November 2020
Volume: 17, **No**: 6, pp. 837 – 852
ISSN: 1741-8984
e-ISSN: 1741-8992
www.migrationletters.com

First Submitted: 5 May 2020 Accepted: 4 June 2020
DOI: https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v17i6.984

LONG READ

Performing gender in the diaspora: Turkish women in North London*

Vildan Mahmutoglu[1]

Abstract

This article explores the first and second-generation Turkish women gender identity construction in North London. I argue that their social experience of gender in the homeland and that in the diaspora are in conflict, because of their different background life. They can feel the differences while they are performing women's gender identity. Also, their media consumption is analysed as this shows their sense of belonging. This reveals that their gender identity construction develops over time. In other words, changes in gender identity are gradual. For this study, the in-depth interview method was used and interviews were conducted in North London. The analysis has been covered under five different titles.

Keywords: *gender in diaspora; woman's identity; media consumption; performing gender.*

Introduction

When the problems of women in communities are analysed and discussed, it is clear that the patriarchal structures and traditional behaviour patterns are still being kept alive today and they can still dominate the attitudes towards women in these communities. Hence, in some communities, women are still under social pressure, which is very difficult to alleviate even today, i.e. after many generations of immigration. Especially, the first generation immigrants can't abandon these traditions adversely pressuring women. Traditions have been there for a long time and they constitute the patriarchal backbone of the society**.** In a patriarchal structure, there are difficult models of archetypes, especially for women. Thus, when the pressures of the migration process is added, lifes get tougher for women.

In society, feminine and masculine identities are constantly (re)produced. Gender is constructed in the current geography and takes shape according to the culture of that place. So, when women have to migrate, they adapt to new gender roles in the destination. It is a very difficult process of change. They have lived in an important part of their lives in homeland and they learned the gender roles there. This study is about how do these women continue to maintain their gender roles and identity acquired in their homeland in diaspora. How do they tune in to the host society? Also after the changes in the construction of gender identity, do they conflict with the communities of their origin?

Migration is a concern for all contemporary societies around the world. However migration experiences can change by time. Current migration crises we are experiencing are mainly due to

[1] Vildan Mahmutoglu, Associate Professor, Galatasaray University, Istanbul. Turkey. E-mail: v.mahmutoglu@gmail.com
* This work has been supported by the Scientific Research Projects Commission of Galatasaray University under grant number 17.300.011.

security concerns arising from wars and civil wars. That is, people migrate as refugees from a homeland where they do not feel safe and also because of economic and social reasons. Diaspora studies have focused on men for a long time. This means diaspora studies has historically usually studied men's migration and their subsequent experiences. In earlier studies, women were included as just being complementary to men's diaspora stories. Nowadays, the studies of the diaspora have evolved towards more specific research interests. Recently, studies focusing on women in diaspora have increased.

This study tries to find answers for; what do the Turkish immigrant women feel in North London when they come together with English women? How do they make contact with English society as Turkish women? What do they think about the gender roles of English women? This article is divided into two main sections. The first provides a general overview of the Turkish diaspora, and Turkish / Kurdish / Alevi women's identity construction in the host land. The second part is about their media consumption. Do they keep up with Turkish media or do they use new media? Since media consumption can be seen as a reflection of belonging.

Background of the migration to the United Kingdom

Britain has always been a desirable country for immigrants and the first groups were those from its colonies. They were educated or semi-educated from countries, such as India, Pakistan or West Africa. The first jobs that the people from these colonies obtained were usually manual ones, such as carpenters, electricians or plumbers. The largest number of immigrants amongst these groups came from India (Sharma, 2013). Turkish people began to migrate to both internal and external destinations in the 1950s seemingly motivated by economic reasons. Emigration from Turkey was usually to European countries, especially Germany (Sirkeci, 2005). Germany has been a popular destination for immigrants and also the country needed workers to revive the economy. Historically, Britain received sizeable workforce immigration from their former colonies (Panayi, 2007). Because of the coup in 1960, migration movements in Turkey accelerated. The military coup of 1960 was the first coup in the Republic of Turkey. The immigration that started in small numbers in the 1950s accelerated after the 1960 coup and England was added to the migration destination. Ibrahim Sirkeci has divided the periods of emigration of Turkish people into two groups: before 1960 and after 1960. Before 1960, migration movements were mostly made through land connections established during the Ottoman empire, whilst migration after 1960, shifted towards European countries. The external migrations after 1960 can also be divided into several periods. In particular, each military coup, including those of 1960, 1971 and 1980, led to the start of a new wave of emigration from Turkey (Sirkeci & Esipova, 2013).

Subsequently, attacks against the Alevis in Kahramanmaraş in 1978 led to the migration to a safer area. Later, with the military coup of 12 September 1980, another wave of migration occurred to the United Kingdom, with 40,000 people who were political refugees arriving. Turkish Cypriots have started to migrate earlier than the Turkish people because of their relation. So when Turkish people fled mainland Turkey, Turkish Cypriot had already settled in North London. When the first generation of Turkish people arrived in London, they preferred to locate where the Turkish Cypriots lived. So, after the first generation of the Turkish settlement in North London, the second generation grew up or came after and, prefer also live in North London. Turkish associations and language schools were established in North London. Thus, North London became attractive for Turkish people to live. North London has a large population of Turkish immigrants (Sirkeci et al., 2016). After each military coup in Turkey, immigration to the UK has increased. Immigration to the UK

is slightly different from immigration to other European countries. It is a fact that there are more political immigrants in the UK (Tilbe, 2020). Those who arrived in the early 1990s mostly settled in Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, and Islington (Sirkeci et al., 2016:13). Turkish, and Turkish Cypriot communities are often classified under "white others" category, and they are the largest group from Turkey in North London. Those who migrated with the first wave of immigration started to work in textiles in the first years and later, set up family businesses such as grocery stores, cafes, and Turkish restaurants (Bilecen, 2020). After textile, the family business was also an employment opportunity for Turkish women in North London. Because of these job opportunities, women got economic power. However, family businesses have other restrictions for Turkish women.

