Social Mobility, Habitus and Identity Formation in the Turkish-German Second Generation

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Abstract

Social mobility literature widely assumes that socially upward mobile individuals 'alienate' from their 'milieu of origin' while adopting the patterns of acting and thinking of the 'new milieu'. The most frequent underlying concepts are the 'habitus transformation' or even the 'habitus cleft', which presume that the acquisition of a new habitus necessarily involves moving away from the previous one. This article presents three contrasting case studies from a research project among socially upward mobile individuals of Turkish background in Germany to show that the static juxtaposition of 'either … or' is too narrow. Most respondents maintain intensive relations with family and friends from their 'milieu of origin', while at the same time 'assimilating' to the expected habitus in their professional environments and high-ranking positions. This article suggests borrowing elements from Identity Theory – especially concepts such as hybridity and multiplicity – to show that transformations in individual habitus do not necessarily go along with relevant levels of 'alienation' in neither direction. As a consequence, the authors propose 'habitus *diversification'* as a more promising concept for including frequent bridging strategies and the active switching between 'habitual' codes and languages.

Keywords: second generation, social mobility, habitus, Germany, identity

Introduction

Erfolg (…). Ein herkunftsfremder Spätdeutscher reagiert nicht selten unwirsch ob dieser Zuschreibung – wieso? Er ahnt, dass man ihn fast des Verrats beschuldigt: an der Kultur der Heimat seiner Eltern. Er weiß um die Implikation – verätzt und entstellt ist das begabte Arbeiterkind, eine andere Möglichkeit kann und darf es nicht geben. – Feridun Zaimoğlu, 2014[1]

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[1] "Success (…). An origin-alien Lategerman not infrequently reacts rather stroppy to this ascription – why? He senses that he is almost accused of betrayal of the culture of the homeland of his parents. He knows about the implications – burned and disfigured is the gifted worker's child, another possibility can and must not be there." (In: Ezli and Staupe 2014: 77, translation JS).

Turkey has been the country of origin of the largest group of immigrants in Western and Northern Europe since the early 1960s, when bilateral agreements were signed on labour recruitment between Turkey and a series of European countries. Family reunification with spouses and children and, after the military coup in Turkey, especially Kurdish minorities and members of the urban intelligentsia followed. Including their native-born children and grandchildren, most of these migrants today live in Germany: an estimated 2.5 million persons. Due to its size, and also because labour migrants from Turkey were particularly recruited among the poorest and

lowest educated, these immigrants have thus been facing the greatest challenges in achieving upward social mobility. They have attracted the most attention and are taken as the most 'prototypical' group for illustrating supposed 'integration problems' or even 'failure' in German integration literature.

A rapidly increasing body of literature today assesses the question of migrant social mobility from an intergenerational perspective by looking at how the second and third generations fare – because their situation allows a better perspective on the long-term effects of immigration on societies. As numerous studies have also shown, over the past decades, children of Turkish immigrants in Germany have been facing particular challenges in their educational careers and, consequently, in striving for good professional jobs. Even though their advancement in their educational credentials in relation to their parents and grandparents is immense, processes of social mobility have been particularly slow in Germany – especially when compared to their 'ethno-national' peers in other European countries (see e.g. Crul, Schneider and Lelie 2012; Wilmes, Schneider and Crul 2011). This notwithstanding, there is an increasingly visible middle-class in Germany with family roots in Turkey that has also attracted some attention by social scientists and – especially in recent years – considerable media interest in their 'success stories'.

Beyond the question of the (dis-)proportional representation in well-paid and socially prestigious jobs, analysing social mobility processes and the individual trajectories of the second generation can tell us something about mechanisms of social reproduction and existing social boundaries in the society 'at large': Which boundaries apply and how are they socially constructed? What are valid strategies for overcoming structural barriers and managing to cross these boundaries? What kind of 'transformations' do individuals have to undergo to successfully manage their transition to higher social strata in their upward careers?

Social Mobility, Boundaries and Habitus

Social stratification implies that there are boundaries in place between different social strata (or classes or groups). These boundaries are socialised and internalised in childhood and youth; their actual brightness or rigidity depends on their role for the 'general setup' of a given society. Social climbers simultaneously highlight these boundaries by making them more visible *and* question their seemingly 'natural' social order by showing that it is possible to cross them.

Pierre Bourdieu developed some of the most influential concepts for the analysis of social stratification. According to him, social difference is primarily based on different access to and disposability of economic resources and power, i.e. economic, social and cultural capital. The concept of *habitus* bridges the gap between the individual and the collective, because it describes as much the meta-individual structures – 'the rules of the game' – as their incorporation in mostly rather subconscious individual judgements on tastes, norms and behaviours – 'knowing the rules' and acting according to them. Since habitus is at the same time individual and collective, it allows explaining specific individual behaviours and preferences, but also uncovers them as collectively shared and reproduced in the wider structures of society. In this combination of the two aspects, the idea of habitus explains why a given social structure is so durable and difficult to be substantially changed (see Bourdieu 1977: 72, 95; 1984; 1989: 12; 1990).

Upward social mobility may 'undermine' the notion of 'durability' in Bourdieu's habitus concept; however, boundaries between social strata themselves are generally not getting 'blurred' by individuals that cross them: it is the individuals who change, but not the social order.[2] Social mobility, therefore, presents a particular challenge to the upwardly mobile individuals: They

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[2] We can see a parallel here to Fredrik Barth's observations on the function of boundaries between ethnic groups. According to Barth, ethnic boundaries are not challenged by individuals who move over them, e.g. by migration or interethnic marriage (Barth 1969: 9).

do not only lack the support of parental capital, which makes career possibilities of (upper) middle-class offspring so largely independent from individual talent and abilities, but they also have to find their way into social fields with whose habitus they are not intimately familiar. A child from a poor, working class family, managing her/his own way all the way up to university and becoming e.g. a doctor or a lawyer, in one way or another, inevitably also crosses the habitus boundaries between the strata of the working poor and the free professions.

This process has attracted the interest of a considerable amount of studies on social mobility in which, in fact, the concept of habitus stands central.[3] The issue of habitus boundaries is, moreover, particularly interesting for studies that are looking at the intersections between social and other kinds of relevant inner-societal boundaries – especially 'racial' or 'ethnic' or between 'immigrants' and 'natives'[4]. Being Black in the UK, Black or Hispanic in the U.S., or Turkish or Arab in most parts of Western Europe more frequently than not means coming of age in a comparatively low educated, working class family. The access to middle class-dominated educational and professional 'milieus' thus generally goes along with a transition from an environment, in which being Black or immigrant is nothing noteworthy, to a predominantly, if not almost exclusively 'white' and non-immigrant environment.

