SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION/EXCLUSION OF TURKISH IMMIGRANT YOUTH IN CANADA

by

Dilek Kayaalp

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the experiences of social, cultural and educational inclusion/exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth in Vancouver, Canada. I undertake this work within the context of inequality, such as racism and other forms of social and educational marginalization. My theoretical framework combines sociology of immigration (e.g., Hall) with sociology of education (e.g., Bourdieu). The main methodology is a critical qualitative approach. In total, 14 young people, ages 15-25, participated in this research.

The findings of the study indicate that Turkish youths’ experience of inclusion/exclusion in Canada changes according to their immigration and socio-economic status, gender and religious affiliation. Muslim and first generation young people suffer from cultural and accent discrimination, stereotypes and general Islamophobia in the social sphere. The imposition of the dominant language, values, habits and habitus on minority students as the legitimate truth and lack of respect for minority students’ cultural background are forms of discrimination against minority youth in Canadian schools. The social and educational marginalization of young people affects their conflicted identities and sense of belonging in the host country. Conditional acceptance leads minority youth to have a conditional sense of belonging.
Preface

My research was approved by UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board. The Certificate Number of the Ethics Certificate is H09-01861.
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1 Introduction

This thesis explores the experiences of social, cultural and educational inclusion/exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth in Canada and their associated social conditions as they navigate the new global city in one urban Canadian concentration, namely, Vancouver, British Columbia. In this work, I view social and educational exclusion from the perspective of, and in relation to, other forms of inequality, such as racism, economic retrenchment and other forms of cultural marginalization. As research has shown (c.f. Wacquant, 1993; Kaya, 2005; Miller, 2005), the exclusion of young people within educational institutions can lead to wider forms of social alienation from social institutions (e.g., the labour market) and the broader society at large. Much of the exclusion relates to the wider politics of nation-states, immigration policies, popular hegemony (i.e., hegemonic consensus of the mainstream) and the larger questions of rights for young people who are not officially granted citizens. Youth at the boundaries of the modern nation-state, experience an associated loss, as they lose the “right to have rights,” which are not only tied to the history of nation-state building (Arendt, 1951), but also to the process of identity-formation and feelings of belonging. For example, the static\(^1\) nature of the nation-state, including its ideals such as the formation of a single unified nation, often stands in opposition to the construction and representation of multiple identities among youth. These challenges are now longstanding but may intensify through the wider forms of global change which are currently taking place, locally, in many global metropolises of the world. Canada is no exception to these wider trends.

This situation is made worse for immigrant youth, whose original identification with a nation-state of origin becomes a challenge to the definitions of their citizenship and sense of belonging, security and rights in a new nation-state. In other words, the hybrid, diasporic identities of immigrant youth are sometimes considered to be threats to the ideals of the nation-state and its homogenising logic (Caglar, 1997). Turkish youth have long been a mobile group who are members of the diaspora and thus they must struggle with the bigger questions of “who they are” under the dynamics of mobility, immigration, and change.

\(^1\) Change threatens the unity of the nation-state.
While initial assessments of this diasporic configuration in Europe have begun to expose issues about Turkish immigrants’ social and educational inclusion/exclusion in host countries, very little sociological and educational research has investigated Turkish youth immigrants’ experiences of inclusion/exclusion in Canada, despite the growing Turkish population in metropolitan areas like Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Statistics Canada (2006) locates the largest Turkish community in Canada, with a population of 14,975 in Toronto, followed by Montreal with 10,345 and Vancouver with 3,380. “The general pattern of Turkish immigration to Canada has been such that it reached its peak before World War I, stopped until after World War II, and peaked during the late 1960s, again in the early 1980s, it has been increasing rapidly during the last few years” (Ataca and Berry, 2002, p.16).

Exploring the realities of immigrant youth from Turkey offers a unique opportunity to illuminate how fragmented, complex, hybrid identities in one’s home country (i.e., Kurdish/Laz/Circassian/Turkish or European/Mediterranean/Middle-Eastern or secular/religious/modern/traditional) are transformed into a “diasporic hybrid identity” (e.g., Turkish-Canadian) in Canada. This inquiry offers a unique opportunity to explore the diverse experiences of Turkish immigrant youth in multicultural Canada, which differs in significant ways from Turkish immigrant experiences in European countries (e.g., Germany) due to very different historical and contemporary immigration policies, social and educational practices.

In response to this research gap, the current project investigates the experiences and perceptions of 14 Turkish female and male immigrant youth² (aged 15–25) in relation to social and educational inclusion/exclusion in Vancouver, Canada. The literature here is sparse, but there have been enough studies on the immigrant experience to suggest that Turkish youth face considerable social and educational exclusion in Canada. Their marginalization arises from immigration policies (e.g., multiculturalism policy), the state’s official language (“visible minority” discourse), government policy (the imposition of official languages and the consequent devaluation of minority languages, which is made explicit through accents reduction programs) (see Nakhaie, 2001; Derwing, 2003). Moreover, Turkish youth face particular challenges as a result of Orientalism and Eurocentrism, which today manifest in discriminatory

² Both first and second-generation Turkish immigrant youth (i.e., young people who were born in Canada and elsewhere) will form my target group.
policies/practices, particularly since 9/11, as popular hegemony, Islamophobia and stereotypes have surfaced from the colonial past. While “epistemological violence,” in the form of the state’s official language, generates exclusionary discourses about minority people and their cultures (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005) (e.g., radical Muslims or dangerous Middle-Easterners) popular hegemony, in the form of the fears of ordinary people (Hall et al., 1978), reproduce these narratives.

This study seeks to achieve four aims. First, it will provide an educational and social profile of a sample of 14 immigrant Turkish youth living in Vancouver, Canada. These profiles will provide a small-scale qualitative portrait of how Turkish minority youth account for their experiences of inclusion/exclusion in Vancouver, Canada. Second, this research aims to showcase how Turkish youth immigrants negotiate the process of exclusion in a new national culture, particularly in an urban center. Finally, the study seeks to uncover young people’s multiple attachments, and sense of in-betweenness; “the process of fragmentation,” based on the hybrid and diasporic identities stemming from pre and post-migration histories as well as conflicts within their families.

“The research questions I pose are as follows:”

Social and Educational Experiences
(i) How do Turkish immigrant youth describe their schooling and social experiences in urban centres?
(ii) How do young people with different immigration statuses, socio-economic background, religious affiliations, genders and ages perceive discrimination and exclusion?

Sense of Belonging and Attachments
(iii) What elements of national Canadian culture, or the national imaginary of urban Canada, as part of socialization, undermine or support their feelings of belonging?

Multiple Identities
(iv) How are the binaries of identity categories such as “Muslim/secular,” “traditional/modern,” “western/eastern,” “European/Mediterranean/Middle Eastern” “Turkish/Canadian” manifest themselves in Turkish youths notions of their identities?

The primary reason that I chose Vancouver for my fieldwork is that Turks in Vancouver are an unexplored group. In addition, I am located in Vancouver, which made contact and in-depth research expedient.
Ultimately, the core arguments that I make in this thesis can be clustered around three themes: 1) social and educational inclusion and exclusion 2) sense of belonging and attachments 3) multiple identities. In the first theme, I argue that immigration status, gender, religious affiliation, age and social class background affect not only youth’s social, cultural and educational experiences but also their sense of belonging, their attachments and identities. In this regard, it is possible to make a comparison between first-generation and second-generation, religious and non-religious, male and female youth, and youth from working-class and professional-class families, with regard to their perceptions and lived experiences of marginalization.

In the second theme, I assume the importance of the political and societal context of the host and home countries in determining the sense of belonging and attachments of young people. In other words, while ontological factors (e.g., memories) have an impact on youth’s sense of belonging and attachments to the host or home country, the home/host country’s context is also significant in affecting young people’s feelings of belonging. In this regard, I argue that the host country’s features, whether it is welcoming or discriminatory, accepting of inequalities and opportunities, influences youth’s self-identifications rather than youth’s crises, their “psychological problems,” “low self-esteem,” and language deficiencies. In this societal context, the popular hegemony with its dominant Christian values and white and distant habitus and racist discourses (such as Islamophobia, Orientalism, stereotypes, cultural and accent discrimination) work with the state’s “authorized language,” its exclusionary policies, regulations and apparatuses.

Finally, the exploration of multiple identities is related to my fascination with conflicting identities of young people. The concept of hybridity, especially as articulated in Hall’s (1996d) work, is key. While accepting that nobody is “pure” and thus everybody is hybrid, I underline the fact that young people are super-hybrid. They are super-hybrid because they challenge the structured and structuring orthodoxy, which essentializes entities, and considers bodies to be black and white. I assume that young people, who are in-between selves, are able to liberate themselves from ideological impasses of secularism and religious orthodoxy. They are not single but plural, they embrace multiple conflicting identities; they are Muslim atheists, rock fans with headscarves and cultural conservatives with body piercings.
To explore these claims and respond to the research questions, this thesis is divided into eight chapters. In Chapter 2, I intend to provide further background and explore the literature on youth and social exclusion, with Turkish youth as the focal point. The discussion begins by considering youth identity in modern Turkey because “the emigration processes … cannot be understood without prior understanding of the local social contexts from which they have emerged” (Abadan-Unat, 1985, p. 15). The next section of this review examines those who immigrated with their families, entering an environment with additional social barriers and they experience a process of transition that causes a greater sense of uprootedness and displacement. In the last section of chapter 2, I examine the experiences of Turkish immigrant youth in Canada.

In Chapter 3, I describe, in detail, the theoretical framework. For the interpretation of social and educational realities and the experiences of exclusion endured by Turkish immigrant youth, my research draws particularly upon the theories of Hannah Arendt, Pierre Bourdieu and Stuart Hall. In particular, the Arendtian notions of the “right to have rights,” and “action and speech,” Bourdieu’s concepts of “social space,” “habitus,” “symbolic violence” and “official language”, and Hall’s concept of “state’s hegemony” and “new ethnicities” (diasporic and hybrid identities) are necessary theoretical tools for examining the relationship between the exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth from the educational market, public space and their “statelessness” in nation-states (Arendt, 1951; 1958; Bourdieu, 1991; 1997; Hall, 1978; 1984; 1989; 1995).

In Chapter 4, I describe in detail my methodology, including data collection processes, the techniques used, and analysis of the data collected. Also, I discuss my research paradigm, including my ontology (i.e., my position on the nature of reality, my epistemology (i.e., theory of knowledge) and finally the set of values that guided my work, e.g., anti-racism and social justice.

Chapter 5 is the first chapter of my findings. In other words, it is first time we will encounter young people’s realities and lived experiences. In this chapter I will explore Turkish youth’s multiple and complex identities and their sense of belonging and their attachments through their unique narratives. Also, I will analyze the home and the host societal contexts, including the dominant values and norms and the state’s policies with regard to youth’s identities and belongings.

In Chapter 6, I continue this exploration by investigating young people’s cultural and social experiences of inclusion and exclusion in Vancouver. The chapter examines young Turkish
immigrants’ living conditions in the public space with regard to accent and cultural discrimination and stereotypes about Turks and Turkey. In addition, social interaction of Turkish youth with other Turks as well as with the dominant culture and other minority youth will be examined, in order to uncover multiple and complex social and cultural encounters, tensions and discrimination among different ethnic groups.

Chapter 7 attempts to address the educational experiences of Turkish immigrant youth in Vancouver. This chapter discusses young Turkish immigrants’ educational challenges with regard to their experiences of discrimination at school. In addition, it explores segregation in high schools in Vancouver in order to uncover the interplay between the social aspects of education, and Turkish students’ positions within group dynamics in particular, and school culture in general.

The final chapter summarizes and identifies the key findings of this study; notes how the study affirms, challenges and expands the current knowledge in the area. Also, it discusses what other kinds of research can be done about the issues. Finally, it summarizes my personal reflections on what has been learned, how my practice has been changed and what the educational implications are in general.
2 The Circumstances of Turkish Youth in Cross-National Contexts

This chapter explores the circumstances and experiences of social/educational exclusion of Turkish youth in cross-cultural contexts, that is in Turkey, Western Europe and Canada. My argument is that a cross-cultural analysis is a helpful way of comparing differences and similarities among the kinds of exclusion experienced by Turkish youth. It is appropriate to the nature of my study, which argues that exclusion, as a problem of inequality, is necessarily in transition. That is, exclusion is not a uniform and static phenomenon that reflects a singular experience, but a process that changes with the context. Therefore, this chapter will investigate wider questions about identities and processes which change and transform according to time, place and space. As Nayak (2003) argues “places and identities are mutually constitutive in that not only does ‘place’ shape youth identities, but also youth identities shape and influence the character of places” (Nayak, 2003, p. 28). In other words, Turkish/immigrant/youth’s experiences and perceptions of exclusion will be explored in relation to their hybrid/diasporic/identities or identities in transition (their pre and post-migration histories). As a result, I think that it might be possible to explore social change and its impact on young people.

Exclusion is a process whereby persons are prevented from social, cultural, political and economic benefits for reasons having to do with race, ethnicity, religion, physical disability, or sexual orientation (Merry, 2005). Similarly, the Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (2005) defines exclusion “as a process by which a group or individual is denied access to important positions, resources and symbols of economic, religious or political power within any society” (Scott & Marshall, 2005, p. 204). Taking these definitions into account, exclusion is clearly related to wider forms of inequality. As Grabb writes: “Social inequality could be determined as differences establishing unequal relations between people from rights, opportunities, rewards to privileges” (Grabb, 1990, p. 4). Educational inequality and social inequality can thus be read as interconnected concepts since unequal educational opportunity is a barrier to social equality.

In this discussion, social and educational exclusion are viewed as interrelated concepts, as well as human rights issues: Exclusion of youth from educational institutions can lead to their marginalization from social institutions (e.g., the labour market) and the public sphere. The

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4 Social change might also lead us to consider the evolution of exclusion.
5 Marginalization and exclusion will be used interchangeably since they both refer to the same process.
social exclusion of youth from the boundaries of the traditional nation-state and the associated loss for them of the “right to have rights,” that is, the right of belonging to a community and the right to action and speech, is not only tied to nation-state building (Arendt, 1951) but to the process of identity-formation. For example, the static\(^6\) nature of the nation-state, including its ideals such as a single unified nation, stands as antithetical to the representation of multiple identities of youth. The case is intensified for immigrant youth, whose original identification with a nation-state of origin becomes unacceptable to a new nation-state. In other words, the hybrid, diasporic identities of immigrant youth are often considered as threats to the ideals of the nation-state and its homogenising logic (Caglar, 1997). As a result, and not surprisingly, the social and educational exclusion of youth that occurs within Turkey is compounded when Turkish and Muslim youth emigrate, providing new experiences of unemployment, racism, discrimination and social exclusion in host countries such as France, Germany, Holland, Belgium and Canada.

As we have learned from the riots in France in 2005 and the massive demonstrations by immigrant youth in the U.S. in 2006, there is a relationship between the marginalization of immigrant youth and the majority’s racist discrimination and inherited nationalist sentiments against immigrants (Miller, 2005). It would seem that national context, including state policies regarding official language and other exclusionary practices and the stereotypes and prejudices of the mainstream against immigrants, are significant barriers both to the integration of immigrant youth and to their sense of belonging within the host society. According to Miller, “In France, the integration problem is less about legal status…rather, the integration problem involves unemployment of migrant-background youths, the discrimination they endure, [and] their social isolation and poor housing conditions” (Miller, 2005, p.17). The riots, then, can be seen in part as a reaction expressed by immigrant youth to such experiences of being automatically excluded from the nation’s “centre,” from Frenchness itself (Wacquaint, 1993; Latent State, 2005).

The following discussion of social and educational exclusion experienced by Turkish youth begins by considering youth identity in modern Turkey. Contemporary views have been greatly influenced by the nation-building efforts of the state following the revolutions which contributed to a differentiation and subsequent marginalization of particular youth populations. Decades of social dislocation and crises due to the projects and revolutions of the Turkish

\(^6\) Change threatens the unity of the nation-state.
republic (this issue will be discussed in detail in the next section) had material and psychological effects on youth today. The next section examines those who immigrated with their families, entering an environment with additional social barriers and experiencing a process of transition that caused a greater sense of uprootedness and displacement. European countries, with their own national ideals and prejudices, proved to be less than entirely receptive to immigrant youth from Turkey. In addition, the section examines how Turkish immigrant youth fared (and continue to fare) in Canada. In the concluding section, exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth will be argued with regard to conflicts of the home country (e.g., ethnic and ideological) and exclusionary practices of the host country. Finally, I will discuss the phenomenon of the “in-betweenness” (i.e., belonging to anywhere but to nowhere) and hybridised nature of Turkish immigrant youth in relation to their encounters with marginalization in host countries.

2.1. Creating educational/social exclusion at home: Historical and social antecedents

Modern Turkey is not an egalitarian state. Some of today’s youth enjoy considerable privilege, participating in the social life of the nation and acquiring an education that will allow them to obtain well-paid jobs and a good standard of living. Others, however, face social and educational exclusion that keeps them at the margins of social, economic, and political life. According to Neyzi (2001), the categories youth, youth cultures and their everyday practices, as well as marginalization of youth, are affected by ideological and political conflicts, social and educational inequalities, and identity politics in Turkey. The concept of youth should be considered a political category in relation to historical developments in Turkey, a history marked in the twentieth century by national and international conflicts that divided people on the basis of ideology (religion) and politics, ethnicity, and place. During the last eighty-five years, it became highly significant whether one was secular or religious, modern or traditional, Turkish, Kurdish, or Alawí, urban or rural, and Eastern or Western. Conflicts among groups holding these different identities are among the most important reasons for the educational and economic exclusion of disadvantaged youth in Turkey.
2.1.1. Creating Turkish youth identity at home: The origins of a crisis

The idea of “Turkishness,” with all its adjectives (e.g., “modern,” “western,” “hardworking”), is controversial. It is not a neutral term; rather, it is constructed by different mechanisms of the Turkish state including its education system, the official language, and symbolic violence. The oath recited by elementary school students every day is one of the strongest vehicles of this construction: “I am a Turk, upright, hardworking…My law is to love my country and nation more than my self…Let my being be sacrificed for the sake of Turkish existence. How happy is he who can say ‘I am a Turk!’” (Neyzi, 2001). One of the major aims of these mechanisms was and is to teach young people to assert a very strong sense of a national identity: Turkishness. They are taught to believe in an “imagined community.” As Anderson (1983, p.5) claims, “the nation is an imagined political community…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 communion.” Although the imagined community of the Turkish Republic came to be adopted and promoted by the dominant group in Turkey (sometimes through brutal and authoritarian state practices), it has never been universally adopted by all young Turks, leading to profound questions about identity (Robins, 1996; Ergil, 2000; Cagaptay, 2006; Belge, 2007). The contemporary national emphasis is based in the historical evolution of the Turkish Republic, which has three distinct phases that involved youth in different ways: first as harbingers of a new culture, then as a radical opposition to an authoritarian state, and finally as apolitical global consumers (Kadioglu, 2006).

The “Turkish Republic” was created in 1923 following the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. The new centralized state attempted to create a new memory and a new history by means of the Institute of Turkish History (Türk Tarih Kurumu), a new alphabet and finally new subjects (Karpat, 2000; Belge, 2007). As Belge (2007) states, the Republic’s revolutions transformed the everyday practices of life, from language and religion to music. The regime banned the veil for women and the fez for men in the 1925 “clothing reform”; it disbanded the caliphate and religious courts, forbidding religious political opposition parties; it introduced the Gregorian calendar, the metric system of measurement, the Latin alphabet, and a legal system containing elements of Swiss law. Although Islam had remained the official religion of the state, secularism was accepted as one of the constitutive principles of the Republic. “The 1920s and the
1930s,” according to Kadioglu, “were crucial years in the making of the new Republican Turkey and the emergence of the new Turks” (Kadioglu, 1996, p. 7).

Accordingly, Turks, and particularly Turkish youth, under the Republican regime must be “modernist”, “secular”, and “western” subjects who must be uprooted from their past and cut off from their obsolete Ottoman identity. The old identity was “traditional,” “religious,” “eastern,” and “backward”- characteristics regarded as undesirable in the new state. Most importantly, people clinging to the old identity were cast in the role of “other,” not belonging, nor perhaps even welcome, in the new state. However, the early reforms were only partially effective. The Turkish republican regime created enduring social tension when it reduced three pre-existing identities (Ottoman, Muslim, and Turkish) in the Ottoman Empire into a single national Turkish identity (Karpat 2000). Other identities such as Kurdish and Armenian were also transformed into a single identity, though this point is ignored in Karpat’s study. The sudden revolt against their Ottoman identity caused many to feel a profound sense of uprootedness, a sort of “schizoid separation” between tradition and modernity (Belge 2007). The Muslim Ottoman identity and the new secular Turkish identity of the regime were mutually exclusive, a circumstance that led to the clash between Islamists (who were mostly rural-origin and uneducated) and secular, modernist, well-educated urban elites. The result was that the Turkish Republic was in reality composed of diverse people who did not share a common identity.