Gender and migration

In terms of defining gender, it can be said that gender is constituted by a cultural accumulation of knowledge, norms, and values, whereas sex is a biological classification that comes from birth. Gender collects the values of being feminine or masculine in society, and then it shows how the ideal masculinity and femininity should be to the people (Aaltio, Mills, 2002). Ideas about the formation of gender can, in fact, be initially attributed to Freud, whereby he tried to consider femininity and masculinity theoretically. Freud was not concerned with the nature of men and women, but with the gendered psychologies which the society a person lives in determines. For him, the child will learn how to behave from the culture of the society into which he/she is born (Direk, 2015). These behaviours construct stereotypes. Stereotyped behaviours are shared beliefs of specific groups that show gender roles in society. Then the next step is attitudes that are the feelings and acts of the individual. People's attitudes show their beliefs and their gender stereotypes. If their roles change in time, then their stereotypes will also change (Archer, Lloyd, 2002).

The connection of masculinity with the public sphere and the connection of femininity with the private sphere was realised with the industrial revolution. Within this era, workshops became places where production was made outside of the home. Thus, the public / private distinctions were brought onto the agenda. Men were toiling in the works outside, whilst women were in peace and quiet at home. It can be said that "gendered" spaces were created in the society (Ersöz, 2015). The idea that women will be at home most of the time in the traditional structure has been constantly nurtured and kept alive until today. In the studies on space and space formations, academics working on gender express the view that these definitions are made through "masculine thinking" and that the concepts of "private space" and "public space" should be revisited again in the context of gender today. Whilst these two concepts are opposites, they are in fact, related to each other (Alkan, 2000). As a result of the gendered areas, it is thought that those who will go to the school that is to go to a public area should be boys and those who will stay at home should be girls. Boys will be in the public sphere and girls will remain in the private one. There is the idea that women will be safer at home as they are away from danger. For example, the streets are dangerous for women at night, but not for men. These spaces, which were shaped in the 19th century, have not changed much today. In traditional societies, the idea that women should not be present in areas where men can walk around is still a familiar idea (Wilson, Groth, 2003).

Drawing attention to this double standard, feminist Simone de Beauvoir (1949) explained inequalities between men and women in her book "Second Sex". She said that being the second sex does not change according to class or ethnicity differences; women are always second sex to men. Beauvoir's views became a source of gender analysis. When making her feminist critique, she was influenced by existential philosophy. She developed an existentialist philosophy and applied it to

women/men, laying down the cornerstones of feminism. Beauvoir contended that the subject must be active in order to develop, that is, she must be fulfilling her own personal preferences and she must be active, for if she stays in the "situation" then she cannot develop herself. When the woman herself is not active and does just as she is told do, she cannot make progress. In this case, women were "frozen in a situation". Beauvoir argued that the differences in the female and male body should not give privilege to the man and the stronger male body cannot force the woman to be subjugated to man (Grosholz, 2004).

Subsequently, Judith Butler (1988) who is not a feminist herself, stated that gender is a system of fictionalised performances. Butler argued that this system was constructed by teaching the behaviours and then doing them repeatedly. Gender is an incomplete process and the process is re-formed on an ongoing basis always (Bora, 2005). Judith Butler's best-known work talks about gender identity. Butler says that gender identity is performative and the individual also plays a role in gender formation. She says that being performative is important for identity formations and that it is gender identity is re-produced. The individual produces their roles regularly. Butler says femininity and masculinity come with the performance. Butler and Beauvoir agreed upon a woman is in a process and she is always under construction; both arguing that there is no finished female identity. Butler argued that gender is "unnatural" and there is no connection between body and gender. There is a performative gender identity acquired only through learned behaviours. Her ideas have formed the foundation of modern gender studies (Salih, 2002). Hannah Arendt defined areas as “labor”, “work” and “action” in terms of gender. She argued that the freedom of individuals required “action”, whilst “labor” pertains to biological processes such as birth, growth, death and it takes place in the private area within the family. Whilst “working” is an area that provides some freedom of individuals. Arendt argued that a person can only emerge in the public sphere, she can be free in public space. Freedom comes from the work area as a public area. It means the individual is not free in privacy (Alkan, 2000).