Bourdieu himself mentions several moments of what could be called 'habitual unsettledness' in his own trajectory from the peasant countryside to high academia (Bourdieu 2002: 46, 76 et

passim). Overall, however, the habitus-concept has certainly served better in explaining the *reproduction* of inequality than in shedding light on the breaks from it. Therefore, the relationship between habitus, understood as durable meta-individual *collective* structures, and *individual* trajectories of social mobility has been open for different interpretations in social mobility literature.

Two terminologies and slightly different concepts dominate these interpretations: Particularly in studies on the access of students from non-privileged family backgrounds to higher education institutions, the Bourdieusian term of *'cleft habitus'* (Bourdieu 2008: 100) or *habitus cleavage* is common (Torres 2009; Abrahams and Ingram 2013; Lee and Kramer 2013). The terminology implies that working class poor and/or Black/immigrant students at prestigious, upper middle class-dominated universities have to perform a radical change in their behaviour, tastes and language. According to Lee and Kramer, this leads to "weakening relationships" in the home community because the "potentially painful process of habitus cleavage" makes it difficult to "balance" the newly acquired with the old habitus (Lee and Kramer 2013: 31, 32).

While this concept primarily looks at the *distance* between two habitus that represent two different ends of the social ladder, the other dominant concept in this literature, *habitus transformation*, rather focuses on the process of the conversion that individuals have to undergo when moving from one social stratum to another (see e.g. Horvat and Davis 2011; Rosenberg 2011; Byrom and Lightfoot 2012; El-Mafaalani 2012). According to Aladin El-Mafaalani, for example, the transformation in habitus of his interviewees – German social climbers from immigrant and non-immigrant families – "appears to be (...) a necessary condition for (social) ascension as understood here" (2012: 319) which implies a "perception of alienation from the milieu of origin" (ibid.). Despite a difference in perspective, both terminologies thus describe the movement from one habitus to another as a moving *away*

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[3] See e.g. Rosenberg 2011; London 1992; Torres 2009; Horvat and Davis 2011; Byrom and Lightfoot 2012; El-Mafaalani 2012; Abrahams and Ingram 2013; Dalhaus 2013; Jo 2013; Lee and Kramer 2013. See Reay 2004 for a critique of the 'habitual use' of the habitus-concept especially in research on educational success.

[4] See e.g. for the USA and the UK Pattillo 1999; Moore 2008; Zhou et al. 2008; Torres 2009; Wright, Standen, and Patel 2010; Rollock et al. 2011; 2013; Vallejo 2012a, 2012b. For Germany and the Netherlands, as two continental European examples with a wide body of literature, see e.g. Vermeulen 2001; Pott 2002; Cain 2007; Dalhaus 2013.

from one's working class past, and building up a distance to the 'milieu of origin' of the family and the home community. Intended or not, this leads to a representation of 'milieu of origin' versus 'milieu of arrival' as separate units whose mutual boundary is not only clearly marked, but also internalised by the social climbers themselves.[5]

This rather static understanding of habitus lies in stark contrast to a completely different body of literature: the theorisation of identities and identity formation. Strangely enough, habitus and identity are very rarely conceptualised together, although they are undoubtedly close to each other. Habitus is acquired and 'internalised' in early childhood to adolescence, and it attempts to describe and explain practices and attitudes of groups and persons. Habitus thus groups together individuals according to their shared or similar positions in the wider social space. Identities provide 'labels' for the belonging to groups. In the 'ideal', non-conflictive case, belonging to a certain group coincides with habitual practices of distinction. Moreover, both identity and habitus are based on the existence and definition of boundaries (cf. Cohen 2002; Jenkins 2008; Donnan and Wilson 1999 and many others).

In contrast to the usage of habitus in large parts of social mobility literature, Identity Theory stresses the hybridity, fuzziness and multiplicities in practices of (self-)labelling and representations of belonging (cf. Çağlar 1997; Schneider 2001, 2010; Wimmer 2013). Each individual represents a unique combination of belonging to a diverse range of group categories (Devereux 1978: 164ff.) that allows her/him to make use of context-sensitive, adequate attitudes and behaviours – in other words: habitual practices. Habitus could thus be defined as the

performative dimension of identity: the *practice* connected to specific categories of belonging. Bringing the two concepts together reveals a tension – inherent in *both* concepts – between deterministic aspects (mostly rather unconscious and thus unquestioned), on one hand, and a certain empirical 'fuzziness' that also includes at least the *potential* for change in biographical perspective on the other. Another tension lies in the relationship between habitus as a *collective* 'structuring structure' and a 'matrix' for *individual* "perceptions, appreciations and actions" (Bourdieu 1977: 95). This similarly applies to identity: it is a personal attribute, but each category of belonging is a collectively shared group category.

Why, then, are identities multiple, hybrid and dynamic, but habitus is stable and enduring? If habitus is, in fact, the performative practice of specific forms of belonging, why should individuals not dispose of a variety of habitus, allowing them to be involved in several *different* 'games', playing these according to their respective rules? The problem is that the idea of habitus as 'an open system of dispositions' (see note 5) makes the notions of 'habitus cleavage' or 'habitus transformation' far less convincing – at least in the rigidity of an 'either … or', as they are presented. There is, obviously, no doubt that access to a prestigious law firm from a working class background means entering a *new* world, whose explicit and implicit rules have to be learned and be adapted. The question is whether this must necessarily go along with an 'alienation' from the *previous* world.

In this regard, we suggest that linking the habitus concept with insights from identity literature can introduce more fruitful perspectives into the study of social mobility processes. This is particularly interesting in the case of individuals growing up in immigrant or 'ethnic minority'-families because social climbers from these origins deal with both kinds of boundaries: their 'habitus of origin' includes the immigrant origin of the parents as much as predominantly a working class background.

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[5] Bourdieu himself actually softened the rigidity of widespread understandings of habitus: "Habitus is not the fate that some people read into it. Being the product of history, it is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures. It is durable but not eternal!" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 133)

'Pathways to Success'

In the following sections, we want to address the question of habitus and identity among intergenerationally upwardly mobile individuals of Turkish background in Germany, making use of data from the *Pathways to Success*-Project, which analyses trajectories through education and into well-paid and/or high prestige jobs in three German urban agglomerations: Berlin, Frankfurt and the Ruhr Area. The sample of interviews executed in 2012-13 includes 74 members of the Turkish second generation, mainly between the ages of 25 and 45. Almost all of them come from families in which the parents maximally completed lower secondary education. Another 20 respondents come from non-immigrant families, also with parents with no academic education. By far, most of our respondents successfully gained university degrees and they have achieved responsible positions in professional fields that can be characterized as predominantly mainstream middle- or even upper class. Regarding the fields, there is an emphasis in our sample on law, teaching, the public administration and the business sector, including entrepreneurs and employees in leading positions.

