

Surprises, Grumpy Old Men, and Immigrant Secrets: Migration in Short Stories

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Abstract

This ethnographic study, conducted among Turkish immigrants in Germany between 2012 and 2016, aims to reveal the personal migration stories of the participants based on materials obtained through interviews and participant observation. In this context; topics, immigrant experiences, and life stories collected in the field with ethnographic research techniques are conveyed in a literary manner through short stories. Ethnographic journals accompanying the short stories include methodological discussions such as anthropologists' use of literature and the place of fiction in ethnographic writing. Possible migration-based discussions that may arise with short stories are discussed together with some basic concepts in social sciences by making references to the stories. In this context, this study aims to address the issue of immigration as the personal story of the immigrant and is an effort to reveal its own discussion texts in its own distinctive structure.

Keywords: Migration, Ethnographic Fiction, Turkish migration, Germany, Short Story.

INTRODUCTION

This study consists of migration stories I collected from interviews with Turkish immigrants in Germany between 2012 and 2016. In such a study, which is designed to present a section from a long study, intense methodological discussions are beyond the scope. But it would be necessary to at least explain how the study works. It is an attempt to form a hybrid academic study, combining the fictional aspects of literature with the culture-oriented perspectives of ethnography. Anthropological materials about the social, cultural, psychological, and real-life experiences of Turkish immigrants in Germany are collected through anthropological fieldwork methods such as interviews and participant observation. All these collections are reshaped, reformulated, recreated, and rewritten within the fictional world of literature. As a matter of fact, the academic and social scientific side of the study prepared the required background, and the literary or fictional side of it dressed this background in short stories.

I used the necessary methods to attain the required input to be able to write about immigrants. However, each method to collect anthropologic material, and to create ethnography, has some flaws. Participant¹ observation, for instance, involves “either close or superficial rapport with a variety of individuals and their specificity is often lost or generalized in the standard monograph which tends to present the society through the overarching authority of the named author” (Okeley & Callaway, 2005, p. VIII).

¹This work has been rearranged and edited as a section from the dissertation titled "Writing Migration: Lives as Ethnographic Fiction", written in 2018 at the University of Bremen under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Dorle Dracklé and Prof. Dr. Cordula Weissköppel. The original study consists of 12 stories, and in each chapter, many methodological issues such as autoethnography, the position of the researcher (insider/outsider), and the use of narrative technique are discussed in more depth.

For this study, I had to practice some participant observation, but in most of the places I observed I had already presented myself as an authentic member as at the time of the study, I was a Turkish immigrant living in Germany. The Turkish café in Sielwall, Bremen, for instance, was the place where I used to go as a customer to see my friends, to watch football games, and to play billiard and *okey* (Rummikub), long before I began to collect materials for my study. The mosque in Neustadt, Bremen was also a place that I often visited during my first years in Germany as its tea-house was the meeting of the Turkish youth in Neustadt. As my appearance was not found to be strange there, I was able to practice participant observation as a method in an authentic way. So, my immigrant identity merged with my academic attitudes as a researcher.

This study is not an attempt to cover Turkish migration in Germany from a wide range of perspectives, with a historical analysis supported with statistical facts and sociopolitical intense academic references. Rather, it is an effort to reflect the very personal lives of Turkish immigrants, to deal with their immigrant identities in literary forms and to bring new viewpoints to Turkish migration in Germany by using the alternative perspectives of fiction.

Literary texts in this study portray the very human aspects of immigrants as social personae and, along with their individual styles; they capture the struggle in the very center of the daily lives of migrants as foreigners in a host land. The creation of literature out of interviews and short stories written out of the collected anthropological materials are the results of a process that begins first with searching for an appropriate interviewee. It continues with an interview leading to a literarily useful encounter and then concludes with the production of a short story which provides migration-oriented content. This process is commented on and discussed analytically and critically before and after each literary text. These journals of the short stories give the study the required space to write about the transformation of anthropological materials into ethnographic texts.