Through media technologies, media crosses the borders of nations. It reaches its audiences who will be culturally perceived around the world. As it surpasses geographical limits and it carries symbolic forms to people where it is consumed. While media are moving across, they carry the traditional belongings where they are consumed. Media serves as a bridge to the past within the present (Fornas, Becker et al.2007). Simon Cottle said that the borders not only physical ones but also there are borders in communities. It is difficult to reach them (Cottle,2000). Nowadays, displaced people can make contact and talk face to face by technological innovations. They live in any part of the world and share the same cultural sphere with the homeland. Arjun Appadurai (1990), identify this zone as an “ethnoscape”. Diasporic communities can choose to live in any industrial cities but they can prefer to be in their “ethnoscape”. For Manuel Castells, being away from the nation-state, does not prevent diasporic communities to share the same interests (Nayak, 2003). Citizenship has not just a discussion and an experience that takes place in the nation-state and inside of the borders. Globalisation creates more links for citizenship and makes room for the connections. The media opens spaces for the diasporic communities. Diasporic communities can understand their sense of belonging in them. Media reinforce the ties and cultural practices to the homeland (Nguyen, 2012).

Methods

This study was conducted by Turkish immigrant women living in North London between 2017-2019. In-depth interviews were realised to collect data. In the field, voices were all recorded and

then deciphered. In the interviews, women were asked to tell themselves and then their migration stories were asked. The main aim of this study was to analyse the gender formation differences within the diaspora. The first and second generations of gender constructions of Turkish / Kurdish / Alevi women from rural areas are examined; the first generation women migrated in adulthood, whilst those of the second generation migrated either as children or during their transition from childhood into becoming a youth. Therefore, the differences between the first migrant women and the second generation began to stand out at this point. The interviews took place in cafes, in associations, and in their homes.

Whilst the names of the interviewees were not used in the analyses, their ages were deemed important for the study, so they are specified. The in-depth interviews were carried out in North London with thirty-five women. The opinions of the interviewees took place with the codes. For example, letter (w) is used for women and their age is put in the bracket to mention their ages. Therefore, the third interviewee was mentioned as W3 (40) and it means she is 40 years old. For this research, Turkish Cypriots were excluded. Through the in-depth interviews with the first and second generations, diasporic gender identity problems, gender formations they brought from the homeland, and their problems in the host countries and their media consumptions are analysed.

Findings of the study

The data obtained in the study were analysed under five topics. It is tried to understand; patriarchy and gender formation at home; social pressure and gender difference; working in "private space"; public space and social participation; their media consumption.

Private patriarchy

In this part, private patriarchy is analysed in the context of family relations and marriages. Also, the differences between English women and Turkish women in the diaspora are explored. There are several spaces where patriarchy is used in life. Patriarchy refers to a system that is applied, sometimes by direct force, sometimes by social pressure or rituals, or traditions, being a means of telling women what they can and cannot do. Allan Johnson made a more current definition, he says that this process of patriarchy now works through the society, it becomes the rules of the society. Today, it is adhered to not just by men but also by women. Women also try to keep alive the rules of patriarchy. The male dominates this process, and it is a male centred system (Bennett, 2006). Patriarchy creates the areas about the classification of the places to which women and men belong to. After classification in this system, the home has become a private space for women. It has been designed as the place where innocence should prevail, away from the dangers of the outside world. Whilst men enter the outside world, women and children are expected to stay at home, which is the basis of the system. Thus, violence and abuse at home remain as a private area belonging to the home (Bora, 2005).

The main subject of the private area is about families, with the cornerstone of the family being married. One definition of marriage in the progressive era in the USA is as follows: it is a central institution that helps solve three main problems. First of all, it ensures keeping up traditional norms in the transformations brought by modernisation. Secondly, it provides the protection of the identity of the country of affiliation, especially when migrating to another country. Thirdly, it ensures the continuation of the design and cultural life as chosen by the country. It is an institutional structure for the reproduction of culture and values, especially in the diaspora through arranged marriages. In other words, the rules set by the state are produced locally by families (Yamin, 2012).

Interviewee W6 (60), who is the first-generation immigrant, was asked about how her marriage and that of her daughter happened. She was asked whether their marriages were arranged or not. She replied that nobody asked her for her marriage. They just made it. She did not decide to marry or not to marry. Her family decided her to marry and it happened. She also explained that almost all first-generation marriages had been arranged, whilst for the second generation this has changed. Sometimes they marry at will, but arranged marriages are still happening. In her case, her daughters' marriage had been planned by the father. She said:

> 17 years ago, one evening, he came and he said, I gave her away. I was shocked and asked him 'what have you just said?' He said that he had given the eldest daughter away to marry. To whom I said? He said that he had promised her to someone and add that it was one of his relative's children. My daughter got up, and she cried a lot and said no. she wouldn't marry him, two streams of tears there. I feel the same. The girl is crying, I am crying. What can I do? (London, 2018).

She is asked that if the objections had worked. She said, "What good would the objections do? Of course, the marriage happened and my objections were beaten out of me". She was subjected to violence because of her objection. Her situation is an example for the violence that happened at home. When she was asked whether the boys were involved in arranged marriages, she answered "no, he could not decide the boys' marriage. The boys married whom they wanted, because they are like their father". The father insisted on arranged marriage for his daughters, but not for his sons. His daughters couldn't choose their husbands whereas his sons choose their wives. The same family, but different entitlement for the children. Gender construction is built up differently in the same family, and this mirrors that of Turkish society. Despite being in the diaspora, they were living in their community and felt obliged to accept the cultural norms of their homeland. In other words, they were still being governed by the values and traditions of their homeland and their private life had to concur with that of the community. But these norms work differently for women and men. While women cannot decide their marriage, men can decide on their marriages.

