. However, people, who know both countries have more entrepreneurial skills and will to develop their society.

As the most important target, building a mosque is still an objective for TSOR. They want to build an Ottoman style mosque with minarets. This would symbolize the existence of Turks in Rochester for almost 50 years. In 2012,

TSOR announced that the society “plans to broaden its activities due to larger facility including two houses and 20,000 square building with partitioned coffee house (popular gathering place) and a mosque”⁶¹. In order to achieve this goal, they started ‘Turkish Society of Rochester Mosque Project’ to collect 1 million USD⁶².

According to Semih, TSOR has 180 family members. However, 45-50 people attend regularly to Friday prayer. In holiday prayers, the number of people, attending to prayer reaches 250-300. Considering these numbers, building a mosque for 1 million USD would be evaluated as an extravagant expenditure. However, maybe more than its functionality, symbolic value of the mosque will be more important for TSOR. The mosque will symbolize that Turks have been living in Rochester for almost 50 years. On the other hand, this view may instigate some old controversies, considering Cansu⁶³’s question: ‘Why the symbolic value of Turkey should be a mosque?’ The answer probably lies within the reality that although TSOR is a national association, its religious function has becoming more important, since American context demands to see them as ‘Muslim people’, rather than ‘Turkish people’.

⁶¹ Source: <http://www.tsor.org>. Retrieved on: August, 2012.

⁶² The Turkish Mosque Project was also announced by the local newspaper: “... Chili’s commissioner of public Works/superintendent of highways, said the organization has been granted preliminary approval but still needs final approval after a few minor procedural adjustments”

Source: Smith, Alicia, *Turkish Mosque may come to Rochester*. Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, April 23, 2012.

⁶³ Cansu’s father came to Rochester in 1991. He did not work as a tailor. In 1999, Cansu, her brother and mother also migrated to Rochester. Her mother, who was a teacher of needlework in Turkey, is still working in Hickey Freeman. Cansu was 18 years old when she came to Rochester. She continued her education in US and graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology. She remembers that most of the classes were much easier in US than in Turkey.

CHAPTER IV

**IDENTITY TRANSFORMATION OF TURKISH IMMIGRANTS
IN ROCHESTER**

As based on differences and otherness, social identities are still taking its source significantly from ethnicity. In contemporary times, world is perceived as a smaller place as a result of globalization. This effect becomes more apparent in the sphere of culture and economy. In the new order of the world, all individuals became the customers of same market and the audience of same popular culture⁶⁴. Yet, the disjunctive effects of ethnic identity have not diminished.

Marxist tradition would assume that class interests would emerge as the bedrock of collective identity and political consciousness; therefore ethnicity would lose its importance. Weber's prophecy about ethnicity was similar to Marxists. He thinks progressive rationalization, science and modernity would prevail, and communal relationship and ethnicity would disappear⁶⁵. Especially in 1970's it was assumed that ethnicity would be evaluated as a source of old and disappearing cleavages and antiquated views of society in near future⁶⁶. However, even in the most developed regions ethnicity did not disappeared. On the contrary, ethnic identities reshaped and reconstructed throughout the modernization.

Personal identity typically refers to characteristics that an individual defines him/herself in isolation from wider society. On the other hand collective identity is explicitly connected to a group of people outside the self. Although

⁶⁴ Giddens, Anthony. *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping Our Lives*. Profile Books, London, 2002, p:27.

⁶⁵ Kaya, İlhan. op. cit, p:20.

⁶⁶ Chiu, Shirley S. *Ethnic Identity Formation: A Case Study of Carribean and Indian Hakkas in Toronto*. Master's Thesis Submitted to York University, Toronto, Canada, 2003, p: 1.

recognition of collective identity is a multidimensional concept, which involves values, emotional significance and behavioral implications⁶⁷, this thesis tries to understand personal identity patterns of Turkish immigrants in order to capture the collective identity construction of Turkish community in Rochester.

4.1 Major Theories of Ethnic Identity Formation

There are mainly three theories to understand how individuals build their identities. First theory can be identified as the ‘primordial perspective’. According to this view, individuals are wrapped up certain cultural connections by birth. Therefore identities are very rooted in one’s birth. Group identity is given, not a matter of choice. Time and place do not have much impact on identity construction⁶⁸. Clifford Geertz holds this view, according to him “along hermeneutic lines that cultural systems are more or less self-sustaining and are thus not subject to the willful manipulation of individuals.”⁶⁹ This fatalistic view is hardly comprehends to explain changes in individual and group identities.

As a reaction to primordial theory, ‘instrumentalist theorists’ think that ethnicity could be understood as a strategic tool to gain access to resources, services and rewards. To reach these resources, an individual has to claim a particular identity⁷⁰. It is also possible to see ethnicity as a matter of power relations or a tool to pursue communal interests⁷¹. For Hobsbawm, most collective identities and ethnicity could be associated with ‘shirts’, rather than ‘skin’. Like wearing shirts, ethnicity is something optional and not escapable.

⁶⁷ Ashmore, R.D., Deaux, K., McLaughlin-Volpe, T. *An Organizing Framework for Collective Identity: Articulation and Significance of Multidimensionality*. Psychological Bulletin. 2004, Vol: 130, No: 1, p:82.

⁶⁸ Kaya, İlhan. op. cit, p:21.

⁶⁹ Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York, Basic Books, 1973, p:73.

⁷⁰ Chiu, Shirley S, op., cit, p:42

⁷¹ Kaya, İlhan. op. cit, p:21.

They are interchangeable or wearable in multiple combinations⁷². According to Hobsbawm, people ‘choose’ to belong to an identity group. Ethnicity may acquire political functions in certain circumstances and find itself associated with different programs⁷³.

Fredrik Barth’s view on ethnicity carries similar emphasis on how ethnicity is used as instruments by the individuals. According to Barth, “ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves⁷⁴”. Individuals, as actors, do not carry objective and primordial features; rather, they carry features, only if actors themselves find them as significant⁷⁵.

The instrumentalist theory is criticized as being incapable to grasp the primordial realities of identity. It could be evaluated that the tactical use of the ethnicity is overemphasized in this view. Ethnic identity is changeable from time to time. In Rochester, even the first Turkish immigrants could easily consider themselves as ‘Turkish-Americans’. However, identity is not totally convertible. People might suffer from their ethnic identity, if they could not alter or deny their ethnic background, like Jewish people during the Holocaust.

In order to cope with the theoretical dilemma of ethnic identity formation, Smith tries to conceptualize a third way to understand the formation of ethnic identity:

Between two extremes (primordial and instrumental views) lie those approaches that stress the historical and symbolic-cultural attributes of ethnic identity... An ethnic group is a type of cultural collectivity that emphasizes the role of myths of descent and historical memories, and

⁷² Hobsbawm, Eric. *Identity Politics and the Left*. Text of the Barry Amiel and Norman Melburn Turst lecture given at the Institute of Education., London on May 2, 1996, p:41.

⁷³ Hobsbawm, Eric. *Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today*. *Anthropology Today*, Vol: 8, No: 1, February 1992, p:4.

⁷⁴ Barth, Fredrik. *Introduction* in Barth, F. (Ed) *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, Little Brown, Boston, 1969, p:10.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p: 14.

*that is recognized by one or more cultural differences like religion, customs, language or institutions. Such collectivities are doubly 'historical' in the sense that not only are historical memories essential to their continuance but each such ethnic group is the product of specific historical forces and is therefore subject to historical change and dissolution.*⁷⁶

'Constructionist theory' is evaluated as a third way to understand identity. According to this theory, ethnic identity is neither innate nor instrumental, because "societies are construction sites, in which identities are shaped, reworked and reconstructed"⁷⁷. It has multidimensional, dynamic, fluid, situationally defined, produced and re-produced characteristics. In reaction to changing settings, social interactions and time; the explanation of ethnic identity may change⁷⁸. To illustrate this fluidity, it is possible to define a person as an Istanbulite in Turkey, Muslim in New York, Turkish in Rochester and Süleymanci in front of other Turks in Rochester.

Constructionist theory does not deny the primordial features of the ethnicity; however these primordialities are understood as constructed realities. As a major source for individual and collective identity, ethnicity emerges as 'constructed primordial quality'. These constructed qualities may change over time in order to grasp new functionalities. The origination and transformation of the identity is based on social constructions. Consequently, it is possible to view that people create their own stories of real and imagined happenings, involving history, migration, colonization, struggle, opposition, defeat and survival⁷⁹.

⁷⁶ Smith, Anthony, D. *National Identity*. University of Nevada Press, Reno, Nevada, 1991. p: 20.

⁷⁷ Rodaway, P. *Exploring the Subject in Hyper-Reality*. In Pile S, and Thrift N. J. (Eds.) *Mapping the Subject : Geographies of Cultural Transformation*. London, New York, Routledge, 1995.

⁷⁸ Chiu, Shirley S, op., cit, p:43.

⁷⁹ Hubbard, P., Kitchin, R., Bartley, B. and Fuller, D. *Thinking Geographically: Space, Theory, and Contemporary Human Geography*. London: Continuum. 2002.

In the constructionist theory, nothing is absolute about the process of identity construction, since identities are viewed as changing, divergent and contingent under different time and space settings. Consequently, as a social construction, identities are continuous processes; no identity is complete or finished⁸⁰.

According to Kaya:

*Constructionist view of ethnicity applies better to Turkish identities in American and global contexts, since it widens its scope to both primordial and circumstantial realms. Turkish identities are variable, changeable and contingent depending on their time and space contexts.*⁸¹

As Soysal puts, “the migrant is tied to an unyielding past, the past of his home and culture, and a persistent present, the present of his host place, his bureaucratic shackles and, his otherness”⁸². The Turks in Rochester in the same way desired to create a new life for them, since their life quality was unsatisfactory in Turkey. However, they did not separate themselves from their past. On the contrary, they clung to their ethnic and religious identities more willingly. They also struggle with their present time realities, comprising the problems caused by their social and cultural orientations. Eventually, their identities have perpetually re-defined and re-stated according to changing time, space and context.

4.2 Effects of the Perception of Migration on Identity

Globalization process, enhancement of the transportation potentials and increased unification of international economy are some of the significant reasons for increased migration in global scale. In this context, the type of migration has also been diversified, however still could be understood within two major groups. Some migrants can be conceptualized as *transilients or*

⁸⁰ Kaya, İlhan. op. cit, p:22-23.

⁸¹ Ibid, p:25.

⁸² Soysal, Levent. *Labor to Culture: Writing Turkish Migration to Europe*. The South Atlantic Quarterly. 102:2/3, Spring/Summer 2003, Duke University Press, p:501.

permanent migrants, who migrate to find better labor opportunities in different places. Since they have certain intentions to migrate, they are adaptive migrants to new environments. Opposite to this group, another migrant behavior can be conceptualized as *sojourners or temporary migrants*, who aim shorter stay duration in their migration destinations⁸³. It is also agreeable to add different social and economic motivations or their combinations to describe migration patterns. Factors and combinations can be very diverse considering features of migration whether it is voluntary or involuntary, or, economic or political⁸⁴.