Interviews: Inspiring Sources

More than sixty interviews were held for this study. Most of the interviewees were from Bremen, but there were other interviews which took place in different cities, like Hamburg, Münster, Lübeck, Leipzig, Osnabrück, Dortmund etc. The nationalities of interviewees were mainly Turkish, but there were also interviewees from Turkey with different ethnic identities. Turkish immigrants in Germany differentiate from each other not only in terms of their cultural, religious, linguistic and even national aspects, but also in terms of when they immigrated to Germany; their place in the chronology of Turkish migration to Germany makes it necessary to decide on criteria for the selection of interviewees. However, the main concern of the study was not to examine particular issues of immigrants in various contexts, but to reflect or to reveal the human experiences and immigrant emotions in the context of Turkish migration in Germany. So, the intensity of human feelings and the possibility of reflecting them in the form of literature became the priority while selecting the interviewees and while writing the short stories emerging from them.

Writing Migration in the Form of Short Stories

The short story as a literary genre fulfills the objectives of the study in many ways. Its economic structure makes it possible to narrate a number of people within the study. Although the interviews, what the interviewees tell within the interview, and how I interpret the things I heard determine the topic, content, and even the flow of the short stories in most cases, there are exceptional texts that are almost independent from the content of the interview. What an individual goes through as an immigrant, what he/she experiences in the host country, cannot be captured with the limited symbols of language. Language is a form of expression for an ethnographer, but “every ethnographer is painfully aware of the discrepancy between the richness of the lived field experience and the paucity of language used to characterize it” (Bruner, 1986, p. 6). Short stories, in this sense, are intimate efforts of this study to overcome the boundaries of language in order to extract the human feelings, human experiences, and in this particular context, to be able to portray immigrants in a transparent form of description.

Instead of loading the study with objective and scientific references and instead of dealing with the term migration only as a concept of social science to draw a generalized picture, short stories within this study put the immigrants themselves in focus and enable the study to deal with the subject matter with actor-centered research practices.

Ethnographic Journals

Because literature creation is handled as a process in this study, journals before and after each short story assume the role of unfolding these processes. How a particular short story has come into existence and which component of the process (interview, interviewee or an independent factor) triggered the literary text, are illustrated in the journals. In this sense, the journals cover the whole process starting from the interviews to short stories. All the authorial reflexes, literary implications, textual maneuvers, and messages hidden between the lines are revealed, or rather, deciphered through the critical eye of the journals.

On the other hand, the journals also function as the continuation of short stories, as the narration style of the short stories is reflected in various instances within the journals. The authorial voice does not interfere in order to preserve the unity of writing style. Some journals even imitate or rather extend the literary style of the short stories. Nevertheless; it would be more reasonable to label the journals as the academic frameworks of the study. They create space to discuss the short stories with reference to the works of some significant social scientists, such as Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Homi Bhabha, Benedict Anderson etc.

That some parts are written in traditional academic forms inevitably results in diverging from the writing style of ethnographic genre this study strives to create. Nevertheless, these exceptional parts of the study contribute to a demonstration of the harmony between literariness and academic writing. This harmony emphasizes the fact that extensive use of a literary approach is not a hindrance to the creation of ethnographic texts as storytelling is a crucial task of ethnography. In order to reach the audience and to grant them access to the field; “many ethnographers compose coherent narratives that require them to engage in a process similar to that of literary narrative” (Leavy, 2013, p. 31). Marcel Mauss 1/26/2024 12:52:00 PM also claims that sociology and descriptive ethnology require a novelist to be able to evoke the life of a whole society. Kamala Visweswaran (Visweswaran, 1994, p. 16) states that most ethnographic writing is founded on the fiction of restoring lost voices. She also notes that ethnography is fiction and anthropology “has always experimented with literary genres of the novel and autobiography”. What this study aims for, in this context, is to reveal interpretive, intimate, subjective, personal migration stories by merging fiction with ethnographic writing in both literary and academic forms. This peculiar structure of the study requires a methodological discussion to reveal its nature as an ethnographic fieldwork.

²Because of this unity of writing style, I realized that in some parts of the study, it is difficult to differentiate where the short-stories end and where the journals begin. So, I preferred to write the short stories in italic form. Also, as stated by Kirin Narayan, “when a work weaves between genres, it is imperative to make it clear, just when the author is writing ethnography and when the author has stepped into fiction” (Narayan, 1999, p. 142).