The unstable social conditions of the Republic would never go away. Karpat suggests that, “no nation can survive or remain culturally and psychologically healthy by turning its back to its own past” (Karpat, 2000, p. xvii). Neyzi (2001) agrees: the identity crisis of Turks arose from the mismatch between the construction of a single national identity by the new regime and its multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual Ottoman past. The idea of a Turkish identity, unlike Ottoman identity which almost by definition included diverse (although subjugated) peoples, was ethnic in nature and thus exclusive, and this was one of the significant problems of the new system. The new Turkish state and its revolutions led to a deliberate sense of amnesia, and a process of estrangement of the subordinated people at the “periphery” of the nation, from some of their cultural practices (Kadioglu, 1996; Nachmani, 2003). The adoption of the Latin alphabet in place of the Arabic script was perhaps the most iconoclastic reform of the period. Feroz Ahmad suggests that “at a stroke, even the literate people were cut off from their past.
Overnight, virtually the entire nation was made illiterate” (cited in Kadioglu, 1996, p. 7). Moreover, according to Ergil (2000), the crisis of identity experienced by Turkey’s citizens parallels the crisis of Turkey’s hegemonic state. For Ergil, the creation of a fixed national identity and nationalist pressures has led to conflict and feelings of instability. Social change during the foundation of the Turkish Republic through a revolutionary practice shifted the cultural landscape of selfhood in space and time.

“Place” was also significant to the identity and the cultural formation of Turkishness. Since revolutions were mostly limited to cities (Ergil, 2000; Karpat, 2000; Nachmani, 2003; Belge, 2007), the labels “secular,” “modern,” “educated,” and “rich” were associated with those living in urban centres. In contrast, “religious,” “traditional,” “uneducated,” and “poor” became associated with rural dwellers. The aspirations of the new regime, such as “westernization”, “secularism” and “modernism,” precipitated the exclusion of the young living in rural areas who from the beginning have rebelled against the official language and thus were outside the mainstream. Mardin (1978) views religion as particularly under attack by the new regime, since Islamic identity was one of the counter-identities of the secular regime (Kadioglu, 1996; Nachmani, 2003). Religious youth associated with Islam and living in rural areas were disadvantaged economically and educationally in the new society compared to the “modernist,” “western,” and “secular” youth of the cities known as the “white Turks,” a term denoting privilege rather than ethnic or racial background. This situation continued well into the 1950s.

In the second period (1950-1982), Turkey participated more closely in world affairs. The Republic remained neutral during the Second World War thanks to Anglo-French guarantees, and sought American aid under the Marshall Plan on the condition that it introduced democratic political reforms. It joined the United Nations as a charter member and aligned itself with the United States during the cold war, joining NATO in 1952 after fighting alongside the United States in the Korean War.

During the coups of the 1970s, students were polarized into “leftist” and “rightist” factions, aligning themselves with either Marxist or Islamist/rightist groups. Turkish youth, both

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7 It should also be noted that currently Turkish media discusses exclusion of the laic minority due to radical Islamic policies of AKP (i.e. the Islamic party that is currently in the power) (www.radikal.com.tr).
8 Rightists were promoting Islamic tradition. Leftists, on the contrary, were advocating Marxist-Leninist ideals to “save” the country from the imperialists, particularly the U.S. Male students dominated both of the groups.
rightist and leftist, were portrayed by the state as rebels and a threat to the nation as well as to the Republic (Mardin, 1978). Students who participated in illegal political groups were subjected to violent reprisals: “In the four years between autumn 1973 and summer 1977, 447 students died; in the two election months of April-June 1977, 70 more died and 800 were wounded; in the first quarter of 1978, 157 died” (Mardin, 1978). To Mardin, this student violence may be explained as the consequence of a major cultural dislocation, that is the erosion of the traditional values of the Ottoman Empire without being replaced by a successful synthesis of civil religion or Kemalism, the official ideology of the Republic. For Mardin, due to the myth of homogeneity of the Turkish nation-state, ethnic and religious groups were not recognized and were marginalized.

Additionally, the new secular educational institutions of the Republic encouraged a generation gap and the alienation of young people from their society and family who still might want to live with and believe in traditional values of the Empire. In other words, the new regime increased the conflict and widened the gap between the educated and uneducated, old and young, the centre (state and state elites) and the periphery (the rest of the people). In addition to all these, for Mardin, ideologies of the Republic, such as supra-nationalism, authoritarianism and heroism, functioned “as an identity-anchoring mechanism for the young people who are particularly affected by the strains of change,” and led to exclusion, conflict and finally violence between the “leftist” and the “rightist” students in Turkey during the 1970s. On the other hand, because of the nature of the movement, the active agents were again well educated, particularly university students, middle-class and urbanized youth. Rural-origin, traditional youth were absent once again from crucial political events in Turkish history.

Finally, in the third period (post-1982), notable for the emphasis on transnational politics and the acceleration of globalization in the world, Turkish youth were represented as apolitical consumers by the media, but others increasingly voiced anti-West sentiments, which gave rise to a political climate that allowed youth to reconsider the alternative identities (Kadioglu 1996). Reconstruction of new alternative identities, such as rural and traditional youth, led to conflict and exclusion among young people who have different ideologies. In other words, while the secular Westernist youth have become more hostile to the religious youth, the religious group have become more intolerant to the values and culture of the secular youth.
The weight of history has an impact on youth, who today adopt complex identities. Young people might pray five times a day and engage in fasting according to Muslim belief, but at the same time celebrate New Year, perform belly dances, and drink alcohol—activities which are frowned upon by traditionalists. Kaya’s (2003) study about the identity construction of Turkish-Americans in the U.S. is important to illustrate the “hybridities,” “specificities” or forms of difference which emerge among Turkish youth. For Kaya, biographical sketches of the interviewees in the study indicate that Turkishness is not absolute, but rather complex, multiple, contextual and personal: Temel, who is Muslim but does not practice Islam asserts,

I feel Asian. I feel we are different from Europeans and Middle Easterners culturally, historically and politically. I think from outside: like the way we dress and live, yes, we look European. But from inside: like religion and family values I do not think if we are European.

Ediz, on the contrary, views his western identity as a privilege that makes him a different and unique person.

I do not want to sound cocky but I am a unique person because of my purely western education. I am not totally Turkish not racially but culturally. If you ask if I listen to Turkish folk music, yes, I do, but I started to listen to opera when I was seven (Kaya, 2003, p.84).

In sum, it should be expected that the polarizations and conflicts in Turkish society that arose during the formation of the modern Turkish state had an impact on the social and educational exclusion of Turkish youth, an impact still noticeable today. In the next section, I will discuss the exclusion of disadvantaged youth with regard to social and educational inequalities in Turkey.

2.1.2. Social exclusion of marginalized youth in Turkey today

Young people have historically played different roles in the Turkish state and society and their involvement continues to be circumscribed according to their ethnic, ideological, economic, and regional background. Historical discussions about foundation of the Turkish Republic and its identity politics are significant to indicating the present ethnic and ideological conflicts and socio-spatial polarizations in Turkey and their impact on youth.
The authoritarian, hegemonic Turkish state and its social-engineering project sought to create a homogeneous population with a single shared identity which resulted in increased inequality and marginalization (Kadioglu, 1996). Turkish society simply was/is not homogeneous due to its ethnic, religious, ideological, and regional diversities (e.g., Kurdish, Alawi, Islamists, Kemalists, rural and Eastern).

During the nation-building project, many rural Turks and Kurds were alienated since they were ethnically unlike those who had power in the state and its apparatuses (Ergil, 2000). The Turkish state did not recognize Kurdish identity with its distinct ethnic and linguistic characteristics. Kurds were the so-called “Mountain Turks” (Leggewie, 1996). The identity transformation of the society fomented ideological and ethnic conflicts between secularist, modernist, mainstream Turks and the traditional, religious population and Kurdish minority. Youth were very much caught up in these divisions, with some looking forward to adult lives participating in the modern state and others looking toward futures on the social, economic, and indeed geographical margins of society. Kurdish youth were particularly susceptible to the latter bleak outlook because of their ethnic divergence from the dominant society. The marginalization of Kurdish youth from the Eastern part of Turkey began with the displacement project of Turkish Republic in 1920s, a time when Armenians were also subjected to limited resettlement and today are over-represented among the poor and marginal (Cagaptay, 2006, p. 69). For Cagaptay, the aim of the Turkish Republic was to assimilate Kurds and to prevent a possible Kurdish national movement. “Because of such policies there is not …a single wealthy or powerful Kurd in [the Eastern part of Turkey] today,” noted a British traveler in 1929 (Cagaptay, 2006, p. 69).

Exclusionary ideological discourses of the Turkish state can lead to the exclusion of youth who resist the official ideology (Saktanber, 2002). For example, it matters whether one is Islamist, or of Alawi or Kurdish origin (Smith & Gunduz-Hosgor, 2006). Since the official language is Turkish and the official religion of the republic is Sunni Islam, Alawi and Kurdish youth are outsiders.

According to Saktanber (2002), there is the difficulty of addressing the social exclusion of economically and educationally disadvantaged youth in Turkey. For Saktanber, the phenomenon of social exclusion cannot be explained simply by enlisting socio-economic status or through a simple analysis of youth and class conflict since this approach might be misleading. According to
Saktanber (2002), “the type of class culture that must be confronted in a general analysis of youth in highly industrialized Western societies does not demarcate social life in Turkey as it does, for instance, in the British society where literature has originated. There is no comparable working-class culture in Turkey” (Saktanber, 2002, p. 258). Instead, the study of youth exclusion must be analyzed deeply by considering the transformation of youth identities as a result of the foundation of the Turkish Republic, ideological/political tensions, and social and educational inequalities (e.g., regional, ideological (i.e., modernist/traditional and secular/religious), and ethnic) in Turkey. Although Saktanber argues that a western industrial class analysis is not appropriate for Turkish society, this should not be taken to mean that Turkish society is not hierarchical. On the contrary, there is a fundamental economic polarization and inequality between people from lower-classes who work in menial jobs, and people from upper and middle-classes who work in prestigious and more specialized types of jobs. Consequently, economic inequality encourages economic and social exclusion of youth with a rural, lower-class background.

Further, the regional inequalities, which might be associated with the gap between the political centre (urbanized power-elitists and the authoritarian state) and the periphery (mostly rural people), led to the exclusion of rural-origin youth who are economically and educationally disadvantaged, unlike privileged urbanized youth. One place where the polarization, marginalization, and lack of recognition experienced by underprivileged young people can be most vividly seen is in the gecekondu\(^9\) areas in the cities. Here we find young people who have the characteristics that make them susceptible to marginalization: they are ethnic Kurds, poor, strongly religious, and from rural backgrounds. Although they are the children of peasants who migrated from rural areas in order to integrate into city life, the mainstream has shown no apparent desire to acknowledge or integrate them. Instead, they are rejected and held responsible for destroying the established urban order (Karpat, 1976). They are the outsiders or “invaders,” “who threaten the authenticity and purity,” of the city culture (Oncu, 2002).

Oncu’s (2000) study\(^10\) of media representations of the excluded “others” who live in the gecekondu indicates the multi-dimensional aspect of youth exclusion, due to economical, ideological and socio-spatial, factors. According to Oncu, the “other” is represented in the media

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\(^9\) Gecekondu is a Turkish version of the term squatter house, which is an illegal construction of the poor who mostly migrated from rural to urban (Drakakis-Smith & Bale, 1990; Tekeli, 1996).

\(^10\) Oncu’s (2000) study of media representations of the excluded “others” who live in the gecekondu indicates the multi-dimensional aspect of youth exclusion, due to economical, ideological and socio-spatial, factors.
as the reverse character of the privileged, urbanized, well-educated, upper/middle class person, who is *Istanbullu*, a person from Istanbul. Oncu presents three different socially and spatially marginalized characters among metropolitans in Turkey: “Hacıaga,” “arabesk,” and “maganda.”

“Hacıaga” is a male character with a rural origin who represents the dilemmas of a new city dweller: He is neither a villager nor an urbanite. Due to his rural background city-folk consider him to be religious, uneducated and ignorant and non-western. Although he is rich, this is not enough to be respected and accepted by the mainstream. The second character, also a male, is associated with an “arabesk culture,” a hybrid culture that is not only between a city and a village but also between a traditional (Eastern) and a modern (Western) way of life. This marginalized male character, arabesk, is the most excluded and alienated character of the three due to his potential to destroy the city culture. Finally, “maganda” represents a male who is aesthetically abnormal, sexually over-active, uneducated, and aggressive. He is the antithesis of a “white Turk” who is urbanized, well educated, has a decent job and a higher income. In her article “Consumerism, Sexuality and Cultural Remapping” Oncu (2002) discusses how the word maganda came to represent a new generation of youth culture, one that is traditional, ignorant, dangerous, degenerate, uprooted, and “other” and a category of total social exclusion in Turkey:

> These maganda are members of the arabesk culture[^11] which emerges when the traditional culture of immigrants to the fringes of megalopolitan Istanbul is fused with urban culture. They do not have a lengthy history…Maganda belongs neither to urban nor to rural, he is in-between… impure,… banal, trashy, polluted and polluting, residual and marginal (Oncu, 2002, p. 185).

Oncu’s analysis indicates well these media representations indicate the socio-spatial segregation and polarization in Turkish society: Urbanized, well-educated, “white Turks,” who live in middle/upper-class neighbourhoods contrast sharply with rural-origin, educationally and economically disadvantaged, excluded people, who live in gecekondu. However, it may be the case that the situation in gecekondu pre-dates the Republican era, an outcome of the conflict between powerful urbanized elitists and rural, uneducated migrants in the Ottoman era.

In sum, the hegemonic official ideology of the Turkish state, its assimilative policies, and exclusionary prejudices and attitudes of the mainstream (i.e., educated, urban, Western-looking

[^10]: *Istanbullu ve Otekiler*, 2000 (A person is from Istanbul and the others).
secularist upper class white Turks) (Gole, 2005) lead us to consider various dimensions of economic and social marginalization of young people in Turkey. In the next section, I will discuss the educational exclusion of disadvantaged youth with regard to educational inequality in Turkey (though I think that social and educational exclusion are interconnected, as are social and educational inequalities).

2.1.3. Educational exclusion of disadvantaged youth in Turkey today

Just as young people in Turkey today have varying opportunities to participate in the social life of their country, with some enjoying the privilege of their ethnic, geographical, religious, economic and ideological backgrounds and others finding themselves marginalized, so too do Turkish youth have varying experiences of the national educational system, and for the same reasons. Schools in urban and affluent regions and neighbourhoods (e.g., Anatolian High Schools) provide opportunities for their students that allow them to retain their privileged positions. Schools in less affluent, rural regions and neighbourhoods (e.g., General High Schools) offer limited opportunities for their students from lower-class families. Educational inequality is a controversial issue in Turkey. Gender disparities, regional differences and polarization between secular and religious schools are among the foremost sources of educational inequality (Ministry of National Education, 2000). Moreover, the curriculum and differences of quality between private and public schools contribute to the dichotomy between rich and poor students (Guvenc, 1998).

One of the most pressing educational problems in Turkey is gender-based discrimination which privileges males in access to education. According to Smits and Gunduz-Hosgor (2006), next to girls’ disadvantaged access to education, the biggest disparities are related to the urban-rural division and regional differences between the Western and the Eastern parts of Turkey. In the Western part of the country primary and secondary school non-enrolment of female and male youth (age 6-17) was small (only a few percent) in 1998, but in the Eastern region non-enrolment in primary and secondary education was still as high as 36% for female students and 16% for male students. Smits and Gunduz-Hosgor’s (2006) study shows us that Kurdish-origin youth from rural, Eastern part of Turkey have limited access to educational institutions, no doubt due to their lack of Turkish language proficiency required in these schools. The eastern part of Anatolia
has the lowest rate of schooling compared to the western part of Turkey. This is the major reason for the educational marginalization of Kurdish youth who are linguistically disconnected from the official language, and ethnically different from mainstream Turkish youth.

According to research into the distribution of candidates participating in the Öğrenci Seçme Sınavı (University Entrance Exam) in 2000 by sex, the proportion of females is lower than males: 44% compared to 56% - across the country. However, if we look at another study of the number of students, teachers and schools in 2000-2001, the developed Marmara region in the western part of Turkey - has the highest proportion of students in secondary education whereas the underdeveloped, and mostly Kurdish, South eastern region of Anatolia has the lowest rate of schooling in secondary education. Similar regional differences also exist for the number of teachers and schools (Ministry of National Education, 2000, p. 167). This statistical information indicates the regional, ethnic and gender dimensions of educational exclusion in Turkey.

The different value accorded by the state to Imam Hatip High Schools, which are religious, and General High Schools, which are secular although rural and poor, is a prime example of how secular youth are privileged over religious youth within the Turkish education system. This indicates well the interrelationship between aforementioned social divides such as ideological (e.g., religious and traditional) and economic, ethnic and educational divides such as religious versus secular schools and public versus private schools.

The 8-year-education project begun in 1997 which increased the obligatory primary education from five to eight years led to a sudden decline in the popularity of Imam Hatip Schools and worked against religious students because the new project reduced the “points” of Imam Hatip graduates in university entrance exams and decreased their chances to enter university (Ozdalga, 1999; Cakir, 2004; Kayaalp, 2005). As a result, religious families have been induced to send their children to secular schools, creating tensions between religious and secular youth at the schools and in the society.

Acar & Ayata (2002), in contrast, criticize Imam Hatip Schools in Turkey as reproducing inequalities and reinforcing conformity to segregationist and discriminatory policies due to their patriarchal, gendered and discriminatory hidden curriculum. For Acar and Ayata, teachers at Imam Hatip Schools “openly admit to advising girls and boys to choose their occupations in accordance with their [biological nature], and not try to contradict it. Furthermore, it is always
stressed that the most important [natural] requirement for woman is motherhood” (Acar & Ayata, 2002, p. 99). In the view of these authors, the values of meritocracy and gender equity are not well served in the Imam Hatip Schools so the authors are arguing in support of secular schools.

Another instance of unequal treatment in the education system is the lack of recognition of religious minority students’ belief system, particularly the Alawi, and imposition of knowledge of Sunni Islam (Ozdalga, 1999). Ozdalga (1999) states, “obligatory religious instruction ignores the existence of the Alawi minority. This group, which constitutes some 15% of the Turkish population, is a heterodox sect, which by invoking the fourth caliph, Ali, is many respects closer to Shi’a than to Sunni Islam” (Ozdalga, 1999, p. 436). In comparison to Sunni youth, Alawi youth, might be considered as the excluded other since Sunni Islam is constructed as the legitimate and the dominant religion by the State. Although modern Turkey is officially secular, schools curricula are not neutral in regard to religion. Even the emphasis on Turkish nationalism in all schools has elements of exclusion since the state ideology “moves between the racist or ethno-culturalist stance and political nationalism [emphasis on the notion of Turkishness] ” which leads to further exclusion of youth (e.g., Kurdish) who do not fit into this discourse or framework (Esen 2007).

Educational inequality as a form of exclusion can also be seen when comparing private with public schools, and mainstream with vocational schools: Youth from economically privileged classes attend high quality private schools which emphasize foreign language education and lead to university entrance (Ercan, 1999; Ayata & Acar, 2002). Similarly, Science High Schools and Anatolian High Schools are considered as elite schools compared to vocational high schools. Despite their open-to-all entrance exams, the former basically serve the children of middle and upper-class families due to expensive preparatory courses that are effectively required for success in these exams.

Public schools, in contrast, are reserved for children who come from economically disadvantaged families. Generally, public schools provide the lowest quality of education, especially in regard to the quality of teachers, school equipment and foreign language curriculum (Guvenc, 1998; Tahsin, 1999). Vocational education is reserved for youth destined for quick entry into the labour market (Bulut, 2007); hence, vocational diplomas have a very low status. Naturally, this determines the students’ profiles and who gets to attend what kind of school. The
vast majority of children from poor families choose vocational high schools as a short-term solution. In this way, they can acquire an intermediate vocational qualification and increased likelihood to find some form of employment, no matter how mediocre (Kayaalp, 2005).

The existence of different types of schools, such as public, private and vocational, appeal to different segments of society reflects the educational inequality in Turkey where private high schools offer more academic opportunities than public schools. About 66% or two thirds of the total vocational and technical high school graduates failed the university entrance exam in 2000 (Ministry of National Education, 2000). This is a very high rate compared to that of, for example, graduates of Anatolian high schools with a failure rate of 36 %, a little over one third or graduates of private high schools offering foreign language instruction with a failure rate of 38%. Another important difference between economically disadvantaged students who attend public schools and economically privileged students attending private schools is the students’ foreign language proficiency. Globalization had made fluency in a foreign language (or languages) among the most valuable aspect of one’s cultural capital, and one of the foremost determinants of the quality of the jobs available. Consequently, private schools have a stake in teaching a foreign language, when compared to public schools. Meanwhile, public schools provide the lowest quality of training overall, especially in relation to foreign language curricula (Guvenc, 1998; Acar & Ayata, 2002).

Youth in Turkish educational system are excluded for reasons of gender, region, ethnic, religiosity and economic. Educational exclusion today mirrors social exclusion in Turkey more generally because of a history of inequities generated by the construction of the modern Turkish state. Structural conflicts and inequalities of the country, hegemonic state practices and hierarchical educational policies have led to educationally, economically, ideologically, ethnically marginalized youth. In short, social and educational exclusion should be analyzed as interrelated concepts in Turkey.

In the next section, I discuss the experiences of exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth in European nation-states. In addition, the marginalization of immigrant youth as a result of generational gaps will be considered.
2.2. Creating educational/social exclusion abroad: Immigrant youth face additional barriers

I shall always hate the Turks, what wretched barbarians (Voltaire in Kinzer, 2001, p.5).