Very much similar to general motivation of Turkish labor migration in 1960's, Turkish immigrants in Rochester firstly considered themselves as temporary migrants. Their primary aim was earning sufficient amounts of money and turning back to their homelands in Turkey to set up a better life. Therefore Turkish tailors migrated to Rochester predominantly for economic reasons. Yet, even in some of the earlier tailor-migrants, political motivations fostered their will to migrate. Idris remarks:

In the past, your merits were not important in Turkey. Everything was about knowing and reaching the important people. If you knew the special people, you could become everything. I would like to escape to a place where I would get what I deserve.

Idris' antipathy against Turkey tightened during 1970's:

Every time I visited Turkey, I had problems in customs. I was bringing many gifts like cigars, candies and chocolates from America. Customs officer was accused me and asked 'are you a smuggler?' then he took some of the gifts for himself. I got very angry and asked, 'How dare you are taking these? Did we earn this together?'

⁸³ Standing, G. *Conceptualizing Territorial Mobility* in Bilborrow, R. E., Oberai, A. S. And Standng G. (eds), *Migration Surveys in Low Income Countries: Guidelines for Survey and Questionnaire Design*, 1984, London: Dover, N. H.,USA: Croom Helm, p: 42-45.

⁸⁴ Messina, A. H., Lahav, G. *The Migration Reader: Exploring Politics and Policies*. Lynne Rienner Publishers: Boulder London. 2006, p: 11.

Extreme nepotism in job market in Turkey or some special instances such as the daring of customs officer to bring some his presents for him are important non-economic factors in order to understand why Turkish immigrants preferred to reside in US. For İdris, Rochester appeared as a fair and egalitarian place to work, where his income would be determined by his working performance.

For Hamiyet⁸⁵, migrating to a foreign country was a psychological obstacle:

When we were young, it was a kind of shame to migrate a foreign country to earn money. My father said that he could support us, but we wanted to go. Despite of my father's great disagreement, we came here (Rochester) in 1969. Soon after, my father passed away. I think because he had in a great sorrow about me.

Probably Hamiyet and her husband felt that people in Turkey might think that the reason of their migration was their inefficacy to earn their life in Turkey. Furthermore going to a foreign land to work could be seen as treason. Rather than, struggling with the problems like everyone, they 'sold out' their country to earn more money and live in better conditions in a foreign country. As a result, migrating to a foreign country was a 'shame'. Moreover that shame was felt by her father in Turkey. Hamiyet even blames herself that such an embarrassment caused the demise of his father.

Dissimilarly, for Lutfullah migrating to a foreign country became a challenge to prove his adequacy:

I approved to foreign employment in 1965. I was hoping to go to Germany, because everybody was going there to work. Finally, I found myself in USA by chance. However, I waited my departure for 3 years. I am remembering that my friends were mocking me. They were thinking I could never be able to go to a foreign country.

Lutfullah was a very young single man when he first wanted to migrate to other countries to work. Unlike Hamiyet, Lutfullah would prove himself, if he could accomplish such a migration. Because his first trials were unsuccessful, his

⁸⁵ Hamiyet is one of the earliest immigrants who came to Rochester with her husband, to work in Hickey Freeman in 1969.

friends ridiculed him, believing that he could never go to a foreign country. Therefore, idea of labor migration could mean very differently considering the various features of the emigrants in 1960's Turkey. For a single and young male emigrant, migration meant success, whereas for a newly married couple migrating to live in a foreign country was shameful.

Most of the first Turkish immigrants returned to Turkey after several years, since they thought they collected enough amounts of money. However, returners mostly went to Rochester back⁸⁶. They either could not adapt to life in Turkey or they could not find nice employment opportunities.

In general, the migration wave of Turkish immigrants in Rochester from 1967 to mid-1980's, were characterized with strong economic and voluntary motivations. For these immigrants, both migrating to a foreign country to work and going to Rochester were matters of choice. They evaluated to migrate to Rochester, since they thought their employment would be easier because of their sartorial skills. They aimed short term stay; however they became long term migrants. The immigrants came after 1980's, were also in search of economic resources; however the proportion of immigrants who had political motivations increased. That kind of immigrants were either immigrants from Turkey, who wanted to escape from the political upheavals in Turkey; or Turkish immigrants from other US cities, who decided to reside in Rochester because of better conditions or intensify the likeminded political groups. For example, according to interviewees, significant amount of *Süleymanlılar* supporters came and settle down in Rochester, in order to reinforce *Süleymanlılar*'s power in TSOR in 1990's.

Especially after 1996 conflict of TSOR, it is hard to generalize Turkish immigrants in Rochester. They became varied in terms of their jobs, hometowns in Turkey, religion, political orientation and cultural background.

⁸⁶ Their decisions about going back to Rochester closely related with the fact that their green card status in USA easily enabled them to settle down again in USA.

While early immigrants were thinking that they will return to Turkey someday, immigrants after 1980's were conscious to consider themselves as permanent migrants, directly focusing on long term settlement. Consequently, the relatively homogenous collective identities of Turkish immigrants in 1960's and 1970's started to disappear in 1980's.

4.3 Transnational Identities of Turks in Rochester

The term 'transnationalism' was firstly coined by the Randolph Bourne. According to him, although all members or their descendants of the American society were foreign born, some other ground might have found other than 'indigenusness', because all Americans were somehow 'transnationals'. All members of the American society should have kept their own transnational qualities. Americans should not want that the distinctive qualities of the individuals washed out into "a tasteless, colorless fluid of uniformity"⁸⁷. According to Bourne:

*The early colonists (of America) came over with motives no less colonial than the later... They came to get freedom to live as they wanted. They came to escape from the stifling air and the chaos of the old world; they came to make their fortune in a new land... The non-English American can scarcely be blamed if he sometimes thinks of the Anglo-Saxon predominance in America as little more than a predominance of a priority. The Anglo-Saxon was merely the first immigrant, the first to found a colony. He has never really ceased to be the descendant of immigrants, nor has he ever succeeded in transforming that colony into a real nation...Colonials from other nations have come and settle down beside him. They found no definite native culture... consequently they looked back to their another country...*⁸⁸

Thus, America was born as a transnational country, in which no any ethnic identity has predominance over others and the members of the society carry their own descendants' features as well as America's unique cultural blend.

⁸⁷ Bourne, Randolph. *Transnational America*. Atlantic Monthly, 118, July 1916, pp:86-97.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Although the original usage of the transnationalism was put to describe American society, later on, the term has been used to imply the multileveled connections of the individuals in relation with the more than one country and national group. The more global mobility enhances, the more phenomenon of transnationalism increases. International immigrants sustain their lives in relation with the more than one country. Their interest towards their homeland or the society where they live may vary. According to Barkan, “transnationalism had become the term of choice to describe the multilevel, sustained, intensive financial connections to families and/or communities in the homelands”⁸⁹. Transnational migrants might develop complex financial relations internationally. On the other hand, transnationalism might affect the integration of the immigrants to the host country. The blurred social connections of the international migrants are described by the van den Anker; “Immigrants would watch the news from their country of origin was presented evidence for their lack of connection to the society where they lived”⁹⁰.

Yet, no any standard description of transnationalism exists. According to van den Anker, there are three different usages of the transnationalism. First, transnationalism means a practice of migrants. International migrants remain in a close contact with their country of origin. For example, most of the transnational immigrants contribute to their families’ standard of living through travel, communication or sending goods.

On the other hand, transnationalism may imply the changing identities. Our perspectives have been reshaped by the transnationalism. The impact of international movement and communication is seen as alteration of identities and transcending the boundaries. According to this view, transnationalism appears as a positive factor for the creation of global citizenship.

⁸⁹ Barkan, R. Elliott. *Introduction: Immigration, Incorporation, Assimilation and the Limits of Transnationalism*, *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Winter, Spring, 2006, p: 14.

⁹⁰ van den Anker, C. *Transnationalism and Cosmopolitanism: Towards Global Citizenship?* *Journal of International Political Theory*, 6 (1), 2010, p: 74.

‘Uprootedness and being from nowhere’ are welcomed in order to alienate from national boundaries and arrive to global cosmopolitanism. In addition to this overemphasis on the excitement of diversity, transnationalism could be evaluated thirdly, as a conceptual approach parallel to globalization, explaining the changing world around us and shaping our perspectives⁹¹.

Considering transnationalism as a conceptual approach (as the third definition), generally it is a disputable issue to analyze its effects. On the one hand, transnationalism could be considered as a positive factor for increasing tolerance between ‘global citizens’ and growing understanding between cultures. On the other hand, it is also arguable that transnational activities increase the prejudice against ‘strangers’ and produce more stereotypes against ‘insecure’ and ‘mistrusted’ others. To put it in different way, the result of the transnational movements is a debated issue. Transnationalism might encourage the hospitality towards others, as well as trigger the xenophobia and stigmatization towards strangers.

Most of early Turkish immigrants in Rochester planned to return to Turkey after earning certain amount of money. This motivation was one of the major reasons for them to keep their financial and emotional links with Turkey. In the following years, they mostly engaged with the Turkish community in Rochester. They frequently visited Turkey, sent aids to their relatives in their homelands and tried to find spouses from Turkey. Within Rochester, they commonly integrated with the Turkish groups, especially with TSOR. Consequently, it is possible to argue that Turks in Rochester gained a transnational character. Turks voluntarily went to Rochester and especially the early immigrants were welcomed with the migrant-friendly policies of US. Keeping their transnational character was their only choice since they need a strong solidarity between each other. It was a unique opportunity for these first immigrants that most of them were working in the same companies; therefore

⁹¹ Ibid, p: 77-80.

they did not need to integrate with American society. Undisputedly, they created a stereotype of *out of favor* ‘American’ and they avoided to be Americanized. At the same time, starting from the second generation, transnationalism of the Turks in Rochester provided them more toleration towards others. Because they gradually evaluated themselves as American citizens, who have Turkish roots, morality and culture; and acknowledge other population groups in the same way. They enjoy their freedom of celebration of their culture and recognize other social groups as the other components of the American society.

As transnationalism could be understood differently, transnational engagement could also be analyzed with different forms. According to Lee, there are various transnational engagements such as ‘cyber-transnationalism’ (with the increasing technical capabilities of communication, international migrants can sustain their connections with more than one homeland), ‘intradiasporic transnationalism’ (immigrants strongly integrate with the diaspora groups within the host nation) and ‘indirect transnationalism’ (immigrants gain transnational characteristics with indirect remittances and tangible forms of indirect connections)⁹². These different transnational engagements could be found in multiple ways. For example, transnational character of Turks in Rochester is mostly intradiasporic, because they consider that TSOR and other Turkish societies as their social organization representing their homeland and original culture. As a place where people mostly speak Turkish, discuss the news about Turkey, watch Turkish football games, celebrate national and religious holidays, eat Turkish foods and socialize with other Turks, these places constructs diasporic centers, allows immigrants to feel the atmosphere of their country of origin in a foreign land. Additionally, cyber-transnationalism is also valid to describe behavior of Turks in Rochester. Communication technologies allow Turks to watch Turkish TV channels from

⁹² Lee, Helen. *Rethinking Transnationalism through the Second Generation*. The Australian Journal of Anthropology, 22, 2011, p: 297-298.

their homes. They can easily communicate with their relatives and peers in Turkey.