When asking the W6 about her business life, another example of violence in the family arises from the answer. When asked whether she had worked continuously, she said: "No. Actually, I worked but I can't say that ... I worked in temporary jobs, and then I became crippled ... My husband hurt my waist. He hit my eyes and I became half-blind". She was almost crying because she had been injured a lot, having received a lot of beatings from her husband. She was asked why she didn't divorce from him? She explained that her family and the community wouldn't allow her to do. So, community pressure and the patriarchal structure deterred her about the divorce.

Another interviewee W13(44) explained the changes to her family when her father died, saying:

> OK, we were a very good family, but then I lost my father. When we lost him, my mother changed. Before my father died, she was such a gentle person. My mother became my father; she became very dominant. She put very strict rules on me. She was just trying to protect me, but she was very strict. Then, she arranged my marriage to one of my cousins just to protect me. I didn't want to marry, but I didn't want to break my mother's heart. So, I said yes. But when we came here, he started to cheat on me, and not once, many times. I decided to divorce him, but my whole family put pressure on me not to divorce. (London, 2018).

W13 was asked whether the pressure came from London or Turkey and she replied "both countries, but also from Europe". She said that they had relatives in these countries. She told them that her husband was cheating on her, but they implored her not to divorce him and it had been very hard to resist. Patriarchy works hard in the diaspora. People don't want to lose their norms, traditions. Because they find it difficult to integrate into British society and as they know their patriarchal system, they hold on to it. Arranged marriages are very common in traditional societies because they are seen as the continuation of customs.

During the interview with W14 (55), she said she had realised that divorcing is English culture; not part of the Turkish. She said:

> When we try to fit with their British culture, then we go insane and we lose. It is not our culture to divorce. This new habit affects our family life so much. Many people divorce here. Because they see that the state can support women if they want. So when they see a problem, they immediately divorce. They think that they don't need their husband. In traditional society, divorce for a woman is very difficult. She can divorce when her husband also wishes to do so. They want to keep everything private, but when they go to court, then they have to open up to their personal matters to everyone (London, 2019).

Patriarchy works easily in traditional families. The first generation in the diaspora cannot break this pressure. Punishment is not only something meted out by a husband to wife, but also there are other forms of family violence. For example, W13 (44) reported how she and her husband migrated together because of his family's punishment of her. "I married my cousin. We didn't know each other. Our families arranged it. We found ourselves in a home as a husband and wife. Then, one day I opened my eyes to his brother's punishment. Then, we just ran away from his family". This abuse led to them fleeing abroad to construct a new life. In other words, they fled abroad due to family beating. Her husband could not prevent the beating of his family. When the interviewees were asked the ways in which British women were different from them. They all replied that they would not accept violence and complain immediately to the police, probably filing for divorce.

After undertaking the interviews with 35 Turkish immigrant women, it can be said that violence and getting beaten were not reasons for divorce in traditional Turkish societies. The only way they could get a divorce is when the men wanted to leave them.

Social pressure and gender difference

In this part, social pressure is examined, with some gender difference examples for males and females in terms of their diasporic experiences being provided. Also, gender differences between Turkish women and native Londoners will be investigated.

The issues discussed above can be seen as reflections of the pressure of society on the family. In other words, it is clearly seen how the patriarchal structure spreads into family life. There are patterns formed in terms of generally accepted norms along with traditions all of which exert social pressure on private lives. These norms and traditions are brought to the diaspora by migrant people. Despite having the opportunity to live in the hostland with new social rules, they cannot realise this. Gender identity construction is a part of identity. We can briefly describe identity as forming ourselves. It is a formation of what we have from society and what we have in our inner world. It is the same for gender construction. It has no end and it takes part from society and in our world (Josselson, 1996).

The first two Turkish generations in London appear to have lived according to their cultural norms and traditions. Under the continuous gender identity formation perspective, these women have been unable to engage with British society, because of the social pressure and the patriarchal structure. For example, when the interviewees were asked if there was anything they saw that they would like to do, W27 (45) said that:

> We came out of the village, we came here, we opened our eyes here, everything I know, I have learned here. We are pushing ourselves to be what we learned, we cannot do what we want to do, especially women, we cannot do what we want to do (London, 2018).

She talks about social pressure. When she was asked if there was community pressure, she said that "There is absolutely a pressure on us. You cannot do exactly what you want, because of the community pressure". When she was asked that whether there was pressure on British women, she replied that she did not know because she was not intertwined with them, but she thought there was no social pressure on them. When she was asked how social pressure does work there, W27 said that "We are pressuring ourselves by saying If we do this, they say something, if we do, they say something." So, women prevent themselves. As Allan Johnson has pointed out, patriarchy is now different from the past. Now, all the system is inside of the people; it is taught first of all in the family then in the community. As can be seen, the norms and customs are also taken with them to the diaspora. The respondent was also asked whether there had been any easing in the social pressure or it remained the same as in Turkey. W27, who comes to their community house constantly, says that social pressure is not broken much. Also, she always goes to the community house. She added that those who live in European countries lived under less social pressure compared to them. Because they do not go to community houses like them, she sees the community house also as a center for the social pressure. Because it made them a closed society. Despite living in London, she said:

> Now we go to other European countries, let's say that there are family visits, or a wedding when we talk to those who come there, we are different from them. I see that they have grown a little freer. We live here more intertwined, so you can't get out of that shell. But they look, like, more European (London, 2018).