In this section I analyse and assess perspectives in western culture. I look at Turkish immigration history that resulted in a sort of “in-betweenness” of Turkish immigrant youth and its consequences, specifically Turkish immigrant youth’s social and educational exclusion in European nation-states. This analysis illustrates that racist discrimination, prejudice and exclusionary state’s policies are the reasons for the exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth. In addition, youth’s in-betweenness or their complex identities are a challenge to normative values of both host and home countries results in immigrant youth’s exclusion.

2.2.1. Construction of the Turkish image in Western culture

The Turkish image as “undesirable” is not recent, but rather it goes back to the sixteenth-century’s Orientalist literature and its Euro-centric assumptions about Ottoman Turks (Kinzer, 2001; Cirakman, 2002). As Kinzer (2001) puts it “older people …can still remember being warned as children that if they didn’t behave, Turks would come to get them” (2001, p. 5). Cirakman (2002) argues that European writers as early as the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries helped to further the distance between Turks and European culture. In their writings, Turks were not only barbarous, violent public enemies of Christians, but also ignorant unbelievers. Or as Knolles, a well-known historian, put it they were nothing less than “the present terror of the world” (Cirakman, 2002, p. 75). The construction of Turks as infidel other (i.e., Muslim) is no doubt a factor in their exclusion from European society. According to Sardar (1995), the perception of a Muslim, as a member of a distinct religious group was identified with different ways of life and cultural practices and associated with certain stereotypes held by Europeans (Sardar, 1995). Correspondingly, Kaya (2005) argues that westerners perceive Islam as a threat to the European lifestyle. Similarly, Modood (1997, p. 3) alludes to “a historical antipathy, of a Crusader or colonial sort, to Islam.”

Underlying such characterizations was the Ottoman Empire’s status as a non-western society and its alienation from Western civilization which perpetuated the hatred toward- and exclusion of- Turks (Belge, 2007): “You have to have clarity about where the boundaries of Europe are, and the boundaries of Europe are not on the Turkish border,” argued Lord Owen.
Owen drew attention to Turkey’s Middle-Eastern and Islamic connections. As a result of these biased discourses, Europeans today discount Turkey’s geopolitical position as a bridge between Asia and Europe and (indirectly) the Turks’ hybrid identities as they bid for recognition as part of Europe. Instead, Turks continue to be represented as violent Muslims, unpredictable, alien, peculiar, inassimilable, and finally not European. Robins relates, “in Germany, the so-called guest-workers (Turkish immigrants) have been seen as a kind of continuation (this time by economic means) of the Ottoman (Islamic) onslaught on Europe” (Robins, 1996, p.66). Gole (2005) points out that “the objection of Austria, until the very last minute, to the opening of negotiations with Turkey for the European Union illustrates the weight of memories” namely the siege of Vienna by the Ottoman army in the seventeenth century. The stigmatization of Turks as unwanted, as the underclass, as pariahs, or as the enemy—like the Jews in Germany—is in part a legacy of this long history of xenophobia, hatred, and discrimination against Turks in the Western world.

These historical portrayals provide fuel for today’s racisms and racist attacks: Jacques Chirac remarked how “the very noise and smell of Muslims drives decent and civilized French people ‘understandably crazy’” (Sardar, 1995) and John Allemang, a journalist in Canada’s Globe and Mail newspaper, characterizes the Western conception of Muslims as “ruthless terrorists, fanatic mullahs, …cruel and arbitrary zealots bent on vengeance for a sexual faux-pas, pious ayatollahs giddy with bloodlust” (Sardar, 1995). Similar discourses in Scandinavia (especially among conservative Norwegians and Danes) invoke images of Muslim conquerors in the medieval times when representing Muslims as “the invaders,” and Islam as a focus of racist hostility, namely “Islamophobia” (Modood, 1997). Finally, not surprisingly, Turks were killed in Solingen, Molln, and Rostock by Neo-Nazis in Germany in 1992 and 1993 (Kaya, 2002). As Senocak argues following the targeting and persecution of Turkish immigrants in Germany, “what has become a taboo in the case of the Jews because of the Holocaust has become acceptable in the case of the Turks” (Robins, 1996, p.67).
2.2.2. Turkish immigration history and the conflict between Turkish immigrants and European countries

Mass Turkish immigration to Europe started with an agreement signed by Turkey and West Germany in 1961 (Faist, 1993; Yalcin-Heckmann, 1997, Caglar, 2002; Yalcin-Heckmann, 2002; Kirisci, 2003; Kastoryana, 2006). Turkey signed similar agreements with other European countries including Belgium, Holland, France, and Sweden (Elley, 1984; Hargreaves, 1995; Kroeh-Sommer, 1995; Van Oudenhoven et. al. 1998; Lindo, 2000; Kaya, 2005; Merry, 2005). While most rural, traditional Turkish immigrants migrated for economic reasons, some immigrants were motivated by the opportunity for social mobility and a better education for their children.

According to these agreements, Turkish “guest-workers” would return to Turkey. However, many of these guest workers didn’t return; rather they decided to settle down and even bring their families to join them. This mismatch between expectations and realities may be one of the explanations of tensions between host countries and Turkish immigrants.

Moreover, the boundaries between the dominant and the immigrant groups based on distinct ethnicity, religion, language, history, customs, and traditions helped to increase the hostility between Turks and the host community (Elley, 1984). While the host regarded Turkish immigrants as quite distinct due to their ethnic characteristics, Turks were also suspicious of the new norms and ways of living, including both the customs and belief systems of the host country. As a result, Turks have preferred keeping their Muslim and Turkish identity (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003) in order to maintain the borders between themselves and the mainstream and limit their interaction in the workplace or at school. In this regard, Sardar’s (1995) insightful discussion about the concepts of a “siege mentality,” and “the frozen clock” syndrome, are very helpful to understanding the conflict between Turks and host societies as well as the marginalization of Turkish youth both from their own communities and host societies.

For Sardar (1995), one result of a “siege mentality” is the refusal by immigrants to accept problems within their own communities (e.g., honour killing and domestic violence against women), which widened the gulf between them and the mainstream. Although patriarchy may also be a concern within the host country, the act of honour killing seems one of the most unique and crucial problems of the Turkish society. Similarly, in “the frozen clock” syndrome,
associated with the “siege mentality,” immigrants “behave as though the clock stopped when they left their homelands decades ago and the children are brought up synchronous with this frozen parental frame. Even the perception that the country they have left behind has changed, and changed radically, is lacking” (Sardar, 1995, p. 11). In other words, immigrant Turks, who are traditional, religious and rural-background resist all social changes, adapting less easily than the “white Turks” who are “western-looking,” secular and wealthy.

I think that these two concepts illustrate the interrelationship between the concepts of generational gap/conflict, “in-betweenness” and the exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth. In the next section, I will discuss “the process of fragmentation [which] can involve a disturbing sense of ‘loss’”(Nayak, 2003, p. 161) and/or the impasse immigrant youth find themselves at with regard to their in-betweenness and marginalization, both from their own communities and from the host society.

2.2.3. “In-betweenness” of Turkish immigrant youth and their conflict with home and host

Turkish immigrant youth’s in-betweenness results in their exclusion, not only from the host society, but also from their own families as well as home country. Their ambiguous status of belonging to anywhere but to nowhere has a psychological impact. They do not identify with the host society, adopting, say, a German identity; nor do they really fit into a simple Turkish identity: are they Muslim or secular, traditional or modern, Eastern or Western, a reproduction of their parents or a new generation? Their complex self-identities, permanent uncertainties and different expectations and norms contribute to their exclusion. To use Yalcin-Heckmann’s (2002) vivid phrase, for second-generation immigrant youth their parents are their “intimate other” which means this generational conflict and the exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth is due to a large extent the difference between the cultural values and expectations of youth and those of their families. Explaining the marginalization, exclusion, and adaptation of immigrant youth in particular, and immigrants in general, simply in reference to the “culture” of immigrants is risky and even ethno-centric since it leaves aside questions of what qualifies as “culture” and how it is determined (Vermeulen & Perlmann, 2000). However, it is useful to highlight certain cultural

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12 “Almancı,”(German-like) which is a Turkish term with negative connotations, is used to describe a Turkish immigrant in Germany (see Mandel, 1990).
values of Turkish society in order to contextualize this generational conflict and, indirectly, the identity crisis and exclusion of immigrant youth from the host, home society as well as from their families. In other words, clashes between the family, home society, and host society over values and norms contribute not only to conflict between young people and their families, but also to the identity crises of the youth and finally to their marginalization.

Abadan-Unat’s (1985) socio-psychological study, though dated, helps to explain how Turkish societal structures and cultural values determine the values of the immigrant family and the circumstances of immigrant youth in host countries: “The emigration processes … cannot be understood without prior understanding of the local social contexts from which they have emerged” (Abadan-Unat, 1985, p. 15). According to Abadan-Unat, family, as one of the most important institutions of Turkish society, is based on a “positional” control system and is dominated by a set of principal virtues that include a sense of honour –namus-, shame –ayip-, respect and submission to authority and elders, along with a commitment to collectivism. This stands in sharp contrast to Western values such as independence and individualism (Phalet & Schonpflug, 2001). In this authoritarian, patriarchal, non-Western family structure, the roles of individuals are regulated according to a hierarchical order based on gender and age. Thus, the roles of young people are shaped by their parents and elder relatives; hence, youth’s autonomy is very limited.

In addition, due to patriarchal norms, the independence of young girls, especially those from lower-class, rural, traditional, and religious families, is even more restricted (White, 1995); they are confined to home and are expected to engage in household activities, rather than participating in public affairs. In other words, they are the “honour” of the family that has to be protected and the “domestic labourers” of their households (Kayaalp, 2005). Certain linguistic terms (e.g., elder brother -abi- and elder sister –abla-) that are absent in many Western languages reinforce this patriarchal and hierarchical system. (It is also very interesting to observe that, when addressing people who are unknown, young people use such titles as “uncle” and “aunt”). These symbols are also important to understanding how Turkish family life differs from membership in a Western family, say Anglo-Canadian, which does not contain these terms.

The critical question for a Turkish immigrant youth is this: what should the reference point be: their home country and family or the host country? Faced with an unresolvable dilemma, as
Abadan-Unat (1985) argues, they become nomads within two worlds. While at home, “ideas such as family honour, national pride are uncalculated by means of restricted language codes and positional control systems, at school the system is oriented toward the individual and a wide range of codes are used to achieve ends such as success and happiness” (Abadan-Unat, 1985, p. 16). Moreover, no matter which ways they answer the question, immigrant youth are treated either as deviants by the family or by the host society, which in turn perpetuates their exclusion.

The film *Head-On* (by Fatih Akin (2003), a director of Turkish-origin) exposes the plights of Turkish immigrant youth in Germany. While the film is important to reveal the existence of the “frozen clock” syndrome and “the siege mentality” in the lives of Turkish immigrant parents in Germany, it also indicates that the marginalization of Turkish immigrant youth cannot be separated from the generational conflict between young people and their parents concerning the norms of the home country. *Head-On* narrates the tragedy of Sibel, a 22-year-old Turkish immigrant girl, who is trying to escape from the patriarchal values of her traditional Muslim family and Cahit, a Turkish punk man, who lives for alcohol and earns a meagre living collecting glasses in a dingy bar in Germany\(^\text{13}\). The film effectively portrays their in-betweenness and their exclusion from both home societies, including their family as well as from the mainstream.

Senocak has suggested that Turkish immigrant youth’s otherization could be examined in connection with their “inner exile,” and their permanent insecurity because of that uncertainty (Sardar, 1995).

The in-betweenness of Muslim Turkish immigrant youth, their belonging to anywhere but to nowhere, as one of the reasons for conflict and exclusion has also been examined through their identity perceptions, e.g., Muslimness. According to Abdullah, “In Germany a majority of young Muslim immigrant youth are alienated from their parents’ obscurantist interpretation of their religion. Some of these sixteen year olds argue that ‘such kind of Islam’ does not suit them in Western society. Others maintain that their overtly political nature, combined with a static traditionalism, has driven them away from mosques. Only those who are forced to attend mosque classes, some 12 per cent, actually admit to accepting their parents’ version of Islam. And it is not just in Germany but throughout Europe that mosques, with their important semi-ignorant imams, have failed to provide a sense of belonging to young Muslims” (Sardar, 1995, p. 13). Similarly,

\(^{13}\) www.tiscali.co.uk
in France Muslim youth hold their Islamic identity only at a symbolic level (Kaya, 2005). Most of them do not fast, they adopt a secular approach, and even some define themselves as “Atheist Muslims.” Although according to Islam it is not possible to be an “atheist Muslim,” the category of Muslimness suggests a cultural as well as a religious background. This is one of the reasons for social tensions that exist in Turkey today that might surface within an immigrant community. Kaya calls this process “symbolic religiosity,” in which “religiosity gains a more symbolic than instrumental function in people’s lives, and loses its importance …[and] becomes a leisure time activity” (Kaya, 2005, p. 9).

This perspective calls for a critical reconsideration: one that takes into account the fractured diasporic identities of Turkish immigrant youth, their identity transformations, their constantly changing perceptions and experiences of “Muslimness” and “Turkishness” and “our,” that is the researchers’ tendency to make problematic a priori assumptions about “Turkish and Muslim” immigrant youth without considering their self-identifications. Turkish immigrant youth might internalize the official language of the Turkish state and define him/herself as “secular,” “modernist” Turk, rather than an excluded Muslim in another country.

The diasporic hybrid identity of Turkish immigrant youth is of course not the only factor in social and educational exclusion. Of equal importance is the interrelationship between the structure of the host country (whether it is inclusive or exclusive) and the parental ties with the home country (through relatives or property in Turkey). (While I believe that there is no “pure” identity and thus all people are hybrid, I still prefer using the concept of hybridity to underline complexity of identities of children of immigrants and to show that “cultures of hybridity contradict Cartesian binary oppositions, operating as a logic of the included middle” (Guattari cited in Kaya, 2002)). Consequently, one expects to see different diasporic hybrid identity formations in different social contexts, a result of dialectical and dialogical relations between Turkish minority youth and the majority (Kaya, 2005). As well, the nature of exclusion/s in first-generation compared to second-generation immigrant Turkish youth should also vary, given the different interactions among parents, the home country, and the dominant social context.

Furthermore, the exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth might be examined regarding their ambivalent status and (therefore) the challenges they represent to the boundaries between minority and mainstream or “us” and “them.” In other words, hybrid identities of immigrant
youth “challenge the assumed and imagined cultural borders of social unities” (Yalcin- Heckmann, 2002, p. 283). Similarly, complex identities of immigrant youth undermine narration of identification of the nation-state. These identities challenge the nation-state’s ideals such as homogeneity, and the ideal of a “pure” nation because their roots lie elsewhere (Bader, 1997; Caglar, 1997; Nayak, 2003). Immigrant youth are coded as foreigners by the state’s exclusionary policies and the host society’s prejudices which contribute to marginalization of Turkish youth.

As hybrid identities “undergo constant transformation” (Hall, n.d.), the nature of exclusion/s and perceptions of exclusions are shaped accordingly. In other words, the degree of exclusion/s might alter according to class, cultural practices, and “degree of in-betweenness” (i.e., first generation vs. second generation) of immigrant youth. Therefore, immigrant youth’s experience of exclusion should not be considered as a static phenomenon that reflects a singular experience, but a process that indicates multiple experiences.

Having charted the background of general difficulties facing immigrant Turkish youth, I now look at the literature discussing the specific social and educational exclusions they face in Germany, the Netherlands, France, England and Belgium. It is readily apparent that Turkish youth have limited access to societal institutions, including the labour and the education markets, and they are ethnically, economically and educationally disadvantaged in host countries.

2.2.4. Social and educational exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth in Western European nation-states

[A plastic surgeon told us about an industrial accident] in a food processing plant where a Turk working on a cutting machine had sliced open his hand. And he even started the story with: “the stupid Turk. His hand is not a can!”…He said, “I didn’t have much confidence, but still, I wanted to save the man’s hand, because he said, you know what it costs the Dutch government if that man loses his hand… But eventually, the hand started to die anyway. His hand was amputated after all. Rosa N., a Somalian medical student, preludes her accounts of racism in the Netherlands (cited in Essed, 1991, p. 149).

This section discusses the educational and social exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth in Western European nation-states, namely Germany, the Netherlands, France, England and Belgium. Exclusionary practices and policies of the states, stereotypes and prejudices of the
dominant society contribute to reasons for young people’s marginalization in the educational and social institutions.

The research of Alba (2005), Glick and White (2003), Hargreaves (1995) indicates that the academic achievement of immigrant youth is affected by the socio-economic status of the family, their language, and their ethnicity. However, since personal histories and experiences of immigrants cannot be divorced from the social structure of the society, the economic, social and political framework of the society has to be taken into account when examining the educational attainment of immigrant youth. Research also shows that Turkish immigrant youth suffer from racist discrimination, prejudice, and lack of opportunities in education, labour and the housing market (Faist, 1993; Van Oudenhoven et al. 1998; Kaya, 2005; Merry, 2005, Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006).

Turkish youth in Germany suffer from social and educational exclusion. The state’s official language, including racist legal and educational state policies toward immigrants, contributes to immigrant youth’s exclusion from educational and social institutions (Kastoryana, 2006). For instance, the overrepresentation of Turkish youth in special education schools due to their lack of proficiency in German, and their ‘foreigner’ identity due to the state’s restrictive immigration policies toward dual citizenship are some of the factors implicated in the exclusion and marginalization of the immigrant youth and their failure in the educational and social institutions in Germany (Kroeh-Sommer, 1995).

Yalcin-Heckmann (2002) argues that, although many Turkish immigrants have been residents of Germany for more than 35 years, they are still treated as “guest workers,” “settlers with a foreign passport,” “Turks living in Germany,” and finally the “other others.” White (1995) states that “since Germanness is still based on blood, not behaviour or even citizenship, a Turk raised in Germany, even a German citizen, fluent in the Bavarian dialect, will still have trouble renting an apartment because s/he is not German” (White, 1995, p. 2). In short, Turks are not only not Germans\textsuperscript{14} but they do not belong in Germany.

Kastoryano’s (2006) research on Germany’s new citizenship law (2000) in relation to the situation of Turkish immigrant youth is a very crucial and current inquiry. It explores recent

\textsuperscript{14} According to new citizenship law (2000), Turkish immigrant youth can be a German citizen though it depends on certain conditions. For more information see Kastoryano, 2006 and Fucks, 2002.
political developments and, indirectly, the meaning of the nation-state and the citizenship status of Turkish immigrant youth in Germany. For Kastoryano, the new law, which passed in January 2000, is revolutionary because it states “a child born in Germany to foreign parents acquires German citizenship if one of the parents has lawfully resided in Germany for at least eight consecutive years.” Despite that sentiment, however, the legislation is unlikely to integrate Turks in general and first and second generation Turkish immigrant youth in particular because it is unlikely to overcome centuries of social prejudice (Gulalp, 2006). Kastoryano goes on to relate that, since the new law does not recognize dual citizenship, Turkish immigrant youth between the ages of 18 and 23 have to choose between two nationalities, that is between becoming German and remaining a “foreigner”, a situation which further perpetuates the distinction between true/assimilable and false/inassimilable citizens. The German state’s rejection of the demand for dual citizenship and hence, the failure to acknowledge the cultural ties of immigrant young with their homelands, reduces citizenship to a simple juridical status, or “citizenship on paper” that is a right without identity” (Kastoryano, 2006, p. 21). Consequently, the new law offers a “conditional citizenship” without guaranteeing cultural integration and recognition to Turkish youth: They are foreigners forever.

Phalet and Schonpflug (2001) argue that the transmission of collectivist values, such as conformity to social norms and patriarchal values, is crucial for Turkish immigrant families in Germany. According to the study, more collectivistic Turkish parents have lower aspirations for the school careers of their daughters. On the other hand, according to Crul (2000), immigrants’ culture cannot be the only explanation for the failure of Turkish immigrants, both in terms of school and their integration into the society. For Crul, the host society’s attitude towards Turkish immigrants determines Turkish immigrants’ behavioural patterns and integration into the society.

Other research indicates that Turkish youth in Germany suffer from higher rates of unemployment and lower rates of enrolment in school, especially in the dual system (apprenticeship with part-time vocational schools) (Faist, 1993). According to Faist, Turkish youth’s disadvantaged condition in the educational and labour market is the outcome of the state’s discriminatory policies and practices toward Turkish minorities. Germany’s “foreigner policy” has affected the place of Turkish youth in the labour market. “Second generation Turks born in Germany are not eligible for dual citizenship” (Faist, 1993, p.320).
Stigmatization of Turks as “foreigners” and “guest-workers” excludes Turkish immigrants and marginalizes them as an “underclass.” Turkish youth who fail in the dual system are transferred into programs for mentally and physically handicapped German youth, which makes them a “problem group.” Most importantly, for Faist, these special programs are de facto ethnically targeted programs. Turkish youth who fail in the educational system become potentially unemployed or blue-collar workers like their fathers. This indicates that Turkish immigrant youth’s upward mobility in Germany is limited because of the state’s policies and the hierarchical German education system.