Transnational engagement of the second generation immigrants might be different than the first generation. For Lee, the question that ‘can a person be considered transnational, if he or she does not physically move between home and host nations?’ is particularly salient⁹³. Members of the second generation may never been to their parent’s homeland, cannot speak the language or alienate from the culture and tradition of the country of origin. These people might be subjected to strong socialization to support family and the hometown as a ‘forced transnationalism’⁹⁴. In Rochester, it is possible to view that young people of the more religious Turkish groups are subject to more ‘forced transnationalism’, since their lifestyle, morality and general behavior are described in more inflexible ways. Their reformulated Turkishness and Americanness are given to them in more solid and unquestionable manners.

Especially for the members of the second and later generation members there is one more form of transnational engagement which is ‘emotional transnationalism’. According to Wolf, for the young people who have no direct connections to hometown, only an emotional sense of attachment remains to their parents’ homeland⁹⁵. Although their actual connections with their homeland reduce, they continue to feel their belonging to their country of origin.

Second generation of Turkish immigrants in Rochester has been keeping their actual connections with the Turkey. They know and communicate people from their parents’ homeland. However, like first generation members, TSOR and

⁹³ Ibid, p: 297.

⁹⁴ Wolf, D. *There is no place like ‘home’: Ethical Transnationalism and the struggles of second generation Filipinos*. In Levitt P., Waters P. (eds) *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, New York, Rusell Sage Foundation, 2002., p: 308.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

other Turkish societies are their actual basis to remind them that they also 'belong' to their parents' country of origin. Therefore, it is possible to claim Turkish immigrants in Rochester generally carry intradiasporic transnational features. On the other hand, for the third generation members, the importance of the Turkish societies in their actual lives is less visible than their parents. Going to Turkish migrant associations becomes some kind of 'assignment' just because they somehow have Turkish roots. Yet, they still socialize with other Turkish youngsters and try to keep their parents' cultural habits alive. In this regard, while newer generations integrate more with the wider segments of American society, they gradually become 'emotional transnationals'. Using different names which is generally misspelled by the other American people, avoiding to eat pork meat, participating to holiday prayers, eating kebab from the Turkish associations, dancing with the Turkish folk songs and all similar kind of behaviors are the reminders for the younger generations that despite they are living as Americans, they have one additional cultural affinity with another country.

In terms of Turkish immigrants' identities, it is important to note that Turks in Rochester gained a transnational character. While early immigrants cooperate with each other and developed a Turkish-American identity, their engagement with the society carried intradiasporic transnationalism. Next generations could carry their transnationalism with cyber technologies; yet, for the third generation, their transnational features remains mostly emotional. Smaller groups and more religious Turkish societies might impose more 'forced transnationalism' to their members, since they try to keep their identity and moral values in stricter ways. Taking transnationalism as a conceptual approach, it is possible to claim that transnationalism of the early immigrants produced some kind of xenophobia by creating an unwanted American stereotype. At the same time, while next generations integrating with wider segments of the American society, their transnational character became a source to respect others.

Finally, with many different focus points, transnationalism is covering important notions regarding the behavior of Turks in Rochester; however, it is hard to claim that transnationalism is enough to describe the identity patterns of the Turkish immigrants completely.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF TURKISH IMMIGRANTS IN ROCHESTER

The history of Turkish migration to Rochester comprises almost 50 years. Throughout this time period, social relations within Turkish immigrants and interaction between Turks and wider society of Rochester have changed dramatically. In this chapter, my aim will be to capture these changes by using Ager and Strang's study about understanding the integration. According to Ager and Strang, ten core domains could be considered to reflect normative understandings of integration, and they could provide a potential structure for analysis of relevant outcomes of social integration process. These ten core domains are summarizing the perceptions of what constitutes successful integration⁹⁶. Ager and Strang's conceptual framework can be seen below:

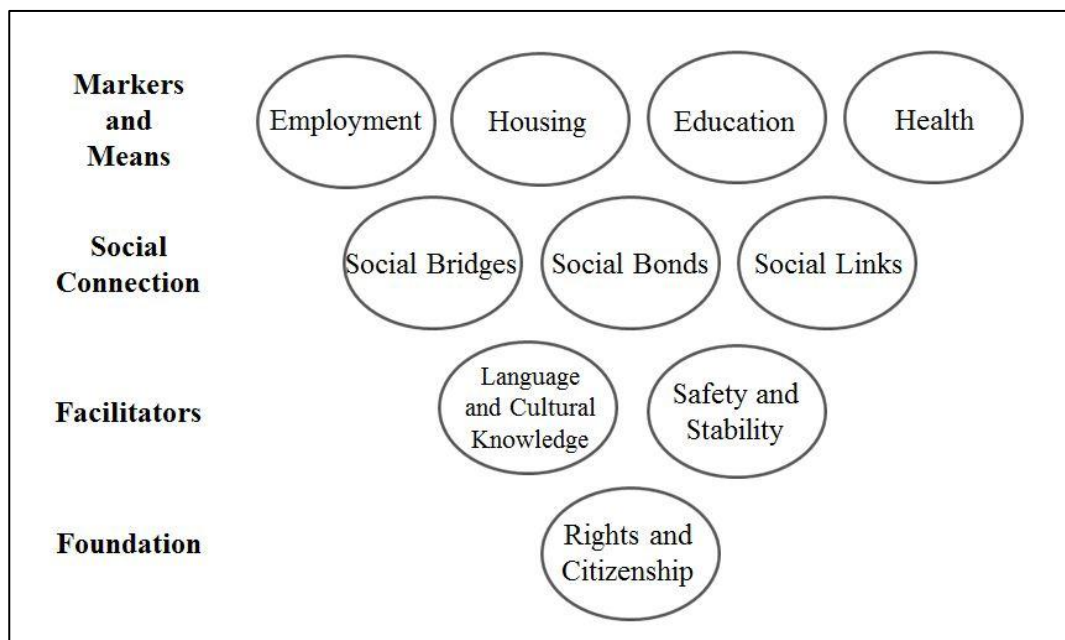


Figure 2: A conceptual framework defining core domains of integration⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Ager, A., Strang, A., op. cit., p: 167, 184.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p: 170.

Alison and Ager's study provides the very ground to examine the integration patterns of Turkish immigrants in Rochester. Usage of this framework provides a functional opportunity to conclude findings of my thesis. It is important to note that, 'the successful integration' might be understood differently according to different viewpoints. While integration to American society transforms Turkishness as a nostalgic memory or a kind of old identity; integration to Turkish contexts in the US could be considered as a resistance against American culture. Not necessarily a migrant group completely integrates into host society or resists within its own cultural boundaries; rather, different domains might show incompatible tendencies of integration at the same time. For my research, I consider two polarizing tendencies, on the one hand Turkish immigrants' integration to larger American context, and on the other hand Turkish immigrants' resistance by creating a Turkish context within American society. Below, I will focus on the core domains of integration and try to reach a conclusive explanation of my research in consideration of these opposing orientations.

5.1 Employment

The general tendency of Turkish immigrants in 1960's and 1970's were largely motivated by educational and professional reasons. Therefore According to Akçapar, there was a substantial increase in the number of specialists and professionals, emigrating to United States from Turkey⁹⁸. However, there was also an exceptional immigrants group in Rochester. Akçapar remarks:

*Together with this skilled migration, several hundred semi-skilled workers, especially tailors, came from Turkey with their families to work in places like Bond Clothing Company in Rochester, New York, between the late 1960's and early 1980's.*⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Akçapar, S. K., op. cit., p: 170-171.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

As explained in more detail in Chapter 3, Turkish immigrants in Rochester can be considered as an exceptional case in terms of Turkish migration waves to US. Although they had sartorial skills, they were not speaking English. They were directly influenced by skilled middle class Turkish immigrants who came to Rochester before. Nevertheless, Turkish migration to Rochester could be considered as a labor migration, therefore employment opportunities were seen as the major ‘pulling factor’ by the immigrants. Working in foreign countries and earning more salary were the primary aim and they primarily planned short term stay.

In 1960’s, when the volume of Turkish labor migration to West increased, Turkish immigrants had several difficulties. Even some of the problems of Turkish immigrants in Europe in terms of their legal status and immigrant rights are still visible. According to Sezgin, although most Turkish migrants have yet to gain German citizenship and certain rights, once reserved for citizens, they still continue to experience discrimination and exclusion in the German labor market and educational system¹⁰⁰. On the contrary, first Turkish immigrants were surprised when they get green card after their arrival to Rochester. They thought they would face with several difficulties about working and staying permit, however their green card status enabled them unlimited permits of staying and working in US. Moreover, they could easily bring their spouses and children to re-settle their family lives in US.

Another important point about Turkish immigrants in Rochester was the women’s high participation to employment. Considering the Turkish labor migrant communities in the US, generally it is possible to claim Turkish immigrant women are not participating to the public life to a great extent. According to DiCarlo, although Turkish women are excluded from employment in the US, they are ‘sent’ to care of small family business in Turkey. She notes commonly Turkish immigrants of Giresun origin send their

¹⁰⁰ Sezgin, Zeynep., op. cit., p: 79.

women and children to village life in Turkey during summer. Without their husbands, women are responsible to look after the land and assessing the progress on construction of new homes¹⁰¹. Turkish women's low participation to working life was also related with the fact that Turkish women's English literacy is lower than men. According to Karpat, the rate of English literacy is especially low among married women. Because their educational background is poor and/or their husband fear that fluency in English will allow their wives to interact with society¹⁰². Therefore language becomes a barrier for women to be employed.

In Rochester, especially first women Turkish migrants participated to working life. They mostly worked in Bond's or Hickey Freeman clothing factories, where their husbands are also working. Hamiyet remarks:

I never worked in Turkey; however I worked in Hickey Freeman for 15 years. In the first years, I was paid \$1, 5/hour, therefore I could make \$35/week. But my husband could earn \$45/week. However, in 80's, I could earn more than my husband. We were working very hard. I could hardly see my husband at home.

Although those women were not working in Turkey like Hamiyet, Turkish women could find the opportunity to earn their money and participate into the society. On the one hand, it possible to consider migrating to Rochester had a liberating effect on Turkish women, because they gained their economic freedom and could enter public life to a great extent. On the other hand, their employment in private sector did not modify their housework responsibilities. Therefore, employment of the Turkish women in Rochester could also be considered as a 'double burden' for them.

Selahatin appreciates the Turkish women in Rochester since they worked both in outside and within the home:

¹⁰¹ DiCarlo, Lisa., op. cit., p: 155.

¹⁰² Karpat, Kemal., op. c.t., p:181.

We (Turkish men) do not worth a penny without our wives. They gave us children, made housewifery, worked in factories, fed us... What about us? We have always hundreds of excuses for everything, but always ready to go billiard halls.

Employment still provides a social network for Turkish women in Rochester. Cansu's mother is still working in Hickey Freeman along with many. According to Cansu:

We hear about other Turks mostly from other Turkish women working with my mother in Hickey Freeman. We stay in touch with Turkish community via women's talk in Hickey Freeman.

