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6.6.2005

### «Media and Processes of Identity Formation in the Context of Migration»

At the moment I listen to three different types of music: English, Turkish, and Kurdish.

I download them all at once and listen to it all the time. I often download film and music from the Internet.

And then they [the parents] often say: «Stop it, get away from the computer, no more music.» My parents used to say: «Listen to Kurdish and Turkish music», and now they can't get me away from it. (Ergün, Kurdish boy, 15 years old, lives in Zurich, Switzerland)

*In a highly industrialized and media-saturated country like Switzerland children of all origins are strong multimedia users. Switzerland has one of the highest proportions of migrants in Europe: About 20,5 percent of the population are of migrant origin. So far, media research in Switzerland focussing on children and young people has paid no special attention to the extent the cultural background may influence the media use, i.e. whether the media play a specific function in processes of identity-formation for these children. More detailed and qualified information on this topic is of interest when faced with the fact that the social background is still one of the key determinants of a successful career in our society. This paper will discuss first findings of a project focussing on the impact of the cultural background on the media use of children with a migrant background in Switzerland.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> The project is situated in the National Research Programme 52 «Childhood, Youth and Intergenerational Relationships in a Changing Society» and focuses on: «The  
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### «Productive users»

The project's aim is to investigate the relationship between culture-specific characteristics (besides other socio-demographic influences) and the function and role the media and ICT play in identity-formation processes for youths living in a multicultural setting, i.e. with an immigrant background. In the research proposal we formulated the following two general hypotheses:

1. There are major differences concerning media use, access, possession and consumption between youths with an immigrant background and Swiss youths and also within each of these groups. As a consequence the education system has to be sensitive towards these differences in order to fulfil its task of guaranteeing equal access to knowledge and information.
2. Immigrant youths and families live in a world with contradictory social and cultural value systems. The use of media and ICT functions as a means to develop and maintain a sense of identity within different social contexts: e.g. the family, school or peer group.

To grow up in a western industrial society such as Switzerland means to grow up and live in a media-saturated environment, with access to different media, to multiple TV-channels, to the computer, to mobile phones, and to the Internet. In recent years the computer, integrating broadcasting, video, computing, games and the Internet, has become the leading site of our multimedia culture. The latest large survey analyzing the media use of children and youths in Switzerland is a study published in 2000.<sup>2</sup> This large-scale child-centred investigation analyses media consumption and activities of about 1'300 Swiss children aged 6 to 16. Topics addressed in this survey were media access and ownership, time spent with different media, media preferences and favourite media, media habits and regulations. While strong emphasis was put on age and gender, the factor «cultural background» as a possible influencing determinant was not considered. This gap can now be closed with a project financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation<sup>3</sup> that puts the focus on the impact of the

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Function of Media in Constructing Social Identity in a Multicultural Setting».

<sup>2</sup> Süss, Daniel. *Kinder und Jugendliche im sich wandelnden Medienumfeld: Eine repräsentative Befragung von 6- bis 16-Jährigen und ihren Eltern in der Schweiz*. Zürich: IPMZ, 2000. This project was part of the European comparative study *Children, Young People and Their Changing Media Environment* ed. by Sonia Livingstone and Moira Bovill 2001.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1.

cultural background in connection with media use of children, paying special attention to the role of media in processes of identity-formation.

The focus of the study is on the individual media user or consumer and the methodological approach tries to describe his or her interaction with different media considering various settings i.e. within the familial context or with peers. Our theoretical argumentation draws on conceptions developed in the context of a cultural studies' approach in media studies. This perspective offers fruitful approaches to conceptualize processes of identity-formation in an industrialized and media-saturated western society. In a rapidly changing world, where stable identities lasting over the whole working life are more and more dysfunctional, the working and reworking of identities – often in the context of media use – has become a lifelong task for the people in western societies (see: Moser 2000, p. 108). In this context identity is rather seen as a field of interpretation than an essence, not as a metaphysical essence but as a dynamic system (Melucci 1977, p. 64).