She was asked which European countries they were from: “They are from Germany, Switzerland, France, and they seem freer… we are not like that.” She told that living in a community prevented access to the openness of a new society. When she was asked whether there was any pressure exerted by the British state on women? “Absolutely not, there is a hundred per cent support for women here. Here, if a woman cannot do something, it is because of our Turkish community”. The social pressure, the patriarchy, originates not from the British state, but rather, it comes from the homeland.

She was also asked about the differences between her and British women. She and almost all of the interviewees said that British women could take care of themselves. They knew how to be good looking and they didn’t accept any pressure on them. If they experienced violence at home, they would immediately leave their husbands. They said that they could not behave like British women because of the social norms and their gender identity. W27 added that their customs did not let them do what they wanted.

Another question asked to the interviewees was about how they treated their daughters and sons in the family. W25 (58), who left Turkey 28 years ago, said she saw some negative examples amongst her close family. She stated that:

> The girl had no value in the house. The woman had no value. I was very angry when I saw them. I was protecting their daughters as much as I could. My father never was that cruel to us. He was not in our house. Different meals were placed in front of the girls and different meals in front of the boys. I have witnessed this many times (London, 2017).

In their home, different food was served for different sexes. When asked why did she think women could not oppose the violence they experienced in the home or in their marriages, he interviewee pointed to the ways in which girls are being raised:

> I do not blame women because this is how women are growing up. Since childhood, in our society, always we hear that, for example, men can shoot or beat. We think now it is normal. Men also think that these behaviours are their rights. A man can cheat on his wife. He can marry and beat her. A man can swear if he wants or love (London, 2017).

W25 was asked whether such discrimination could occur in London among the general population. She answered that it was impossible. She said that there were human rights here and she continued as follows: "Because they overcame it here. They see women and men as everyone. They are equal. Here, they do not put people into different categories according to their gender. They are human only."

We can analyse how gender roles are taught, just as de Beauvoir claimed. She stated that, first of all, men are the first sex and then, women are positioned according to them as the second sex. The behaviours such as beatings and swearing are taught and also tolerated in the family. Another interviewee explained that they had a very poor childhood and they could not drink milk as they wanted in those poor days. She explained that only her brother could drink milk every night, and her mother made him it every night. So, when she was asked in the interview why she didn't object to this situation, she replied that she had never thought of that. The patriarchal structure was embedded in the family as mothers, girls, and boys. Neither the mother nor the girls nor the boy questioned why milk was only given to him. As mentioned above, Butler said that the distinction is structured after the birth of the individual. This is the point that the interviewee also stated that British society behaves in such a way that all people are treated as human equals. There is no boy or girl distinction in British society.

One of the respondents, W14(55) spoke about the gender differences from her family experience. She said:

> Our children go to a school that has a different atmosphere and come back to a home that has a different atmosphere. They get confused between these two atmospheres. The relationship in their culture is very easy. Our children cannot walk in their shoes. They come from another culture. We will need maybe two or three centuries to be like them. But our women came and automatically began to be like them, which caused a problem. In this society, when a child reaches 18 years old, boy or girl, he or she can do anything, whatever he or she wants. This doesn't fit with us, but some of our families and teenagers try to take up their customs. It affects our system. They start to say "do not meddle with me; I am 18." It is dangerous for our culture. (London, 2019).

All these different styles of living are rooted in the different cultural lives and the conflict appears when these two societies live together. It takes time to be in tune. She is a mother and she is choosing her way; she doesn't get confused. But in her family, she has children and she tries to make a balance with them.

Another example is W13 (44), whose life changed when she lost her father. Also, her mother changed. Her example also shows how gender construction is driven by society and social norms. People and society make patriarchy and patriarchy are kept alive by men or women. W13 said:

> When we lost him, my mother changed. My mother took over my father's dominance. She put very strict rules on me. She was just trying to protect me, but she was very strict. Then, she arranged my marriage with one of my cousins to protect me. I didn't want to marry, but I didn't want to break the heart of my mother. So I said yes. But when we came here, he started to cheat on me many times and I have decided to divorce him (London, 2018).

Göran Therborn pointed out that patriarchy has two basic dimensions; one is the father's rule and the other is that of the husband. To continue a patriarchal hierarchy, there needs to be a family with a mother, father, and children (Therborn, 2004). However, the above example indicates that just having a family would appear to be enough for the patriarchy to persist. That is, if there is no father, then the mother can take on the role and design the rules. So, it can be said that patriarchy does not need a specific body. It is a constitution and it continues to be alive within anybody as a male or female. It is the idea of a social union, which sets up the rules for someone else.

W13 was asked that when she decided to divorce what had happened. She said that the whole family put pressure on her. These pressures were from London and Turkey as well as from Europe. She added, "Because we have relatives in those countries. I told them he was cheating on me. But they said it was OK; 'do not divorce.' It was very hard to resist." As we can see, the pressure was coming from all the family who lived in London, in Turkey, and in some cities in Europe. Those people had lived in Europe for a long time, but nothing had changed in 20 or 30 years.

W33 (50) was asked about the differences between Londoner and Turkish females. She recounted from her memory how when they had migrated to London, in the beginning, one Cypriot family took them to dinner at their home. That family had lived here for a long time and she saw that in the family, the wife sat with them and the husband served the food, subsequently washing the dishes. She said that she was shocked because it was the first time she had seen a man serving the food and then, washing the dishes. She also reported how she saw for the first time women working outside of the home. In her village, she had never seen a woman doing so or a man washing the dishes, for that matter. Gender is constituted in the cultural environment and there can be many gender constructions. She said that now it seemed very normal for her that a man served the food or washed the dishes. She also emphasised that in those times she thought that English women wore very short skirts, but now she thought this was very normal.