In 2000's, Hickey Freeman was still calling tailors from Turkey, in order to employ them in Rochester. In 2004, Hickey Freeman published a job advertisement, announcing that they are searching for experienced and artisan tailors. The spokeswoman of the corporation, who is a daughter of one of the earliest Turkish immigrants in Rochester, states:

Previously Hickey Freeman was employing Italian and Turkish tailors. However, there are not any tailors remained in Italy. Therefore we are publishing job advertisement only in Turkey. Here they are so satisfied about the industriousness of the Turks. We published another job advertisement 8 years ago and thus 22 families came to US in that way. Currently 200 Turks are working in the factory¹⁰³

Turkish immigrant's workplaces diversified through years. They are not solely tailors any more. They are following various business strategies to adopt changing work life. Without doubt; it is possible to claim that convenient employment opportunities and other benefits, provided by the US government to new foreign employers, were the main factors which enabled Turkish immigrants' integration to US. Because most Turkish immigrants were working in the same companies, early Turkish immigrants also provided their social relations with other Turks via their workplace. However, in

¹⁰³ *İyi Terziyseniz Toplayın Bavulu Yolculuk ABD'ye*. Hürriyet Gazetesi. Published: March 03, 2004 (Translated from Turkish).

contemporary Rochester, employment can no longer be considered as an integration domain of Turks within themselves.

5.2 Housing

Early Turkish immigrants in Rochester were dependent to their companies for housing. They mostly stayed in the houses around the close neighborhood of the factories. They were shopping from small stores in their neighborhood; therefore their all life area was physically very limited. Since they could not have driver's license, they do not have the possibility to discover workplaces and houses in further areas.

One positive affect of limited housing opportunities of early Turkish migrants can be considered the emergence of Turkish small district. Especially houses of the employees of Bond's were very close to each other. The residential proximity provided more cooperation between Turkish employees and their families. Therefore the closeness might have fostered the feeling of 'being at home'.

The list of TSOR members in December 1969 shows that 103 Turkish households of the member immigrants resided very close to each other. Martin street (18 households), Conkey avenue (14 households), St. Paul street (9 households), Galusha street (9 households), Scranton street (6 households), Evergreen street (6 households) and Harris street (6 households) were the main places where Turkish families inhabited.

The deprivation of Turkish immigrants, caused by this obligatory residential proximity, were noticed by Emirbayer and he solved this problem by translating all the documents required to pass driver's license exam and becoming an official invigilator of Department of Motor Vehicles of New York.



Figure 3: Detail map showing Turkish households in Rochester in December 1969¹⁰⁴

Along with the various impacts, as discussed in Chapter 3, acquiring driver's license provided freedom for Turkish immigrants to discover other places. They moved to better accommodations around Rochester and housing became no longer a major problem.

At the present time, not all Turkish people are tailors and there is not any place in Rochester as Turkish district or neighborhood. Dwellings of Turkish

¹⁰⁴ Source: <http://maps.google.com>. Retrieved on: October, 2012

immigrants spread all over Rochester metropolitan area. This expansion could be considered as an indicator for Turkish immigrants' integration to US. The house of TSOR and other places of Turkish associations are the only places where Turks regularly gather.

5.3 Education

Early Turkish immigrants in Rochester were tailors who learned their skills not from schools, but from their masters. Probably, they started to work in very early ages as tailor apprentices in Turkey. They expected their own children would also enter the job market very early and start to earn their own money.

In early years, many Turkish parents avoided to send their children to school. In addition to economic concerns, they also desired to secure their children against harmful components of American Society. They wanted to keep their children within Turks' sphere of influence. Working within the same company was the easiest way to ensure their children were safe and also earning money. As a result of this behavior, it could be argued that the education degree of second generation (especially women) was not very high among Turkish immigrants. According to Nazan¹⁰⁵:

I came to Rochester when I was 14 years old. We heard some very bad thing about Porto Ricans and Blacks. After that my father did not want me to continue to school in America. I started to work as a baby sitter. However, some officials somehow noticed me when I was 14. They said that it is illegal to keep me at home until I will be 16 years old. Then I started to school again. The concerns about bad conditions in schools were partly true. For example there was a black girl, frequently racketeering me. After finishing the school, I started to work in Hickey Freeman when I was 17.

Nazan's interview reveals that the concerns about bad effects of the schools were somehow justified because of the undesirable conditions in the classes.

¹⁰⁵ Nazan came to Rochester after his father, when she was 14. Three years later, she started to work in Hickey Freeman. Later on his father opened his own tailor shop; however Nazan and her mother continued to work in Hickey Freeman.

Cansu's observation about Turk's motivations regarding their daughters' education is similar:

Some families want their daughters to work directly in Hickey Freeman instead of continuing to school. This is some kind of protection strategy of parents, in order to secure their children against bad friends. They also let their daughters to marry at very early age.

Today, the attitude towards schools changed dramatically. Most of the immigrants are encouraging their children to go to schools around Rochester. Tailoring was seen as a disappearing craft and Hickey Freeman was the only remaining garment factory, therefore fathers' and mothers' jobs are no longer seem feasible to follow.

The general higher education strategy of Turks is firstly going to Monroe Community College for two years, then applying for other prestigious schools around Rochester to acquire four-year-degree. They desire to go University of Rochester, St. John Fisher College or Nazareth College. Thus, by going to community college first, they can economize their educational expenditures.

Gülen movement supporters are the most interested Turkish group about education. Their association, TCCR has been organizing various events with the cooperation of colleges and universities around Rochester. They reach to their young supporters, among Turkish and other Muslim students of universities, who are newcomers to Rochester. According to Cihat, Gülen Society dedicated itself to education more than any other society. Even for TSOR, education is not the primary objective.

Education clearly provides more skill and competency to people and it is directly related with the integration of immigrant societies with the host country. However, elder Turkish immigrants are complainant concerning their children's unwillingness about higher education. Semih thinks that, they gave their children whatever they wanted. Therefore they are not enthusiastic to reach their own goals. For Semih, their children have much more opportunities

to be more successful. They consider that while their options were mostly limited to tailoring and some other small businesses, their children might build up their career by evaluating a huge range of educational opportunities. One of the indications of this unwillingness is that there are almost not any Turkish immigrants in Rochester working in public sector. Small scale businesses, like operating kiosks, are still perceived as the main method of doing business. In this sense, for many years, their attitude towards education was a barrier for Turkish immigrants to integrate with wider American Society; however it is possible to claim that the behavior of Turks has been gradually putting more emphasis on education.

5.4 Health

According to Ager and Strang, “although infrequently cited as a core factor in integration in the course of local fieldwork, good health was widely seen as an important resource for active engagement in a new society”¹⁰⁶. Before Turkish tailors migration to Rochester, there were several Turkish doctors already settled in Rochester. One of the important opportunities of the early Turkish tailors in Rochester was these doctors, since they helped them about their health problems. Therefore, integration to Turkish society (TSOR) was beneficial for the new immigrants in terms of their health related issues.

At the present time, Turkish immigrants have various problems about health system; however these problems are also general to American health system. According to Idris, it was impossible to compare America with Turkey at the past in any sense. However, now Turkey is better than America. He is complaining about paying \$600 monthly as his health insurance. In return of this payment, he could not receive an adequate service. Therefore going to Turkey for surgical operations and for other health issues is very common for Turkish immigrants. In this regard, health related issues are playing crucial role for Turkish immigrants to keep their contact with Turkish networks. This

¹⁰⁶ Ager, A. and Strang A. op. cit. p: 172.

behavior is emphasizing that Turkish immigrants' links with Turkey, rather than their will to integrate larger Rochester-American community.

Burials are also important issues for Turkish community. According to Sabuncu, in 1976, a Turkish person named as Nurettin died in a traffic accident and they suddenly needed to learn burial procedures. They bought 7 graveyards on behalf of TSOR at that time.

For many years and today, burying a person in Rochester or sending the deceased to Turkey cost almost the same. Therefore, many families prefer to send their deceased to their homelands. On the other hand, the official imam of TSOR can also perform funerals with the assistance of funeral companies. According to Kızılaslan, they can follow exactly the same burial rituals in Rochester, compatible with Islam and Turkish culture. Continuing to send their deceased to Turkey, Turkish immigrants show that they are still considering the Turkey as their 'homeland'. Both their health related issues and preference to send their deceased to Turkey are indicators that Turks are not totally integrated with the larger American society.

5.5 Social Bonds

Although first Turkish immigrants desired for profit oriented long term stay in US, they gradually convinced for permanent residency; because they could also bring their wives to Rochester or start their families in Rochester. Family bonds were perceived as the most important element. Turks in Rochester lived mostly as nuclear families, because the parents of the first immigrants mostly refused to migrate to Rochester. However, for the second generation, some families appeared as an extended family including the grandparents, who were among the early Turkish immigrants. Turks have been strongly supporting to each other to build a cooperative society and this cooperation has been mainly actualizing by family units.

According to Selahattin, he made the first wedding ceremony among the Turkish immigrants. As an arranged marriage, he organized a wedding ceremony in 1969 and all Bond's workers and Turks attended. In this first wedding ceremony, both English and Turkish music were played. In the following years, Turkish tailors found their spouses by arranged marriages through their relatives in Turkey. Generally, they visited Turkey with yearly basis and their relatives in Turkey helped them to arrange their marriage. Firstly they organize a wedding ceremony in Turkey with the participation of their relatives. Following, they return to Rochester alone, and after all visa procedures completed, their wives could also come to Rochester. After this, they organize a second marriage ceremony with the participation of Turkish community in Rochester.

Marrying with a non-Turkish person has been considered as a socially unacceptable behavior by the Turks in Rochester. According to Idris, some families tried to become 'more American' by letting their children to marry with foreigners. However, he thinks these families finally 'disappeared' and their child melted away within American culture. The disappearance means losing the ability of speaking Turkish, more importantly, losing the religion and as a result: the morality. This would also mean that losing the authentic mode of being Turk.

Hamiyet remarks that her biggest fear was her children's marriage with Americans. Hamiyet's fears came true, and her son had a child from an American girl. She looked after her grandchildren for a while and could set good relationship with her. Now her grandchild has her own child from black husband. Her life in Rochester causes astonishment for Hamiyet; "While we were trying to secure our daughter from foreigners, grandchild of my son became black. What more this life has in store to show us?"

Hamiyet became successful to secure her daughter from Americans. Her daughter married with a Turkish man. Similarly her son also found a Turkish

woman later and married with her. Hamiyet is now very happy about both of their children's 'successful' marriages.

Although he is one of the most prestigious and well known characters of the Turkish community in US, even Sabuncu feels the necessity to legitimize his marriage with an Italian wife. While he was talking about her wife, he specially states:

My wife is Italian, but what kind? After all these years she has turned to be more Turkish than you and me.

For the daughters of first generation of Turkish immigrants, marriage could be way of liberation from extensive control and consideration of the parenthood.

Nazan remarks:

Family was controlling everything. We could not move a little without their permission. Therefore marriage was some kind of escape to freedom. Despite of our young age, we married to attain a relatively 'freer' life. Family links were working fast to matchmaking. My marriage was arranged just in 3 weeks.