In the case of adolescents with a migrant background, the lack of normative orientation that characterises «post-modern» western societies seems to complicate the development and stabilisation of a coherent identity because of their position between different cultures and lifestyles. So, we will include in our discussion the conceptualisation of paradigms such as ethnicity and nationality in a globalised society, concepts of hybridity and multiple identities in reference to subject positions taken up in connection with processes of generating meaning of accessible media texts, i.e. representations in media products, consumption of a globalised popular culture, accessibility of different cultural worlds through media. When focussing on children in this context the intergenerational relations also have to be considered since it is precisely in this connection that they find themselves in different – often conflicting – subject positions, thus experiencing themselves as the linchpin of different norms and value systems. In this context the aspect of gender also plays an important role and has to be considered as a strong determinant. In addition, the socio-economic status of the family as a factor influencing these processes also has to be accounted for.

One of the central theoretical concepts in the discussion of the media consumer or user is the model of the active user i.e. consumer as introduced in Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding model, describing the act of media

reception as an active process (Hall 1981). In this context de Certeau's conceptualisation of the active role of the consumer in connection with consumer culture and products of media culture is also of importance, since he conceptualises these activities in practices of everyday life (de Certeau 1984). Willis's findings, generated by analysing consumer-practices of adolescents of a working-class background, have to be mentioned here as well, since they palpably illustrate how these young people made use of global cultural products such as TV texts, videos, magazines, pop music, commercials, clothes etc. in order to express their individuality and personality. They were by no means the passive consumers exposed to an endless stream of pictures, sounds, and goods (Willis 1991). These argumentations foster an ethnographic perspective when surveying and describing media activities. Liebes and Katz (see Barker 2001, p. 114) demonstrated in the early 1990s the importance of nation and ethnicity as paradigms influencing the intercourse with media products by showing how cultural and ethnic background play a role in so far as the audience use their own sense of national and ethnic identity as a position from which to decode programs.

In 1991 Morley argued in his influential essay «Where the Global Meets the Local: Notes from the Sitting Room» that the ethnographic study of media consumption – as an element of everyday life and practices – in a globalised world has to include the careful analysis on the micro-level to reveal changes due to globalisation. Describing the media-reception of youths Willis and others have thus demonstrated most vividly that neither meaning nor purpose of use of these mediated texts are determined as such. Depending on individual or social context these texts are interpreted differently and used as symbolic resources to constitute a specific identity. It is argued that the paradigms of class, family, and nation lose their authority and power. In their place are now global information and communication-flows that impose the coded system of cultural products and thus present the framework within which the youths act (Winter 2001, p. 286). In the context of today's media-saturated world Morley thus asks for a specific analysis of simultaneously occurring processes of homogenisation and fragmentation, and of globalisation and localisation.

In her famous study on media use in a community of British-Asian youths in Southall, Marie Gillespie uses the above-mentioned conceptualisations by adopting a similar theoretical approach (Gillespie, 1995). Her study

presents results on the difficulties children face when growing up with different cultural backgrounds. By closely analysing the role the media play for these girls with an immigrant background her study sheds light on differences with respect to media use and consumption between immigrated parents and their children growing up in the host country. Of special interest in this situation is the question of cultural identity in a context of global communication. Transnational products can open up an imaginary space in which one's own culture can be newly defined. «Media are being used by productive consumers to maintain and strengthen boundaries, but also to create new, shared spaces in which syncretic cultural forms, such as «new ethnicities», can emerge» (Gillespie 1995, p. 208).

When discussing conceptualisations of identity from perspectives focussing on ethnic and cultural background the concept of «hybridity», introduced by postcolonial studies (Bhaba), enters the debate. The thesis of hybrid identities is a topic generally discussed in context with reflecting the globalisation debate: The local attachment of diaspora life in the sense of «fixed origins» has become permeable in favour of networks of living together that might span the whole globe (Brah 1996). Hepp, too, emphasized the relationships among global media for processes of identity formation when pointing out the possibilities inherent in the new information and communication technologies such as satellite television or net-communication when it comes to the development of hybrid cultural identities, since they offer new ways of relations between location and space. With their potential to cross borders and undermine or subvert territories, they are included in a complex play of de- and re-territorialisation of spaces of identity (Hepp 1999, p. 221).

Hall's three arguments presented in this discussion of the function of media in relation to the transformation of cultural identities in the face of the globalisation of western cultural products and media texts embrace the whole context with reference to the political dimension:

1. The development of a cultural homogenisation and the «global post-modern» leads to an erosion of «natural» identities.
2. National and other «local» or particularistic identities will be empowered as opposition against globalisation.
3. National identities will diminish, and new identities of a hybrid character will take their place (Hall 1994, p. 209).