Following the above mentioned literature, 'habitus transformation' or 'cleavage' should be a dominant pattern in our interviews. In the course of their trajectory, our interviewees had to adapt to new ways of acting and thinking in social fields which no one in their families had previously entered and, because of this, there were no role models at hand in the local and ethnic communities in which they grew up. They are very likely to have developed new interests, goals, tastes, and life-styles on the pathway of achieving higher education and entering into their respective professional fields, while – according to the hypothesis of habitus transformation – ties to childhood friends etc. are likely to have loosened after they left their native neighbourhood for their studies or jobs.[6]

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[6] Empirically, our data are narratives collected through interviews; they do not include systematic

This will be examined closer by looking at three case studies.

Case 1: Alienation and Social Distinction

The case of Onur Aktaş[7], a 42 year old stock exchange trader in Frankfurt, can be seen as a prototypical representation of 'cleft habitus'. Onur describes the departure point of his trajectory as a 'classical guest worker biography'. Born in Turkey, he came to Germany at the age of six to join his parents who had come to the Frankfurt area as recruited labour migrants. After primary school, he was recommended for middle secondary school (*Realschule*), and then he continued to the upper secondary level at a vocational high school where he took his *Abitur*. Already at this stage, his main professional aim was 'earning money', an intrinsic motivation he closely links to the financial shortages he experienced in his family. For this reason, Onur followed a two-year apprenticeship at a bank and then started directly working for a broker at the Frankfurt Stock Exchange, in an environment he describes as 'extremely conservative' and in which social background, family networks and different markers of high social status (e.g. cars, clothes etc.) played an important role. As a 'Turk' and 'foreigner', he says, he was an absolute exception at that time (i.e. approx. 20 years ago). He was successful in what he did and, as a consequence, moved into higher positions. He made a lot of money while, at the same time, he completed a degree in Business Studies. After some years, he

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ethnographic fieldwork beyond observations from the interview situation itself. The directly accessible social practice analysed in this article is thus limited to the 'discursive habitus' of our respondents in a particular social situation, in an interview with a researcher. While this means considerable limitation for addressing questions of habitus in the Bourdieusian sense, language and communication are important social practices in and of themselves, which give insights into discursive and communicative dispositions. But they obviously do not represent 'the whole story': we simply do not know whether the observation of other forms of social practices would have led to different interpretations.

[7] All respondents' names have been pseudonymised.

decided to take a break. At the time of the interview he only worked part-time and planned to take up studies in Philosophy or Psychology for his own intellectual development.

The transformation of the ways in which he did or saw things, and the distinction from the habitus of his working class 'milieu of origin', is a structuring narrative in Onur's account. He describes his school trajectory as a process of learning the necessary skills and codes to achieve educational success, all of which were not provided in his family. As he points out, his parents lacked the knowledge of the essential structures and capacities needed for a successful educational career and could therefore give him no support at all. Instead, Onur emphasizes the decisive role of a teacher who showed him how to establish a basic learning environment at home:

> There was this teacher who somehow saw my potential, I think. She supported me and also set the course with my parents in a certain way. My parents are rather simple people: both, my mother and my father, had only four years of primary school. And they were just not familiar with learning structures, you know? They wanted that their children would be better off than they, but what could they contribute to that? There was very little. Providing some structure, taking care that the child learns to develop discipline in the first place, to be able to concentrate, and also teaching the child to be patient, until it has learnt something. Or also just these very basic things, like taking care that I was in bed in good time, so that I am not totally sleepy in the morning, that I got a desk for myself, these actually quite basic things. I believe that her intervention also led to getting me really on some track at some moment, you know? (§17, 19)[8]

Onur lists here different educational practices and cognitive patterns that, in his eyes, are fundamental for a successful school career, and he presents his parents as unable to transmit them. He acquired the necessary educational 'attitude' only thanks to a person from a higher social milieu. Onur's metaphor of 'taking a completely different track' than the one predetermined by his family can be interpreted as a deep transformation of schemes of thinking and acting.

Onur represents this transformation through clearly distancing himself from the habitus of his home environment. Throughout the interview, he marks differences between his current values, goals, interests, and social contacts – and those of his family and the working class environment he comes from:

> But these are also all people who, in one way or the other, are also intellectually interesting for me. It is a completely different kind of people. When I think about the friends and acquaintances that my parents had and compare them with my people, they are *absolutely* different, very, very different people they are, yes. (§83)[9]

In Onur's view, the 'intellectual standards' of his current circle of friends – he mentions, for instance, people working in academia or in higher positions in business – and his own acquired cultural capital render closer social connections to the lower educated and working class 'milieu' of his parents practically impossible. This becomes visible in the following reference to a friend from childhood – apart from his parents, the only

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[8] „Es gab eine Lehrerin, die einfach irgendwie schon mein Potential, glaube ich, gesehen hat, die das gefördert hat (…) und auch mit meinen Eltern dann da schon Weichen gestellt hat. (…) Meine Eltern (…) waren recht einfache Leute. Sowohl meine Mutter wie auch mein Vater hatten vier Jahre Grundschule, mehr nicht. Und also denen waren einfach Strukturen von Lernen nicht bekannt ja? Also die wollten zwar gerne, dass ihre Kinder es mal besser haben als sie selbst, aber selbst dazu was beitragen, ja? Da kam eben herzlich wenig. Also einfach 'ne Struktur schaffen, (…) dafür zu sorgen, dass das Kind (…) überhaupt

lernt Disziplin aufzubauen, (…) 'ne Konzentration aufzubauen, (…) auch dem Kind Geduld beizubringen, bis es etwas gelernt hat. (…) Oder dann eben so ganz einfache Sachen wie dafür zu sorgen, beizeiten im Bett zu sein, dass ich irgendwie eben morgens nicht total verpennt bin, (…) dafür zu sorgen, dass ich 'n Schreibtisch bekommen hab, (…) also eigentlich relative Basics. Ich glaub, das (die Unterstützung durch die Lehrerin) hat auch dazu geführt, dass ich dann wirklich in so 'ne Spur rein gekommen bin, ja?"
[9] „Das sind aber auch alles Leute, die in irgendeiner Form, ja, die also für mich auch intellektuell interessant sind (…) Also es ist 'n gänzlich anderes- (…) wenn ich überlege, was meine Eltern für Freunde, für 'n Bekanntenkreis hatten, und was ich jetzt für- da sind *ganz* andere- ganz ganz andere Leute sind das, ja."