Maybe one of the exceptional cases about letting her children to marry with non-Turkish people is offered by Cihat, but depending on one important condition:

I know that I will not have the total control over my children as my parents had over me. However, Americans do not have generally a consistent marriage life. My groom might be a non-Turkish, but he must be a Muslim.

With his prerequisite, Cihat separates Muslim people among other people in America. While he thinks Americans are not consistent about marriage, Muslim people are acceptable for him since being Muslim means more 'moral consistency' in family life.

Arranged marriages from Turkey are still the main marriage strategy for most of the second generation of Turkish immigrants. However, leastwise there are some marriages occurred between Turks in Rochester. For the next generations

selection of spouse seems to become a more complex problem, because Turkish community in Rochester thinks that their lifestyle is no more similar neither with the people in Turkey nor the Americans. For them, the best choice would be the marriage of two Turks, who both rose in Rochester.

As explained in more detail in Chapter 3, while the early years of Turkish immigrants were mostly characterized by the shared cultural capital, with the establishment of TSOR, social capital appeared as a differentiating factor among Turkish community. Cederberg argues that “the core argument is that, it is not just about how much money you have, but your friends and networks and the resources they give you access to (social capital), your education, cultural knowledge, tastes and ways of interacting with people (cultural capital)¹⁰⁷” are determinative. Friendship and social networks in Rochester were based on TSOR throughout the years. Subcommittees of TSOR intensified the cooperation possibilities in consideration of different needs. Even today, other Turkish societies are mostly considering TSOR as the ‘main’ organization of Turks in Rochester. It is possible to claim Turkish community overcame the conflicts and divisions occurred in 1990’s. Therefore, social bonds between Turks are still strong. Turks are mostly trusting to other Turks. They frequently see each other with friendly basis. Religious and official holidays, weddings and funerals are the main events that social relations are refreshed between Turkish immigrants. Strong social bonds are still providing the integration of Turks as a community in Rochester.

5.6 Social Bridges

First Turkish immigrants worked in Bond’s Clothing believe that they were invited to Rochester to break the dominion of Italian tailors in the factories. However, they set good relations with them. Most of the first Turkish immigrants shared their houses with Italians. According to Selahattin, first

¹⁰⁷ Cederberg, Maja. *Migrant Networks and Beyond: Exploring the value of the notion of social capital for making sense of ethnic inequalities*. Acta Sociologica 55 (I), 2012, p: 61.

Turkish tailors learned Italian more than English, because they had to communicate with Italians both in workplace and in the house.

Until TSOR bought a building, Turkish community used lounges of churches and schools for their cultural and religious activity. Especially for the holiday prayers they also welcomed some other Muslim groups.

After TSOR bought a building, the relationship between TSOR, other groups in Rochester and official organizations were increased. With their building TSOR became more institutionalized and its organizational identity strengthened.

As explained in the previous section (5.5 Social Bonds), Turkish community in Rochester has some kind of cultural conservativeness against ‘harmful effects of American life’, and a slight xenophobia, especially when it comes to marriage and education. Avoiding from losing their cultural identity and melting within the American society resulted as more family control particularly on young Turkish immigrants. In order to avoid this fear, religion may function to preserve ‘the original identities of immigrants’. In accordance with this tendency, the imams can gain a new function by giving consultancy to describe best behaviors with respect to Turkish and Islamic values. Ehrkamp objects to this tendency considering her research in Turkish immigrant groups in Germany:

He (imam or hoca) comes to Germany for a limited number of years, which poses particular problems for some members of local communities because the hoca lacks insights into life in Germany. When local Turkish immigrants ask for guidance in questions of everyday life and raising children in Germany, the hoca does not know enough about the circumstances of immigrants’ local lives, and thus is not always able to provide members of the community with the guidance that they need¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ Ehrkamp, Patricia. *Placing Identities: Transnational Practices and Local Attachments of Turkish Immigrants in Germany*. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. Vol.31, No: 2, March 2005, p: 354.

The impact of imam on immigrants is obviously significant. The first imam who came to Rochester as a supporter of *Süleymanlılar* affected a whole generation. While most of them remember him with respect, many immigrants count him as the person who divided Turkish community by using religious emotions.

After 1990's with various political and religious conflicts, TSOR requested an official imam from DRA. The arrival of the second imam (Tasyapan) from Turkey to Rochester was also reflected to a newspaper of Rochester, with emphasis on imam's power on immigrant societies:

*Tasyapan has been certified by the Turkish government as knowing a whole lot about being a Muslim... enough to be one 11 such men sent to US to help other Turks learn more about their faith, Tasyapan, 35, arrived last month, to more than 3000 Turkish Americans.*¹⁰⁹

The existence of official imam in Turkish immigrants of Rochester influenced Turks connections with other groups. Karpat's observes that:

*The Turkishness of Rochester group, despite being impregnated with a strong dose of religion seemed to have an ethnic orientation... The spokesman for the Rochester Turks' multiculturalism and respect for other religions and ethnicities was the imam of their community.*¹¹⁰

Indeed official imams of TSOR were the only full time workers and they were the first representatives of TSOR to communicate with other groups professionally. Therefore after 2000, the appearance of TSOR apparently become more religion oriented. Third official imam of TSOR, Kızılaslan (2006-2011) was especially very active to develop relationships with other groups. He directly involved in the establishment of 'Greater Rochester Council of Imams' and developed various events and organizations to strengthen Turk's relations with other Muslim and non-Muslim groups.

¹⁰⁹ Mandelaro, Doug. *Imam on Mission of Faith*. Rochester Democrat and Chronicle. 10.11.2002.

¹¹⁰ Karpat, Kemal., op., cit., p:190.

It is also possible to agree that Turkish community around TSOR was also supported the leadership of their official imam, because they attempted to soothe the religious conflicts appeared in 1990's. The viewpoint of official imam was agreed as the last word and imam's existence stopped the oppositions about religious issues.

It is important to note that although Turkish immigrants evaluated religion as 'the preservation of original identities', they did not integrate with the other Muslim groups in Rochester. Despite in some occasions where they made contacts with Pakistani and Afghan people, their understanding of Islam is not the same with others. Certainly, constructing a 'Turkish-Muslim' identity has been more important and desirable than merely a Muslim identity for the Turkish immigrants in Rochester.

On the other hand, TCCR -*Gülen movement* supporters- is the most dedicated Turkish group to develop more relations with the groups in Rochester. They frequently organize friendship dinners, iftar dinners, conferences and summits. They organize reciprocal cultural visits between Rochester and Turkey. Their main goal is to emphasize the idea of inter-religious dialogue, initiated by the Fethullah Gülen, the founder of the *Gülen movement*.

To conclude, Turkish immigrants had no particular problems in order to set social bridges to integrate with the host society. While they put great emphasis on the role of religion, they have not used the religion as a way of integrating with larger communities in Rochester, until 1996 conflict. However, it is remarkable that especially after 2000, even in TSOR, role of imam has been strengthened and imam gained a representative role.

5.7 Social Links

The relationship between immigrant groups and the host state is significantly important to understand whether immigrants integrated with the wider society or within their own community. This relationship might be described with very

strict viewpoints as in the German case, in which both citizenship law and integration regime defined migrants as a ‘foreign body’ of nation state¹¹¹. However, according to Amelina and Faist, another assumption multiplies located political activities are compatible with nation state required integration developments¹¹².

Even though they did not have language capabilities and past migration experience, early Turkish immigrants took the advantage of the inclusive immigration policies of US Government. They thought they would get limited working and residency permits; however they received green cards which offered them unlimited accommodation and working opportunities. Moreover they could easily come together and establish their own migrant association.

For Amelina and Faist, we have to acknowledge that “the formation of migrant associations can also be supportive for two-way accommodation processes. On the one hand, they represent and address the collective recognition concerns of the migrants to the political authorities. On the other hand, the public authorities of nation states can voice their integration requests to representatives of migrant collectives”¹¹³.

Turkish community in Rochester remained as an introverted society until 1990’s. Emirbayer’s efforts to become official invigilator of Department of Motor Vehicles in order to make the exam for acquiring driver’s license in Turkish language, could be argued as the first communication attempts between Turkish community and American officials. Turkish immigrants of Rochester had various contacts with authorities around Rochester in order to get various permissions for purchasing graveyards, reserving halls of churches

¹¹¹ Amelina A., Faist, T. *Turkish Migrant Associations in Germany: Between Integration Pressure and Transnational Linkages*. *Revue Europeenne des Migrations Internationales*. 2008 (24), p: 93.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid, p: 94.

and schools, and sacrificing animals in eid-ul-adha holiday. However, their communication with other groups and officials gradually intensified with TSOR's house. Selahattin thinks that City of Rochester encouraged them to buy a community house; because city administration wanted to find a legal entity representing Turkish immigrants during 1970's. Therefore having a community house and strengthening the migrants association could be understood as integration requests of US authorities.

Relations of immigrant groups with their homeland authorities also affect their integration. The first official contact between Turkish Government and TSOR was set after 1996 conflict. After this conflict Turkish society in Rochester segmented into fractions. The most important group was supporters of *Süleymancılar*. They established ICCR and the Hamidiye Mosque. There were also some other organizations like Erbakan followers, Rochester Turkish-Islamic Center, and non-formal assembling of Maraş countrymen. According to Sezgin, "many organizations began simply as informal social gatherings of Turkish nationals, but have since formalized their status as professional and sometimes highly politicized non-governmental units with different organizational aims, functions and structures"¹¹⁴. However, only supporters of *Süleymancılar* could sustain their vision as an official association.

After the separation of Turkish associations in Rochester, TSOR wanted to soothe religious disputes and requested an official imam from DRA of Turkish Government. In 2000, their request was approved and the first official imam of TSOR started his mission.

Supporters of *Süleymancılar* and their Hamidiye Mosque act as a branch of United American Muslim Association, which has many branches across US and Canada. Therefore all their activities are organized with in conjunction with the general community of *Süleymancılar*. Similarly, as appointed by the

¹¹⁴ Sezgin, Zeynep., op. cit., p: 82.

DRA of Turkey, the official imam of TSOR is not the only official imam working in overseas. DRA has many international missions. Consequently it is possible to generalize that especially religious organizations of Turkish immigrants are interrelated with various social links.

The social links of TSOR is not solely limited with its religious functions. TSOR is a member of Assembly of Turkish-American Associations¹¹⁵ and Federation of Turkish-American Associations¹¹⁶. Representatives of TSOR directly attend to meetings of these umbrella associations of Turkish-Americans. On the other hand, independency of TSOR's social links is securitized. According to the bylaw of TSOR, the association cannot take over another institution's substation or representation¹¹⁷, although TSOR's membership to other organizations is possible.

Social links of Turkish groups in Rochester mostly causes more integration to Turkish communities within Rochester. Especially *Süleymançular* and *Gülen movement* supporters use their links to organize more powerful structures not only limited with Rochester, but also about whole US. TSOR similarly pays attention to the federations of Turkish associations in US. Almost all groups are following their social links in order to strengthen their 'Turkishness' or 'Islam' within America.