MIGRATION IN SHORT STORIES

Surprise

Two days before Richard Nixon’s hasty departure from the White House, two months after the disclosure that one of the closest co-workers of Willy Brandt’s was an East German agent, five months before a young man named Georg Forman knocked out Muhammed Ali in Zaire, two months before East Germany scored another goal against West Germany this time on football field and the military intervention of Turkey in Cyprus, a young man, who was only seventeen years old at that time, left his house on Lindenhofstrasse and made his way to the bar on Pastorenweg, where he spent most of his days. Everything was same. He was again extremely hungry. Nothing had gotten to his stomach other than one bottle of beer and a small piece of bread in the last thirty-eight hours. The smokes from the six cigarettes he smoked was lost in the emptiness of his stomach and hadn’t found a way-out yet. It had been more than one year since he came to Germany, but he still hadn’t gotten his work permit. He had no income other than his father’s pittance. He didn’t care about anything, neither the world nor homesickness. His only concern was to fill his stomach.

When he came to the bar, he realized that only a few customers were there as it was not five yet. Few customers were sitting outside at the tables to enjoy the nice weather and they had just begun to drink their first beers. He found himself a table and sat. His stomach had long given up crying for an answer and the feeling of hunger was replaced with nausea and the feeling of burning. A customer, who was sitting next to his table, was biting his hot dog and swallowing his beer with foam in his blonde moustache. All the people on earth were full and happy, as all the people on earth had their money in their pockets. If they wanted, for instance, they could go to the market at the corner and they could buy fresh bread, cheese, yoghurt, and eggs and then they could go to their homes happily. Without any rush, by enjoying their food, they would make their stomach rejoice. After they finished their food, they could light up their cigarettes and with their tea ready to drink, talk about politics, the world cup, and women. It was precisely because of this that he hated all the people on earth, Germany, misery, and hunger.

In fact, the Turks in the neighbourhood knew of his situation. Some of them gave him money whenever they saw him around, others wanted to feed him or invited him to their house, to their dinner table. However, he was seventeen years old and his pride couldn’t take this charity anymore. He began to lose his hope day by day. He used to work at Greek Aristidis’ grocery as an illicit worker, but last week a group of Turks busted his shop and punished him by overturning one box of plums on his head. Aristidis got angry and fired him. So, the Cyprus crisis cost him a lot.

He couldn’t understand why he couldn’t get a work permit. He knocked on all of the official doors a few times in spite of his non-existent German language skills. He told them, they couldn’t understand. They told him, he couldn’t understand. Then he came back again and again, angry and tearful. A Turk, who could speak German, pitied him and took him to the aliens department. They told him that his case had been delayed because of a fight in which he had been involved. He didn’t get involved in any fight; he just broke up a fight by intervening on time. He couldn’t express himself. They told him to wait. Just wait. “I am hungry”. “Wait” “I want to work”. “Wait”. “I am seventeen years old. I could do any job”. “Wait”. So, he waited.

Of course, he hadn't imagined being here would be like this. He had heard that money was scattered in the streets, people changed their jobs like changing their socks, and everything was more than enough. He fell into the worst kind of misery, even worse than his situation in his village, which he had left because of poverty. His father had brought him to Germany, and left him all alone. What could he do, though? He was also a foreigner here. Wouldn't he do anything for him if he could? He wouldn't do that to his own son.

It was ten past five and the customers began to come one by one. Turks began to gather at a corner as usual. He went to them after a while. He had met all of them here in the bar. They greeted him, all of them. Beers were served and they began to drink. They talked about Cyprus. They lit up their cigarettes. They talked about home. The empty glasses were replaced with the full ones. The conversations became deeper and deeper. He was sitting next to them, but he wasn't talking. Neither Cyprus nor his homeland; He didn't care about anything. He turned away the cigarettes they offered as the endless emptiness in his stomach was not in the right condition to bear the smoke.