A political perspective discussing aspects of power has to be considered e. g. when it comes to the discussion of the development of measures to be carried out by national educational systems in order to guarantee equal access to education for all pupils. So far it has not yet been discussed to what extent immigrants understand their «hybrid identities» as a resource when discussing concepts of assimilation and integration. The question arises as to whether and how this endeavour will be hindered or facilitated by the media's «covert co-educators». Differentiated information on the influence of media would serve as a key orientational aid for teachers in multicultural schools. In 2002 Eggert and Theunert clearly drew our attention to the lack of databased information that analyse the deeper functions of media use and consumption for children and adolescents with an immigrant background (see Eggert/Theunert 2002, p. 291). These authors point out that the complex situation of youths with an immigrant background, characterised by having to oscillate between differently structured worlds and norm systems, forces them to develop «intercultural competence» and can cause severe problems when it comes to the formation of a stable identity (Eggert/Theunert 2002, p. 290). In this context Alkan points out that «the increasing media globalization creates new possibilities and possible problems for children and young people situated as they are between the often contradictory (media) norms of parents and peers» (Drotner in Livingstone, p. 293).

The research-framework of our project adopts a mixed-method approach combining qualitatively and quantitatively collected data.<sup>4</sup> In the quantitative part a large survey<sup>5</sup> is to provide insight into the media behaviour of migrant youths and will discuss the first hypothesis, i.e. differences between youths with an immigrant background and Swiss youths concerning media use, access, possession and consumption and also within each

<sup>4</sup> The project is carried out by two partners: The Institute of Mass Communication and Media Research IPMZ of the University of Zurich and the University of Applied Sciences, School of Education of Zürich, where the authors of this paper work.

<sup>5</sup> The quantitative survey comprises a written questionnaire which will be answered by about 1200 pupils aged 12–15 (classes with a high percentage of pupils with an immigrant background). They will be asked to answer questions regarding the following topics: media access, media use compared to other leisure activities; perception of one's own migration context; personal values and attitudes concerning media services; future plans; political attitudes; personal values; socio-demographic factors: gender, age, religious background, position within the family, socio-economic status.

of these cultural contexts. The qualitative part of the project focuses on the role and function the media play for these children in processes of identity-construction in their familial context, with their peers, and in school, paying special attention to their confrontation with different cultural value systems.<sup>6</sup>

The relationships between media use, identity-formation, and the processes of globalisation will now be discussed in connection with first results of focus group interviews we carried out in December 03 and January 04 with seven girls and four boys of Turkish and Kurdish background, aged 13 to 16 in a secondary school in Zurich. It was the first step in our qualitative research programme and as such, it was mainly concerned with the reflection of the contribution of media use in processes of identity construction in the daily lives of the interviewed adolescents.

### Globalisation and the media

As Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. demonstrate, the «spaces» of interaction between people, information, institutions, and cultural traditions have changed in the «information age» (see Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 2003). The globalised modernity (Giddens) is not only a theoretical construct but also part of the daily experiences of everyday life. At the same time the questions of Anthony Giddens remain: «But what exactly is globalisation, and how might we best conceptualise the phenomenon?» (Giddens 2003, p. 19). In the following section we will discuss these topics exclusively in a theoretical manner. Indeed, we are focussing on our interviews with Turkish migrant adolescents and their answers to questions concerning their media use and their everyday life.

Focussing on the relationships between everyday life, globalisation and the media as presented in the respective scientific literature it is not uncommon to assume a globalising effect of the media-system. We are participating in a global mediascape as Appadurai characterises it. With the term «mediascape» he refers to both the distribution of the electronic capabilities to

produce and disseminate information and to the images of the world created by these media (see Appadurai 1996, p. 35). The news on CNN, soap operas like *The Osbournes* and TV-series such as *Sex and the City* or *South Park* are part of a worldwide distributed popular culture. Globalisation thus transforms the spaces of communication between individuals, institutions, and cultural traditions. Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. suggest that «patterns of social interaction and information flows are increasingly occurring across national boundaries to form new bases of political and cultural identity» (Sreberny-Mohammadi e.a. 1997, p. XII).