5.8 Language and Cultural Knowledge

Language and other cultural shares were the most important common ground for the first Turkish immigrants in Rochester. In this sense, cultural capital,

¹¹⁵ Established in 1979, ATAA is an umbrella organization of Turkish American associations "throughout the United States, Canada and Turkey, dedicated to pursuing the interests of Turkish Americans and friends of Turkey in Washington and beyond.". Source: <http://www.ataa.org/about/index.html>. Retrieved on: November, 2012.

¹¹⁶ The mission of the federation is to unite Turkish Associations founded in various areas of the United States. Turkish-American Association was established in 1951. Source: <http://www.tadf.org>. Retrieved on: November, 2012.

¹¹⁷ Source: <http://tsor.org/images/stories/tuzuk.pdf>, p: 12. Retrived on: August 2012.

which exists in various forms, including long standing dispositions and habits acquired in the socialization process¹¹⁸, has a significant impact on immigrant cooperation in the early years.

As a general motivation, Turkish immigrants wanted to learn American way of life. Hamiyet remembers that in the early years, they were tried to be very ‘modern’. However, they also scared from Americanization. They thought if they Americanized, their identities and values would be lost. According to Idris:

All children here are growing up naturally with two cultures; however Turkish language is the basis of our culture. Some families intentionally stopped to talk Turkish at home, at the end they are all gone (assimilated). Moreover those ones could not succeed. Those who tried to integrate American culture are lost.

The intention of some families, which İdris criticizes, aims to integrate fully with the American society by talking English at home. However, İdris thinks that this would also cause the loss of other components of identity, which means being ‘gone’.

The term of ‘Americanization’ is very hard to describe for Turkish immigrants in Rochester. Being Turk is mostly associated with speaking Turkish. However, although most second generation Turkish immigrants are bilingual, third generation immigrants are hardly express themselves in Turkish. Despite they can mostly understand their parents in Turkish; they prefer to answer them in English. Similarly third generation Turkish immigrants, who are mostly young students, communicate with each other in English. Consequently, Turkish language abilities are seemingly losing its significance as a prerequisite of Turkish identity. For example, I asked to Arkin¹¹⁹ (10 years old boy) in English ‘How do you want people to call you?’ His answer was; ‘Arkin is a smart *Turkish* guy living in Rochester.’ I also asked to Arkin about what

¹¹⁸ Anheier, H.K., Gerhards, J. and Romo, F. P., op., cit, p: 862.

¹¹⁹ Arkin was born in 2000, in Rochester. His parents were also born in Rochester.

would you be when you grew up and with whom you would work with mostly. His answer to this question was also significant: ‘I would like to be an architect, and probably I will work with other Turkish friends, because I would know them from the past’.

On the one hand, Turkishness is becoming a membership of a social club. The members of these club share most of their times together and they know each other from their past. Therefore, they trust and enjoy with each other. On the other hand, although new generations are hardly speaking Turkish, they still define themselves as Turk. Their Turkish identity remains, however it is also reconstructed according to their migration experiences and their social relations in Rochester.

Nazan’s English abilities were higher than her parents like many second generation Turkish immigrants. Her children now directly prefer to talk English -as they can speak English as their native language- and completely adapted to the American way of life as US born citizens. However, their adaptation sometimes disturbs Nazan:

Recently my son organized a birthday party with his friends in our house. Most of his friends are Turkish but there are also some others. They ordered pizzas but some of them with pepperoni (pork sausage). It really bothered me.

Eating habits are not only disjunctive, but also connective. Turkish immigrants frequently come together to eat Turkish grills and other Turkish food specialties. TSOR is also serves as a center to serve Turkish foods. Each week after Friday’s prayer, Turkish immigrants eat Turkish kebab traditionally. The flyer of the 17th Annual Turkish Art & Folk Festival announces “dolma, adana kebab, baklava”¹²⁰ (with their pictures) and names of various other Turkish foods. According to Cansu, her father was going to Rochester Turkish-Islamic Center just to eat Turkish kebab. Halal Market serves as a local Turkish

¹²⁰ Source: http://tsor.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18&Itemid=13. Retrieved on: October 2012.

grocery, where people can find Turkish foods and kitchenware. Most Turkish families are very strict about preserving Turkish rituals of serving in their houses; they have special Turkish tea and coffee cups and glasses to serve beverages in its authentic way. They continue to cook Turkish dishes at home, however they also enjoy some American life-style foods, such as making barbeque in the garden, hamburger, hot-dog, pizza and roasted turkey when it is Thanksgiving Day.

Technological development has significant impacts on immigrant lives. According to Hamiyet:

If you came to Rochester, image of Turkey in your head freezes. We thought Turkey was living 1970's for a long time. Moreover, we lived in Rochester with the 1970's Turkish lifestyle.

This gap was overcome by technological developments. Turkish immigrants in Rochester can easily communicate with their Turkish relatives and friends in Turkey via internet. They can watch all Turkish TV channels and instantly follow the news from Turkey.

Holidays play a central role for Turkish immigrants' culture in Rochester. They not only put great importance to religious holidays, but also to national holidays. Especially in TSOR for many years, many events organized to celebrate national holidays, including a ball, where members attend with their husbands and wives, to celebrate the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 29th of October. Unlike TSOR, *Süleymanlılar* (Hamidiye Mosque) and TCCR (*Gülen movement* supporters) are not celebrating and putting special importance on Turkish national holidays.

The immigrant cultural identity also requires avoiding from some holidays. For many years, for instance, celebration of Christmas was a taboo for Turks. Hamiyet remarks:

I was so surprised when I saw a Christmas tree in Turkey. It was a banned object for us in Rochester. Indeed it is nice. I think it is very heartwarming.

However, celebrating the Thanksgiving Day is socially accepted. Eating turkey and coming together as a whole family is very common, even for the religious Turkish immigrants. They think Thanksgiving is the holiday of all ethnicities and religions in America. It is accepted as a culture of secular America, therefore it is not against Islam.

Just like celebrations, mourning is also important part of culture. Nazan remarks differentiating motivations of Turkish immigrants:

We have all good relations also with our non –Turkish neighbors. I try to attend all of their invitations. I found their marriages very boring. I think they are not having fun compared to us. On the other hand their funerals are also different. I observed that they are so calm. Sometimes I found myself sadder than them in their funerals.

Nazan's observation shows that Americans are not as emotional as Turks. Although she almost grew up in Rochester and has very close American friends, she still finds the calmness of Americans was strange.

Soccer plays a significant unifying role between Turkish immigrants. Almost all Turks are supporting one of the soccer teams in Turkey and they closely following the news regarding their teams. They also play soccer among themselves. Turkish children generally join the soccer teams of their schools. Furthermore soccer is also one of the most important conversation subjects among Turkish immigrants. Having recognized this significant tendency, Selim¹²¹ thinks:

We are trying to build a one-million-dollar mosque to unify Turks in Rochester, although very limited number of people going to mosque. If I was the only person to decide and if the aim is to create common point among Turks, I would build a sports complex, because Turks are mostly

¹²¹ Selim was born in 1968. After graduated from a university in Turkey, he came to Rochester to marry and work. Currently he is working in one of the biggest companies in Rochester as an engineer.

speaking and interested about sports. I would make a bet that more people would like it than building a mosque. However things are not simple like that. We have to consider 'symbolic values' also.

With all of these changing and diversifying motivations, Turkish immigrants in Rochester created their own culture. They are still strictly holding their Turkish identity, with some modifications, just like attaching less importance to Turkish language than previous generations. They also started to consider Rochester as their hometown. Even Cihat, who came to Rochester in 2001, remarks that:

I don't want to return to Turkey. I think relationships in Turkey are so saucy. Nobody is hesitating to disturb others. Unlike Turkey, there is discipline here. If someday Turkey would have the same discipline, Turkey will be indestructible.

After all of their conflicts and separation, it is still possible to consider whole Turkish population in Rochester as a cooperative community. According to Sabuncu being Turkish in Rochester means, “we (Turks) might think different; however if an important (negative) situation appears, we become one body.” Sabuncu’s comment reveals that identity crisis of Turks is mostly introverted. When there would be any problems, he believes, Turks will act cooperatively. Most probably recent developments in Rochester similarly justified this phenomenon. Despite of the conflicts in 1990’s and their separation, they could set a kind of social balance now. Sabuncu and many others believe that they are still members of the same greater Turkish community in Rochester.

For Hamiyet, Turks in Rochester have some kind of ‘more intellectual Turkishness’, because they were aware about what they could get from both worlds (Turkey and US). And, being Turkish is more important when you are not in Turkey, she thinks; maybe Turks in Rochester are ‘more Turkish’ than the Turks in Turkey.

Turkish immigrants in Rochester considered their Turkishness as a source to build a respectable and moral community in the US. They emphasized their

national and religious identity more than they were doing in Turkey. They think they are aware of the importance of the identity, therefore they embraced it. Thus they became ‘more Turkish than the Turks in Turkey’.

According to Karpat, especially for the second wave elite Turkish immigrants in US:

Being ‘Turk’ meant being modern, well-educated and secular, willing to exclude Islam from the public sphere, to ignore the Ottoman legacy and to have little, if any, connection with those whose did not share their views¹²².

However, in Rochester:

...to be ‘Turk’ meant to be part of an old-traditional-Islamic-Turkish community, which had a historical continuity although the immigrants did not identify themselves as Ottomans... Community in Rochester did not reject Atatürk or Republic. Instead, it seemed to search for a reconciliation between old and new identities¹²³.

Karpat’s comments on Turkish identity in Rochester are very comprehensive. As he notices Turkishness of immigrants in Rochester strive to embrace, both modern republican values and religious identities at the same time. However, it is important recall that the establishment of TSOR, its traditional organizations and institutional character were provided by the members of second wave ‘elite Turkish immigrants in Rochester. Therefore, the social identity of Turks in Rochester is not established as a reaction to the values of elite Turkish identities. On the contrary, they mostly affected from the ideas of second wave Turkish immigrants. In addition to that, for almost 50 years, many factors such as changing economic structure, characteristics of migration, developing technology, religious and political movements, built the unique cultural knowledge of Turks in Rochester. This uniqueness is also generating the complexity of Turkish immigrants’ integration patterns with wider American society.

¹²² Karpat, Kemal., op. cit., p:191.

¹²³ Ibid.

5.9 Safety and Stability

Turkish immigrants in Rochester have felt that they are safe in Rochester and this feeling was one of the most important factors about their integration. Their stability was emphasized by their employers themselves even in their early years. Moreover, potential risks against their safety -such as their inability to acquire driver's license or unfair dismissals explained in Chapter 3 with more details- removed by the cooperative movements organized around TSOR. On the other hand, since early Turkish migrants were artisans, they were self-confident to try new business opportunities because they thought that in the worst case scenario they could continue to work as tailors. This opportunity provided them more safety and stability in Rochester. For example Idris worked as security personnel in a factory for a while, and then he opened his own tailor shop. Similarly, Lutfullah bought a truck and wanted to work in transportation sector; however he moved to tailoring again and opened his own tailor shop.