After three glasses of beer, a friend of his, who was only one year older than him, came into the bar. He waved a greeting and sat down. They had come to Germany almost at the same time. He had gotten his work permit right away and begun to work. They used to come together and pour out their grief to each other. However, the misery that made itself felt in the most cruel way, also made him avoid his friends. He couldn't talk about his basic needs to his friend, with whom he shared almost everything about his life. He couldn't say "I am hungry." Maybe he was ashamed of not being able to fulfill this very basic need, but he couldn't tell them that everything they talked about was meaningless, that any kind of trouble they had was not so terrible and didn't need any immediate attention, that every joke they made was inappropriate, and that he hated them when they stood in front of him so healthy and hearty. It didn't take too long until his friend noticed his condition. "It cannot go on like this. Come to my place in one hour. I have a surprise for you." He smiled with an impish look and left the bar. He looked behind this guardian angel with the utmost admiration: The one who was the man of the world, who took care of troubles, who heard the cry of his stomach and a godsend, a walking soup kitchen. He had eaten at his house before, but the timing was not perfect like this. After his half human/half angel friend's departure he couldn't stay at the bar anymore. He walked through the street to pass the hour. He sat on the benches he found, watched the pavements full of women, he played with his young moustache, checked his hair, which he combed regularly and flattened with brilliantine in spite of everything. He cleaned his crême oxford bags gently with his hands. Every time he left a bench, he unbuttoned the upper buttons of his dark green shirts and then buttoned them again. In short, he waited and waited.

His friend's house was in Depot, across from the tram station. He rang the bell of the basement floor flat. "Come on in. I was waiting for you. I prepared everything." That everything was prepared made him happy. The narrow corridor at the entrance was like a tunnel into darkness. He followed the owner of the house like a shadow and they reached the room. It was lighter inside the room. A small bed at the corner. In the middle of the room, there was something that couldn't possibly be a coffee table, but couldn't pass as a table either. It was smaller than a table and bigger than a coffee table, something like an intermediate (transitional) form. It was almost a wheeled table. A chair. A small window that endowed light into the room. A dark wood cupboard next to the bed and a Kenwood pick-up player just next to the cupboard on the floor. The smell of fresh bread and cheese was coming from the kitchen, but the surface of the almost-table was still empty. While the host was lying on the bed, he pointed to the chair indicating for the guest to sit down. "Where have you been? You haven't been around for a while. What about the job? Did you get your work permit?" He told him that he couldn't get it and he was still waiting.

The sun was not going down and the evening was not coming. The daylight was still dominant outside. His friend was not leaving his bed and he was not bringing the surprise.

After a long silence, the man on the bed smiled, "Let's not make you wait anymore and experience the surprise." He opened the cupboard. It was highly tidy. He took a box out with any rush and put it on the bed. "When I saw you looking that wretched, I couldn't stand it. I thought I should do something. I thought I should do something to change things."

He took a record out of the box and showed it excitedly to his guest, who was sitting on his chair without making the slightest move. "Look, brother. This is my surprise, the last record of Hakkı Bulut. Let's listen to it and make the troubles fade away."

He placed the record inside the pick-up cautiously. The little bachelor room filled with the sound of the music:

"No hope

No hope

Neither from today nor from tomorrow

As long as there are ones living blindly with seeing eyes

No hope

The oppressed ones don't wake up

Wake up brother wake up!"

His friend was lying on his bed with no intention of waking up and was looking with smiling eyes. Hakkı Bulut was crying with his full stomach.

"What a performance!" said the one on the bed.

There was no hope from the bread in the kitchen. He smiled when a voice from his stomach began to accompany the music. Maybe to be able to share the joy of his friend or maybe to be able to build up his courage to ask about the bread in the kitchen, he approved of his friend's comments, "He has a damn good voice.

JOURNALS ARE ENGAGED

Everything began with a phone call. A friend of mine called me on a Sunday evening and said "I heard that you are looking for stories. I think you may find the story of my father-in-law interesting." I was very grateful and accepted the offer immediately. I came to Germany through marriage. I was married to a second-generation Turkish immigrant and my experiences as an immigrant were different from the first generation. Besides, as a teacher I knew -at least theoretically- what it meant to be a foreigner before I came to Germany. The Turkish Diaspora was already a crucial part of the German society long before my personal migration and I was kind of a free-rider. During this project, I always listened to the migration stories of the first generation with an embarrassment.