As a basic assumption we therefore suppose that media are one of the main fields within which we see globalisation at work. This hypothesis can be illustrated with the interviews conducted with young people with an immigrant background. In focus groups the adolescents were asked to name the programmes they watch on television on a regular basis. The answers demonstrated that some of the girls who generally expressed rather strong traditional religious attitudes are at the same time regular consumers of American soaps and/or of the MTV show *Dismissed*. Despite their rather conservative attitudes with regard to questions concerning moral and sexual behaviour they are fascinated by the more permissive American way of life as presented e.g. in the American soap opera *Friends*. They like *Friends*, a soap, which revolves around a sextet of good-looking young people, three men and three women, in an urban setting of New York. One of the male protagonists – Ross – is a divorced paleontologist working in a museum, whose pregnant wife Carol has left him for another woman. This lesbian couple is now raising his baby, and Ross – despite fits of pique and jealousy – tries to be a «new man» about it and behaves as if they were a normal heterosexual couple.

But our interviewed adolescents also like German soaps such as *Gute Zeiten, schlechte Zeiten* or *Marienhof*, both dealing with a group of young people and the problems they face when growing up in today's Germany, i.e. friendship, first love, hassles with parents, teachers, and employers. To our young female fans the main characters of these soaps present patterns of a future female adult life in today's western urban society. To what extent the girls use these models and programmes to negotiate their own personal situation and important topics (e. g. sexuality and gender roles) will be of interest when analysing e. g. media talk in peer groups. The fact that our young interview-partners showed great interest in this type of programme allows us to assume similar motives as those presented by

<sup>6</sup> The next step of the qualitative project will be a longitudinal study focussing on the media use in four Turkish and four Kurdish families. With different methods we will collect data to come close to detailed descriptions of the meanings and uses the media have for the different families and family members. We will conduct interviews in different settings, but will also use visual methods such as photographs the children take of their bedrooms and interpret themselves. Our main focus will be on the children and how they interpret the meaning of the media in their lives.

Gillespie and her British-Asian teenage-girls' fondness for the Australian soap *Neighbours* (Gillespie 1995). But the interest in western-style American and German programmes is not exclusive. For the interviewed adolescents «globalisation» means at the same time that they have direct access to Turkish (satellite) media. Thus, they watch a lot of Turkish soaps and programmes as one girl mentioned: «For me, there are twice as many Turkish programmes in comparison with German ones.» Often they watch Turkish soaps together with their parents. As a boy mentioned, «We are only watching soaps together, if it is interesting for me.» In this context, «globalisation» can also mean that genres like the soap opera are adaptable to local cultural preferences.

#### «Traditional» parents and «modern» children?

According to the interviewed youths it is the parents – especially the mothers<sup>7</sup> – that mainly prefer Turkish programmes. Generally the behaviour of the parents seems to be more deeply entrenched in the traditional Turkish culture. This opinion likewise dominates the Swiss political discourse about the difference of the generations: Thus it constructs an adult generation rooted in the culture of origin and a Turkish youth growing up in a world of global media, from television to mobile phones and the Internet, that has access to these media and uses them for their specific needs. However, it has also been argued that for young people the globalising tendencies of the media play a far more important role than their own cultural origins: Grown up in families rooted in foreign cultures, the media open up a window to the mainstream world of globalised commodities and artefacts.

Compared to their children, parents or adult people are seen as the exponents of a pre-globalised emigration. Since they are mostly low-skilled workers, they profit from the contemporary media-culture in a different way: In the diasporic situation of migration they try to establish and maintain close relationships to their home culture using media such as satellite TV for Turkish channels or Turkish newspapers. For them, the media are a means to strengthen the traditional cultural ties and to maintain contacts to the homeland. This could lead to the assumption that parents generally are more conservative, more rooted in the Turkish culture; they seem to conjoin origins with ethnic authenticity.

<sup>7</sup> The daily lives of the mothers are often restricted to the domestic space. As a consequence they have few opportunities to learn German or a Swiss German dialect.

But this pattern of a binary relationship – conservative parents and modern(ised) young people – is too simple and does not do justice to the complexity of the situation the different generations are confronted with: On the one hand, it is true that the parents of our interviewed adolescents often consumed Turkish media (newspaper, television etc). In fact, they are interested in Turkish programmes but not exclusively, as one of our interviews shows. «Yes, my mother likes Turkish TV. And my father often watches Turkish TV as well. But sometimes, when we are watching TV, he switches to German channels. Then he is looking for movies, and if a German movie is running, we watch it» (Hakan, 16-year-old Turkish boy). Although the adult generation is generally more influenced by the culture of origin, there is no uniform relationship between age and cultural orientation. The individual position is dependent on other factors such as social class, education, or gender. As Crul/Vermeulen (2004) point out, an adequate characterisation also has to take into account the internal differences within the Turkish emigrant populations, based on characteristics like ethnicity, first- or second-generation, education levels and religion. Furthermore, it makes a difference whether the migrants belong to the economically motivated wave of immigration in the seventies or whether they are refugees of the Kurdish unrest in the eighties.