In the Netherlands, Turkish immigrant youth are confined to “Black Schools” which are located in poor immigrant neighbourhoods and associated with poor quality education and few chances to pursue higher education, whereas Dutch students are enrolled in “White Schools,” which are located in white, middle-class neighbourhoods and associated with good prospects for higher education (Crul, 2000). On the other hand, according to Lindo (2000), the poor academic performance of Turkish students compared to Portuguese and Spanish students is related to their parents’ pre-immigration histories, including cultural factors such as patriarchal relations or parents’ social positions in the host country. For Lindo, the subordinate position of Turkish women in the patriarchal family and behavioural patterns such as the parents’ negative attitude towards education cause Turkish youth to abandon their educational careers.

Van Oudenhoven (1998) argues that Turkish immigrant youth face several problems in the Netherlands. They are well behind compared to the mainstream population when it comes to education, income and employment. Their psychological situation is not very favourable either. According to the study, although Turkish immigrants want to integrate into the host society, the Dutch majority think that most Turks choose separation. These different perceptions and expectations between the Turkish minority and the Dutch majority likely cause social problems. Moreover, the Turkish populations’ desire to integrate into the host society indicates their expectation of recognition by the mainstream. Another study indicates that, in the Netherlands, Turkish immigrant students’ lower socio-economic status (SES) affects educationally disadvantaged immigrant youths’ instructional and social support preferences (Vedder et. al. 2005). While Dutch youth prefer instructional support from their parents, immigrant youth prefer instructional support from their teachers (Vedder et. al. 2005).
Hargreaves (1996) has noted that exclusionary state policies against Turkish immigrants exist in France where Turkish immigrants are overrepresented in vulnerable, poorly paid, and unskilled jobs, which in turn leads to the marginalization and exclusion of immigrants since permanent employment by the state is reserved for French nationals. As a result of unemployment and marginal status, Turkish immigrants, like Algerians and Moroccans, suffer from social exclusion in France. Similarly, Kaya (2005) argues that in France Muslim minority youth suffer from unemployment, poverty, lack of education, inequality, racism, xenophobia, assimilation, isolation and exclusion. For Kaya, the riots in France in 2005, were more a result of these structural problems than religiosity or radical Islamic culture of the minority youth. The riots were not outcomes of the cultural disintegration and religious radicalism of Muslim youth, who have been described as “criminal,” “vagabond,” and “scum” by the mainstream and the state, but of Muslim youth’s “hyper-isolation,” social and educational exclusion and limited social mobility in France. On the other hand, for Muslim immigrant youth religion might be a symbol of resistance, a reference point and a survival strategy as a “component of identity politics” against exclusion, racism and assimilation. According to the research, Muslim youth are aware of the fact that they have limited access to educational, political and social institutions (Kaya, 2005). In this regard, it is not surprising to see their resistance to these institutions and the official language, as Tribalat puts it nicely: “If I am to meet with discrimination, what is the point of working hard for success in school?” (Kaya, 2005) Similarly, according to Castles and Miller “the contradiction between the ideology of equal opportunity and the reality of discrimination and racism can lead to emergence of countercultures and political radicalization” (Kaya, 2002, p. 50).

For Kaya (2005), individuals and relations in schools are becoming more racialized in France. “Individuals are perceived and branded as people with ‘ethnic identities.’ To put it simply, whereas schools would define some students as working-class children in the past, now they define them as children of emigrants. While a child’s problems would be attributed to his/her father’s poverty in the past, now they are being attributed to the fact that his/her father is a migrant, even though the child belongs to the third generation. The behaviour of male children would be described as ‘hostile’ in the past, now the behaviour itself is being described as ‘ethnic’” (Kaya, 2005, p. 6). While class is considered as outdated abstract category by the
dominant discourse, race is used as an ideology to mask social inequalities and problems in the society.

According to Faas (2008), the first-generation mainland Turkish immigrant youth and the second-generation Turkish Cypriots have suffered from social/educational exclusion, racism and Islamophobia in England. According to the research, Turkish youth also have experienced ethnic conflict with other ethnic minorities, particularly African-Caribbean youth, which in turn leads to a strong ethnic solidarity and national identity (Turkishness) among Turkish youth. Faas’s study illustrates the role of school characteristics (significantly, the school’s adoption of an inclusive multicultural policy and the socio-economic status of its location) and the social class position of immigrant youth in determining their identity formations and their ethnic conflicts/divisions and exclusion. This particular study showed that ethnic conflict based on cultural and religious differences between the African-Caribbean and the Turkish students was higher at working-class Millroad School and lower at middle-class Darwin School, which also had more inclusive school policy. Verbal abuse was the most common form of discrimination against Turks. For Faas, “African-Caribbean students draw on the double meaning of the word ‘turkey,’ which is mostly used to refer to an ugly, large bird, to mock and ridicule the Turkish students.” Faas’s (2008) study is a salient reminder that ethnic conflict and exclusion exists not only between majority and minority groups but also between minority groups.

Merry (2005) argues how Muslim Turkish youth in Belgium are disadvantaged with regard to education, jobs and housing. According to Merry, Belgium’s educational policies affect educators’ practice and immigrant students’ educational achievement. Turkish immigrant youth are overrepresented in inner-city “concentration” schools rather than “mainstream” schools in affluent neighbourhoods. Moreover, because of the biased educational policies, such as requiring school uniforms, certificates of baptism, and teachers’ discrimination against Turkish youth, some of the immigrant students are relegated to special education programs. As a result of this segregation and exclusion, Turkish immigrant students are stigmatized as “losers,” “troublemakers,” and “disobedient.” They are also targeted as scapegoats for recent higher national crime rates.

The literature reviewed here indicates very strongly that Turkish immigrant youth face considerable educational and social exclusion of in European nation-states, a result of
exclusionary policies, practices, and popular beliefs that structure the society. Immigrant youth’s access to education and social institutions as well as their status as “wanted and unwelcome” foreigners in Germany (Bader, 1997) and elsewhere is decided according to the interests of the nation-state and its policies. At one level, states (particularly the German nation-state) enact policies such as conditional citizenship but not dual citizenship, while at another level; popular myth and selective historical memory reinforce unfavourable stereotypes.

If Turkish immigrant youth in European nation-states face social and educational exclusion, one may well ask whether the case is similar in Canada, a nation composed largely of immigrants from Europe but also many other parts of the world. The next section discusses social and educational exclusion of young immigrants with regard to Canadian immigration policies, and the exclusionary practices, stereotypes and prejudices of the mainstream in Canadian society.

2.3. Creating educational/social exclusion abroad: the Canadian case of immigrant youth (especially Turkish and Muslim)

In this section I analyse the social and educational exclusion of Turkish and Muslim youth in Canada. I look at Canadian immigration policy, exclusionary social and educational practices, stereotypes and prejudices among the dominant cultures, and discuss their impact on immigrant youth.

2.3.1. Canadian immigration policy

Canada’s reputation as a welcoming and hospitable destination for immigrants and refugees is poorly supported by research on the historical and contemporary nature of national immigration policies; in fact, this reputation is probably not warranted at all. This sub-section can be divided into 5 themes in relation to Canadian immigration policy and the exclusion of immigrants: 1) historical considerations, 2) current explicit policy restrictions, 3) labour market restrictions, 4) implicit restrictions and 5) “construction” of some immigrants as not “real” Canadians. This section indicates that Canadian immigration policy is a selective and exclusionary construction against immigrants from non-traditional countries including the Middle East, China, Japan and India.
Canada’s discriminatory immigration policies are not a recent development. Indeed, for at least the last century and a half immigration to Canada has been regulated to produce certain “ideal” subjects and to exclude non-ideal or inassimilable ones (Canadian Council For Refugees, 2000; Canadian Council For Refugees, 2005; Basdeo, 2006; Prestan and Murnaghan, 2005; Lorna, 2004; Chan, 2005; Bauder, 2003; Montgomery, 2002; Bannerji, 1995, Bannerji, 1995, Sharma, 2001; Nakhaie, 2006). Canada’s immigration policy has been based on admission of people from Britain, Australia, America and France (and northern Europe more generally) and exclusion of people from the Middle East, China, Japan, and India (Abu-Laban, 1995; Bloom et al., 1995; Boyd & Vickers, 2000; Thobani, 2000; Ash, 2004). As Ash (2004) argues, “Canadian immigration law was Anglo-conformist, seeking to construct the new nation as predominantly British” (Ash, 2004, p. 404) that additionally excluded Aboriginal people (Thobani, 2000). In other words, Canada was populated through discriminatory ideological state policies and practices “on the basis of race and ethnicity” (Stafford, 1992). A survey of opinion by Reitz and Breton (1998) show that Canadians are largely ignorant of the national policies that handicap immigrants, and conclude that “a majority of Canadians feel that minorities are responsible for their own inequality and that government should not intervene to ensure equality” (Reitz & Breton, 1998, p. 65). More recently, Adelman (2002) points to a poll conducted for the Council for Canadian Unity which indicates that, “the support for reduced immigration rose after [the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Buildings] from 29 percent to 45 percent. However, an even larger percentage, 80 percent according to Leger Marketing, demanded strict controls over immigration” (Adelman, 2002, p. 15). In both media and among the mainstream population, immigrants and refugees, particularly from the Middle East, are legally constructed as suspicious terrorists and potential criminals in the name of security which is a new, legitimate way of exclusion of others.

Lorna (2004) argues that the Canadian Immigration Act of 1919 which instituted a literacy test created hierarchies among people who are literate and assimilable versus illiterate and inassimilable. Educationally and economically disadvantaged lower class immigrants, unlike immigrants from middle class, were underprivileged in such cases.

The recruitment of immigrants according to the point system introduced in 1967 may have been an improvement to a blatantly racist immigration policy, but it was also a very selective
process since there is always a hierarchy among immigrants according to ethnicity/race, class and gender (Bloom et al., 1995; Arat-Koc, 1992; Akbari, 1999; Thobani, 2000). The 1978 Immigration Act barred discrimination toward immigrant selections, but Arat-Koc states, “the common notions of “deserving” and “undeserving” immigrants and what different immigrants deserve are not just based on what people do and how they contribute to Canadian society, but on where they come from” (Arat-Koc, 1992, p.238). Arat points out that women who immigrate from poorer regions of the world are excluded on the basis of class, gender, and race, and when they are successful, are relegated to domestic service work where they receive low pay, little recognition, and disregard for their basic rights and liberties. Similarly, number of studies show that “visible minorities” earn less than European-Canadians and that their income falls below the national mean in Canada (Boyd & Vickers, 2000; Juteau, 2000; Palameta, 2004; Nakhaie, 2006).

Even today, recent immigrants, particularly visible minority immigrants, experience significant barriers and discrimination in the labour market due to Canadian immigration policies (Baker & Benjamin, 1994; Bloom et al., 1995; Akbari, 1999; Ley & Hiebert, 2001). Bloom et al. (1995) argues that with point system discrimination has increased in the labour market, since the point system has led to change in the profiles of immigrants from European to “visible” immigrants particularly from Asia, Africa and Latin America who experience more discrimination than non-visible immigrants. This indicates that there is a contrast between official policy and popular acceptance by “mainstream” Canadians.

Because of discrimination in the labour market recent immigrants had incomes below the poverty line according to the 1996 census (Ley & Hiebert, 2001). Immigration, then, appears to be an indicator for poverty. Surprisingly, perhaps, immigrants entering Canada through the business program also experience difficulties in the labour market, since they frequently fail in their bids to establish prosperous businesses (Ley & Hiebert, 2001). Although there are many reasons why immigrants are disadvantaged in the labour market, the implicit (and sometimes explicit) values held by Canada’s government leaders about what constitutes an ideal citizen (e.g., western European ethnicity and good English language skills) and the immigration policies that result are among the more significant reasons (Nakhaie, 2001).

The barriers and discrimination faced by immigrants go beyond the labour market, affecting the very identity of those who come to Canada. According to Sunera Thobani (2000), the
Canadian nation-state is dominated by exclusionary racial, class, gender, sociolinguistic categories and regulations, in which immigrants from “Third World” countries, such as Asia and Africa, are constructed as outsiders and Aboriginal peoples are subject to ongoing repression. For Thobani, as long as Canadian immigration policy and regulations are based on the dichotomy between “ideal” and “real” Canadians (i.e., white), Canadian values (i.e., whiteness, fluency in English and French and mainstream way of living) and “immigrant Canadians” (i.e., people of colour) and their “cultural distinctiveness,” the latter group will remain excluded. To Thobani, the Immigration Policy Review (IPR), the state’s review to restructure the immigration program in the mid-1990s, shows a lingering desire by the Canadian state to preserve the “whiteness” and the white superiority of the citizenry, constructing people of colour as “problems” and “threats.”

The IPR states: “There is increasing concern that immigrants are not respecting these responsibilities (of sponsorship), thus placing demands on already over-burdened social support programs, funded by Canadian taxpayers” (IPR cited in Thobani, 2000, p. 48) (emphasis added). According to Thobani, the text describes “real” Canadians as disturbed by the fact that immigrants arrive at “our” borders with “instructions on how to use the system to their advantaged.” Moreover, for Thobani, throughout the report the “quality” of immigrants is questioned (such as whether they have good English language skills) and their “quantity” is associated with over-population, environmental deterioration, pollution, increased crime, food and housing shortages. In addition, according to the report, “Canadians have expressed concern that their Canada is disappearing; that …‘ its values and lifestyle are being eroded and degraded. Our North American way of life …all of these treasured ideas and ‘our way of life’ is now ending” (Thobani, 2000, p. 44). This argument vividly shows how aspects of policy restrict an immigrant’s ability to prosper after arriving in Canada.

Thobani’s analysis of the IPR raises some important points regarding the identity of immigrants. In fact, the IPR can be read as part of a “new racism” since the text contrasts such supposedly “Canadian” values as honesty, fairness, and industriousness, with the values of immigrants, thus legitimating the superiority of “true” Canadian values over the values of immigrants and emphasizing the “cultural differences” of immigrants (Cohen, 1999; Thobani, 2000; Nayak, 2003). As Nakhaie (2001) suggests, although “the new immigration policies were less racist, they were not yet anti-racist” (Nakhaie, 2001, p. 22). For Nakhaie, although Canada’s
immigration policies were changed dramatically from the mid-1960s and through the 1970s, requirements still favoured Europeans through such test categories as fluency in English and French. “The country was still dominated by white, Anglo-Saxon, French and other Europeans. These groups didn’t readily accept people of different ‘races,’ colours, accents, and cultures into the dominant institutions” (Nakhaie, 2001, p. 23). In fact, immigrants could not hope to be “real” Canadians.

Bannerji (1995) also critically analyzes Canadian immigration policy in general and multiculturalism in particular. For Bannerji, the Canadian nation-state’s immigration policy is based on the ideal of white skin and European origin. According to this formula, non-white, non-European people are constructed as non-Canadians or “outsiders”. Labels such as “minority” and “alien” were created to aid the state’s ideological project. In other words, “the making of Canada is accomplished through the exclusion of the non-white minority through the state’s official language” (Bannerji, 1995). In *Thinking Through* (1995), Bannerji argues that the whole social/cultural/political/economical structure of Canadian society is “raced”. For Bannerji, multiculturalism as a policy is open to criticism since Canada’s homogeneous ideal and its racist and colonial entity are barriers for the inclusion of the “other”. Multiculturalism “serves as an ideological slogan, a symbol for managing social contradictions” (Bannerji, 1995, 14).

Fleras (2004) also criticizes Canadian official multiculturalism as mono-multiculturalism since it is not about “celebrating diversity, but primarily about neutralizing differences to ensure integration” (Fleras, 2004, p. 432). According to Fleras, a mono-multiculturalism is also racist since it imposes a single national cultural unity, including nationalist discourses such as national security; it also suppresses and excludes the identities, experiences and values of minorities. In this regard, it is as exclusionary as old-fashioned racism. Mono-multiculturalism and its motto “we-know-what-is-best-for-you,” as part of ethnocentrism, castrates and de-politicizes differences and alternative thoughts and thus repudiates minorities’ power to challenge, resist and transform dominant ideology. In short, for Fleras, in Canada a pattern of multicultural racism is established as part of the “Canadian way”: A “polite mono-multicultural racism” (emphasis added).

Sharma (2001) holds a similar perspective, arguing that the construction of Canadianness by the Canadian nation-state led to inequality and the exclusion of certain groups of people, not
diversity. For Sharma, Canada’s 1973 Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (NIEAP) produced migrant workers who have no political, social and economic rights in order to create cheap labour for Canadian industry. This program reproduced the non-citizen category and led to the exploitation of workers.

According to the Canadian Council For Refugees report (2000), although “Canada is considered to be among the countries that best respect human rights and that offer a most generous welcome to refugees, refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the society-at-risk of deportation” (Canadian Council For Refugees, 2000, p. 1). Another report of the Canadian Council For Refugees (2005) has remarked, “until the 1960s, Canada chose its immigrants on the basis of their races.” Accordingly, until then, the immigration of Black Americans, Chinese, Indians and “stateless” people, i.e. the Jews, was actively discouraged (Basdeo, 2006). Since Turks were also in the category of undesirables, they were also excluded from immigration to Canada (Canadian Council For Refugees, 2005). Similarly, many Turkish immigrants to Canada between 1911 and 1921 were deported and classified as enemy aliens during World War I, not surprising given the role of the Ottoman Empire in the war (Abu-Laban, 1995).

In sum, Canadian immigration policy and history is the construction of “desirable” and “good” versus “undesirable” and “bad” immigrants (Chan, 2005). Turks, although not specified in the general observations, undoubtedly have been among those constructed as “undesirable” and “bad” since they are from a “non-traditional country” which renders them inassimilable.

2.3.1. Social and educational exclusion of immigrant Turks in Canada

[The Turk] treated the sounds of the unknown language as if they were silence. To break through [her/his] silence. [S/he] learnt twenty words of the new language. But to [her/his] amazement at first, their meaning changed as [s/he] spoke them…Is it possible to see the opaqueness of the words? (Bhabha in Soysal, 2003)

Given the discriminatory nature of Canadian immigration policies and their contribution to the construction of Turkish immigrants (among others) as undesirable, one may well ask how they respond to the circumstances. We do not know much about the Turkish community in Canada; it is one of the least studied ethnic groups in the country, despite the growing Turkish population in metropolitan areas like Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. The increasing size of the Turkish population presents an opportunity for a sociological inquiry to understand Turkish
immigrants and especially their children’s experiences of immigration and exclusion in Canada. Most of the literature on Turkish immigrant youth has focused on their experiences and social exclusion in Europe; research has mostly ignored Turkish immigrant youth’s experiences and social exclusion in Canada. For example, Ataca & Berry (2002) looked into psychological and socio-cultural adaptation of Turkish immigrants in Canada but ignored youths’ experiences.

The selective nature of the Canadian immigration policy raises the question of whether the social and educational profile of Turkish immigrants in Canada is different from Turkish immigrants in Europe. European immigration policies are also selective, but the Canadian system favours skilled workers and entrepreneurs. Turkish immigrants in Europe are typically from semi-skilled or unskilled working class and traditional, rural backgrounds (Elley, 1984; Moodley, 1989; Leggewie, 1996; Crul, 2000; Kirisci, 2003, Belge, 2007), but Muslim Turkish immigrants in Canada tend to have professional and urban backgrounds, and the level of their educational attainment exceeds the Canadian average (Sardar, 1995; Angin, 2003).

Turkish immigrants are coming to Canada largely for economic reasons such as higher salaries and social benefits (Angin, 2003) and they tend to be young and middle-class with higher education, unlike the Turkish immigrants in Europe (Angin 2003; Uskul and Greenglass 2005). Ataca and Berry (2002) argue that in Canada Turkish immigrants’ experience of exclusion changes according to their socio-economic status or class. Turkish immigrant groups from a lower SES and rural backgrounds with lower education and income experience more discrimination than Turks from higher SES professionals with high cultural capital. However, Turkish immigrants in Canada, like Turks in Europe, retain their ethnic identities (Angin, 2003) and also experience social exclusion (Sever, 2006). In fact, because Turkish professionals experience a loss of status they are less satisfied with their immigration experience than Turks from a lower SES.

Aycan and Berry (1996), and Esses et al. (1996) have noted that Turkish immigrants have difficulty finding employment suitable to their prior training because of barriers to recognition of academic qualifications. Correspondingly, despite the high educational qualifications of Muslim immigrants in general, they are occupationally disadvantaged compared to their non-Muslim counterparts (Abu-Laban, 1995; CCMW, 2005). Bauder (2003) argues that in Canada, the “presuppositions of a meritocratic society, in which educational attainment is rewarded with
occupational status, do not apply to recent immigrants” (Bauder, 2003) because the ideology of meritocracy is used to justify existing economic power and privilege, not permit access to foreigners. Bauder (2003) and Nakhaie (2006) found that immigrants’ educational credentials are not valued compared to the native-born who “enter the labour market with the ‘right’ cultural capital and personal ties built during schooling” (cited in Nakhaie, 2006, p. 40). Nakhaie here emphasizes the importance of possessing the dominant cultural values, tastes, knowledge, and communication style and social network when accessing educational and other social institutions, but also notes that official policy explicitly ignores foreign credentials. In this regard, Turkish immigrant youth are disadvantaged since they are not familiar with these cultural codes. According to Aycan and Berry (1996), this disadvantaged condition in the labour market affects Turkish immigrants’ psychological situation and adaptation in Canada.

In sum, this analysis indicates that in Canada Turkish immigrants suffer from discrimination in societal institutions, particularly in the labour market, though their experience of exclusion changes according to their class status. Therefore, it seems necessary to examine social/educational exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth in relation to their social class.