Two weeks later I was on my way to meet the father-in-law. I was exactly thirty-four minutes late. The old man and his son-in-law welcomed me in the garden of a newly-built house. It was a typical middle-class triplex, which is a sign of a financially settled life among Turkish immigrants. "How obvious that you are Turkish," said the old man with a mockery that he did not need to keep for himself. "Only Turks show up so late to appointments," he explained, while we were walking to the house. To make him believe that I was sorry, I lowered my head. Tea was already waiting for my arrival as I could see from the empty glasses that were lying on the coffee table. After a short introduction and revealing my intentions and expectations, I switched on my voice recorder. His answer and enthusiasm to the first question indicated that he had been prepared for the interview.

If I see an Interviewee who is mentally prepared for the Interview, my job becomes easier in many ways. This kind of Interviewee opens the new gates without my pushing as he/she answers even my simplest questions in a detailed way, with fruitful responses.

"I have been silent for years. Now, it is my turn. I will speak loud." he said with the utmost motivation. Like all the interviews which are held with the first generation, the story began with the first arrival to Germany. A deduction that I arrived from the interviews with the first generation was that their first arrival offered many possible experiences that could be covered by the term *culture shock*. This may be the result of their positioning as the pioneers of the Turkish immigrant history in Germany. I remember the question asked in *The Psychology of Culture Shock*, "When do immigrants become members of established ethnocultural groups in culturally plural societies?" (Ward et al., 2005, p. 192). Berry's answer to that question explains the rich content of my interviews with the first generation. Berry claims that first generation settlers should be described as migrants; second or later generation descendants of these settlers are more appropriately referred to as members of ethnocultural groups (Berry, 1990, p. 234). So, I was holding an interview with an original.

While he was telling his stories, possible scenes were passing through my head. He was using a fluent language and giving amusing details which made his stories much more attractive to write about. With all the emotions of a man from the Black Sea, he used an exaggerated style. He even warned me about his possible word choices, "Be ready! I will swear, curse and I will not hold myself back!". I told him that he could say whatever he wanted to say. This freedom that I gave him was not a sign of my sincere personality, as much as an opportunity to use this freedom for my own benefit.

In some interviews I can immediately sense that the Interviewee will offer me a story, and this one was one of them. I did not know what I could write, but I knew that I could write something. When he began to tell the story of the first chapter of his life in Germany, the atmosphere of the interview changed. Instead of a storyteller using humorous language, he turned into a man who favours a rather dramatic tone. He gave lots of names and places with intimate details. As a nineteen-year-old young man he had been rather enthusiastic, and as an old man he was still holding a grudge against his internal portraits of that time. There was no place for forgiveness in his descriptions. He was swearing, cursing as if all these people were standing in front of us and he were screaming out all of his bad memories at these ghosts. I was more than glad about this anger explosion and had no intention of an anger management intervention to calm the ambience. Every scene he described gave me an idea to write: the evil bosses, the loneliness with its most intense taste, lost souls in single rooms, an insensitive father, poverty, hopelessness etc. But I needed to wait until he told me a memory about his struggle against hunger. I suddenly captured the feeling of completeness that comes after finishing a poem or finding a lost text that you were looking for. I turned to my friend who was sitting next to me throughout the interview, except when he was filling the empty tea glasses, and smiled happily, "I found my story".

SUBJECTIVITY IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

After the rapid reconstruction and development of the economy of West Germany after the Second World War, the West German government signed a labour recruitment agreement with Turkey in 1961. During the 1950s and 1960s, the first group of Turkish workers began to come to Germany. These workers were called *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) as Germany “were determined to maintain policy mantra that Germany is no immigration country” (Schaefer et al., 2005, p. 6). The Turkish workers were offered limited residence permit based on the assumption that they would go their homeland after they fulfilled their work commitments. After all they were the guests not the landlords. At the beginning of the 1970s, the economic structure in Germany changed and the country decided to stop the labour recruitment. With this announcement, Turkish guest workers preferred to stay in the country and they even began to bring their families to Germany to change their temporary status to permanent one. Today, the official sources estimate that there are more than three million people of Turkish origin live in Germany.