What we can often find among Turkish immigrants, encouraged by the Turkish media, is a tendency to construct the idea of a shared imagined community<sup>8</sup> (Aksoy 2002, p. 5). Brah, too, points out that the development of digital media such as the Internet, satellite TV, and the mobile phone has important implications for the construction of new and varied imagined communities (Brah 1996, p. 196). But the effects of this intimate medial relationship with the country of origin often are ambivalent if not confusing. And this is true for adults as well as for their offspring.

An important aspect which challenges the nostalgic gaze at the culture of origin is the content of the images the media transfer to their audience. Television is not the appropriate means to satisfy romanticized needs and feelings. As Asu Aksoy remarked, before the advent of Turkish satellite and cable TV, Turkish people could only relate to a country they had left behind. Now it seems possible for them to be at the same time in the

<sup>8</sup> For Benedict Anderson each nation is an imagined community. He argues that it is imagined «because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communities» (Anderson 1997, p. 59).

Turkish space (Aksoy, p. 12), to take part in the world they left behind. As a consequence the viewers are confronted with all the political and social problems of their country of origin. The imagined community is thus directly confronted with the real life as it is displayed in the media. Through the perspective of the mass media crimes, accidents, murders, and crises are often at the centre of attention as Aishe, one of our interviewees, remarks: «Turkish media exaggerate, if something is really bad, then they show it repeatedly. Yes, it is that, which is not good. If something happens, they cry, weep, fall down and tear out their hair. This is so stupid, I don't know, this is so exaggerated ...» In one of our interviews, two girls even questioned the cultural value of Turkish TV: Aishe: «There, everything is the complete opposite of culture. You know, in the media, quite the opposite.» What they meant by «culture» the following remark of her colleague may indicate: Dilek: «Yes, on Turkish TV you only find women in miniskirts, like models. There is no culture to be found in it.»

Contemporary Turkey is a country of great social diversity. It comprises rural and urban parts, Islamic tradition and permissive styles of behavior etc. This is reflected in television programmes as well, in which the emigrant audience does not find a romantic view of their own country. Our interviewed adolescents like Mafia-style soap operas that take place in Turkey. They enumerate different Turkish soaps treating love, family, and conflicts: Aishe, describing the content of these soaps: «Mostly it is about families.» Her friend Dilek adds: «It is about families, about the police. Yes, at the moment I know a lot of films concerning the Mafia.»

As a consequence, people who use the media to maintain contacts to their home country automatically gather a lot of dispersed and diverse information about it. Thus, Dilek noticed the extreme differences between urban and rural parts in Turkish soaps. «In Istanbul», she declared, «life is like in Switzerland. But the Asian part is much different, and that is shown a bit in these shows.» The bulk of media information is often more contradictory and confusing than enlightening. It is a multifaceted view, which includes the dark sides of life in these countries such as crime, political unrest, unemployment etc. In a similar way as spending the holidays in a Turkish village, watching television is part of the difficult and complex process of constructing an individual concept of belonging. This mental closeness to a «spiritual home» is often disrupted by experiencing a different, even contradictory reality when watching TV, a reality that is not congruent with the idealised images of a cultural Turkish identity.

### Living in the sphere of cultural hybridity

For the adolescents there seems to be one easy way to solve the problem of belonging: The existing global youth culture is not bound to these traditional schemes of «here» and «there». Turkish youths participate as do their Swiss coevals in that global culture of pop, lifestyle, and mainstream behaviour, which is shared worldwide, as it is expressed in one of MTV's most famous slogans, dating from the mid-1980s: «ONE WORLD: ONE IMAGE: ONE CHANNEL». Like an echo to this trend of globalisation the Turkish kids stated in our interviews that they favour television channels like MTV or VIVA and music styles like pop, hip hop etc. In the familial context these favourites sometimes conflict with the television preferences of the parents, as one girl described the situation: «Yes, they know, I watch MTV, but they don't like it much. Sometimes, I'm watching MTV, and they have to wait until I have finished. Or they just say: please, change the channel now» (Aniza). This brings to mind Gillespie's Southall study, in which some parents felt their values undermined by soaps like *Neighbours*, and where such potential fears makes them more vigilant concerning soap viewing (see Gillespie 1995, p. 96).