2.3.2. Social and educational exclusion of immigrant youth in Canada

Since little research has been done on the social and educational exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth, we must infer their situation from how immigrant or minority youth in general experience discriminatory state policies and practices, exclusion, racism, teacher discrimination, language barriers and accent discrimination, and wider Islamophobia in the education and social institutions (Dei et. al., 1997; Zine, 2000; Samuel et al., 2001; Zine, 2001; Dei and James, 2002; Zine, 2002; Edith and Burney, 2003; Schick and Denis, 2005; Saul, 2006; Statistics Canada, 2006, Zine, 2006; Zine 2007).

Immigrant youth in general suffer from racism and discrimination in school settings (Schick and Denis, 2005; Dei et. al., 1997). To Schick and Denis (2005), “teaching about the production of white identities is always problematic in Canada. Whiteness is associated with ‘tolerance’ and ‘innocence’, while the ‘other’ identities are neglected.” Scholars have thus concluded that, “the Canadian education system is accused of predominantly Euro-centric, Judeo-
Christian, middle-class and white.” (Davies & Guppy, 1998) Turkish youth, as non-European, non-Christian, non-Western, similarly experience racism.

Language barriers and sociolinguistic variations contribute considerably to the ethnic minority experience of invisibility and discrimination (Cummins, 1997; Samuel et al., 2001; Zine, 2001; Guardado, 2002; Rodda & Eleweke, 2002; Derwing, 2003; Nakhaie, 2006). Guardado (2002) shows how devaluation and lack of recognition of the minority youth’s first language both inside and outside of the school setting are major causes of language loss, which further leads to eroding family relationships, poor self-image, confused cultural identity and lowered school performance of immigrant youth. Similarly, Zine (2001) discusses the relationship between cultural variations of sociolinguistic style and the minority youth’s underachievement in public schools in Canada. For Zine, the mismatch between dominant pedagogical practices and communicative styles, such as language forms and identity symbols, and those of the minority youth can lead to their placement in special language programs such as ESL (English as a Second Language), which is humiliating and damaging to minority youth who were born in Canada and use English as their first language. According to the author, these “resocialization” or penalization practices at school negatively affect not only students’ educational experiences and attainments, but also their emotional well-being. As Gillborn (1997) puts it vividly, these dominant educational forms waste immigrant youth’s “high ability through adopting ‘the wrong attitude’” (Gillborn, 1997, p. 386). Similarly, Erickson (cited in Samuel et al., 2001) argues, “altering the structure in classroom discourse could reduce ‘culture shock’ and enable minority students to feel conversationally comfortable in an otherwise uncomfortable setting”.

Even when immigrant youth can use English well, a foreign accent can lead to mistreatment or lack of recognition by native language users (Derwing, 2003; Nakhaie, 2006). Nakhaie cites a study which indicates that “over 60% of respondents believe that discrimination is worse when members of minority groups speak with an accent in Canada…As well, prejudice and discrimination tend to work indirectly by forcing minorities to withdraw from society” (Reitz and Sklar cited in Nakhaie, 2006, p. 41). Similarly, according to Derwing (2003), non-native speakers in Canada experience “accent discrimination” and are stereotyped by native speakers as less educated, less intelligent, and less affluent. Consequently, the native majority and even non-
native minority construct the “Queen’s English” (or the Canadian equivalent) accent as a status marker. As Lippi and Green put it “Sound like us, and success will be yours. Doors will open, barriers will disappear” (Lippi & Green, 1997, p. 50). According to Derwing’s survey, 95% of the ESL immigrant students agree that they would like to pronounce English like a native speaker. Most importantly, minority students report that they experience lack of attention/recognition, rudeness, anger, and deliberate misunderstanding due to their accents: “Canadians joke and make faces and make rude comments. They tell me I should take pronunciation classes… When we have a car accident, the police didn’t pay attention to what I said. They pay more attention to other woman (native speaker) with who we had the accident” (Derwing, 2003, p. 553).

Derwing’s study points to an important relationship between accent and exclusion, but it should examine more deeply the nature of this relationship. That is, notions of accent and “accent discrimination,” as part of identity politics, should be considered as elements of ethnic or racial discrimination and racism rather than as independent concepts apart from the structural constraints of the society. Accent, dress, types of hair, colour of skin are signifiers within racist social contexts and they are the results of “the selective perception of prejudiced people” (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992, p. 136). Similarly, Lippi & Green (1997) argue that “it is not all foreign accents, but only accents linked to skin that isn’t white, or which signals a third world homeland, that evokes such negative reactions” (Lippi & Green, 1997, p. 238-239).

Given the state of world politics, it is not surprising to see negative attitudes and discriminatory practices against Arab and Turkish youth in school or in the labour market and other social contexts because of their Muslim identity (Abu-Laban, 1995). According to Abu-Laban (1995), there are tensions between the Islamic practices of the Muslim minority and the Canadian environment: “Three of the five essential tenets of Islam (namely, praying five times a day, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and zakat) are threatened in the Canadian environment” (Abu-Laban, 1995, p. 142). In addition, anti-Muslim sentiment is rising (CCMW, 2005). Muslim students are presented with hurtful stereotypes of themselves not only in popular media, but in their social science textbooks.

In Zine’s estimation (2000; 2001; 2002; 2006; 2007), Muslim minority youth suffer from “Islamophobia,” xenophobia and racism in Canada. Zine argues, like Dei (2003), that despite the
multiethnic and diverse linguistic features of the country, the public educational system, including its hidden curriculum, is dominated by Euro-centric perspectives and practices. As a result, many minority youth experience alienation in the schools where the explicit and implicit school policies and practices fail to acknowledge their knowledge, identity, history and language (Cummins, 1997; Dei, 2003). Islam is misrepresented in the curriculum, and “[Muslim students] are forced to remove their Islamic dresses (e.g., Islamic caps and hijabs) or leave the school at the directions of their teachers and principals” (Zine, 2001, p. 412).

Muslim girls’ can experience even greater social exclusion in the public sphere if they wear a veil. Zine’s (2006) study entitled “Unveiled Sentiments” reports that “girls recount their experience of being called ‘illegal immigrants’ and harassed on buses and subways with comments like ‘Halloween’s over!’ Many girls report the same incident at a bus stop outside the school where the bus driver would often close the door on them and drive off” (Zine, 2006, p. 246). Atasoy (2006) reaches a similar conclusion, observing that although the experiences of racism, xenophobia and anti-Islamic sentiments of veiled female immigrants are varied, some of them report that the veil increases the negative reaction and they experience even more racism. One of the study’s participants was also deeply ambivalent about veiling and in order to overcome the marginalization and racism, she focused on her physical appearance and wanted to look white, blonde and blue-eyed. In addition, the diverse expectations and values of female immigrants’ parents and peer groups and conservative leaders within the Muslim community about the conduct of young women reinforced their frustration, anxiety and cultural estrangement.

Teachers play important roles in the alienation and underachievement of Muslim minority youth in the Canadian educational system. As Gillborn (1997) points out “teacher racism is hugely important variable that remains hidden” (Gillborn, 1997, p. 393). According to Zine (2000), “essentialised images of the ‘repressed Muslim woman,’ and the identification of difference as ‘foreignness,’ are attitudes which often frame the relationships between Muslim students and teachers” (Zine, 2000, p. 309). Similarly, for Samuel et al. (2001), teachers’ unsuccessful interaction patterns with immigrant youth, such as acting in uncaring or untrusting ways, and culturally inappropriate pedagogy that neglects immigrant students’ culture, history and language in the classroom can lead to immigrant youth’s marginalization in Canadian
Dei and James (2002) find teachers with socio-cultural backgrounds similar to the
dominant class to have biased expectations that favour the majority students, which creates
inequality for immigrants. For Dei and James, schools in Canada are political arenas which
reproduce the marginality or privilege of subjects who attend. Additionally, Dei (2003) argues
“the school dropout dilemma must be rooted in the institutionalized policies and practices of
too has discovered that, in Canada, minority students leave schools in frustration or transfer to
vocational schools where they are overrepresented because of Eurocentric curricula and
discrimination. The channelling of immigrant and minority young people into lower academic or
vocational streams is another example of teacher’s discrimination against minorities (Cummins,
students are underrepresented in advanced streams leading to university. In addition, they have
been represented as deficient and actively devalued in classrooms through “coercive relations of
power” (i.e., racism, language, religion and cultural discrimination). Similarly, Muslim minority
youth are discouraged from taking math and sciences and are directed toward non-academic
streams. One student in Zine’s (2001, p. 414) study said, “They kept on telling me, ‘you may not
be able to handle it, you do not know how hard it is,’ and like I have never failed a course in high
school. And then my junior high guidance counsellor said, ‘you know may be you should go for
general courses because you may not be able to take advanced,’ but not telling me you can’t go to
university without taking advanced courses. …You think guidance counsellors are there to help
you, but they are not”. Moreover, students reported that “not seeing anyone in the school
administration who looks like you is a constant reminder of the glass ceiling that limits your
chances to achieve positions of power and authority” (Zine, 2002, p. 2). In this regard, Zine’s
(2007) discussion about Islamic schools as alternative and liberating schools for Muslim youth
who suffer from racism, religious discrimination, ethno/euro-centrism and peer pressure in the
public schools, is an important argument in support of these types of schools not as places of
isolation and ghettoization, but as safe places which allow Muslim youth to build a strong sense
of identity and solidarity.

For Zine (2000) Muslim schools are just one possible way that Muslim youth can resist
and fight against the racism they experience. Zine sees, “formalised resistance” as a strategy used
by Muslim students to challenge marginalization, biased and exclusionary policies, practices and curriculum in public schools. Although Zine’s arguments about Muslim youth in general and the notion of “formalised resistance” and Islamic schools in particular help to explain the experiences of Muslim young people in Canada, some of her discussions are open to criticism. First, she considers the Muslim minority as a homogeneous entity, underestimating youth’s class origins. However, a class-based examination is important to explore different levels of exclusion as well as academic under/achievement of minority youth (Gillborn, 1997; Ataca & Berry, 2002). Gillborn (1997) states, “there is a strong association between social class and academic achievement, whatever the students’ gender and ethnic background” (Gillborn, 1997, p. 378). It seems plausible that an immigrant youth from a lower-class family might achieve lower average results and experience more racism and discrimination than a youth from a middle class family, which was found to be the case in Gillborn’s study in England (Gillborn, 1997). Second, although Zine concludes that Islamic schools are a refuge for most Muslim youth, it is also necessary to discuss internal conflicts and discriminations in these schools in order to understand why some of Muslim students prefer public schools despite their exclusionary practices and policies. For example, different branches of Islam disagree on a number of social and educational issues. Third, research about Muslim youth should take into account the existence of “atheist,” and “secular” Muslim youth who do not belong to a “standard” category of Muslimness and who are therefore excluded by the orthodox Muslim youth.

Immigrant youth in Canada face considerable obstacles in becoming full and equal members of their new home: members of the dominant, Euro-Christian population frequently hold racist, prejudiced attitudes; and the state imposes structural constraints and exclusionary policies firstly on who is admitted and secondly on who is acknowledged as an authentic citizen, a continuation of a long history of Canadian nation-building. As a result, many immigrant youth face social rejection and educational exclusion. Turkish immigrant youth, a relatively poorly known group, probably face similar obstacles although no one has yet looked deeply into their situation. As immigrants considered to be from “somewhere in the Middle East,” and as “Muslims,” they might occupy the popular and official category of “undesirables” or even potential “terrorists.” The plight of Turkish immigrant youth is unique. They are stateless within the Canadian nation-state, yet the state attempts to impose a single identity upon Turkish
immigrant youth’s already complex multiple identities and their sense of not belonging. This unique situation needs further scrutiny if we are to understand and respond to the plight.

2.4. Summary

The circumstances of Turkish immigrant youth and their exclusion in a cross-national context are complex, inspiring many questions that have no easy or straightforward answers. The discriminatory and racist attitudes, practices and policies of host countries are salient reasons for the marginalization of Turkish immigrant youth today, but they do not account for all variables. The creation of the modern Turkish Republic and a new Turkish identity introduced educational and social inequalities within the country that make the marginalization of immigrant youth multifaceted. Turkish immigrant youth are thus subjected not only to discrimination, but a sense of in-betweenness; they face an identity crises based on the hybrid identities stemming from pre- and post-migration histories. These are significant realities that have to be considered along with the marginalization created by host countries.

The analysis of pre-migration histories of Turkish youth indicates that there is a relationship between the construction of youth identity and Turkish identity politics. The explicit aim of the Turkish state since 1923 has been to create a national and unitary youth identity, but state practices led to conflict, inequality and marginalization of young people outside of the official definition. Specifically, Kurdish, Alawi or Islamist youth of rural origin who are illiterate and culturally traditional are outsiders within Turkey. When such marginalized groups immigrate with the expectation of ensuring a more egalitarian social environment, they find themselves in different contexts of exclusion in host countries. As Nayak (2003) argues, since youth identities and places are mutually constitutive, young people’s experiences and perceptions of exclusion will change according to their transforming identities and also places they live in. When advantaged groups in Turkey – the well educated, westernized, and more affluent– immigrate (as in the case of Canada), they also find themselves devalued. Their educational attainment is unrecognized, their access to professional employment is restricted, and their status drops. Lingering accents elicit prejudiced responses from native language speakers.

The literature cited here supports the contention that there is an association between the hegemonic ideology that sustains a nation-state and the exclusion of immigrant youth. More
precisely, the multiple and complex identities of immigrant youth appear as threats to the ideals of the nation-state and its homogenising logic. (Yalcin-Heckmann, 2002). Moreover, the state’s immigration, social, and educational policies and practices combine with the prejudices and stereotypes of the mainstream to affect Turkish immigrant youth’s sense of belonging to a new country and their experience of marginalization. Although the level of exclusion and racism vary from country to country according to policies and practices towards immigrants or “outsiders,” immigrant youth everywhere suffer from unemployment, poverty, lack of education, inequality, racism, xenophobia, assimilation, isolation and exclusion. So although the case of Germany might be described as overt racism against immigrants, particularly Turks (Kastoryano, 2006), the case of Canada, despite its multicultural policy, might be identified as “polite monocultural racism” (Fleras, 2004) or “new racism” (Thobani, 2000). In addition, Muslim immigrants from the Middle East have been represented as potential terrorists especially after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Buildings (Adelman, 2002) as well as discriminated in the labour and the educational market (Zine, 2000; 2001; 2002; 2006; 2007). In these circumstances, it is not difficult to assume that in Canada Turks might be placed in the category of “undesirables” as they were after World War I (Abu-Laban, 1995).
This chapter attempts to explore the contemporary experiences of exclusion of immigrant youth. In particular, I will focus on the relationship between nation-state, symbolic violence, “new racisms” and systemic (hegemonic) racism and the social exclusion of immigrant youth.

The chapter can be divided into four sections. In the first part, the plight of immigrant youth (i.e., their “statelessness”) will be examined with regard to the philosophy of Hannah Arendt and her notions of the “right to have rights,” “action” “speech,” “public space,” and “power.” The concept of “statelessness” should be analysed in relation to the state. The sovereignty of the nation-state (i.e., the homogeneity and unity of the nation) is a threat to the sovereignty of immigrant youth (i.e., their multiple attachments and identities) as well as a reason for immigrant youth’s “statelessness.” Stateless youth are deprived of the “right to have rights,” that is, belonging to a community, and the right to action and speech (that is, the “web of human condition”). Therefore, “statelessness” is linked to “rightlessness” (deprivation of action and speech and belonging to any community) and “statuslessness.” The rightless and stateless immigrant youth is also excluded from the public space or “our common world” which I deem to be a human rights issue (Arendt, 1951; Arendt, 1958).

In the second part, Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of “social space,” “habitus,” “social capital,” “symbolic power,” “symbolic violence” and “official language” will be explored with regard to the social and educational exclusion of immigrant youth. I will examine Bourdieu’s concepts of social space and habitus first to understand the relationship between symbolic power, symbolic violence, official language and the social exclusion of immigrant youth. Social space and habitus will be argued as entities which lead to struggle, domination, categorizations, distinctions, and divisions among agents. The state’s symbolic violence (that is, its imposition of a “legitimate” world-view) and official language (a social and political construct of the state), which generate, manipulate and impose a dominant discourse, will be discussed as the main instruments for the otherization and exclusion of immigrant youth. The state’s symbolic violence and official language, like racism, makes, remakes, and selects identities (Bourdieu, 1991; Bourdieu, 1997) as "ideal citizens" or “not-ideal” ones, represents immigrant youth as “unwanted foreigners,” “marginal” and “dangerous” and ignores their knowledge. Education, as a state
apparatus, works for this project: It legitimates this discourse, excludes the other and reproduces inequalities.

In the third section, the conflictual relationship between the modern state and immigrant youth will be highlighted by Stuart Hall’s theory. Hall’s concepts of the “state’s hegemony” and “new ethnicities” (diasporic and hybrid identities) will be discussed in relation to the notions of “new racisms” and “systemic (hegemonic) racism.” Hall’s critique of the modern state is key in understanding the exclusion of immigrant youth. The state’s hegemonic nationalist ideologies (i.e., homogeneous national identity) and illusory aspects of citizenship (i.e., one nation, one citizen) will be discussed as the main reasons for the marginalization of immigrant youth. The state’s hegemony as an ideology, like systemic racism, leads to the stigmatization of immigrant youth, racist legal and educational policies and discourses, and asymmetrical power relations between dominant and subordinated groups. Based on my analysis, there is an interplay between systemic racism, which is rooted in different structures of the state’s institutions from the educational institution to the labour market, and the state’s hegemony. In this relationship systemic racism secure the hegemony of the state (Hall, 2002), and the state tolerates and generates systemic racism in its institutions.

In the final section, the interplay between the state’s hegemony, systemic racism and exclusion of immigrant youth with regard to the theories of Arendt, Bourdieu and Hall will be discussed.

3.1. Immigrant youth and “statelessness”

In this section I will explore the statelessness of immigrants and the Arendtian notion of the “right to have rights” with regard to nation-state formation. Stateless immigrant youth will be considered as the excluded other who is deprived of the “right to have rights,” that is, the right of belonging to a community and the right to action and speech. In other words, the stateless are also rightless. On the other hand, Arendt’s concepts of public space as the place for action and speech, and civic participation as an action for the creation of equality will be reconsidered as hopeful themes, which offer solutions to the worldly alienation and exclusion of immigrant youth and justice for our common world.
3.1.1. The nation-state, statelessness and the “right to have rights”

The nature of the modern state is the central theme of Arendt’s *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951). The clash between the state and the nation, based on the dilemma of state sovereignty and individual sovereignty, is one of Arendt’s central arguments. Since the state, as the key concept, shapes her arguments, the phenomena of statelessness and the “right to have rights” should be analyzed in relation to the notion of the state.

In order to understand the plight of immigrant youth as stateless people, and the reasons that make these people “scapegoats” of the state, it is necessary to examine the doctrine of the nation-state, or nation-state formation and its obsession with establishing a homogeneous population which threatens not only people’s “right to have rights” but also “our common world.”

For Arendt, the sovereignty of the nation-state, associated with the unity and homogeneity of the nation (Arendt, 1951), limits individual sovereignty and the “right to have rights.” The modern state’s legitimacy is based on the notion of a uniform, homogeneous legal order; society, on the contrary, lacks the same homogeneity (Tsao, 2006). Similarly, for Arendt (cited in Canovan, 2000, p.52), nation and state represent opposing principles:

[a nation] is attached to the soil which is the product of past labour and where history has left its traces. It represents the ‘milieu’ into which man is born, a closed society to which one belongs by right of birth. The state on the other hand is an open society, ruling over a territory where its power protects and makes the law.

Correspondingly, according to Cotter (2005), for Arendt national sovereignty and individual sovereignty are mutually exclusive categories, which create tension between state and nation. Since national sovereignty refers to the state’s right to restrict membership, “the representatives of the great nations knew only too well that minorities within the nation-state must sooner or later be either assimilated or liquidated” (Arendt, 1951, p. 273). The nation-state has power to denaturalize, to deport and to make people stateless and rightless. For Cohen (1996), the inequalities between the national majorities and minorities and the exclusion of the minority are the result of the sovereignty of the nation-state. While the ethnic majority enjoys the full protection of legal institutions, the latter have to accept their disadvantaged legal status. Similarly, for Benhabib (2004), the nation-state’s sovereignty and monopoly over territory
delimits material functions and cultural identities. Its membership norms distinguish insiders from outsiders, and citizens from non-citizens, and therefore it is always subject to questioning. This exclusionary principle of the nation-state can be read as a part of the state’s symbolic violence (i.e., imposition of a legitimate world-view) and official language (i.e., a social and political construct of the state), since it excludes the “other” who are “different” from the majority/the dominant and imposes a legitimate vision or a formulation of an “ideal type/citizen.” In this formulation of “ideal citizens”, ethnic origin is the basic quality to be recognized as “ideal” or not. As Arendt argues, naturalized citizens are second-class citizens because “they received their rights by law, not by birth” (Arendt, 1951, p. 230). According to Cotter (2005), this case demonstrated “three existing assumptions about nation-states in Europe. First, they should be ethnically homogeneous; second, there should be a perfect match between nationality and territory; and third, popular sovereignty can only be attained within one’s own state” (Cotter, 2005, p. 102). Therefore, minorities, refugees and immigrants who are regarded as threats to the homogeneity of the sovereign nation-state occupy the category of the “not-ideal-type” and the stateless.