In both literature and in sociological research, the difficulties that the first Turkish generation in Germany experienced are the central issue. Before I began this project, I was not doubtful about the fact that this first migrant generation could offer many narratives. After each interview with a member of this generation, this foresight has been confirmed. However, it has been necessary in this project to overcome the problem of repetition and the inclusion of diversity as the stories of the first generation are contextually similar. As expected, the opening of the interview implied no exception. It was a migration that occurred under the shadow of poverty and ignorance and the main motivation was to overcome financial troubles. Without any doubt, only the personality of the interviewee can offer the many perspectives necessary to write a story. Different individuals bring different perceptions to the same subject. This changeability may bring the study closer to a neglected topic of sociological inquiry, namely subjectivity. The effort of the study tries to highlight the goals formulated by pioneers such as Weber, who saw sociology as centrally concerned with understanding human subjectivity. It may be relevant, in this context, to refer Weber’s definition of sociology: ‘Sociology is a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action. All human behavior is included in ‘action’ as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it. In ‘action’ is included all human behavior when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it.’ (Weber, 1978, p. 4).

Ellis and Flaherty (Ellis & Flaherty, 1992, p. 1) complain about this neglect of today’s sociological tendencies, ask why so little attention has been given to subjectivity, and concludes that many sociologists feel repelled or threatened by the unruly content of subjective experiences.

They keep away from the investigation of subjectivity in the same way that individuals are hesitant in the face of unpleasant or potentially dangerous activities. Ellis and Flaherty state that subjectivity can be both unpleasant and dangerous:

“...unpleasant because emotional, cognitive, and physical experiences frequently concern events that, in spite of their importance, are deemed inappropriate topics for polite society (including that of sociologists). Subjectivity, in this case, can be dangerous as it contradicts the rational world view on which mainstream sociology is premised.” (Ellis & Flaherty, 1992, p. 1)

Short Stories as Mirrors of Migration

While researching migration as a sociological term, this study, on the one hand, challenges the rational reflexes of sociology by putting subjectivity forward and by using subjective discourses as standing points. On the other hand, it uses the flexible zone of anthropology and the fictional content of literature, playing with the subjective comments of immigrants. In spite of the diversity and the range of individual experiences, and the reflections of the interviewees, the stories are written by the same author and the uniqueness of each interviewee is limited by the authorial eye and the empathic capability of the author. At the beginning of the project, I intended to perceive the stories as mirrors to reflect the lives of Turkish immigrants in Germany. As an author I put myself in the role of a mirror holder. However, the comments of the author and the fictional autonomy of the literature caused a reinterpretation of the content of the interviews. This conflict may be read through Lacan's mirror stage concept. For Lacan, 26/01/2024 12:52:00 the psychosexual development of a child is composed of three stages. At the first level, the infant is unable to realize that the external world is something apart from his fragmented body that is marked by nothing but a mix of feelings and perceptions. This stage corresponds to what Lacan terms as *The Real*, which is simply defined as the materiality of existence beyond language (Lacan, 2005, p. 3). Since the child's development proceeds towards the acquisition of language in Lacan's configuration, this stage specifies the closest unity with *The Real* which will subsequently loosen in later stages.

The second phase, known as the mirror stage, refers to the child's misrecognition of himself as a perfect whole, while indeed remaining fragmented (Lacan, 2005, p. 2). This misrecognition is constitutive in the sense that through the child's projection of himself as other, which is self-alienating, an effectual as well as persistent contrast is created between the fragmented reality and the integrated imaginary, causing mixed feelings for the infant caught between hatred (this image is better than me) and love (I want to be like that) (Lacan, 2005, p. 200).

An adaptation of Lacan's mirror stage concept to the role of short stories for the immigrants may provide an argumentative base to discuss the possible functions of the short stories and their perceptions from the point of view of the immigrants themselves. This adaptation roughly offers a useful analogy in which the short stories of the immigrants take the role of the mirrors and the immigrants, not only through reading their stories, but also simply by existing with their fictional reflections, take the role of the infants standing in front of the mirror. As stated above, the infant faces *The Real*, but the immigrants are reflected at a fictional level.