Working in "private space"

In this part, the inner conflicts of women in the diaspora are brought to the fore. Betty Friedan, in her work "Feminine Mystique", in 1962, stated that the number of women in work was very low. Women have to participate to the economy as labour forces. She established the American National Women's Organization and argued that women with jobs would also have housework and motherhood responsibilities. When Friedan, the pioneer of the second feminist wave, wrote these

thoughts, American society was very behind her. In those times, American women supposedly found their happiness in an ideal marriage with children. The idea that women could only be happy when they were good wives and mothers was very popular. Friedan emphasised how women in society could be happy and take part in economic life as well (Williams, 2000). Actually, nowadays there has not been much that has changed in traditional societies. When women have migrated to modern societies, disagreement about gender roles between women and men can become an issue. This is because they still have the same values, but they live in different societies. Traditional women and men in the diaspora can continue to live with homeland values. Notably, the first generation of men and women like to protect their traditional values in modern society.

The Turkish people who emigrated to London first started working in the textile factories opened by the Turkish Cypriots. When they first came, they also brought their families with them. Because women had the opportunity to work in textiles, those who came to London often took these up and obtained work in textiles. In this respect, migration to England differs from that to Europe in terms of equality between women and men. In our case, the first generation women first worked in textiles, just like most Turkish migrants at that time, until this work shifted in most part to China. Later, they usually worked in their own family businesses as unpaid workers overseen by their husbands. If we look at North London, where the first two generations of migrant women work and live, it can be seen that restaurants with Turkish names are quite common, such as *Antepli, Diyarbakır, Yayla, or Hala.* When passing the front of these restaurants, Turkish women working as pastry makers can often be seen. In her study, Floya Anthias pointed out how it was essential for the whole family to help in the family business (Sirkeci et al.2016).

W5(50) was asked about her business life. She said:

> We had a shop here and we worked within the family. When I first arrived here, there were textiles. All Turkish people were working in textiles. It was our society. We worked up to 1996 in that sector; now they do it in China (London, 2017).

Women often helped their husbands, but their labour was largely invisible and they were unpaid. This situation damaged their integration process, for because of their family job, women's social connections remained weak. Working in small shops is the typical Turkish economic case in London. The reason why family workers prefer their own kith and kin is because of the heavy workload. That is, it is difficult to find an employee willing to work up to 20 hours a day. In these businesses, fathers and sons usually work as the bosses, whilst women relatives help them. Arendt (1990) claimed that being in "action" and being in the public sphere would bring freedom. However, working in family-based businesses perpetuates the patriarchal structure, where women serve their father or husband, being denied the opportunity to use their own talent. Another interviewee was asked about her job and she underlined this situation. W46 (44) said that "I was getting a profession, but at that time, my husband opened a cafe and he needed me there. I had worked for him, but now it is not open. So, I don't have any job now." So, instead of pursuing her professional aspirations, she worked in her family business, which whilst construing "action" did not bring her freedom.

One of the interviewees, W52 (59), worked informally in textiles without any insurance for 17 years, which meant that she didn't receive a pension and needed aid from the state. She was asked why she accepted that condition. She said that she did not know English or any of the indigenous population. So, she had accepted the informal job and her labour was abused. W4 (67) was asked about her working life and she said, "I worked in textiles for the first two years and then, worked in

our own pizza shop for three years. When I worked in textiles, there were foreigners, there were Bangladeshi people, there were Cypriots. Of course, there were no English people; no Europeans. What would they be doing in our textiles?" When she was asked if there were any English among the employees, she said "There were always Turkish people, there were also a few Pakistani or Indian families." So when asked why there are generally immigrants working in textiles other than Turks, she put this down to the language barrier.

In sum, first and second-generation women in the diaspora have two basic obstacles: one is their family patriarchy structure and the other is their language problem. These two problems prevent them from integrating into working and also, public life. Lack of a working life away from the family means a lack of assimilation into the host society and hence, a lack of freedom.

Public space and social participation

In this part, women participating in public space and their social participation are analysed. It was observed that the women in the first two generations did not take part in public life, except for involvement in associations of their diaspora community and the family workplace. In these places, generally, there are Turkish people and some other immigrants. The first generation of women have not been to the cinema, theatre or museums, whereas those of the second-generation have been, but seldomly. For example, W27 (55) was asked if she had ever been to these places. She said that "I haven't gone to the theatre or museums, but I went to the cinema. I guess, I went to the cinema last year. Turkish movies are all here. For example, "Recep İvedik" will come this month. The children want to go, but I don't want to that much because it is violent. However, I promised I would take them. I go to Turkish movies. I have never been to foreign films." The second-generation of women went to the theatre or museum because they have children as students. So they have to accompany their children for an educational trip which was a mandatory school excursion.

Interviewee W33 (58), when asked if she went to the cinema, theatre, or museum in London, she said:

> When we go outside with the children, they prefer to go to the British cinema. We prefer to go to the Turkish cinema. Apart from that, we have families, parents here, we have neighbours. We like to be all together. Except for them, we do not talk to anyone else. I'm just coming to this community house. I've been bringing my daughter here for a year and a half. My daughter makes *Sema* first and then does mathematics for two hours. Then, she participates in the choir. After the music, she goes to *Alevism* (London, 2019).