Turkish immigrants are not limited with tailors in Rochester. The migration from Turkey to Rochester has been continuing throughout almost 50 years and especially after 1990's most Turkish immigrants have tried to be employed in other sectors. Furthermore, because of the changes in American economy, the new immigrants faced with harder conditions. According to Karpat, unlike the second wave Turkish immigrants, who were doctors, engineers and other professionals, "the new immigrants have to compete fiercely for low-paying jobs with other immigrants from Latin America, Pakistan, India and China as well as with American-born workers."¹²⁴

One of the most popular jobs for the 'new' Turkish immigrants in Rochester is to hire kiosks in shopping malls. It is said that most of those kiosks are belong to Turks in Rochester. However, holders of these kiosks are constantly changing their products and services in order to capture more customers.

¹²⁴ Ibid, p:185.

Therefore it is possible to consider these immigrants are not working in safe and stable jobs.

According to Semih, one of the problems of Turks in Rochester is their over confidence about their stability, because this feeling decreases their enthusiasm to reach better conditions. He remarks:

We were very few friends when I was a child. We worked very hard, because we have to work to reach something. Even acquiring a driver's license was very hard. But our children get whatever they want. It was wrong. We did not want our children experience same conditions as we did. However, their level of ambition is very low. Maybe we worked too hard and could not nurse our children enough. I feel myself guilty about this.

This difference appears as one of the results of generation gap. According to Hamiyet, first generation immigrants realized that indeed they did nothing for their children, because they worked very hard for their stability. She adds 'however, members of second generation now consider that the risks taken by the first generation immigrants were unbelievable'. Not only for the early immigrants, but also for the next generations, safety and stability have been playing a crucial role to strive for more integration with larger society. Immigrants are trying to find their own way for their education and employment, not necessarily with the guidance of their immigrant community.

5.10 Rights and Citizenship

According to Ager and Strang, "definitions of integration adopted by a nation inevitably depend on that nation's sense of identity"¹²⁵. Comparing to Turkish immigrants in European countries, their counterparts in Rochester were more advantageous in US, which appeared as a county of migration.

Early Turkish immigrants could easily obtain permanent resident cards (green card). This feature enabled them permanent work and residence permits,

¹²⁵ Ager and Strang., op., cit., p: 173.

therefore Turkish immigrants were not dependent to their employers; they had the opportunity to change their jobs and move freely in the US.

Despite of their acquired citizenship rights, associations still carry significant importance. According to Akçapar, “early Turkish immigrants failed to create successful organizations to help their community integrate better in America. Many reasons cited for the perceived failure of organizational attitudes include lack of leadership, temporariness, lack of interest in adjusting to the larger society, economic downturn... and the pull factor of newly established modern Turkey”¹²⁶ however, this inadequacy was overcome by the second wave Turkish immigrants in US, who established many Turkish-American organizations, as well as their umbrella associations like Assembly of Turkish-American Associations or Federation of Turkish-American Associations. Next immigrant waves could also establish various religious and ethnic immigrant associations among US.

TSOR and other organizations in Rochester can be considered as attempts of Turks, who have been trying to claim their existence. Despite of their different aims and characteristics, they all served to emphasize their social identities as American citizens.

US state policy clearly indicates that citizenship depends on *jus soli* (birth in the country) principle. Therefore, starting from the children of first generation, Turkish immigrants gained full citizenship status and acquired more rights. Nevertheless, Cevat thinks that Turks in Rochester are not active enough to advocate their rights. According to Cevat:

In 80's and 90's, Armenians were very active in America. They were claiming so-called genocide in every occasion they could find. We reacted against those claims. We even financially supported some political campaigns. We spoke with some congressman face to face.

¹²⁶ Akçapar, S. K., op., cit., p: 174.

However, he still thinks that these efforts were not sufficient and they have no any representatives in public sector.

To conclude, Turkish immigrants in Rochester took the advantage of being in a country of migration. They did not experience serious offenses in terms of their immigrant rights. They could gain citizenship much more easily than their counterparts in Europe. Therefore, their official integration to host society became more successful and faster than Turkish immigrants in Europe. However, they still think that they could not show serious progress to advocate their rights, because they have almost no representation in public sphere, moreover young generations are not so enthusiastic to be involved in political arena and/or public sector. They justify this need in order to defend and promote Turks position within the American society. This motivation reflects that Turks still desire to be integrated as 'a Turkish community in itself' with the larger American society, rather than integrating as American citizens.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I discussed how Turkish immigrants in Rochester have been constructing their identities since mid-1960. The main focus of the study is the history of TSOR, as the oldest and the biggest immigrant organization of Turks in Rochester. Actually, like TSOR, many Turkish immigrant organizations started to be established in US after 1960's. According to Akçapar, due to series of events such as "Turkish intervention in Cyprus, the American military embargo targeting Turkey, accusations from the members of Greek and Armenian diaspora and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia's massacres targeting Turkish diplomats in the United States and elsewhere, Turks living in the United States felt for the first time the need to mobilize practically and to influence American policies in favor of their homeland¹²⁷". However, the establishment of TSOR depends on different dynamics than this general phenomenon.

First Turkish immigrants in Rochester were high skilled professionals. Because they were very few, they did not establish a community. Starting from 1967, Turkish tailors started to migrate to Rochester, and gradually they became an important population group¹²⁸. Although these tailors did not originated from specific city or region in Turkey, they migrated to Rochester from urban centers. Despite their limited economic well-being, they were capable people to communicate with the middle and high class Turks, who came to Rochester before. In other words, although their economic capital is low and they were not graduated from prestigious educational institutions; their special occupational experience provided them a particular 'cultural capital' in Bourdieuan sense, which enabled them to communicate with the high skilled

¹²⁷ Akçapar, S, K, op. cit, p: 178.

¹²⁸ The reasons of Turkish tailors migration to Rochester depends on two interesting coincidences, which explained before in Chapter 3.1.

Turks in Rochester. The main reason of this successful communication and solidarity between these two groups was the adaptability of tailors to the behavioral patterns of upper class Turkish immigrants.

This communication provided the originality of the Turks in Rochester, as a Turkish immigrant group in the US. First, because tailor-migrants were invited by the two major clothing factories of Rochester, early Turkish immigrants could directly gain green card status, which enabled them unlimited residence and working permissions. Consequently, tailor-migrants and their spouses experienced almost no problems regarding their immigrant status. Second, tailor-migrants went to Rochester from different cities of Turkey. They had no homogeneous background in terms of their hometown; additionally, their religious and political features were also very different to each other. As a third factor, tailor-immigrants were unique, in terms of their professional quality. Early immigrants were skilled tailors, who were selected according to their success in the competitive examinations. Their ‘identity capital’ –the assumption that the inculcation of skill-oriented knowledge generates economic activity¹²⁹ - was the most important factor of their migration. However, their skill was mostly derived from their apprenticeship, therefore they did not have formal educational background, they could not speak English and probably going to Rochester was their first international experience. In a sense, tailor-migrants were neither skilled nor unskilled workers.

The originality of the early Turkish immigrants in Rochester also related to tailor-migrants’ communication with the professional Turkish immigrants who came to Rochester before them. Doubtlessly, upper class Turks not only helped tailor-immigrants, but also, they affected their migrant identity in US. The very first attempt made by Emirbayer was about solving the tailor-migrants’ problem of acquiring driver’s license without knowing English. Emirbayer’s success fostered Turks’ enthusiasm for more cooperation. Thus, TSOR was

¹²⁹ Cote, J., E., *Sociological Perspectives on Identity Formation: the Culture-Identity Link and Identity Capital*. Journal of Adolescence. 1996, 17, p: 424.

established in 1969, with the participation of both tailor-migrants and the upper class Turkish immigrants.

According to Karpat's typology of Turkish immigrants to US, the first immigrant group was consisted of very diverse Ottoman population groups. The second group was started to arrive to US in 1950's as part of the process of 'brain drain'. In this migration wave, number of doctors, engineers and others went to US for specialization or advanced training. The final group, as the third wave, started after the appearance of some restrictions and limited employment opportunities that curtailed Turkish workers' migration to Europe. The identities of these groups were also different. While members of the second wave defined themselves as 'Westernized Turks', the third wave preferred to call themselves as 'Modern Muslim Turks'¹³⁰. Turkish upper class immigrants in Rochester were the members of the second wave of Turkish emigration to US. However, it is hard to conceptualize tailor-migrants within this typology. On the one hand, tailor-migrants were skilled workers who migrated to US to perform their craft; therefore they were not simply worker-migrants. On the other hand, they were not able to speak English and did not have any formal education, their focus was not to advance their profession; rather, they migrated to US, in order to earn more money than they could in Turkey.

Interestingly, the interaction between two Turkish groups affected their identity construction. Before the tailor-migrants arrival to Rochester, upper class Turkish immigrants were meeting with each other very occasionally and they were not participating to any association regarding their ethnicity, religion or other aspects of identity. However, with the establishment of TSOR, upper class Turkish immigrants became very active members of the association. They worked in order to help newcomers and represent the cultural values of Turkey. Despite the fact that Turkish tailor-migrants were the majority of the members of TSOR; as the educated and experienced members, upper class immigrants

¹³⁰ Karpat, Kemal, op. cit, p:177-179.

started to gain influence among the other Turks. Thus, TSOR became a platform to claim social capital, where not only tailor-migrants, but also high skilled Turks endeavor to gain more status and social power among others.

Tailor-migrants were also affected from this interaction. TSOR directly helped their adaptation to life in Rochester. Their leisure time activities were also influenced. Before, probably national holidays were just ‘holidays’ when they were in Turkey, however they started to celebrate Turkish national holidays as very important social events. Especially the ‘Turkish Republic Day Ball’ was one of the major events, where all members joined to the event with their spouses. They started to be involved in various social and cultural events; whereas, most likely they were not involved in similar activities in Turkey. Consequently, their social and cultural life was directly influenced from the upper class Turkish immigrants’ values.

As a result of this interaction, the immigrant association of Turkish people in Rochester was established as a cultural-ethnic organization. Despite they organized prayers, especially in religious holidays; religious activities were not the major events. Exceptionally, Emirbayer transformed the association into labor union of Turkish tailors’ for a while. TSOR defended the rights of Turkish tailors who were working in Bond’s Clothing Factory. It is important to note that during these years, Turkish tailors took the consequence of acting in unison. They could risk their employment in order to defend someone else’s (another Turk’s) unfair dismissal. After Emirbayer’s leaving, TSOR became a cultural organization again, which organizes several activities to bring all Turks together in Rochester. The increasing population and the diversified jobs of Turks changed the mission of TSOR. According to Sabuncu, while they were broadcasting radio programs on Sundays starting from 1976, their aim was to ‘remind Turks, that they were not alone.’

Throughout 50 years, backgrounds of immigrants and employment structures of Turkish immigrants have changed dramatically in Rochester. However, the

influence of TSOR's establishment and activities is still appreciated. Turks in Rochester claim that today many Turkish emigrants prefer to go Rochester since they know going to Rochester is easier and other Turks would provide more assistance to them. The other associations of Turkish immigrants in Rochester are still considering TSOR as the umbrella organization of Turks. According to the administrative members of TSOR, American officials are still evaluating TSOR as the *de facto* representative of Turkish-Americans in Rochester.