However, the immigrants, like infants, exist in the mirror as a whole, although they present their immigrant lives mostly through historically (or biographically) fragmented parts. This particular short story, for instance, provides a fictional wholeness by portraying only a day from the interviewee's fragmented narrations and/or by gathering his immigrant life in the scenes of a unity.

In this context, it seems functional to write a memory which represents the difficulties that the interviewee experienced during the time of arrival and the first chapter of his immigrant life, instead of a story that covers the content of the interview. This extracted memory which is in many ways unique, helps the study to overcome the reappearance of similar descriptions and maybe similar protagonists.

The cultural, psychological and physical shock that the interviewee in this particular memory experienced can be examined under the concept of *Culture Shock*. However, the main theme of this recollection is the disappointment, which the immigrant experiences so intensely. The story does not describe his first encounter with Germany,

but the disappointment that he deals with after he encountered the new land. So, the story not only covers *Culture Shock* as a main theme, but it also handles the posttraumatic reflections of a migrant's first time in a new world.

In the sense of literary satisfaction, this story fulfils expectations. The theoretical frames, in which some of the stories are covered sometimes limit creativity. This concern prevents the literary manoeuvre that enriches the content of the stories. Some stories are born into a theoretical frame and they offer related terms and concepts to discuss. However, these kinds of stories could be humble in respect to content and literary aesthetic. Some stories, on the other hand, are literarily amusing, but challenging to discuss in migration-related terms. This contradiction follows me throughout the study. In this story, though, the balance between literary beauty and theoretical abundance is achieved. It not only offers the required background to tell a contextually and literarily satisfactory story, but it also includes some references to concepts like *Culture Shock* and *Language* in order to take a closer analytical look.

The story *Surprise* maintains an almost exact resemblance with the interviewee and the protagonist, as the personal characteristics of the interviewee is reflected in the emotions and reactions of the protagonist throughout the story. The protagonist of the story is aggressive, angry, and, like the interviewee in the Interview, lives his emotions intensively in his inner world.

As the story takes place in the seventies, to make my story more attractive, I chose the year 1974 as one of the most interesting years of the seventies. I needed to do research about the time. I watched some movies from this particular year like *Angst Essen Seele auf* and *Eine von uns Beiden* to collect images of the time, to have an idea about how

people looked, how they dressed and so forth. The world was in political tumult at that time and there were some crucial incidents that could be incorporated into the story. However, the psychological and physical circumstances of the protagonist arose completely independent from those incidents that made up the history. The story declares that no matter what changes appear, what events take place in the world, each person focuses on his/her personal matters, problems and history. This is precisely what this study aims at by collecting stories: to highlight the human-made details of migration, to cover the subject from the level of personal perceptions.

Fiction is Engaged

In his guiding book *Fiction As Research Practice*, Patricia Leavy (Leavy, 2013, p. 20) explains that there are topics that can be difficult to approach in nonfiction writing or lecture formats because they are intimate and are highly politicized. In this sense, the fictional format offers to handle some complex issues in a way that it touches and processes the questions,

“in all their nuances and to invite diverse readers into the text in a pleasurable way” (Leavy, 2013, p. 20)

How Leavy approaches the function of fiction can be taken as a point of origin for this study as it explains the role of the short stories to approach the very intimate lives of immigrants. With this affective function of fiction, short stories in this study draw us in, giving us access to the worlds of immigrants in which we meet their personal lives and through which we may be able to develop empathy.

What the character in the short story *Surprise* experiences as an immigrant is reflected in its most intimate forms through the engaging role of fiction. The reader is engaged with the difficulties the protagonist struggles with, the emotional break downs he experiences, and the loneliness he goes through. So, the reader is granted an imaginary entry into what is otherwise either inaccessible or plain and formal when written in nonfiction format.