She was bringing her daughter to *Cemevi* as she wanted to cement her cultural bonding. Taninota (2009) pointed out that the connection to the country do not end when being part of the diaspora. The formation of identity continues abroad and the home state has an effect on the construction of this. When W27 (55) was asked where she went out apart from work, she said that "We go to the parks, we walk around. We go to our Turkish neighbours, or go to eat kebabs. We are Turkish people together". W27 did not have a different life outside; she lived in the Turkish community and was holding on to her homeland identity.

Another interviewee, W16 (48), related the story of her life before arriving in London. They were living in a town and her father went abroad without them, so they had to go back to their home village. She could not receive an education because there was no school in the village. W16 continued: "We couldn't go to school because there was no school in the village. Then, my father

came and we settled in the city so my brother could go to school. My brother studied there and we worked there." In other words, after her father returned, the boy got an education in the city, whilst the girl had to work. When she was asked why her brother was educated and she was not, she replied, "I don't know. That's it." This resonates with the concept of the "second sex", where, as Beauvoir pointed out, their situation and position in life are shaped by men. It did not come to this participant's mind to question why the girl had to get a job to support the family and the boy was able to attend school.

The first and the second generation women preferred to be together and they did not keep company with other nationalities. W14 (55) said that to start with, she just visited her sister and she didn't need any neighbours. After a while, she began to visit her Turkish neighbours, but not people of other nationalities. Another interviewee, W52 (59), was asked if she engaged in any social events. She said that she went to the community house and her relatives' houses. Then, she added that she went to Costa to drink coffee with her grandchildren once a week, saying that she was only person in her circle that who did so; she was the exception. When they were in Costa she talked English with her grandchildren. Maybe this was the only place where she felt she was living in a foreign country. The community house, called "cemevi", is where first and second generation of Alevi people always go to participate in rituals. Anna Maria Forties contended that a community needs a civil society in which people feel they belong and regarding the family, this is not such a community. Whilst a church is an institution, it can also be a focal point for the development of a community. Religious practices connect families with other people through rituals and religious practices (Fortier, 2000). The above examples illustrate how having a community identity allows for the perpetuation of the homeland culture.

The community house is very important for the people in the diaspora; it creates a sense of belonging when they cannot integrate into English society. Whilst the community house can serve to prevent integration, on the one hand, it can provide a safe space for those who find it too difficult to find a place in the host society. This situation changes from generation to generation. For example, W8 (48) said that their children experience inner conflict because they were living in two different cultures and some of them had even committed suicide. W8 said that women experience cultural and gender conflict. On the day of the interview, there was the funeral of a woman, who had committed suicide because of depression.

Media consumption

This part investigates these Turkish women's media consumption, which can provide insights into the sense of belonging and also, gender identity. John Fiske said that cultural industries produce cultural production, but consumers decide what to keep. Regarding which, when media is broadcast or published, the audience chooses which to engage with. As Stuart Hall put it more precisely, there is an encoding/decoding process between the message creator and the recipient. Everyone gets the same message technically, but at first, the audience has to choose the message amongst many. He held that the audience chooses the message if it suits them as a context (Gauntlett, 2002).

In the interviews, it was elicited that the first generation of immigrant women never watched the English TV channels due to the language problem and the cultural distance. After the transition to satellite television broadcasting in Turkey, these women could gain access to such broadcasting from abroad. First-generation women use social media rarely and generally, only with the help of their children or grandchildren. W4 was asked about her preferred channels and she said, "When I'm with the kids, we watch English channels. But after they go to sleep, I watch Turkish channels

and I like to watch Cem TV". Thus, W4 reveals the cultural sense of belonging while consuming media. Cem TV is a local television channel for Alevi people. Her watching English TV, was just when she was with her grandchildren, who were London-born.

As previously mentioned, identity is not a finished construction; it is always an ongoing process. People live in a cultural environment and gather their meaning from it. When the place of living and social life change, then people reconfigure themselves within the new environment they find themselves in. Josselson (1996) pointed out that identity links the past and the present and also the social world (28). As this identity is re-established, there is a connection with the past and hence, the links between the homeland and host land continue. When W25 (58) was asked where did she feel that she belonged, she said:

> I think I belong to my country. Our country has four seasons… There is no social life here. Our country's life is warm, people are warm. If you have a family here, you hold on to it. They have many beauties, but they have many deficiencies. My country is my homeland (London, 2017).

Even though the first two generations said that they will continue to live mostly in London, their sense of belonging remained vested in their homeland. W25 was asked if she used social media, she said only Facebook and only Turkish people were on her list of contacts She said she used it because she was missing her relatives and added, "Facebook partially closes a gap, between people, not all, not a hundred per cent."

Another interviewee W6 said: "I watch Cem TV and Halk TV. That's for the news." She followed the news channel from Turkey as this gave her a sense of belonging as a Turk. She still followed the local TV news about the village that she had left years ago and the surrounding region. Like her, W5 also said that they only watched Turkish channels.

> We spend time watching television in the evening. We just watch Turkish television channels, because we do not understand if we try to watch English channels. We look at whatever we like. We also drink our tea and friends come to join us to watch Turkish channels. Also, she only used Facebook and again, there were only relatives and Turkish friends in her contacts (London, 2018).