mentioned remaining contact – who comes from the same Turkish 'guest worker' background, but did not enter higher education and today is a manual worker. After having introduced him in the interview as 'a friend', Onur feels the need to correct himself:

> Well this, he's not my *friend*. Friendship is something at eye level. He is just a very very good acquaintance. (§83)[10]

'Real' friendship relations are for Onur only thinkable on the 'same level' which he defines by similarities in cultural capital and the position in the social space. This strong sentiment of social distance even extends to his parents. This becomes particularly evident in the following extract:

> Well, if my parents were not my parents, they would not be the kind of people I would have contact with. That should be clear. The mutual exchange, the topics they are interested in don't interest me. Maybe that's a big word, but there is actually a- some sort of- a kind of alienation there. He (my father) just lives in a completely different world, there are hardly any intersections with what I do or what I am. I don't know, for example, that they watch so much TV, which always really turns me off. I just visited my father in Turkey and on our last evening he sat there watching a sort of Rambo-film for four hours, with interruptions again and again. And then there is this coke commercial: 'Take a sip of happiness from the bottle' – and what does my father do? He goes to the fridge and gets himself a coke (laughs). With this kind of things I just think: 'What am I doing here?' (§89)[11]

Onur describes a feeling of 'alienation' from his parents, being the result of his acquired position in the social space and the accumulation of economic and cultural capital, as well as his adoption of the habitus of his 'new world'. Onur's case illustrates almost in an ideal-typical way the acquisition of a habitus that Bourdieu associates with the dominant classes. His life-style, taste and cultural preferences do avoid all connections to as much his Turkish *and* his working class background and instead celebrate the typical elements of the 'goût de luxe' (Bourdieu 1984) and the insignia of German *Bildungsbürgertum*: there are repeated references in the interview to his interest in classical music and philosophy, and his apartment – where the interview took place – is elegantly equipped with parquet floor, stuccoed ceiling, exquisite furniture and pieces of modern art.[12]

In Onur's case, identification and distinction are first of all based on *social class* affiliation, but they intersect with ethnicity. On the rare occasions that Turks in Germany appear in his narrative he uses expressions like e.g. 'Ghetto of Turks', and he also associates his own experience of stigmatisation during childhood and youth mainly to *class*-related aspects such as the lack of money in his family. Onur has internalized the strong discursive association in Germany of 'Turkish' with the working class and low-education which leaves no room for whatever forms of hybridity or the simultaneousness of multiple identities and connected habitual practices. He might still

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[10] „Also dieser, das ist nicht mein *Freund*. Freundschaft ist was auf Augenhöhe. Also, das ist einfach 'n sehr sehr guter Bekannter."

[11] „Naja, wenn meine Eltern nicht meine Eltern wären, wären das keine Leute, mit denen ich Kontakt hätte. Das muss man einfach festhalten. Also der Austausch-die Themen, die sie interessieren, interessieren mich nicht. (…) Das ist vielleicht 'n großes Wort, aber es ist schon 'ne- schon 'ne-'ne Art Entfremdung da, dass der (Vater) einfach in 'ner ganz anderen Welt lebt, (…) da gibt's einfach wenig Schnittmengen (…) mit dem, was ich mache oder wie ich halt im Sein bin. (…) Was weiß ich: dass die so viel Fernsehen schauen, was mich immer nur abtörnt. Ich hab jetzt meinen Vater besucht in der Türkei (…) und an unserem letzten Abend (…) saß er da und hat irgend so 'ne Art Rambo-Film gesehen, vier Stunden lang und immer wieder mit Un-

terbrechungen. Und dann machen sie Cola-Werbung – 'Trink ein Schluck Glück aus der Pulle' – und was macht mein Vater? Geht zum Kühlschrank und holt sich 'ne Cola! (lacht) Alles so Sachen, wo ich dann einfach denke, ,was mach ich eigentlich hier?'"

[12] The term *Bildungsbürger* refers to a part of the middle-class that highly values education in a quite traditional sense as 'classical education' with a strong focus on 'high culture' – especially classical music and languages, such as Latin and Ancient Greek. German *Bildungsbürger* are mostly wealthy, they work in traditionally high prestige-professions, such as doctors, lawyers and university professors, and they use education – more than material goods – as a status symbol and differentiator to lower social classes, including the gross of immigrants.

be perceived by outsiders as 'a Turk', but for him that does not mean much more than the 'mere coincidence' of having Turkish parents.

Looking at the entire sample of our Turkish second generation interviewees, however, Onur is not only a rather extreme case, but also an exception. Certainly, all respondents have been facing similar challenges in developing strategies for dealing with differences between their 'milieu of origin' and the skills and socio-cultural competences needed to survive in their respective professional environments. Our next case represents a strategy that takes an almost diametrical position in regard to the role of the ethnic and the social background in the narrative of success.

Case 2: Connection and Ethnic Distinction
In the case of Erkan Özgenc, a 32-year old IT professional in Berlin, the steep upward career is not accompanied by feelings of social distance and alienation towards his Turkish working class 'milieu of origin'. Quite on the contrary, potential gaps in social class affiliation are bridged by emphasising a strong identity as Turkish and Muslim and the supposed cultural values and cohesiveness of an 'ethnic community'. Erkan was born in Berlin into one of the 'typical Turkish' neighbourhoods of the city, but his parents, both with only a few years of formal education and working in low status jobs, purposely moved to a middle-class neighbourhood when he and his brother approached school age. Being a bright pupil in primary education, Erkan went to a *Gymnasium* for secondary education, but approaching the moment of transition from lower to higher secondary he was, as he tells, practically forced to leave the school by a teacher who bluntly said to him that she would do anything to prevent him from becoming the 'first Turk' at this school to pass the final exam. He changed to a vocational *Gymnasium* and successfully gained his *Abitur*. Already during his studies of Informatics at the Technical University, he took up student jobs in the IT departments with different companies. Upon graduating from the university, one of

these companies, a large global player, offered him a full-time position as an IT consultant. Today, he is still working there and has achieved, as he defines it, a 'good middle-class position in society': he lives with his wife and children in a self-owned apartment situated in a relatively heterogeneous middle-class neighbourhood.