According to Arendt, the tragedy of stateless people is that neither the country of origin nor the receiving country agrees to accept these people. “They are ‘undesirable aliens’ of the State and the main problem is ‘How can those people be made deportable again?’” (Arendt, 1951, p. 283). Those people are considered responsible for all the failures of the social order: They are potential criminals, they are Turks in Germany and Algerians and Moroccans in France, they are unwanted foreigners, they are “worldly alienated” people who belong to anywhere but to nowhere, they are homeless people who are isolated from the community or a “common world” to share, to speak or act, they are “stigmatized pariahs” of the modern time (Bourdieu, 1997, p.273). “The rightless is not deprived of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness…but that they no longer belong to any community, no law exists for them…nobody wants even to oppress them” (Arendt, 1951, p. 296). They are “outlaws” (Tsao, 2006), regardless of what they do or who they are. They are superfluous and excluded others. Ironically, “when a rightless person commits a crime [s/he] is put in a better situation than other rightless people because s/he is at least being recognized by the law as a criminal” (Parekh, 2004, p. 46). Consider the riots in
France in 2005 in which legally recognized “second-class citizens” demanded social recognition, such as the right to have a home, an education and a job.

While arguing about immigrant youth’s statelessness in relation to the “right to have rights,” concepts of “human rights” and “civic rights” seem salient to examine (Parekh, 2004; Benhabib, 2004). For Arendt, the “right to have rights” means belonging to a community and having the right to act and to speak meaningfully. Accordingly, statelessness is “tantamount to the loss of all rights…The stateless were deprived of not only of their citizenship rights; they were deprived of any human rights” (Benhabib, 2004, p. 50). Although according to Benhabib (2004, p. 22), Arendt “cannot deconstruct the stark dichotomy between human rights and citizens’ rights,” I think that Arendt didn’t want to curtail the importance of the “right to have rights” by dividing it between civic rights and human rights. I think, for Arendt, the “right to have rights” entails civic rights (the rights to the protection of life and liberty; Scott & Marshall, 2005) and political rights (political participation) and human rights (membership of a community, action and speech) through political organization: “…we can produce equality through organization, because man can act in and change and build a common world” (Arendt, 1971, p. 301).

According to Parekh (2004), civic rights are those rights that “are given and protected by a government but are not the most fundamental kind of rights” (Parekh, 2004, p. 45). That is, its loss does not lead to absolute rightlessness (i.e., not belonging to a community). Benhabib (2004), on the other hand, separates civic rights and political rights. According to Benhabib, while civic rights entail the right to the protection of life, liberty, and property, the right to freedom of conscience, and certain associational rights, such as the right of commerce, political rights refer to the rights of self-determination, to establish political and non-political associations. Human rights, on the other hand, are inalienable natural rights (such as speech and action), “grounded either in the nature of man, but are rights that can only be guaranteed in and through a political community” (Parekh, 2004, p. 45). For Arendt (1971), without the right to action and the right to speech, that is, being able to act and to communicate meaningfully, “we are deprived of our humanity and hence are absolutely rightless” (Parekh, 2004). Therefore, her main concern is

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15 Definitions of rights are debatable; that is, they are used interchangeably by different sources. For more information see Scott & Marshall (2005).
the “incapacitating effects of rightlessness on one’s potential for human dignity and agency, even one’s life is not in danger” (Tsao, 2006). What is striking about rightlessness is that one can have civic and political rights, but s/he can still be deprived of fundamental human rights: “their freedom of movement…gives them no right to residence which even the jailed criminal enjoys as a matter of course; and their freedom of opinion is a fool’s freedom, for nothing they think matters anyhow” (Arendt, 1971, p. 296). In this regard, voting and having a “valid” passport (i.e., a legal status) is not a sufficient condition for being away from rightlessness and statelessness. Full participation in the community and enjoying the rights of the “human condition” (i.e., speech and action are linked and constitute the “web of human condition”) in the public space are the necessary conditions for the “right to have rights” (Cotter, 2006; Philosophy.com, n.d.).

Similarly, for Arendt (cited in Cotter, 2005, p. 109), “the right to have rights …means to live in a framework where one is judged by one’s actions and opinions.” Cotter (2005) argues that a refugee (or an immigrant), by contrast, is judged by his status within the laws of the receiving country to be an “illegal alien.” In other words, immigrants are treated according to what they are (alien or foreigner), rather than who they are (doer or speaker; Parekh, 2004). While “whatness” refers to a person’s ascribed qualities (such as talents, shortcomings, ethnic origin), “whoness” is “implicit in everything somebody says and does” (Arendt, 1958, p. 179) and therefore it can be revealed through speech and action (Villa, 1997). For Arendt (1958, p. 179), “in acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world.” In short, action and speech are deeds, which make people unique and distinct from animals, as well as each other: “we exist primarily as acting and speaking beings” (Arendt, 1958, p. 181). According to this, action and speech, and indirectly, whoness, as assets of human beings, cannot be separated from a person’s history (i.e., his/her work, his/her past, his/her sense of belonging and finally identity). As a result, identity is associated with one’s action and speech. As Arendt (1958, p. 186) argues “who somebody is or was we can know only by knowing the story of which he is himself the hero - his biography.” The stateless, therefore, are those whose history is undermined or forgotten. Immigrant youth are not only “worldly alienated” (i.e., isolated worldwide), uprooted and homeless but also they are speechless foreigners in the nation-state. They are separated from their history. They do not have a past, present or future; they are out of place. Immigrant youth, who
are “deprived of a place in the world for speech and action,” cannot be considered as doers and speakers. The plight of stateless immigrants is to live and die without “leaving any trace” (Cotter, 2006). In short, one of the tragedies of immigrants in the nation-state is that they are rightless in the sense that they do not have a right to act or speak about their statuslessness but must accept it. In this regard, immigrants, like slaves, are excluded “even from the possibility of fighting for freedom” (Arendt cited in Tsao, 2006, p. 126).

Arendt’s (1951) pariah and parvenu characters can be reconsidered with regard to the distinction between whoness and whatness. The pariah is someone who keeps “his/her biography,” sense of belonging and identity (Sayyid, 2000). As a conscious pariah (Pitkin, 1998; Reinhardt, 2003), s/he is aware of his/her subordinated position and resists assimilation and domination. The parvenu, on the other hand, prefers the strategy of assimilation and conforms the norms of whatness; submission to assimilation and domination. Immigrant youth, in this regard, might be subject to this dilemma, that is, whether to be someone who writes his/her own history but be alienated from the mainstream or to be someone who lets the dominant write his/her history.

While nation-state formation and its ideals, such as homogeneity and unity of the nation, are the basic reasons for the statelessness and rightlessness of immigrant youth, public space and civic participation can be seen as alternative entities to the existence of the nation-state because they empower human action and human plurality and hence limit the sovereignty of the nation-state. In the next section, I will consider the concepts of public place, power and civic participation with regard to the exclusion of immigrant youth and the nation-state.

3.1.2. Public place, power, political participation and immigrant youth

For Arendt, the public place (i.e., “the space of appearance”), like action and speech, is another constitutive component for the “right to have rights.” The public sphere is “a vital place because of its cognitive-purposive activities,” (Curtis, 1997). It is a place for meaningful speech and action: “The space of appearance comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action, and therefore predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm and the various forms of government, that is, the various forms in which the public realm can be organized” (Arendt, 1958). Public space is the only place for human freedom (Cohen,
1996), an ideal place for the disclosure of our unique identities, “a space for full equality” (Schutz, 2001) and a “place in the world” (Bernstein, 2005). As Arendt puts it, “living beings, men and animals, are not just in the world, they are of the world and this precisely because they are subjects and objects - perceiving and being perceived - at the same time” (Arendt, 1971, p.20). The public space is the world itself. Public space is a shared space where people from diverse origins, immigrants and citizens, learn to live together: “the physical and organic world, the humanly-made and created world” (Wilson, 2005). Public place, as the place for “human condition” (i.e., action and speech), is the place for recognition of immigrant youth’s unique identities and their differences. It is a “space of appearance” where plurality (that is, recognition that we are equal and distinct) exists (Arendt, 1958; Wilson, 2005). In short, it is a place for interaction, negotiation and recognition (Taylor, 1991), a place for building our common world or project and thus producing a creative power, regardless of an individual’s ethnic origins.

For Arendt, unlike Bourdieu, power is a concept which is produced collectively by members of this common world or community (Arendt, 1958). Therefore, everyone is powerful in this ideal world and this power is a creative power. For Arendt, “power, as opposed to force, strength, or violence is actualized only where …deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities” (Topper, 2001).

On the other hand, to consider power as a positive concept seems controversial. Although public space is an “ideal” place for the disclosure of plural and unique identities, it does not consist of individuals who have equal rights and privileges. Therefore, the question about rightless people and their relation to power remains unresolved by Arendt: If the rightless are also powerless and if not, what makes them powerful for Arendt? Although the answer may not be so easy as saying “yes” or “no”, it is worth considering. While Arendt’s theory is optimistic and hopeful in terms of creating a common world based on principles of equality, recognition, plurality and reconciliation (Villa, 1997), the statuslessness of stateless people in the nation-state leads us to consider their powerlessness rather than their power. Therefore, the concept of power is one of the limitations of Arendt’s theory, which considers power as an entity as belonging to everyone, regardless of their status in the public (that is, whether they are the dominant or the minority). This perspective might undermine the experience of powerlessness of stateless people who have no place in the public space and therefore no chance to participate in our common
project and to change the world. Similarly, Tsao (2006, p. 128) argues “[Arendt’s] observations on the radical loss of agency suffered by a person denied recognition as a member of a state are not matched by any clear statement of what sort of agency she means to ascribe to a person who enjoys such recognition.”

On the other hand, it can be assumed that, for Arendt, the concept of power might be another “human condition,” like action and speech, and therefore it might be considered as a “shared value” which only belongs to human beings. In this case, we might consider different powers in different places: powerful individuals who are able to act and to speak meaningfully in our “ideal” world, which is an alternative to the nation-state formation and powerless and stateless masses in the nation-state.

While public place is the basic condition for the “appearance” of distinct identities and experiences (Arendt, 1958; d’Entreves, 1994), totalitarianism, capitalism and modern forces – technological automatism- lead to the destruction of the public sphere or “the destruction of the common world,” isolation (Hansen, 2004) and worldly alienation (d’Entreves, 1994), which “weakens our attachment to existence for its own sake” (Villa, 1997, p. 185). For Arendt, these forces make people masses rather than individuals. “Under totalitarian conditions, human beings are reduced to ‘living corpses’; all human particularity was extinguished” (Curtis, 1997). As a result, these factors threaten self-representation and hence the identities of human beings, regardless of their status (i.e., immigrants or citizens), and limits their rights (Arendt, 1968).

Taking these discussions into account, the question might be whether the nation-state can be considered as one of these modern forces which undermines human plurality and particularity (Fraser, 2004), and conquers, dominates and reshapes human subjectivity, finally leading to alienation and exclusion. If so, how we can explain the position of immigrant youth who are already worldly alienated, uprooted, homeless and placeless in our “common world.” And is there any hope for overcoming worldly alienation and isolation for immigrant youth? Will they “begin to be at home in the world once again”?

Arendt’s critique of modernity, including totalitarianism, and her desire for human plurality, particularity and freedom reflect her ideas of democratic political life (Curtis, 1997; Villa, 1997). Arendt yearns for radical democratic practices: “This is of utmost importance, as it is the precondition of our ability to belong to each other, to care for our lives together, and
finally, to act deliberately together” (Curtis, 1997, p. 47). For Arendt, political life which is based on the idea of “reciprocal recognition of one another’s equal rights” (Tsao, 2006) can change the world: “…we can produce equality through organization, because man can act in and change and build a common world together with his equals and only with his equals” (Arendt, 1951, p. 301). This reciprocal recognition is the right of humanity, which is a claim of being a member of civil society (Benhabib, 2004). Political participation is a necessary condition of the “right to have rights” (d’Entreves, 1994; that is, speech and action, belonging to a community, civic and human rights, and transformation of identities of immigrant youth from what – mass- to who – individual-), and of “the daily strife through which freedom and justice are won” (Tsao, 2006). As Arendt (1968, p. 149) puts it, “without a politically guaranteed public realm, freedom lacks the worldly space to make its appearance.” In this regard, public space, action and political participation are complementary components and basic conditions of freedom. For Arendt, political organization is a way of resistance to worldly alienation, fragmentation, and isolation and a strategy for creating a common world with shared ends and values and generating an agreement with others (Villa, 1997). According to Benhabib (2004, p. 60), “Arendt advocates a ‘civic’ as opposed to an ‘ethnic’ ideal of polity and belonging.” Because ethnic unification, as one of the impasses of the nation-state, of “many into one is antipolitical…each may feel that he is no longer an individual but actually one with all others” (Arendt, 1958). A civic-republican polity, based on the idea of respect for difference, is the very opposite of the nation-state’s ideology which advocates sameness and commonality (Benhabib, 2004). This civic polity, which is freed from any national or ethnic identity, can limit the nation-state’s sovereignty and thus prevents exclusion of immigrant youth from public space and secures their rights (to speech and action; Cohen, 1996).

In sum, the interplay between public space and political participation can be read as hopeful projects for the recognition and equality of immigrant youth in the nation-state. While these entities challenge the nation-state’s sovereignty which excludes ethnic minorities and makes them stateless, it provides immigrant youth with a sense of political identity –i.e., active individuals-, and helps them create their public spaces or “our common project” and finally makes them feel at home in the world once again. Therefore, for Arendt, a civic organization and
the political participation of immigrant youth in public space are the preconditions to removing their statelessness and exclusion.

3.2. Symbolic violence, official language and social exclusion

In this section I analyse and assess Bourdieu’s concepts of social space, habitus, social capital, symbolic power, symbolic violence, and official language with regard to the social exclusion of immigrant youth. This analysis illustrates that although symbolic power (e.g., language) and symbolic violence (i.e., the imposition of a legitimate world-view) have an impact on the exclusion of immigrant youth and their linguistically, educationally and economically disadvantaged status in societal institutions, the interplay between social place and habitus also leads to divisions, distinctions and exclusions.

3.2.1. Social space and habitus and the social exclusion of immigrant youth

This section discusses Bourdieu’s concepts of social space and habitus. The concepts of social space and habitus have to be examined first to understand the relationship between symbolic power and symbolic violence, official language and the social exclusion of immigrant youth. Social space and habitus are not neutral terms but salient factors for domination, divisions and exclusions among agents.

The notion of social space is crucial in Bourdieu’s theory because his other key sociological concepts such as habitus, capitals, symbolic power and symbolic violence are comprehensible only in the context of social space (Couldry, 2003). For Bourdieu, social space is a place of conflictual social relations among agents, an arena of struggle for domination and imposition. According to Bourdieu (1990), in social space, social agents compete for capitals that are unequally distributed in that social space. Therefore, social space is not only a site of relations between agents but also the place of social inequalities with regard to the production and uneven distribution of capitals (DiMaggio, 1979). Accordingly, for Bourdieu social space “leads people to keep to their ordinary place and the others to ‘keep their distance or ‘respect their rank’” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 128). Then, social space is the first site where the agents’ appropriation and adaptation, as well as conformism to their ranks, are imposed.
Habitus is a key concept for understanding how “one’s sense of place” develops in social space which in turn leads to struggles, divisions and exclusions among agents. Bourdieu (1989) describes habitus, as “the dispositions of agents,” that is, “the mental structures through which [agents] apprehend the social world…their habitus are essentially the product of the internalization of the structures of that world” (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 18). So, habitus is a transformative process that starts with the socialization process and continues during the lifetime of the agent and the product of the interplay between the agent, social place and the structures (other agents, agents’ habitus, the capitals, the “system of representations” or “symbolic systems” i.e., codes, customs, beliefs and institutions) surrounding them.

Bourdieu (1997, p. 180) argues, “habitus is not destiny; but symbolic action cannot, on its own, without transformation of the conditions of the production and transformation of dispositions, extirpate bodily beliefs …[habitus] is rooted in dispositions and beliefs.” I think that this statement has important implications in terms of indicating the paradox of habitus. Habitus is limited to and dependent on structures; therefore, it has restricted potential to lead to change. So, as long as agents are structured and surrounded by the same structures, say, racist structures, they will be restricted by racism and exclusion will be their destiny in the host country. Although this perspective seems to be a reductionist and deterministic one, it is important to note that for Bourdieu agents (they are not individuals) “are merely the passive bearers of ideology who carry out its universal reproductive function” (Lakomski, 1984). For Bourdieu, agents internalize structures and act accordingly and hence reproduce structures of racism and inequalities. In this regard, it can be assumed that an agent’s destiny depends on the structures rather than their agency that is their action (Edgar & Sedgwick, 2002).

This argument makes Bourdieu’s theory open to criticism. First, if human agency is absent in Bourdieu’s theory (Lakomski, 1984; Jenkins, 1992) then how can we explain the “transformation of the conditions of the production and transformation of dispositions”? That is, where does power itself have its roots (Lakomski, 1984) in relation to the transformation of dispositions. Second, how can we consider social space as a place of struggles, dominations, impositions, and thus a place of action without taking into account human action? In these ways,

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16 Bourdieu’s concept of misrecognition, in particular, indicates the passivity of actors in social space. I will discuss this later.
this view is contradictory, it also does not allow for social change, and it is ahistorical (Jenkins, 1992). Third, if there is no social change, then what causes structures to be restructured (Bourdieu, 1991)? Finally, taking these discussions into account, does this perspective offer us any solutions to racism in host countries or is there “any possibility of breaking out of the circle” (Lakowski, 2002) of racism?

Parker (2000) criticizes Bourdieu’s concept of habitus with regard to its incompatibility with the notion of “diasporic habitus” in terms of diasporic habitus’s racialized nature and experience of diaspora. According to Parker (2000, p. 83), Bourdieu’s concept of habitus “does not capture the lived experiences of racialized hierarchy; [Bourdieu’s] topology of social space prioritizes the mapping of class positions, he does not give sufficient attention to the specific asymmetries of other social locations.” For Parker, Bourdieu’s theory about habitus and field cannot adapt the “diasporic habitus in diaspora space” because the diasporic habitus, unlike Bourdieu’s habitus, are not passive. Diaspora habitus struggles over diaspora space and resists racism.

The interplay between habitus, social space and the struggles of agents for positions raises the relationship between exclusion and habitus. For Bourdieu, since agents, as part and product of conflictual social class relations in the field, have a “sense as a rank” (Bourdieu, 1997), they develop different habitus (i.e., individual differences of placement, which governs her experience of the place of occupied, defined absolutely such as taste (Bourdieu, 1984)). While this brings integration and inclusion among agents who occupy the same rank, it also leads to the exclusion of some (DiMaggio, 1979; Bourdieu, 1997). That is, every inclusion comprises exclusion and vice versa. As such, habitus creates boundaries between agents. It implies a “sense of one’s place” but also a “sense of the place of others” (Bourdieu, 1990). The “sense of one’s place” or “habitus” leads to “division” by keeping one’s distance from the other, and “vision” by placing one’s self in a certain space. It also “governs the use of language in everyday interaction” (DiMaggio, 1979, p. 1465). In other words, habitus leads agents to divide, classify, categorize, and exclude others as well as agents themselves according to certain codes, categories, or capitals: “Differences function as distinctive signs and signs of distinction, positive or negative, this happens outside of any intention of distinction” (Bourdieu, 1989).
Agents constantly and un/intentionally exclude and include others through the “representational system” (such as codes and signs) (Hall, 1997) and/or “symbolic instruments” (such as language, music, lifestyle; Bourdieu, 1991; Swartz, 1997). So, social classifications and distances are part of habitus and essences of social relations in social space. As Bourdieu (1989, p. 17) argues, “social divisions are inscribed in bodies or, more precisely, into the relation to the body, to language and to time.” Therefore, categorization of agents according to their race, ethnicity, class, gender, including taste (such as clothing, music) (Bourdieu, 1984) can be read as part of habitus, that is the system of classification. As Bourdieu (2000, p. 181) puts it vividly “…the deadly passions of all racisms (of ethnicity, sex or class) perpetuate themselves because they are bound to the body in the form of dispositions.” In this regard, accent as a “distinctive sign,” which is “inscribed in bodies” of the immigrant youth, is one of the most important factors in their marginalization and their underclass position in host countries, since linguistic capital is positively correlated with the class and academic achievement of the student (Bourdieu, 1991).

This discussion indicates that habitus should be considered as part of the system of domination and struggle in social space. The interaction between social space and habitus results in stratifications and divisions. Therefore, symbolic violence and symbolic power, which is based on the possession of symbolic capital (such as respect and recognition), should be considered in relation to this unequal and exclusionary framework. In the next section I wish to discuss symbolic capital, symbolic power and symbolic violence to understand the exclusion of the immigrant youth.

3.2. 2. Symbolic capital, symbolic power, symbolic violence and the social and educational exclusion of immigrant youth

Capital in its various forms (i.e., economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital) determine the positions of agents and, indirectly, their relations to one another in social space. As Bourdieu (1989, p. 17) argues, “agents are distributed in the overall social space, in the first dimension, according to the overall volume of capital they possess and, in the second dimension, according to the structure of their capital, that is, the relative weight of the different species of capital, economic and cultural, in the total volume of their assets.” Therefore,
social relations are not only the relations between agents but also the relations of capitals in social space.