In Bourdieuan terms, the lifestyle in Rochester has been evolved as a 'durable' reality for the Turks, which they feel throughout their lifetime. It is also 'transposable', that is to say, Turkish society generate new practices in multiple ways in accordance with the changing social, cultural, political and economic patterns. Thus, Rochester became a 'structured structure' or '*habitus*' for the Turks, where beginning from the early childhood, Turkish way of life is inculcated throughout lifetime.

Currently, families of the first tailor-migrants reached to third generation. The grand children of the early immigrants can hardly speak Turkish now. Although they do not find it enjoyable to visit TSOR regularly, most of their friends are still other Turkish-Americans. In his research, Faas shows that the Turkish youth in Germany and England are in identity crisis, because they are very ambiguous about how to identify themselves, whether they are German, English or Turkish¹³¹. In Rochester, Turkish youth is very clear about considering themselves as Turks. Even Arkin, who is a 10 years old, third generation boy, identify himself as 'a smart *Turkish* guy living in Rochester'. According to Kaya, "Turkish identities are never complete, fixed or passive, as they are negotiated, contested and reconstructed and reflect relations of power

¹³¹ Faas, Daniel. *Reconsidering Identity: The Ethnic and Political Dimensions of Hybridity among Majority and Turkish Youth in Germany and England*. The British Journal of Sociology 2009, Volume 60, Issue,p: 316.

in American and global cultural and political contexts¹³²”. As an identity pattern, younger generations have kept their ‘Turkishness’; however, the content and the meaning attributed to Turkishness is not unchangeable and non-reproducible. For the first generation, Turkishness was the major identity in order to survive, and the constituents of their Turkishness were unquestionable. Although their connections with Turkey gradually decreased, they remained as ‘intradiasporic transnational’ immigrants. For the second generation, Turkishness was the source of becoming ‘moral’ and ‘pure’. Being ‘Turk’ was considered as the very essence of their identity. However, a person might lose their Turkishness; therefore they needed to attach importance to ‘care’ their essence. For the third generation, Turkishness is an old and nostalgic identity; a form of ‘emotional transnationalism’, a reality shared by many people, and a characteristic which provides trust and confidence between alike.

It is possible to argue that, first generation Turkish immigrants in Rochester considered their Turkish ethnic identity as an unchangeable reality. Most of them are still thinking that they were not members of the American society and they tried to evaluate every occasion to perform their Turkish habitudes in order to keep their identity alive. Yet, it is interesting to observe that some early immigrants inclined to define their ethnic identity, considering its functional value. They thought being American was essentially a bad thing. ‘Americans’ were immoral and corrupt. If a Turk tries to transform him/herself into an American person, probably he/she would be ‘lost’. One of the interviewees cited some of his old friends, according to him; they started to talk English at home, because they wanted to adapt their children to the American society. The result was a total failure. Those children were unsuccessful in their schools and they became morally corrupted.

¹³² Kaya, İlhan, op. cit, p: 9.

On the other side, constructionist theory provides the most comprehensive outlook in order to explain the ethnic identity formation of Turks in Rochester. With all of its divergent and contingent features, identity of Turkish immigrants in Rochester has changed throughout different time and space settings. According to Cornell and Hartmann, “identities are not natural, but socially made, but this social construction occurs through the interaction of different groups. While individuals and groups are active agents in identity formations, circumstances out of their control also shape who they are¹³³”. In line with these circumstances, ethnicity is built and rebuilt over time. After every important circumstance in Rochester, perception of Turkishness has also been rebuilt. While the majority of immigrants were tailors working in the same factory, Turkishness meant the solidarity within the group. After Turkish immigrants became more diverse and spread among Rochester, Turkishness was a source for moral values. The conflict, occurred in 1996, separated Turkish immigrants, while some of them continued to define their identity over Turkishness, some others preferred to define themselves in more religious terms. For the third generation, Turkishness remains as an emotional affinity and a social membership between people, who share similar culture. While sometimes ethnicity is acknowledged as a primordial quality, sometimes its functionality becomes more prominent. In any case, its primordality and functionality are re-constructed again and again.

Turkish immigrants’ integration with the US should be evaluated as a bidirectional phenomenon, considering that Turks can integrate with the larger American society and/or with the Turkish community within the US as well. In the early years, Turkish immigrants resisted to integrate with the larger American society. The strong migrant community offered easiness and comfort to the newcomers for their social and occupational life. On the other hand, integration with the wider society mostly evaluated as risky or even immoral,

¹³³ Cornell, S. E. and Hartmann, D. *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge Press.1998, p:98.

since it might cause the loss of their ‘Turkish’ purity. After the conflict occurred in 1996 in TSOR, Turkish community firstly divided into 5 different organizations. Currently, it is possible to name four different organizations comprised by Turkish immigrants. While TSOR mostly represents Turkish culture and values of the Republic of Turkey; TCCR reflects the values of *Gülen movement*, ICCR directly focuses on Islamic culture of the supporters of *Süleymançılar*, and the informal group of Maraş countrymen takes the kinship and/or hometown as its basis. Consequently, all of these groups started to provide different integration strategies for Turkish immigrants; and integration with the Turkish community could mean very different identity constructions, because the vision of Turkish organizations varies according to their emphasis on culture, religion, politics and the selection of their members. In order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the integration of the Turks in Rochester, integration with the larger American society and the integration with the Turkish community should be understood as two polarizing and confronting tendencies.

The main reason of the transformation of Turkish organizations in Rochester was their different religious perspectives. TSOR was a place where members might consume alcoholic drinks, organize various cultural events and also practice religion. This multiplicity was a disturbing image for the more religion oriented members. The departing members established directly religious organizations. They thought they need their religion in order to reach and keep their idealized identity. However, after the separation, TSOR began to organize religious activities, too. The first attempt was trying to build a Turkish mosque. This project was failed because of several reasons discussed in Chapter 3.5. Second, TSOR officially requested a full time working imam from DRA. In 2000, with the arrival of imam from DRA of Turkey, the discussions about religious practices and the important issues, such as the relationship between religion and politics came to an end, because imam was considered as the very expert about these issues. This was a strategy of TSOR, in order to legitimize

its religious functions against other Muslim-Turkish groups in Rochester. However, imam eventually became the only person who works full time for the association. Not only religious practices were guided by him, but also religious and general culture classes were also started to be taught by the imam. On behalf of TSOR, imams also communicated with other groups and associations in Rochester. Thus, implicitly imam has become the main representative of TSOR. While association itself is not participating to any other umbrella organization or assembly about any non-religious reason within Rochester; imam of TSOR participates the 'Greater Rochester Council of Imams'. Karpát states that "the spokesman for the Rochester Turks' multiculturalism and respect for other religions and ethnicities was the imam of their community¹³⁴". The third important attempt to strengthen religious activities of TSOR is rearrangement of the Turkish mosque project. After 2007, TSOR moved to a bigger community center. The large area of the new center enables the association to build their mosque directly to their own land. The project officially announced by the society and transformed into a public fund raising campaign.

Not only Turks in Rochester, but also the wider American society has been increasingly emphasizing the religious identities¹³⁵. The ideal of diversity is gradually becoming the religious diversity. In a sense, US is claiming to be a country, in which different people, believing different religions, ideally come together democratically to unite the America. Rather than old-style identifications like Italian-Americans, Irish-Americans or Turkish-Americans;

¹³⁴ Karpát, K., op, cit, p: 190.

¹³⁵ Not only US, but also international politics has been affected from the increasing importance of religious identities for the last three decades. Towards the end of the Cold War, many religious authorities, including Vatican, presented communism as the very enemy of the religion. First independent mass political movement, emerged in Soviet Bloc, Polish Solidarity Campaign was supported by the Pope John Paul II. Religious authorities contributed to the success of Christian democratic political parties among European countries. Especially after September 11, international terrorist organizations have been defined over radical religious groups. Apparently, after communism's collapse, ideological politics have been substituted by religious politics.

people of America now more likely to be defined according to their beliefs, such as Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, or atheists. Therefore as Güler states, “Islam helps the Turkish migrants gain an identity; and integration with other Muslims makes that identity even stronger”¹³⁶. The ‘Americanness’ has been imposed by the US, as an ‘upper identity’. While the emphasis on ethnic identities started to be in contradiction with Americanness, religious identities underline the diversity of the American society. Strong dose of Turkishness may hinder the neutralization process of Turkish immigrants within larger American society; however Islam may easily formulated as a complementary part of American identity.

It is possible to observe that after 1996 conflict, all Turkish organizations in Rochester gradually accommodated themselves into this context. ICCR has been established as an Islamic organization, which even did not use any word in its title regarding Turkishness. TCCR similarly focuses on religious activities; moreover *Gülen movement*’s rhetoric on inter-religious dialogue provides even more coherence with the American ideal of diversity. Despite members share the same hometown in Turkey, Maraş countrymen can also be considered as a religion based organization, in which their members follow a religious leader.

TSOR could only escape from this discourse, if it would remain as introverted cultural-ethnic immigrant organization, in which most of the members have similar socio-economic conditions as it was the case in the early years. While almost all members were tailors, who were gaining similar wages and had similar migration stories, and very few upper class people who wanted to help and guide to their compatriots, TSOR was a sustaining organization as a cultural-ethnicity oriented and self-enclosed community. However, throughout decades, the profile of its members, in terms of their income, social-cultural background and occupation have changed. Therefore, the new vision of TSOR

¹³⁶ Güler, Müzeyyen., op, cit, p: 154.

could be evaluated as a re-formulation and re-adaptation into the changing American discourse. Imam is appearing as the most suitable person to provide this adaptation. Emphasizing the culture of Turkish people on the basis of Islam, imams could gain a new legitimacy and attraction to TSOR.

As the final remark of my study, I would like to quote Karpat's comments on Turks in Rochester:

Citing the case of Rochester during the past four decades...it is possible to say that Turks finally established a community in the United States¹³⁷

Starting from the migration stories of early tailor-migrants to the current diversity of the Turks in Rochester, history of Turkish migration to Rochester presents significant characteristics. This thesis hopes to draw the general comprehension of the migration history and the complex nature of being Turkish in Rochester in the context of the US. I hope this study triggers further work about the reconstruction of identities and the migrant communities.

¹³⁷ Karpat, Kemal., op, cit, p: 192.

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APPENDIX: TEZ FOTOKOPİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı: Orhaner
Adı: Berkay
Bölümü: Sosyoloji A.B.D.

TEZİN ADI: RECONSTRUCTION OF TURKISHNESS
AMONG THE TURKISH IMMIGRANTS IN ROCHESTER

TEZİN TÜRÜ: Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılsın ve kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla tezimin bir kısmı veya tamamının fotokopisi alınsın.
2. Tezimin tamamı yalnızca Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi kullanıcılarının erişimine açılsın. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)
3. Tezim bir (1) yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olsun. (Bu seçenekle tezinizin fotokopisi ya da elektronik kopyası Kütüphane aracılığı ile ODTÜ dışına dağıtılmayacaktır.)

Yazarın imzası

Tarih: 19.02.2013