In contrast to Onur, the structuring element of Erkan's career narrative is not alienation from the 'milieu of origin', but continuity and identification with it. Though Erkan's parents could not help with his educational career either, he tells a very different story about what they meant for him during the time at school:

> Let me put it like this: my parents educated us very well in terms of well-educated behaviour, of culture, of values. But in actual school matters, we had to educate ourselves, my brother and me. They knew what a '1' and what a '6' meant (i.e. the best and the worst school grades; CL) but that was enough. So we knew: ok, we need to take an effort in school, good grades are good, bad grades are bad. (§40)[13]

It is revealing that in this reply to the question about the role of his parents for his school career particularly the transmission of *cultural* values is emphasised. Throughout the interview, Erkan refers to things done and thought that in his view are 'common for us' or 'in our culture'. For example, when he tells about his time at university and about having contact mostly with other Turkish students, he describes 'typical' modes of sociability that distinguished 'them' from 'German' students:

> Simple things such as, I don't know, when we are in the canteen, one person gets up and gets tea for everyone. He just asks 'Who would like to have tea?' and then usually everybody answers 'yes' and then he simply gets the tea. And no one asks afterwards:

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[13] „Also ich sag mal so, meine Eltern haben uns von der Erziehung her sehr gut erzogen, also vom Verhalten, von der Kultur her, von den Werten her (…). Aber rein schulisch haben wir uns eigentlich selbst erzogen, mit meinem Bruder. Also die wussten was 'ne Eins und was 'ne Sechs war, (…) aber das hat auch schon gereicht. Also wir wussten halt: Ok, wir müssen uns in der Schule anstrengen, gute Noten sind gut, schlechte Noten sind schlecht. (§40)"

'What do I owe you?' For us that is just common practice: if you have something, you share it. There are, as I said, many cultural aspects in which we are just different and therefore the circle of friends is always very similar as regards language and culture. (§181)[14]

In Erkan's case, the values he has been socialized into in his family are still guiding his everyday practices, social relationships, and perceptions of the world. According to him, his upward trajectory seems not to have performed any effect or change to these underlying, culturally defined principles. Erkan's narrative does not express any feeling of social distance to his parents or to other lower-educated Turkish people as could be presumed in the light of his upward career and his position in the social space. His frequently used collective 'we', as seen in the above-cited extract, establishes a close link with the social environment of his childhood and adolescence.

This is possible and coherent because Erkan works with a basic distinction not along 'social class', but along 'ethnic' classifications and notions of 'minority versus majority'. Throughout his account, Erkan particularly brightens the boundaries between 'Turks'/'Muslims' (or even 'foreigners' in general) and the German *Mehrheitsgesellschaft* ('majority society').[15] He continuously points out strong differences in values, norms and practices between the two sides, but also mentions the regularity of experiences of exclusion and stigmatisation that he shares with his 'co-ethnics'. An example:

It has happened several times already when we went shopping, that we were stopped by the security people: 'We saw that you took something, you hid it in the pushchair, you did this at the cashier.' Then he started screaming really loud, until we finally opened the pushchair in which our baby was sleeping. So we said to him: 'If she wakes up, you'll get into trouble'. And only then he noticed that we speak German and to him that was absolutely strange. (§207)[16]

Being 'othered' and discriminated against as a 'Turk' and 'Muslim' represents a biographical continuity for Erkan. He experiences that his accumulation of cultural and economic capital does not make much of a difference, but that he continues to be considered as 'socially inferior' simply because of his background. His emphasis on ethnic differentiations can be interpreted as *reactive* to social exclusion, and it is also visible in the way he describes his social relationships. Basically, all of his friends have a Turkish and/or Muslim background, whereas the relation to his 'native German' friends he still had in school did not last long – according to him, again because of 'fundamental cultural differences':

The big separation actually started right after the *Abitur*. Since the day of the *Abitur*, when I held it in the hand, I never heard or saw anything from my people at school again. Probably, we had never built up some real thing. I also have a friend, who for years had been separated from us, building up a German circle of friends. And after some years, he came over to us again and he told us: 'Hey, you know what, as much as I tried to bring myself together with these people, at the end of the day I am always the Turk', he said. So one can never- it just doesn't work, the two cultures are so far apart. It is just a completely different understanding of certain things. We really only have Turkish friends, not because we don't like the Germans,

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[14] „So einfache Dinge wie, keine Ahnung, wenn wir in der Kantine sitzen, dann steht bei uns einer auf und geht halt Tee holen für alle. (…) Er fragt nur 'Wer möchte 'n Tee haben?' und dann meldet sich eigentlich immer jeder und dann holt er halt den Tee. Und da wird dann nicht hinterher gefragt 'Ja was schuld ich dir?' (…) Bei uns ist es halt üblich, wenn man was hat, dann teilt man es. (…) Es sind, wie gesagt, viele kulturelle Aspekte, die uns unterscheiden einfach, und deswegen ist der Freundeskreis immer auch sehr gleichsprachig und gleichkulturell."

[15] On the concept of 'bright' versus 'blurred' boundaries see Alba 2005.

[16] „(Es ist) auch schon häufiger (passiert), dass wir beim Einkaufen von Securityleuten angehalten wurden, von wegen 'Ja, wir haben gesehen, wie Sie was eingesteckt haben' (…) 'Das haben sie im Kinderwagen versteckt, das haben Sie an der Kasse gemacht'. (…) Dann hat er ganz lautstark geschrien und dann haben wir dann im Endeffekt den Kinderwagen aufgemacht, sie hat geschlafen, wir haben gesagt 'Wenn sie aufwacht, dann gibt's Ärger'. Und er hat gemerkt, dass wir halt Deutsch sprechen, das war für ihn dann total fremd."

but simply because the intersections don't work. (§319)[17]

In sharp contrast to Onur, Erkan defines friendship as sharing a common cultural or ethnic background which works irrespective of educational level or social class. This connects him to a social environment which can be extremely heterogeneous. Consequently, his circle of friends comprises well-educated people in high status jobs as much as people who, as he admits, 'did not really get their lives together'. The joint 'ethnic definition' of social ties facilitates strong feelings of solidarity with lower educated people, whom he can support thanks to the cultural capital and self-confidence developed during his career. He describes himself as active in 'defending our own people,' in case they are treated unfairly, and he is involved in voluntary projects supporting young people of immigrant background in their educational careers. His trajectory thus not only did *not* go along with a dissociation from the 'old' habitus, but, on the contrary, strengthened his social position in and his feelings of belonging towards the 'milieu of origin'.

At the same time, Erkan's narrative is not about 'failed integration' or anything similar. As stated above, he and his family are living a middle-class life. Regarding his professional context, there are certain reservations expressed in regard to socialising with his colleagues beyond the work context. These reservations are mostly based on the perception that his ethnically 'German' colleagues wouldn't understand the rules imposed by his Islamic belief and also on his own rejection of the central role of alcohol in socialising events. But despite this, he seems to have internalised quite well the 'rules of the game', i.e. the habitus and strategies needed to be successful on the job.