Symbolic capital, like economic and cultural capitals, reproduces struggles, divisions, exclusions and finally inequalities in social space. For Bourdieu (1989, p. 21), symbolic capital is nothing other than economic or cultural capital when it is known and recognized, when it is known through the categories of perception that it imposes, symbolic relations of power tend to produce and reinforce the power relations that constitute the structure of social space.

Symbolic capital, as a symbolic resource of domination, influences the actions of others, and creates events. It imposes a vision of the legitimate world-view or for self-presentation and self-representation “by the means of the production and transmission of symbolic forms” (Thompson, 1991), such as respect, esteem, recognition, belief, confidence in others and honour.

The concept of social recognition is key in analysing symbolic power and symbolic capital work in the social space (Bourdieu, 1990), since symbolic capital can only be perpetuated with the consent of the dominated (Bourdieu, 1997). Symbolic capital and its impact on agents and conditions of legitimation are contextual and relational. As Couldry (2003) argues, symbolic capital is almost always specific and local. That is, symbolic capitals have different meanings and purposes in different social spaces and therefore they can be used in different ways. (For example, while a gift exchange is a strategic social relationship and a mode of symbolic capital for the Kabyles (Bourdieu, 2006), in a western context which is dominated by indirect bureaucratic mechanisms, this form of symbolic capital may not be seen an effective means to have power).

The possession of symbolic capital provides the basis for the possession of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1989). The relationship between these two concepts contributes to an understanding of how power relations and dominations operate in institutional interactions (Topper, 2001). This understanding of the operation of a subtle, invisible mode of domination through institutions (Krais, 1993) helps us to conceptualize systemic racism and symbolic violence. Symbolic power, as part of a representational system, works through codes and signs and therefore it is invisible. However, it has crucial economic, social and political effects in societal institutions (e.g., the generation of systemic violence in educational institutions). As
Bourdieu (1989, p. 22) argues, “symbolic power is a power of ‘world-making…is the power to make things with words.’”

According to Swartz (1997), “how Bourdieu thinks of symbolic power relates to how he conceptualizes all symbolic systems, whether they be art, religion, science, or language itself. For Bourdieu, symbolic systems are “structuring structures.” Secondly, symbolic systems are also “structured structures.” Thirdly, symbolic systems not only provide cognitive functions but also serve as instruments of domination” (Swartz, 1997, p. 82). According to this, the state’s official language, biased school curriculum, and racism all can be seen as instruments of domination in the symbolic system. These instruments create hierarchies among social agents, social inequalities and binary oppositions such as the dominant and the dominated.

For Swartz (1997), from the theory of symbolic system Bourdieu develops the theory of symbolic violence and capital. The salient point is that symbolic capital and symbolic power are credits to impose recognition and legitimation in the social world: “in this way, a power of constitution, a power of making a new group, by mobilizing, by speaking on its behalf, as an authorized spokesperson, can be obtained” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 138). In other words, symbolic power and also symbolic capital have the potential to create, manipulate, recognize or not-recognize things and social agents. Therefore, symbolic capital, like symbolic power, is not a neutral entity, but “enables forms of domination, which implies dependence on those who can be dominated by it” (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 166).

The acceptance and internalization of this legitimated symbolic power by the social agents leads to “misrecognition”, which is akin to Marx’s idea of “false consciousness” (Swartz, 1997). Misrecognition contributes to the reproduction of this existing hierarchical system, which in turn recreates domination, violence and exclusion. DiMaggio (1979) argues, “these unquestioned ‘cultural arbitraries’ are the underpinnings of any system of domination, of the hierarchies that characterize relations among individuals” (DiMaggio, 1979, p. 1461). The system of domination, in this regard, depends on misrecognition and it reproduces itself “without conscious recognition by a society’s members” (DiMaggio, 1979, p. 1461) both the dominant and the dominated. However, misrecognition (i.e., individuals as the agents of reproduction of misrecognition) is not only reproduced by individuals but also by institutions, such as family, education, and religion. Misrecognition works invisibly in everyday relations. Topper explains
this with the existence of racist practices even after the juridical basis has been abolished (Topper, 2001). (The existence of subtle racism in Canada despite/because of the policy of multiculturalism is an example).

According to Bourdieu (1997, p. 173) “‘misrecognition’ of ‘reputation’, ‘glory’, and ‘respect’, for persons, works, laws and ‘the great’ or this ‘natural attitude’ reproduces this domination and the oppressive relationship between the dominant and the dominated.” In light of this argument, it can be assumed that this established structure or social order (i.e., the oppressive relationship between the dominant and the dominated) and also social capitals, such as honour, glory, and respect are social, cultural and political constructs, since these are embedded in the agent’s belief system – i.e., habitus- and reconstructed by him/her (Bourdieu, 2001). In this regard, social actors who carry codes of domination and subordination are not innocent but responsible subjects of this unequal system. As Schubert (2002) puts it “conformity is a form of symbolic violence”. For Schubert, Bourdieu’s concept of “symbolic violence shows the ways in which our daily practices and structures of discourse produce the embodiment of domination within others and ourselves” (Schubert, 2002, p. 1094). In this regard, the power to legitimize, to recognize, and to name are the forms of linguistic domination and violence that include or exclude social actors.

According to Bourdieu, “language establishes the structures of the social world and constitutes classes, nations, ethnic groups, and social positions” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 113). Language, in this regard, is a mode of distinction, domination, exclusion and symbolic violence. In other words, language is a tool to impose this established asymmetrical power relationship between the dominant and the dominated. The dominant language regulates the linguistic market and the “linguistic habitus,” that is agents’ linguistic practices (such as accent and style of speech) which in turn affects the agents’ linguistic and cultural capitals, as well as their position in the field (Topper, 2001). As Bourdieu (1991, p. 109) argues, “the use of language, the manner as much as the substance of discourse, depends on the social position of the speaker, which governs the access he can have to the language institution, that is, to the official, orthodox and legitimate language.” What makes language powerful and acceptable is “the belief in the legitimacy of words and of those who utter them” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 170). In other words, for Bourdieu, the legitimate agent creates the legitimate situation for legitimate domination.
For Bourdieu, the State has the monopoly to apply this legitimate language in the form of official language, which creates symbolic violence (i.e., the power to impose) and domination (Webb et. al., 2002; Thompson, 1991). The official language “assigns to everyone an identity,” it relocates all structures, social groups and agents in the social world, it classifies, recognizes or not-recognizes the agents, it stigmatizes and excludes immigrants as “undesirable aliens,” it “forgets” their history. Parallel with the nation-state’s unitary principle, it dominates the immigrants’ language and sense of belonging (Archer, 2003). Similarly, from Bourdieu’s perspective, statelessness can be read sociologically as a disadvantaged status, which leads to lack of recognition and legitimation in the social world.

The education market, as part of the State’s apparatus, helps the reproduction and legitimation of this symbolic violence through language (Thompson, 1991). According to Lakomski (1984) and Jenkins (1992), Bourdieu’s symbolic violence should be considered with regard to his approach towards education. As Bourdieu puts it, “pedagogic action is …symbolic violence” (Schubert, 2002) and the idea of “free” education provides the reproduction of this action. Similarly, exclusion of minority students from higher education or tracking them in non-academic fields is symbolic violence (Schubert, 2002). Correspondingly, the imposition of dominant class’s linguistic codes over linguistically and culturally subordinated groups such as immigrant youth creates exclusions and inequalities in the educational market.

The linguistic market marginalizes immigrant youth’s linguistic habitus and negatively affects their linguistic/symbolic capital and their position in the educational system (Bourdieu, 1991). For Bourdieu & Passeron (1990, p. 73), “linguistic style is always taken into account, implicitly or explicitly, at every level of the educational system and in all university careers.” In this regard, schools might be seen as “fields,” (i.e., “a text of social relations” (DiMaggio, 1979) in which capitals, especially cultural and symbolic capitals, are reproduced and distributed for the benefit of dominant classes.

Similarly, schools are cultural markets where cultural capital is converted into symbolic as well as economic capital (DiMaggio, 1979). Academic success is the product of cultural capital and linguistic capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Swartz, 1997). Therefore, for Bourdieu, cultural capital is one of the most salient reasons for social and educational inequality (Lakomski, 1984). Correspondingly, economically advantaged mainstream youth rely on the
school to convert their economic capital into cultural and symbolic capital, which in turn reinforces their economic domination and as a result it reproduces class inequalities and conflicts among youth from diverse background (e.g., economically, culturally, linguistically disadvantaged immigrant youth).

The hierarchical nature of schools and the misrecognition of educational inequalities (e.g., educational and social mobilization of mainstream youth versus the controlled and limited mobility of immigrant youth) legitimate the symbolic violence of schooling, that is, the imposition and internalization of these inequalities or “the imposition of a ‘cultural arbitrary’” (DiMaggio, 1979), which “values one way of being while it devalues others” (Schubert, 2002).

In sum, the educational system as a social space is the arena of dominations and struggles. It produces and distributes linguistic and cultural capitals unequally, creating inequalities. The state and the educational system, as “the state’s ideological apparatus,” impose the official language (a dominant worldview), reshape and rename subjects; they neglect immigrant youth’s local cultural, linguistic capitals, which leads to symbolic violence, the exclusion of immigrant youth and social and educational inequality. For Bourdieu, like Hall, the state is the site of domination and the legitimation of symbolic violence. In the next section, I will discuss Hall’s understanding of the state in relation to racism and the exclusion of immigrant youth.

3.3. The state and the social exclusion of immigrant youth

In this section I wish to discuss the nature of the modern state in relation to the exclusion of immigrant youth. Based on my analysis, there is an antagonistic relationship between the state and immigrant youth. The state’s sovereignty, its nationalistic hegemonic ideology and its ideals (such as one nation, one citizen, and one single national identity) and the multiple identities of immigrant youth will be discussed as indicators of this conflictual relationship. Moreover, the notion of “new ethnicities” (that is, hybrid and diasporic identities) will be discussed with regard to the notion of “new racisms” and systemic racism to understand the experiences of diasporic/hybrid identities in the modern state.

3.3.1. “The state in question”: The state’s hegemony and the exclusion of immigrant youth

Make no mistake about it: under this regime, the market is to be Free; the
people are to be disciplined (Hall in Sim, 2000).

Theorists and practical men alike have generally agreed that the primary purpose of the state is to maintain order (Thatcher in Sim, 2000).

This section discusses the relationship between the state and its subjects. This analysis is important not only to uncover the nature of the state and its components such as power, coercion and consent, and sovereignty, but also to understand the status of immigrant youth as outsiders and the nature of their exclusion. The state’s power, coercion and sovereignty are the reasons for the exclusion of immigrant youth in the modern state.

Hall’s (1984) analysis is a significant indicator that the nature of the relationship between the state and society is dominated by unequal, hierarchical, exclusionary and authoritarian principles of the state. “The state’s relationship to society is hierarchical in form. Someone or some power ‘up there’ sets the rules of the game for us ‘down here.’ In some cases, with our consent, in others not” (Hall, 1984, p. 15).

Hall’s (1984) study shows that the state is authoritarian. According to Hall (1984, p. 16), “authority is power which the state is licensed to exercise…A power is required which will keep the competition peaceful within a defined ‘system of rules of the game.’” Therefore, the state’s power/authority/violence are necessary for the continuation of the system. While the state is a supreme authority regulating its subjects from above to below, it is always in contact with society. This authoritarian relationship between the state and its subjects (that is, its citizens and immigrants) leads to criticisms. While the modern state protects the interests of dominant groups, particularly capitalists, it exercises its power and dominates the subordinated groups (Hall, 1996b), particularly marginalized immigrants. As Hall (1984) puts it vividly the state is like a father figure who protects (some of) his children and also who punishes (some of them) them. I think that this patriarchal and unequal nature of the state is a problematic one, which leads to further contradictions and inequalities in society.

The state’s sovereignty – autonomy - is a crucial notion for understanding the status of immigrant youth and their exclusion in the nation-state. For Hall (1984), sovereignty means that “the state is the supreme power, subject to the rule neither of some external power nor of a rival power within the boundaries” (Hall, 1984, p. 17). In this regard, the definition of its territorial
boundaries and its nation (i.e., who belongs to it or not), are salient components of the sovereignty of the state.

Multiple attachments and the complex identities of immigrant youth are considered as threats to the formation of nation-states (Hall, 2000) because these complex identities exist “outside of, and sometimes in opposition to, the political forms and codes of” (Gilroy, 1997, p. 329) the modern nation-state, which is “based on an exclusionary universalism, it is a bounded entity; it is not open to everyone.” (Sayyid, 2000, p. 36). This ambivalent status of immigrant youth (i.e., within and outside of the nation) and their multiple attachments destabilize nation-states (Hall, 1997c). Difference, in the nation-state, is considered to be a threat, “there is safety only in sameness” and sameness can be manipulated for political reasons (Gilroy, 1997) (re: maintenance of the hegemonic order of the nation-state depends on popular consent. This issue will be discussed in the section entitled “Racisms and exclusion of immigrant youth”). State discourses, which are dominated by notions of sovereignty, law and order, exclude minority youth and construct them as scapegoats of the nation (Hall, 1978). The nation-state ignores complex identities of immigrants and constructs them as permanent, fixed or essential ethnic entities and restricts them with particular essentialised histories and cultures (Hall, 1996; 1997a; 1997b; 2000a). This essentialised representation of ethnic identity in the nation-state does not allow for plurality (Drew, 1999). However, for Hall (2000b, p. 233), “there are always the ‘attachments’ we have to those who share our world with us but who are different from us.” In other words, while ethnic identity gives us “some sense of place and position in the world” and reminds us that we are coming from somewhere - “even if it is only an ‘imagined community’” (Hall, 1989a, p. 133) - we might have multiple attachments and a sense of not/belonging. Belonging is a question of attachment: attachment to a place, time and space. It is a matter of investment and involvement (Grossberg, 2000), and as a result it is a matter of membership, responsibilities and rights.

Citizenship is about membership in a community (Hall, 1989d; Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992; Benhabib, 2004). According to Hall (1989d, p. 175), “citizenship has entailed a discussion of, and a struggle over, the meaning and scope of membership to the community in which one lives. Who belongs and what does belonging mean in practice?” While membership (i.e., belonging to a community), including rights and responsibilities, provides solidarity among
individuals “against the arbitrary exercise of state power” (Hall, 1989d), it also excludes individuals who do not belong to the group in terms of their ethnic, race, and class origins. Therefore, the “politics of citizenship” or the “politics of closure” (Hall, 1989d) is about exclusion of some (e.g., immigrants, who are different from the majority). In other words, citizenship cannot guarantee full membership in a community (social and individual rights) and equal access to societal institutions because the state, as a power of control, regulates, selects its members according to certain criteria (e.g., ethnicity/race and class) and redefines their identities (Hall, 2002b). As a result, different groups have different statuses and access to the state and its institutions. Therefore, the question of the nation-state is whether these diverse identities of subjects and statuses can be adequately expressed through a single social status like citizenship (Hall, 1989d).

On the other hand, “the politics of citizenship” and its components (i.e., membership, rights and responsibilities), can be read as part of the hegemonic project of the state, that is, the state’s strategic manipulation of its subjects in the name of democracy. According to Hall (1996b, p. 423), hegemony is “the process of the coordination of the interests of a dominant group with the general interests of other groups and the life of the state.” The main point is that the authority and power of the dominant group is recognized and obeyed by the “rest” of the society. “Popular consent” (i.e., consensus of the people) legitimizes the hegemony of the dominant group and the state. In this regard, elections, immigrant naturalization ceremonies, as the indicators of our consent to the state or conspicuous celebrities of the hegemonic power, serve to legitimate the state’s power. As Honig (2001, p. 93) argues, ‘consent by mail, an action taken in private, is not likely ever to have to have the same affective symbolic-cultural effect as the public scene it is intended to mime: that of new citizens taking the oath of citizenship…Immigrant naturalization ceremonies function as a kind of ‘national liturgy.’ With a hope and a prayer and an oath, the gap of consent is filled.”

In this regard, the state and society are interrelated components with regard to coercion and consent: “Coercion and consent are not mutually exclusive but complementary” (Hall, 1984, p. 15). While popular consent can be read as a site for solidarity among groups, and struggle and resistance against the state’s domination, Hall (1996b) reminds us that popular consent or the national consent is also a site for the construction of a “popular hegemony,” which is
manipulated by the state’s apparatuses (e.g., the media) and its institutions (e.g., education) to legitimize the state’s domination. This popular hegemony of the mainstream can be a site for racism and hegemonic nationalist discourses which exclude immigrant youth and make them stateless.

In short, this analysis of the relationship between the state and its subjects, particularly immigrant youth, indicates that the state is not a neutral entity but authoritarian and exclusionary. The sovereignty of the modern state excludes immigrant youth and undermines their multiple identities. The notion of citizenship should also be considered critically. The politics of citizenship is manipulated and controlled by the state where immigrant youth have limited legal status and are excluded outsiders.

3.3.2. National identity in question: New ethnicities, multiple identities

All fixed, fast-frozen relationships, with their terrain of venerable ideas and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become obsolete before they can ossify. All That is Solid Melts Into Air (Marx cited in Hall, 1989b, p. 123).

Illusory aspects of citizenship (i.e., one nation, one citizenship) and national identity (i.e., one single homogeneous national identity) are in question. They are in question not only because “many of them ‘invested’” in “regimes of representations” (such as dominant cultural codes, images, values, rituals of everyday life, constructed distinctive national characteristics; Hall, 1997a; 1997b; 2000; Drew, 1999), but also the new world order, associated with globalization, challenges their existence. “New Times,” which are associated with social, political, and economic changes (e.g., global migration), are a threat to the sovereignty of the modern nation-state (Hall, 1989b, 1989c), including its constitutive components such as citizenship and national identity (Sayyid, 2000). As a result of these changes, the question of identity, which is associated with the sense of belonging, should be reconsidered.

The association of identity with the sense of belonging leads us to consider identity in relation to time, space and place (Grossberg, 2000). To Hall (cited in Mercer, 2000) “identity…is placed, positioned, situated.” Correspondingly, identities are “subject to the continuous “play” of history, culture and power” (Hall cited in Ang, 2000) and created as a consequence of certain symbolic and ideological struggles (Hall, 2000a, 147; for example,
capitalism, the state’s hegemony, and patriarchy). Identity, in this regard, is a question of power. As Laclau (cited in Hall, 1996b, p. 5) argues “the constitution of a social identity is an act of power.” Then, it becomes a site of assimilation and exclusion with regard to certain categories such as race and ethnicity.

For Hall (1997c), there are at least two different ways of thinking about “cultural identity.” The first one defines cultural identity in terms of one shared culture. I think this definition of cultural identity is parallel to Arendts’ central argument about the nation-state’s ideals (i.e., homogeneity and the unity of the nation). This is the idea behind Turkishness or Canadianness: Belonging to a certain identity as a political category is always historically constructed. This perspective separates us from all the narratives or constructions about one, single identity and leads us to think about multiple identities and also multiple marginalities. The second cultural identity “recognizes that as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference which constitute ‘what we really are’; or rather ‘what we have become’ … It is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being’…This identity belongs to the future as much as to the past…” (Hall, 1997c, p. 225). Here Hall emphasizes the continuity and fluidity of identities (Hall, 1995). Identities are always incomplete (Hall, 2002a). Moreover, he underlines the similarities and differences between identities. For Hall (2000a), “the notion that identity has to do with people that look the same, feel the same, call the same, is nonsense.” As Lewis (2000) argues, Hall discusses identities as constructed within fields of difference. Similarly, according to Hall (cited in Solomos and Back, 1996, p. 133), “the fully unified, completed, secure and coherent identity is fantasy. Instead, …we are confronted by a bewildering, fleeting multiplicity of possible identities.” According to this perspective, people can define themselves with more than one identity: I can be Turkish or Turkish Canadian or assimilated Kurdish Turkish Canadian and so on. In other words, if we are born Turkish it is not necessary to die Turkish since diasporic identities “undergo constant transformation.” These debates led to the concept of “new ethnicities” (that is, diasporic and hybrid identities).

According to Cohen (1999), the notion of “new ethnicities” was first developed by Stuart Hall. This form challenged the traditional narratives of essentialism (e.g., black and white identities), and replaced it with multiple identities. According to Cohen (1999), “the notion of ‘new ethnicities’ can lead to a ‘new moral binarism’ between a ‘good’ and ‘new’ ethnicity, which
celebrated healthy, happy hybridity, and ‘bad’ ‘old’ ethnicity mired in pathological purity was often difficult to resist.”

According to Solomos and Back (1996), the notion of “new ethnicities” not only challenges Eurocentric enlightenment but it also questions other constructed cultural identities such as Black identity. The idea of multiple and uncertain identities led to the notion of “hybrid” identity which has been developed by Hall (Drew, 1999) and Bhabha (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1990; Bhabha, 1996). For Bhabha (1996, p. 58), the concept of hybridity has been developed “to describe the construction of cultural authority within conditions of political antagonism or inequity.” Hybridity is a strategy or a site of negotiation with asymmetrical power relations but such negotiation is neither assimilation nor collaboration. “It makes possible the emergence of an ‘interstitial’ agency that refuses the binary representation of social antagonism” (Bhabha, 1996, p. 58). Then, for Bhabha, hybrid identity, as an alternative/transformative entity, is in a constant struggle against the projects of hegemony: domination, hierarchy, exclusion and standardization (Bhabha, 1990). As Hall (2000a, p. 227) puts it vividly: “the black teenager who is a dance–hall DJ, plays jungle music but supports Manchester United or the Muslim student who wears baggy, hip-hop, street style jeans but is never absent from Friday prayers, are all, in their different ways, ‘hybridized.’” Hybrid immigrant youth are not standardized and conformist. They break the boundaries and essentialist categories.