The global Anglo-American culture is an important element of contemporary youth culture in Switzerland. But as theoretical debates show, these influences of globalisation are not uncontested. It is not a kind of a homogenous technological superstructure, which spreads images, meanings and cultural styles all over the world. As James Lull (2000, p. 244) noticed, culture oscillates between permanence and change, between the old and the new. The elements of the global culture have to be appropriated by the local people as a process of giving and taking. This kind of «indigenisation» or «creolisation» means «that imported cultural elements take on local features as the cultural hybrids develop» (Lull 2000, p. 244). It is more a process of «glocalisation», a mix of cultural elements from different – global and local – sources than a unidirectional process of «globalisation».

In our research we found stylish girls wearing a headscarf. Aishe, one of the girls, remarked that she feels like normal Turkish people. But later on she told us in the same interview that she couldn't live in Turkey at all: «My town [she is referring to Zurich] is very nice. I like Turkey for holidays, it's very nice, I would like to go there every time for holidays.» Like Aishe, almost all of the adolescents we have interviewed seem to be emotionally close to their country of origin. Their position is similar to that

of the children of mixed-race milieus described by Suki Ali (2003, p. 131). They feel close to their «spiritual home» despite the sometimes painful effects of location, culture, and material wealth. So, instead of her complicated biographical situation, Aishe constructs a «normal» Turkish identity. She was born in Turkey, lived there for some years, came back to Switzerland and now owns a Swiss passport. Aishe is very interested in the culture and the history of Turkey, almost as if she had to embody the «imagined community» with real experiences and historical information. Each weekend, she told us, she goes to the mosque, where she and her colleagues learn much about Islamic culture and where they stay overnight. She is very interested in the history of the Ottoman empire. But as we noticed during the interview, the place where Aishe wants to live is Switzerland: «I think Zurich is ok, Switzerland is ok, very much so. I don't know... If you work, you get money. There [Turkey], it is so difficult to find a job. But here, at the moment everything is fine... I don't know what comes about later, but now, all is ok.» For Aishe «home» is an imagined community, a mythic place of desire. In the sense of Avtar Brah it is a place of no return «even if it is possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of «origin»» (Brah 1997, p. 193).

The emotional ties to the Turkish roots are also expressed in the music styles our interviewees fancy. All our interview partners related to Turkish pop stars like Mustafa Sandal, Tarkan or Ebru Gündes. Two Turkish girls tried to explain:

Aishe: «...and Ebru Gündes, you should see her, she is very good.» Dilek complemented this observation: «She doesn't perform so fantasy-like...» Aishe agreed and added a further detail: «Yes, but she has a wonderful voice.» Dilek introduced another singer, hoping that the interviewers might know him since he also performs on the German channel RTL: «Yes, and Mustafa Sandal, you should know him, because he was on RTL.» Both girls consider this music to be «normal» like English pop songs, the only difference being that the language of the songs is Turkish. The music merges mainstream pop elements with traditional Turkish roots. The music-style of Ebru Gündes, known as «arabesque», is a fusion of Turkish folk music and pop. The same is true of Turkish pop stars like Mustafa Sandal or Tarkan. They perform a kind of mainstream pop with inherent Turkish influences.

But these girls are not only fascinated by the music style, even more important are the biographies of their pop idols. This is especially true in

the case of Tarkan, a Turkish pop star, who was born 1972 in Germany, but partly grew up near Istanbul. On the Internet site *Stars on Top* one can find the following annotations to his image as a rebel, which in many respects mirrors the inherent conflicts of migrant adolescents with the values and expectations of their country of origin: «Then, a couple of years later he angered Turkish conservatives again, this time more seriously so. In favour of his high-flying career he refused to serve his compulsory 18 months of Turkish military service and left the country for Germany. For this act of defiance he was officially stripped of Turkish citizenship in April 1999 and was publicly reprimanded. It didn't seem to trouble him for long, though. In fact, he rather quickly found a brand new audience and began performing in Europe to wildly adoring fans there. His European fans say his music is the perfect mixture of Western originality and Turkish romanticism. And they just love his 'great, sexy voice, and fantastic dancing» (<http://www.starson.com/tarkan/bio.htm>). Tarkan is the perfect representation of a hybrid lifestyle, incorporating all the tensions, fears, and hopes of his mainly Turkish audience. He contests traditional Turkish behaviour and at the same time he is a star, who is successful in Turkey and all over Europe. In the eyes of his Turkish fans he realized a style of life connecting the expressions of a worldwide culture of pop music with his Turkishness – a perfect mixture of Western originality and Turkish romanticism, which is referred to on *Stars on Top*.