The fact that his professional environment and the private social contexts are clearly separated does not present any particular difficulty for Erkan, who has been facing the challenges of switching between 'different worlds' since his childhood:

> One still lives between two cultures, you know? So you come home: a completely different world, in school it's a completely different world. Nowadays with work, it's still the same: when I go to work it's still a very strange world for me that just functions in a different manner than with us at home. And then somehow you have to combine this. (§82)[18]

This reference to 'different worlds' clearly contrasts the two cases. Onur has made his professional and private lives part of the same social sphere, consisting of an almost exclusively 'white' intellectual upper middle class. When Onur talks about a 'completely different world', he refers to the world of his parents and the Turkish working class from which he moved away in both the literal and the figurative meaning. For Erkan, the 'two worlds' are separated, too, but they both remain relevant for him: his self-identification is clearly with the world of his parents and his 'milieu of origin', but performing practices belonging to the 'old' habitus does not exclude knowing the 'codes' for being successful as a professional in a mainstream global company and acting accordingly in the respective contexts.

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[17] „Die große Spaltung hat eigentlich direkt nach'm Abitur begonnen. Also, am Tag des Abiturs, wo ich's in der Hand gehalten hab, hab ich nie wieder was von meinen Leuten aus der Schule gehört oder gesehen. (…) Man hat nie wahrscheinlich so richtig was aufgebaut. (…) Ich hab auch 'n Freund, (…) der hat jahrelang sich von uns abgespalten, der hat sich so 'n deutschen Freundeskreis aufgebaut. Und nach etlichen Jahren kam er dann mehr mal wieder zu uns rüber, so wenn wir uns getroffen haben, (…) und hat dann erzählt 'Ey wisst ihr was, so sehr ich mich auch versucht hab, mit den Leuten irgendwie zusammen zu bringen, im Endeffekt bin ich der Türke' hat der gesagt. Also man kann niemals- das geht einfach nicht, die Kultur ist so fern voneinander. Also das Verständnis für gewisse Dinge ist einfach komplett verschieden. (…) Wir haben halt wirklich nur türkische Freunde, nicht aus dem Grund, weil wir die Deutschen nicht mögen, sondern einfach, weil die Schnittpunkte nicht funktionieren."

[18] „Man lebt ja zwischen zwei Kulturen, immer noch, ne? Also, du kommst nach Hause: ganz andere Welt, in der Schule ist 'ne ganz andere Welt. Das ist heute mit Arbeiten immer noch so: Wenn ich arbeiten gehe, ist für mich halt immer noch 'ne ganz fremde Welt, die halt einfach anders tickt, als es zu Hause bei uns ist. Und dann muss man das ja irgendwie kombinieren."

The position of the Turkish minority as one of the most prominent Others in current German self-definitions (Schneider 2001, 2010; Mandel 2008) and the clear boundaries between what is associated with the 'Turkish' and the 'German worlds' suggests little room for members of that minority to really 'become part' – in a dual sense: as the *ethnic* label 'being Turkish' is discursively linked with low educational and professional status, our upwardly mobile respondents face the problem of defining themselves in a social position that is still largely absent in public discourse. In a way, Erkan's *reactive* identification with his 'own ethnic group' and Onur´s *over*-identification with the mainstream middle class represent two alternative strategies that seem to be closest at hand.

Yet Erkan, like Onur, is not prototypical for the gross of our sample. Taking such a clear side in a strongly contested field of belonging and identity politics is apparently not the most attractive option. Quite on the contrary, most of our professionally successful interviewees employ all kinds of *bridging strategies* between the 'two worlds': They feel at home in Germany and their hometown, but they are also connected to Turkey; they maintain close relations to their families, but also feel at ease with their fellow students or colleagues, even when the latter group does not share the same social or ethnic background. Even when discussing an obvious cultural difference between Turkishness and Germanness, the largest part of our respondents expressed that both references have been intimately part of their socialisation. For them, the actual challenge is how to balance out the multiple and hybrid, social and ethnic identities and the habitus of the different 'worlds' in which they feel they belong.

Case 3: Social Mobility without Alienation and Distinction

This will be illustrated with our third case, the narrative of Meral Çinar, a 31-year old risk manager at a bank in Frankfurt. Meral was born and grew up in a middle-sized town in Bavaria. She had a smooth school career thanks to the 'luck', as she calls it, of having met a supportive school environment. After primary school, she directly accessed the academic track *Gymnasium* – where she was one of just a few children from immigrant families – and she passed the final exam *Abitur* without a problem. While still studying Business at the University of Applied Sciences in her hometown, she decided to spend a year in Istanbul to study Turkish literature. After taking up her Business Studies again in Germany, she wrote her thesis at a global transportation company in Frankfurt and was offered a job there. She declined, however, and instead applied for a two-year traineeship at a renowned bank in Frankfurt. To her own surprise, she successfully passed the highly demanding and selective recruitment process and, after the traineeship, was offered a permanent contract. In the interview, Meral still presents herself as being overwhelmed by this privileged and 'elite' professional context. She lives in an upper-middle class residential town near Frankfurt – another 'elitist' environment, she laughingly admits – but she moved there mainly because family lived nearby. When we met for the interview at her workplace, her appearance stands out: she wore a short, tight black dress, high heels, and quite heavy make-up which was in clear contrast to her passing-by female colleagues in their discreet business pantsuits.

In Meral's narrative, we see a combination of the necessary transformations and adaptations in the course of her steep professional career on one hand, and a quest for continuity in the most fundamental values, norms and identifications from her childhood socialisation on the other. She gives a vivid account of the adaptation process 'from a *Gastarbeiterkind* to a certain class, I did not know before', as she describes it herself, that she experienced upon entering her current job:

> The first year, I was actually permanently overstrained, and I also told my parents: 'It's great here, I like my colleagues and the bosses, everyone is nice, but I am overstrained. This is a world where I do not belong!' It was simply so different for me,

this elitist class where I do not come from, where I was not born into. But then, at some moment and without noticing, I became more influenced, also in the course of my professional achievements. I don't know, at some moment, it was just no trouble anymore and I started to really feel more and more at ease. How shall I say? Today it is like that: I really enjoy working here. (§29)[19]

Meral describes the process of acquiring and internalizing a new habitus which allows her to act and behave properly in this new social context. Her account also illustrates that acquiring a new habitus also means *identifying* with that new environment. Yet, it is also important for her to maintain or establish different types of connections to her Turkish and working class origins. In regard to her parents, for example, Meral emphasizes the importance that her family attributed to education in spite of both parents having only spent a few years in school:

> I come from a family that values education a lot. Even though my parents are guest workers they always wanted that we advance well in school and learn a good profession afterwards. That was very clearly their priority, so when we needed something for school or tutoring classes, they never saved on this. These are actually the values they transmitted to us very strongly.
>
> They made very clear to me, maybe in contrast to many other Turkish families: "You can always marry and you will also certainly find a husband, but first learn a good profession so that you can be self-reliant and independent and do your own thing". (§7, 9)[20]

Meral's parents might not have been able to support her school career by helping with homework etc., but they transmitted a sort of 'fundamental orientation' that guided her educational goals and aspirations. This is actually a very widespread narrative in our interviews, and it has also been reported in several other studies on social mobility in immigrant families as an important element in the 'intergenerational transmission' of educational aspirations (e.g. Raiser 2007; Nicholas, Stepick and Stepick 2008; Tepecik 2011). By this, 'social climbers' establish continuity between their current position and their family. The upward career is presented as *product* of internalized parental aspirations and not as result of individual habitus transformation.