The first-generation women would seem to prefer Turkish national or Turkish local television stations. There are very few Facebook users of this generation, whilst the second generation was found to use social media widely, but generally only have Turkish friends and their relatives in their contact lists. Ruben Rumbaut year? stated that under whatever condition they come, there is something brought from the native land, which is especially the case for first-comers. It is not usual for adult immigrants to shake off their homeland bonds (Ali, 2018). Their media consumption gives clues about their sense of belonging and identity.

Conclusion

The paper has been focused on performing gender in the Turkish diaspora. When women leave the homeland and go to a host land, they often do not give up their gender identity forged in the former, that is, they carry their construction of norms and traditions with them. Thus, it would appear that their sense of belonging remains with their homeland. First and second-generations observe the gender differences in the host land, but find it nigh on impossible to leave behind their identity formed at home. They still live under the patriarchy rules of their homeland. Migrant people

need a foreign language for the integration with the society in host land, which many have failed to acquire. They only interact with family and their Turkish neighbours. It is concluded that it will take only future generations who are not tied to the homeland to shift gender identity. First and second-generation women can function effectively in society in the UK, but full integration into the host community is difficult.

The first Turkish immigrants did not have any social ties with London or Londoners. They initially worked in textiles with other migrant labour and subsequently worked in a family business. The second-generation has children who have been born and educated in London. So, they have some interaction with the other people who are not Turkish. Whilst they don't speak English like a native speaker, they can speak it well enough to maintain their daily lives. Moreover, they have become more integrated with other people because of work and having to engage with their children's schools. They want their children to understand Turkish culture and many are relaxed about them adopting British customs.

References

Aaltio, I., Mills, A.J. (2002). *Gender, Identity, and the Culture of Organisations*. London: Routledge.

Ali, F. (2018). Where Should the Birds Fly After the Last Sky? Images and Voices of Women of the Iraqi Diaspora in the United Kingdom, *Diaspora Studies,* 11:2, 135-151. DOI:10.1080/09739572.2018.1485238

Alkan,A. (2000). Özel Alan, Kamusal Alan Ayrımının Feminist Eleştirisi Çerçevesinde Kentsel Mekan. *Kültür ve İletişim Dergisi,* 71-95.

Archer, J. Lloyd, B. (2002). Sex and Gender. Edition: 2nd. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Arendt, H. (2012). *İnsanlık Durumu.* Çev. Bahadır Sina Şener. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

Bennett, J.M. (2006). *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bilecen, T. (2020). *Politik Sığınmacılardan Ankara Anlaşmalılara, Türkiye'den Birleşik Krallık'a Göçler*, London: Press Dyonisos.

Cheng, B.W. (2011). *City of Working Women: Life, Space, and Social Control in Early Twentieth-Century.* Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies.

Direk, Z. (2015). *Cinsiyetli olmak, Sosyal Bilimlere Feminist Bakışlar.* İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

Fortier, A.M. (2000). *Migrant Belongings:Memory, Space, Identity*. Oxford: Berg.

Fornas, J. Becker,K. Bjurström, E.Ganetz, H.,(2007). *Consuming Media: Communication, Shopping and Everyday Life*, New York: Berg.

Gauntlett, D. (2002). *Media, Gender, and Identity:An Introduction*. London: Routledge.

Grosholz, E.R. (2004). *The Legacy of Simone de Beauvoir*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Josselson, R. (1996). *Revising Herself:The Story of Women's Identity from College to Midlife*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Nayak, A (2003). *Race, Place and Globalisation:Youth Cultures in a Changing World*. Berg: New York.

Nguyen,D.T. (2012). *Vietnamese Immigrant Youth and Citizenship: How Race, Ethnicity, and Culture Shape Sense of Belonging*, El Paso: TX. LFB Scholarly.

Panayi, P. (2014). *An immigration history of Britain: multicultural racism since 1800*. London: Routledge.

Salih, S., (2002). *Judith Butler.*London: Routledge.

Sharma;S. (2012). Immigrants in Britain: A Study of the Indian Diaspora, *Diaspora Studies*, 5:1, 14-43, DOI: 10.1080/09739572.2013.764123

Sirkeci, I. (2005). Turkish Diaspora. In: M.J. Gibney and R. Hansen (eds.) Immigration and Asylum from 1900 to the PresentPublisher: ABC Clio, pp.607-610.

Sirkeci,I, Esipova, N.,(2013) *Border Crossing*, Vol:3, No: 1301. www.tplondon.com/journal/index.php.bel 2013.

Sirkeci, I., Bilecen, T., Costu, Y., Dedeoglu, S., Kesici, M.R., Seker, D., Tilbe, F., Unutulmaz, K.O. (2016). *Little Turkey in Great Britain*. London: Transnational Press London.

Therborn, G. (2004). *Between Sex and Power: Family in the World, 1900-2000.* New York: Psycology Press.

Toninato, P. (2009). *The making of gypsy diasporas.* Translocations, Vol.5 (No.1). http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/44339/

Tilbe, F. (2020). "Türkiye- İngiltere Göçünü Yeniden Düşünmek: Politik mi, Farklı ya da Çoklu Çatışmalar mı?". Sirkeci.I (eds) *Pasajlar, Göç Meselesi*. İstanbul: Doğu Batı Yayınları. 5: 281-309.

Wilson, C. Groth P.(2003). *Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies after J.B. Jackson.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Williams, J. (2000). *Unbending Gender:Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Yamin, P.(2012*). American Marriage: A Political Institution*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.