### Summary

Summarising the main topics of this paper, we have to realise that the position of the media in a global world is not as simple as it might seem at first glance. Certainly, media are an essential instrument in the incessant process of globalization. They transmit expressions of a global culture, from music styles to fashion, lifestyle, and advertising. Through media like mobile phones or the Internet the distances are shrinking and real-time communication has become possible all over the world. In this perspective media are reinforcing a sense of belonging in a global consumer culture.

But at the same time media open up a window to the local communities and to the lifestyles of the countries of origin. Media thus connect various diasporas with their homelands. They integrate the scattered network of migrant families, in which members who share the same origin live in Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. With the help of media and especially satellite TV migrants are fully informed about the political and

the social life in Turkey. They watch the same channels, news, and soap operas as their relatives in Istanbul or Ankara. The success of the new Turkish pop music in the Turkish diaspora all over the world is mediated to a substantial degree through the globally operating media industry.

The concept of the diaspora inscribes, as Avtar Brah argued, a homing desire while simultaneously critiquing discourses of fixed origins (Brah 1997, p. 193). As a consequence of this complex network of different affiliations and meanings, identity construction is much more difficult for the young migrant adolescents than for their parents. The binary model of an essential distinction between Turkish foreigners and Swiss citizens becomes more and more obsolete. Today, many adolescents identifying with their Turkish roots own Swiss passports. They feel emotionally rooted in the Turkish culture: an imagined community while they could not envisage living «there». The preferred music style of some of the youths is American hip-hop – as an expression of the marginalized status of Turkish migrant youths in Switzerland. The adolescents of our study have to construct their own concepts of identity somewhere within the triangle of the global, the local, and the native. Handling the discrepancies between these spheres, for example concerning the expectations of parents, peers, and employers, is not easy for them.

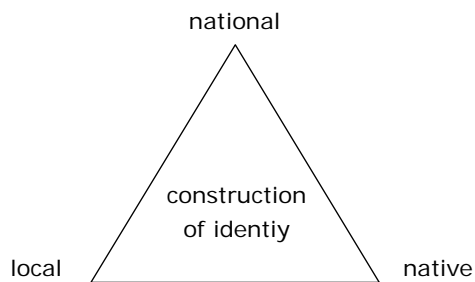


Figure 1: the triangle of identity

As a further result of our study one has to question the political strategies of migrant integration. After 12 years of living in Switzerland a selection of migrant people become Swiss citizens if they can prove that they are socially and culturally integrated in our country. In the political discussions it is easy to find arguments claiming that the Turkish culture and TV channels hinder this integration process since they may influence language

acquisition negatively or create tension in terms of loyalty of immigrants and are thus opposed to the project of integration (see: Aksoy p. 3 ff.). The statement made by the right-wing politician Marco Tuena: «In Zurich immigrants often become Swiss who don't fulfil our demands», illustrates this line of argumentation.

If global media influences foster the development of transnational forms of identity, where affiliations and fusions of different cultural elements are more important than a nationally defined identity, unilateral strategies of integration have to be changed. Nevertheless, we agree with Mike Featherstone, who criticises the seductive assumption that the normal condition of human beings is or should be one where everyone is a «nomad» or «traveller». He mentions a twofold challenge that has to be faced: «We need to enquire into the grounds for the formation of images of the world as a hybrid motion of displaced nomads as well as the persistence of images of localities as integrated and settled communities» (Featherstone 1995, p. 144).

This statement aptly describes the position of the majority of our interview partners. In some respects they are the nomads of a global world, but at the same time they are deeply rooted in their local communities. To a certain degree they have acquired the necessary abilities to switch competently between different cultural settings. This sometimes causes tension and feelings of despair and isolation; but at the same time it could be seen as an important resource and an advantage in a world where the increasing shift from the national to the transnational is becoming ever more evident.

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