But Meral's reference to family values also includes the ideals of independence and individual autonomy, i.e. values that presumably guide her personal goals and attitudes to this day. This even connects her upward career and professional habitus to the mobility narrative of her family. Meral thus manages to discursively bridge what appears as a deep cleft between the 'two worlds' in the two previous cases. This becomes visible at different moments in the interview. The following quote illustrates three parallel lines of continuity in Meral's narrative: (a) the familial habitus of aspiring educational and professional success, (b) the ongoing strong reference to 'Turkishness' (including Turkey and the Turkish community in Germany), and (c) the 'juggling' of the two 'spheres' of her family (and the 'Turkish community') and her 'German' circle of friends:

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[19] „Das erste Jahr war ich eigentlich permanent überfordert und (…) hab das auch so meinen Eltern gesagt. „Das ist toll hier, ich mag zwar meine Kollegen und Chefs, die sind alle nett, aber ich bin nur überfordert, das ist 'ne Welt, in die gehör ich nicht rein!" (…) Das ist so einfach anders gewesen für mich, so diese elitäre Schicht, aus der ich nicht komme, in die ich nicht hineingeboren wurde. Ja und dann irgendwann, (…) ohne dass ich's gemerkt hab, hat das immer mehr eingefärbt, auch mit den fachlichen Erfolgen. (…) Ich weiß nicht, irgendwann ist es mir selber von der Hand ganz einfach gegangen und ich hab mich dann wirklich immer wohler gefühlt. (…) Und ja, wie soll ich's sagen? Jetzt ist es so, ich arbeite hier super super gerne."

[20] „Ich habe 'ne Familie äh, die sehr viel Wert auf Bildung legt. Meine Eltern sind zwar Gastarbeiter, aber sie wollten immer, dass wir schulisch vorankommen und dann später auch einen guten Beruf erlernen(…)

> Die haben auch die Priorität ganz klar darauf gelegt. Das heißt, wenn wir irgendwas für die Schule gebraucht haben, oder Nachhilfeunterricht, daran wurde nie gespart. Und das sind eigentlich die Werte, die uns sehr stark vermittelt wurden."
>
> „Also die haben schon sehr klar gesagt, im Gegensatz vielleicht zu vielen anderen türkischen Familien: 'heiraten kannst du immer, 'n Mann findest du auch immer, aber erlerne einen guten Beruf, damit du selbstständig bist und unabhängig sein kannst und dich selbst verwirklichen kannst.'"

My position towards the family was always different from my (German) friends. It was clear to me that I would *not* move out at age 18; that was not a primary goal. I have two elder brothers: I am very free, but, at the same time, it is pretty clear that I cannot just bring a number of male friends at home. There are certain limits that I have to respect. And these made some differences. I also do not eat pork, and I listen to a different type of music. For me it was clear that I would travel to Turkey every summer, while my friends would go every year to a different place. That does not mean that I would have been the typical swot in school: I went out at night and lived that life *too*. I sometimes went to Turkish discotheques where I would have never persuaded someone from my class to join in (laughs). So, I went with my Turkish friends to the Turkish discotheque on one weekend, and the next weekend I did something with my German friends and we had just as much fun. Also my ideas about men are different from my German friends, very different actually. I have a rather classical understanding of gender roles. I would not like to have a husband who stays at home for three years when I get a child and then welcomes me every evening with an apron around his waist and our child on his arm. (§67)[21]

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[21] „Die Einstellung zur Familie war immer anders bei mir als bei meinen Freunden. Für mich stand halt fest, ich zieh nicht aus mit 18. Das ist jetzt für mich kein primäres Ziel. Ich hab zwei große Brüder: ich bin zwar sehr frei, aber trotzdem war's dann irgendwie auch klar, ich kann hier nicht beliebig viele Freunde haben männliche oder äh so mit nach Hause nehmen, da gibt es schon gewisse Grenzen, die ich einhalten muss. Das waren dann halt Unterschiede. Oder ich esse kein Schweinefleisch und ich hör auch andere Musik. Und für mich ist klar, dass ich jedes Jahr in die Türkei fliege, während meine Freunde jedes Jahr in ein anderes Land fliegen. (…) Ich war jetzt aber nicht der typische Strebertyp, der dann irgendwie ausgeschlossen war, weil ich (…) viel unternommen hab und auch abends weggegangen bin und irgendwie dieses Leben auch gelebt hab. Ich bin vielleicht auch manchmal anders weggegangen als die anderen, also in türkische Diskotheken, da hätte ich niemanden aus meiner Klasse überreden können (lachend) da mitzugehen. Aber dann sind halt meine türkischen Freundinnen und ich in ‚ne türkische Disko gegangen an dem Wochenende. Und am nächsten Wochenende war ich dann mit meinen deutschen Freundinnen unterwegs und das hat genauso viel Spaß gemacht. (…) Ich glaube, auch mein Männerbild ist schon anders als von meinen deutschen Freundinnen (lacht), sehr stark anders, (…) ich hab doch schon 'n klassischeres Verständnis, was die Rollenverteilung angeht. Also (…) ich fände es nicht toll, wenn ich ‚n Kind bekomme und mein Mann

Already in the almost exclusively German and middle class-environment of her *Gymnasium*, Meral became used to 'switching' between the different habitual practices there and at home – which is similar to the practice of 'code-switching' that has also been identified in studies on ethnic minority middle class in the U.S. and the United Kingdom (e.g. by Neckerman, Carter and Lee 1999; Moore 2008; Rollock et al. 2011).[22] Becoming familiar with the professional habitus in her current company was a challenge, but has not led to any sort of questioning or even abandoning the internalised norms and modes of behaviour of her 'Turkish side'. On the contrary, they still guide her everyday practices and they are directly linked to a strong feeling of Turkish identity. Yet, different from Erkan, neither certain feelings of Otherness in her professional environment nor the partially differing life-styles of her 'German' friends go along with drawing a clear *ethnic* boundary. Even though she highlights aspects that distinguish her from the 'German mainstream', she also expresses a strong feeling of being 'at home' in German society and totally at ease in her professional context.