Leavy states that using fiction as a social research practice is a natural extension of what many researchers and writers have long been doing (Leavy, 2013, p. 20). The works of the researchers and of the fiction writers are not as different as it is assumed. The short story, *Surprise* is “a narrative- a story that deals with real and imagined facticities” (Denzin, 1997, p. 159). Banks also claims that “the zone between the practices of fiction writers and non-fiction writers is blurry” as “fiction is more or less fictional” (Banks, 2008, pp. 155–156). What this short story demonstrates, in this sense, makes this zone more ambiguous as the short story tells a memory of a real person. It combines the fictional elements with the nonfictional ones and creates a fiction-based work of research. How this short story is presented makes the real-life marks of the short story more distinctive. It is possible to read within the extracts of the interviews and also in the discussion, how the real-life materials are transformed into a fictional form, via detailed explanation.

Verisimilitude

Fiction in social sciences is applied to reach verisimilitude. Leavy (Leavy, 2013, p. 21) explains the term verisimilitude as “the creation of a realistic, authentic, and life-like portrayal.” In this sense, this creation refers to the goal of both ethnography and fiction. Fiction practiced in social sciences becomes an efficient way to obtain verisimilitude. Social researchers as well as quantitative researchers use fiction to build believable representations of real-life experiences as fiction “provides immediacy- an artfully strategic evocation of sights, smells, sounds, and other contextual factors” (Banks, 2008, p. 161). Using fiction as a form of practice gives both writers (researchers) and readers verisimilitude by avoiding the hindrance of a mechanic language that is usually unable to expose the feelings of a human being.

The short story *Surprise* is an outcome of recording facts and creating fantasies. The material comes from real-life and genuine human experiences. It is not different from qualitative researchers who shape every aspect of their investigations, “imbuing it with meaning and marking it with their fingerprint” (Leavy, 2013, p. 21). This particular short story speaks of loneliness in a foreign land and the difficulties of migration in an art-based research form and gives the study a chance to use the unique capabilities of fiction to make the study publicly accessible to a wide range of readers. If social research is a process of knowledge-building and meaning-making and if it is a way of “accessing, expressing, and negotiating “truths” and effectively communicating those truths to relevant audiences” (Leavy, 2013, p. 21), then the short stories of this study also have the role of accessing and communicating “truths” about Turkish migration in Germany effectively.

CONCLUSION

When I listened to the interview with H. and read his story, I realized that I approached everyone that I interviewed with optimism. I am not certain about the disadvantages of this approach to the study. That my interlocutor is an immigrant causes me to switch on some positive prejudices. Although my positioning as both insider and outsider allows me to work with the common concerns about lack of objectivity or neutrality in the contemporary social sciences, this study endows me new perspectives and new understandings thanks to the shifting positions as insider and outsider.

While writing about the ethnographers, who write about their own cultural environment, Clifford claimed that being an insider is not a disadvantage, but an advantage:

„Their accounts are empowered and restricted in unique ways. The diverse post- and neo-colonial rules for ethnographic practice do not necessarily encourage “better” cultural accounts. The criteria for judging a good account have-never been settled and are changing” (Clifford, 1986, p. 6).

Moreover, as a researcher who embraces autoethnography as a method for this study, all my interventions, additions, comments, and evaluations can be seen as efforts to “afford an insider’s perspective on the practices, meanings, and interpretations of [Turkish migration in Germany] (Adams et al., 2016, p. 31). Some readers may find H. unlikable due to his aggressive reactions towards the country he has been living for years, but his challenges and struggles as a lonely immigrant shaped my approach to his story. As an immigrant researcher, my emphatic interpretation can be read as call for “attention to the complexities of commonly held, taken-for-granted assumptions about [the social misfit of immigrants] (Adams et al., 2016, p. 31).

In this context; while studying the Turkish immigrants in Germany and making the very subjective aspects of them visible, -in contrast to the ones who observe this community from outside- it is possible to develop innovative viewpoints with an insider gaze as a researcher who is also a member of this community.

Another function of the stories is to expose the emotional secrets of Turkish immigrants, which have not been touched on in an academic context. The transcript of H.’s interview reveals many of his secrets and maybe catches him in the most unprotected situation. The fictional H. in the story of Surprise is, on the other hand, a more reasonable character. While pouring the interior world of H. into these pages, H. in the story is my way of apologizing to him. His constantly cursing remarks about Germany as an interviewee are softened and he is presented as a victim of migration.

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