This narrative strategy also bridges differences in social class. She underscores, for instance, the heterogeneity of her social contacts and that she would never judge people on the basis of their educational attainment or current professional activity. Meral has developed a strong understanding of the struggles and challenges of moving up, translated into a sort of 'habitus as social climber' – i.e. becoming part of an upper-class professional environment, but, at the same time, cultivating elements of her working class-origins. This resembles to what Rollock et al. describe in regard to the Black middle class in the United Kingdom as 'immediacy of stories, memories

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sagt „Ich bleib jetzt drei Jahre zu Hause, geh du arbeiten und mach deine Karriere" und er mich jeden Abend mit Schürze und unserem Kind auf 'm Arm empfangen würde."
[22] See also the vast linguistic literature which was the first to observe and describe 'code-switching' as a normal and widely unproblematic exercise in multilingual environments (see Gogolin and Neumann 2009 for an overview of some current debates here).

and advice from a working-class past', making it difficult to unambiguously self-identify as 'just middle-class' (Rollock et al. 2013: 263). Meral demonstrates that maintaining and cultivating the connection to one's origins can be successfully combined with building up social and emotional ties to environments with completely different rules at work.

Even though Meral also uses the metaphor of 'different worlds' to describe her experiences of dealing with her different social contexts, the task is not to decide for one or the other, but to find a way of expressing her feelings of belonging to *both*:

> I have also learned to deal with these two worlds. On the one hand this world of the bank, and the moment I leave the bank, the fact that there is also a real world. I see this here (the bank) also as a sort of soap bubble. It is very selective, and when I am out there with normal people then I need a day or two to acclimatise again. It's really like that, but that's the same with many colleagues, because here you get used to a certain way of speaking, to use certain phrases and formulations. The way you work, the way you think, you become intensely part of the company. I identify very strongly with what I do. But it also helped to be aware of this and tell myself that this is, in fact, a sort of soap bubble here. (§27)[23]

The agile 'switching' between certain practices and 'languages' represents a connection strategy that is quite common among the 'social climbers' in our sample. Growing up in Germany as children of Turkish immigrants made them learn

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[23] „Ich hab gelernt, mit diesen zwei Welten umzugehen. Einmal diese Welt der Bank, und immer wenn ich diese Welt verlasse, dass es nochmal eine echte Welt gibt. Also ich seh das hier so 'n bisschen als Seifenblase an. Hier ist es schon sehr stark selektiert, und wenn ich wieder draußen bin, wieder unter den normalen Menschen, dann brauch ich wieder ein, zwei Tage, um mich zu akklimatisieren. Es ist wirklich so, aber es geht auch vielen Kollegen so, weil du bist es nur gewohnt, (...) in 'ner gewissen Art zu reden, gewisse Redewendungen, Formulierungen zu gebrauchen (...). Die Art, wie du arbeitest, die Art, wie du denkst, also du wirst sehr stark zu dem Unternehmen. Ich identifiziere mich auch sehr stark über das, was ich tue. (...) Aber es hat mir auch geholfen, so dieses Bewusstsein zu sagen ‚Okay, das hier ist nun mal ‚ne Art Seifenblase.'"

to cope with distinct social and cultural contexts since childhood days: a 'private sphere' in which Turkish language and cultural practices predominated and the 'public sphere' of a German speaking school environment. Thus, even though the professional career gives access to still a very different social experience, Meral's narrative – and similarly the narratives of a large part of our respondents – indicates that they have acquired the basic skills for this already in their youth. Developing and applying these skills is challenging, but certainly in most cases not 'painful', as was stated by Lee and Kramer (2013) at the beginning of this article.

Conclusion

The processes of upward social mobility for our respondents require transformation and adaptation in (at least) two intersecting categories: social class and ethnicity. To describe this kind of transformation, a widely used concept in the literature on social mobility has been 'habitus', a term developed and extensively described especially by Pierre Bourdieu whose empirical studies, e.g. on the differentiating function of tastes and preferences within the social classes (Bourdieu 1984), moreover laid a solid fundament for the presumption that crossing social boundaries must go along with profound changes in the habitual practices of upwardly mobile individuals. The focus on the boundaries between social strata emphasises the stability and durability of a given collective habitus. However, most of the literature does not distinguish in conceptual terms between habitus as a collectively shared set of dispositions which demonstrates remarkable continuity and stability, and its representations in individual attitudes and behaviours which can change in the course of a biography. As a consequence, individuals tend to appear as 'imprisoned' in the prescriptions of a given habitus, so that 'escaping' from it and adopting a new habitus is understood as a deep and permanent transformation.

While this might still work conceptually for the crossing of social boundaries, it becomes

increasingly problematic when we look at the intersections between social class and other relevant dividing lines in society, e.g. gender, 'race' or ethnicity. The cases presented demonstrate a much wider range of possible reactions than is suggested by the concepts of 'cleft habitus' and 'habitus transformation'. While there is no doubt that transformations in habitual practices happen in processes of upward social mobility, the examples of Erkan and Meral illustrate that they do not necessarily lead to *replacing* one habitus by another, but rather to a *diversification* of the repertoire of social practices, 'languages' and modes of behaviour.

In our view, much can be gained by bringing together the concept of habitus with the very closely related concepts of identity and hybridity. Identity literature offers a conceptual framework that stresses elements of process, change, and multiplicity. Applied to the concept of habitus, it would entail, for example, the possibility of 'switching' between social practices within a dynamic set of 'multiple habitus', according to the given social context. Linking the two approaches, we therefore suggest thinking in terms of *habitus diversification* to describe and conceptualise the ways in which 'social climbers' deal with adaptations and transformations when crossing social boundaries. An important focus should thus be on the strategies of *bridging* across different habitus instead of the rather limited perspective on the cleavage between them. At the same time, the habitus concept adds something to Identity Theory, too, in the sense that it directs our attention to the *structural* aspects in social mobility patterns, making evident that individual coping strategies are the result of individual and collective interactions within a specific wider social structure (see Baumeister and Muraven 1996; Reay 2004) – a structure that obviously also includes relations of power and inclusion/exclusion. Moreover, the habitus concept offers a way to link identity to practice, which is an aspect Identity Theory literature often has difficulties dealing with.

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