Similarly, Hall’s (1996a) concept of hybrid identity is “not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one.” That is to say, hybrid does not fit essentialist binary categories; s/he is neither “black” nor “white,” s/he is in-between and different. The concept of hybridity leads to the notion of diasporic identity: “The diaspora experience …is defined by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of identity which lives with and through difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference” (Hall, 1997c, p. 58). Hybrid identity is a diasporic identity (i.e., an identity of people in exile; Sayyid, 2000), and vice versa. The hybrid and diasporic identities of immigrant youth are a challenge to binary oppositions (Canclini, 2000; Hall, 2002b; i.e., home and host, “us” and “them”, old and new) and to the normative values of hegemonic hierarchical systems (unified, homogenized, single national identity) and their identities are always “in-process,” in change (Drew, 1999; Kaya, 2002).
However, diasporic identities of immigrant youth lead to further tension between them and the modern state. According to Sayyid (2000), the relationship between diaspora (territorially displaced) and nation (territorially concentrated) within predetermined boundaries of the nation-state is contradictory. “The notion of diaspora is deployed as the anti-thesis of the nation. Nations define ‘home,’ whereas diaspora is a condition of homelessness; in the nation the territory and people are fused, whereas in a diaspora the two are dis-articulated…The existence of a diaspora prevents the closure of the nation, since a diaspora is by definition located within another nation” (Sayyid, 2000, p. 42).

“New Times,” marked by globalization and migration, led to new formations of identity (Hall, 1989b; Hall, 1996a). Now we are talking about “new ethnicities” and diasporic and hybrid identities (Morley & Chen, 1996). While these identities lead to new discourses about the notion of identity, they also put the nation-state and its nationalist and exclusionary discourses (such as one, single, homogeneous nation) into question. However, new ethnicities are still subject to different forms of racism from new racism to systemic hegemonic racism. In the next section I wish to explore these different forms of racism in relation to immigrant youth and discourses of new ethnicities.

3.3.3 “New racisms,” systemic hegemonic racism and the exclusion of immigrant youth

In this section I will discuss “new racism” and systemic hegemonic racism to understand experiences of hybrid identities. I think discussing racism as a plural concept with multiple dimensions is important to understanding the complex and changing nature of racism in the contemporary world.

Race, according to Hall (2000a, p.222), “is the organizing discursive category around which has been constructed a system of socio-economic power, exploitation and exclusion i.e., racism.” So, for Hall, race as a category comprises all forms of social, economic and political inequalities such as exclusion and/or racism, domination, and exploitation. Racisms, for Anthias & Yuval-Davis (1992, p. 2), are “modes of exclusion, inferiorization, subordination and exploitation.” To Anthias & Yuval-Davis (1992), an analysis of racism should take into account the processes of exclusion and exploitation in relation to processes of state and nation, including class and gender relations. Racism, for Hall (2000a, p. 222), “claims to ground the social and
cultural differences which legitimate racialized exclusion in genetic and biological differences: i.e., in Nature.” What is striking about this statement is that Hall connects both biological racism based on physical differences (e.g., skin tone and hair type etc.) and cultural racism associated with cultural and religious features and thus discusses racism as a wider category which includes ethnic and race differences. For Hall (2000a, p. 223), “biological racism privileges markers like skin colour, but those signifiers have always also been used, by discursive extension, to connote social and cultural differences. ‘Blackness’ has functioned as a sign that people of African descent are closer to Nature, and therefore more likely to be lazy, indolent…over-sexualized, with low-self control. Correspondingly, those who are stigmatized on ethnic grounds, because they are ‘culturally different’ and therefore inferior, are often also characterized as physically different in significant ways, underpinned by sexual stereotypes. The biological referent is therefore never absent from discourses of ethnicity.” Similarly, Cohen (1999, p.14) argues that “racist discourses have never confined themselves just to body images.”

It is important to be aware of the fact that racism works differently in different contexts (history, place and space). That is, racism has a conjunctural character and cannot be separated from the structures of society (Hall cited in Lewis 2000), and therefore it must not be homogenized. It is also important to note that since racism works discursively with an articulation of cultural and biological differences, “it seems therefore more appropriate to speak of …‘racism’s two logics’” (Hall, 2000a, p. 223). That is, racism works through both cultural differences (such as cultural practices –i.e., language and religion) and biological differences (such as skin colour). Similarly, the separation between cultural racism and biological racism might incorrectly suggest that cultural racism is “softer” or “less” racist than biological racism and is therefore more tolerable. Hall’s concept of “racism’s two logics” leads us to reconsider arguments about “new racisms” (that is, cultural forms of racism; Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992; Schubert, 2002).

Discussions about new racisms are important to understanding the evolution of racism and its relation to new ethnicities (diasporic/hybrid), though it is not clear whether the notion of new ethnicities gave rise to the discourse of new racisms or vice versa. New racism seems to be a new strategy of exclusion of minority.
According to Nayak (2003), although relations of domination (i.e., social inequalities of racism) didn’t change, racism’s social dynamics changed. Now, we should consider “new racisms” rather than old binary oppositions such as black-white racism. For Nayak, these dichotomies do not allow us to see ‘inter-ethnic nuances’ such as “hybrid identities.”

Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1992) reports that after the Second World War some of the overt forms of racism, based on the idea of the inferiority of non-European “races,” became unacceptable. As a result, new racism “speaks about ‘nations’ rather than ‘races.’” According to Cohen (1999), with new racism “crude biologic doctrines and stereotypes of innate superiority/inferiority were giving away to a more subtle and indirect discourse.” As a result, “English is not innately superior to Irish or the Black but they just did things differently” (Cohen, 1999, p. 4). New racism, in this regard, excludes the experiences of migrant ethnic groups, constructs them as inferior and outsiders or undesirables of the nation (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992). Gilroy (cited in Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992, p. 57) argues, “its novelty lies in the capacity to link discourses of patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia…militarism and gender difference into a complex system which gives ‘race’ its contemporary meaning.” Therefore, new racism has the “capacity” to involve different forms of racisms (such as systemic hegemonic and cultural racism) and discriminations. For Cohen, with new racism discussions the links between structural and cultural racism tended to be lost. The result is that the “hidden wounds of race and class are not much considered” (Cohen, 1999, p. 7).

The studies on new racism show the association between racism, language and “hidden narrative.” These subtle forms of new racism in the form of language are reminiscent of Bourdieu’s theory of symbolic violence and its institutionalized forms of racism, such as the invisible, silent, everyday racisms and the teacher-student relationship in the school setting. In addition, according to Solomos and Back (1996), post-colonial and post-structuralist scholars’ critiques of the discourses of colonialism and of the West are influential in “new racism” debates.

In light of these arguments it can be assumed that we are still not sure whether the ambivalent character of hybrid identities liberate themselves from the old forms of racism (i.e., biological racism). As Cohen argues (1999), race inequalities cannot be labelled in terms of old and new ethnicities. For Cohen, the project of the “new ethnicities” should be connected to both cultural racism and systemic/structural forms of racism.
For Essed (2002), “systemic racism is the interweaving of racism in the fabric of the social system” (i.e., the existence of racism in societal institutions such as the education, labour and housing markets). What is striking about systemic racism is that it is difficult to realize and target it since it is embedded in and reproduced by the structures of the system (Hall, 2002a). As Anthias & Yuval-Davis (1992) argues racist practices need not only rely on an explicit notion on racism, but “practices may be racist in terms of their effects” (for example, hidden curriculum in the educational system may lead immigrant youth to drop out of school).

These different forms of racism show that racism is rooted in different structures of society from social and political to economic. The interplay between racism and societal structures leads us to consider the relationship between the state and racism. In this regard, hegemony – the state’s power - works with racism to dominate and exclude immigrant youth and reproduce asymmetrical power relations and, as a result, inequalities in society. Practices of racism secure the hegemony of the state (Hall, 2002c), which in turn leads to the state’s tolerance towards systemic racism in its institutions. For Hall, racist practices in legal, political and ideological structures provide the framework for other forms of racism (e.g., exclusion) in other structures (e.g., economic). In this regard, racism, as an ideology, transforms social structures and social relations and finally identities. In short, racism, like the state’s hegemony, has ideological, social, and economic impacts in society (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992).

Hall et al.’s (1978) Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law, and Order is an insightful study which helps us to realize and understand how the state’s hegemony constructs a nationalist, exclusionary, conservative, racist discourse which excludes minority youth. Hall et al. (1978) indicates that the state’s nationalist hegemonic discourses reduce the social contradictions of society into a race problem and impose a belief that the state’s domination and its apparatuses (e.g., police, law, education) are necessary for the protection of its citizens from immigrant youth’s “immoral” and violent acts. Popular consent is manipulated to guarantee the state’s operation, to fix the difference and to exclude immigrants as threats of the system and the societal order:

…how the themes of race, crime and youth-condensed into the image of mugging come to serve as the articulator of the crisis, as its ideological conductor. It is also about how these themes have functioned as a mechanism for the construction of an authoritarian consensus, a conservative backlash: What we call the slow build-up towards a ‘soft’ law
and order society. But it also has to ask: to what social contradictions does this trend towards the ‘disciplined society’- powered by the fears mobilized around ‘mugging’- really refer?” (Hall, 1978, viii)

Similarly, Cohen’s (1972) study is a great example to show how stereotypical conservative discourses, including popular hegemony (i.e., hegemonic consensus of the mainstream) as a mechanism of the state, transforms society, and stigmatizes and marginalizes those who are selected to be victims of these discourses:

Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounced their solutions; ways of coping are evolved or resorted to…Sometimes the panic is passed over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long-lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way society conceives itself” (Cohen, 1972, p. 28)

Society helps the state to reproduce this exclusionary hegemonic ideology, which is dominated by the notions of order and control of the nation. Representation of immigrant youth as public enemies by official reports and state institutions, such as the media, religion, education, official language (or by “the circuit of culture” (Hall, 1997a; 1997b) that is, the process of making through cultural practices) make immigrant youth criminals and enemies of the nation. Taking these discussions into account, hegemony, as an ideology and a process, can be considered racism. Social and economical inequalities are separated from the structural problems of the country, they are reduced to a “race” problem, and minority youth are racialized and criminalized: “Racism must be understood as ideology, structure and process in which inequalities inherent in the wider social structure are related to biological and cultural factors attributed to those who are seen as a different ‘race’ and ‘ethnic’ group” (Essed, 2002, p. 185).

Similarly, this hegemonic discourse can also be read as a site for the construction of systemic racism since it “activates existing structural racial inequality in the system” (Essed, 2002, p. 181) and “leads to the policing of difference” (Hall, 2000a). Correspondingly, if “the state could only provide the theatre for the organization of hegemony by working through consent [and]…it secures a certain kind of political order, a certain type of legal order, maintains
a certain kind of social order, in the service of capital” (Hall et al., 1978, p. 206) then the exclusion of immigrant youth from working-class families would not be surprising. The interplay between hegemony and racism leads to the question: Are exclusion and systemic racism manifestations of “crisis of hegemony” (i.e., “disturbance of the equilibrium of consent” (Hall et al., 1978)? According to Hall et al. (1978, p. 217), what makes these moments of “crisis of hegemony” exceptional is “the increased reliance on coercive mechanisms and apparatuses already available within the normal repertoire of state power, and the powerful orchestration …of an authoritarian consensus. In such moments, the ‘relative autonomy’ of the state is no longer enough to secure the measures necessary for social cohesion…The forms of state intervention thus become more overt and more direct.” Taking this into account, hegemonic ideologies (such as systemic racism, nationalism, notions of order and security) and hegemonic representations (such as representation of immigrant youth as criminals, agents of “moral panic”) might be read as moments of crisis of the state:

The themes of crime and social delinquency, articulated through the discourses of popular morality, touch the direct experience, the anxieties and uncertainties of ordinary people. This has led to a dovetailing of the ‘cry for discipline’ from below into the call for an enforced restoration of social order ‘from above’…This, in turn, has given a wide legitimacy to the tilt of the balance within the operations of the state towards the coercive pole, whilst preserving its popular legitimacy ’ (Hall cited in Sim, 2000, p. 319).

This analysis indicates that there is an interrelationship between the state’s hegemonic ideology and racism. They can be viewed as ideologies, which transform structures of the society, and create inequalities. Hegemonic discourses can be read as a site for the construction of systemic racism. Systemic racism, as embedded in the structures of the state’s institutions, works invisibly. Systemic racism, like the state’s hegemony, stigmatizes immigrant youth as scapegoats and marginalizes them in society. Since systemic racism and the state hegemony work together in creating inequalities, we can call this form of racism “systemic hegemonic racism.”

3.4. Summary

A centralized authority which holds a monopoly on all means of violence is not the brightest hope for civilization but rather a forbidding nightmare of tyranny (Arendt in Parekh, 2004, p. 48).
This critical analysis of the social exclusion of immigrant youth in relation to the theories of Arendt, Bourdieu and Hall indicates that the modern state is violent and patriarchal. The state’s power and authority dominate and rule people. As Arendt (1968, p. 102) argues, “if violence fulfills the same function as authority - namely, makes people obey - then violence is authority.” The nation-state, its sovereignty, territoriality, and doctrine based on a homogeneous and uniform nation are the main threats to human plurality, and also basic reasons for the inferior legal, social, educational, economic status of immigrant youth and their exclusion. Therefore, the state is the “institutional source of a great deal of injustice, inequity and violence” (Honig, 2001).

The modern state is in decline. Globalization and migration have destabilized the legitimation of its territorial specification and its authority. The multiple identities and attachments of immigrant youth (Hall, 1996d) have undermined the ideology of national identity. Therefore, the state and its hegemonic order are in crisis. The state’s hegemony is subject to resistance. While the maintenance of the hegemonic order of the nation-state depends on popular consent (that is, the consensus and unification of its citizens; Hall, 1989d; Hall, 1996c; Honig, 2001) and the negotiation between the state and its subjects, immigrant youth’s consent is absent. On the contrary, immigrant youth are generating counter-hegemony. They do not fit into any “given” categories of the state. They are foreign, uncertain; they do not belong to the nation. “The construction of popular consent for this authoritarian project positions immigrants’ as the “enemy within” (Benhabib, 2004).

Bonnie Honig’s Democracy and Foreigner (2001) is a salient study that explores the relationship between the phenomenon of foreignness and the demands of democracy. For Honig, while the regime constructs immigrants as foreigners and threats, it also depends on their foreignness for the reproduction of its self-image. The regime uses foreign immigrants not only to produce cheap labour, but also to utilize their foreignness to deal with enduring problems in the democracy. To Honig (2001), the idea of foreignness is a “productive site for the state’s development of myriad strategies of discipline, normalization, and regulation” (Honig, 2001, p. 77). This point is very similar to Hall’s (1989a) argument about the state’s practice of the scapegoating of immigrant youth to impose the belief that the state’s power and coercion (through the law and police) are necessary for the order of society and the protection of its citizens. This strategy is in turn used to conceal the structural problems and inequalities in the
system and to preserve the state’s operation. In this regard, immigrant’s foreignness functions to support the system in question (Honig, 2001). Similarly, notions such as order, morality, national values and the law can be considered as instrumental mechanisms of the hegemonic state to criminalize and stigmatize immigrant youth: “the law …is and is not the product of the General Will, …generated by the people but also imposed by the lawgiver (Rousseau cited in Honig, 2001). Correspondingly, there is a danger in accepting morality because it can be used for hegemonic ideologies. Brown (2001) views “moralism as a hegemonic form of political expression.” In this regard, the question must be whether morality is associated with justice or domination. Also, state’s other instruments such as the politics of citizenship and practices of political membership (e.g., voting and naturalization ceremonies) should be examined critically. For Benhabib (2004), these practices (such as the naturalization ceremonies of immigrants - the politics of immigration and citizenship) are rituals of the nation-state through which the nation is reproduced. So, voting can be seen as a strategic manipulation of the masses for the maintenance of the system. Voting does matter for the state but not for the people.

The hegemonic state is racist and exclusionary. Racist nationalist projects maintain the idea of a pure, single, national identity, the ethnic superiority of dominant ethnic groups and the protection of their rights and properties. The hegemonic, conservative and nationalist discourses about security, terrorism, order and the “moral panic” of society over the “immorality and violence” of immigrant youth exclude and stigmatize immigrant youth. In this regard, there is a relationship between the state’s hegemony, systemic racism and the exclusion of immigrants. The interplay between hegemonic practices and systemic racism helps us understand the state as a site for the generation of racism which constructs immigrants as different, inferior, traditional outsiders. This discourse is based on cultural racism/new racism and its stereotypical representations. Hall (1997a; 1997b) argues that racism, as a “representational practice” (i.e., a construction of meanings through cultural practices - language, images, symbols, values and so on), constructs hierarchical and essentialist categories between cultures (e.g., civilized west versus primitive east), mobilizes fears, makes the immigrant youth dangerous and criminalizes and excludes them. Therefore, it is vital to be aware of how domination is legitimized through: a symbolic system (such as notions of morality, order, values, language), the state’s instruments (democratic practices such as voting, official language) and the state’s institutions (e.g.,
education, religion institutions and media) and finally our beliefs and roles in the system – habitus. This process of “trans-coding” (that is “readaptation of meaning” or the process of decoding of the codes) (Hall, 1997a; Hall, 1997b) and raising awareness will lead to new ways of meaning-making which are crucial to the fight against systemic hegemonic racism. In this regard, trans-coding can be read as deconstruction. Trans-coding, like deconstruction, is a critical practice which reveals domination or asymmetrical power relations considering the issues of class, ethnicity, gender and religion.

Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence helps us realize systemic racism and violence, which occur “even if it is not intended and even it is not realized” (Schubert, 2002). However, Bourdieu’s conceptualization of habitus, an agent which is limited to and dependent on structures, may cause us to think that human agency is absent from his theory. On the contrary, “diasporic habitus,” as Parker (2000) puts it, is not a passive agent but leads to social change, resists structured orthodoxy, essentialism and racism.

Similarly, Arendt offers solutions to the dilemmas of the “right to have rights” and the plight of “stateless” immigrant youth. A lawful civic political organization, as an alternative to the nation-state, which is divorced from any ethnic or national bases, advocates individuals’ participation in the public space, regardless of their ethnic identities. This project transforms immigrants’ status from foreigners, to actors in our common world. However, while Arendt’s notion of power offers us a hopeful theory in which power establishes relations and creates equalities, the concept of power is also open to criticism with regard to the status of immigrant youth: From an Arendtian perspective, can an immigrant youth, deprived of the sense of belonging to a community, without the right to speak and act, be seen as powerful? What is the relationship between rightlessness and power?
4 Methodology

4.1. Methods

In view of my qualitative methodology and subjective epistemological concerns (such as inequality, exclusion, experiences and identities of immigrant youth), I adopted a critical qualitative approach. This approach enabled me to gather data mainly in the form of in-depth interviews and participant observations of the sites and individual essay writing tasks. I spent approximately six months gathering data with my participants.

A special emphasis was placed on Turkish immigrant youth who were living in one urban center: Vancouver, Canada. I have chosen Vancouver as my site, as I have been living there for four years and already had contacts with Turkish people from different backgrounds.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 7 female and 7 male immigrant youth (aged 15-25) in order to address the research questions and capture young peoples’ experiences, perceptions of inclusion and exclusion, challenges in their school, and Canadian society and the broader educational challenges they face as Turkish immigrants in increasingly complex urban contexts.

I began to recruit Turkish immigrant youth within the community centre (i.e., Vancouver Turkish Canadian Society) in 2009. A letter describing the project was sent to the community centre's staff, asking their permission to post notices about this research project, with information about how to contact me. Upon approval from the community centre, an advertisement describing the project was sent to the centre's public website for the purpose of recruitment. However, this was barely successful. Also, I attempted to find research participants using the “snowball” technique, whereby I contacted people I already know within the Turkish community, and asked them to refer me to others who they thought might be appropriate and interested in participating. The confidentiality of participants and the data were maintained by ensuring that names of the participants would not be revealed and study documents would be kept in a password-protected computer. Each participant was reminded that s/he was free to leave the interview at any time.

A more detailed description of my chosen methods follows:

Interviews

I interviewed each of the participants using an in-depth, semi-structured interview approach (see appendix 1 for interview protocol). The themes of the interviews included young
people’s pre- and post-migration history, sense of not/belonging, multiple diasporic identities, and conflicts between them and their families. Moreover, youth’s perspectives on Muslimness, Turkishness, Canadianness and authoritarian and heroic Turkish figures and symbols (such as Atatürk\(^{17}\)), their perceptions and experiences of inclusion and exclusion (such as their teacher’s racism, peer group -minority and majority- relations and conflicts, discriminatory hidden curriculum, language discrimination, challenges in Canadian society) were examined. During the initial interview, I asked participants if they could refer me to other potential participants. I also asked them to include me in any upcoming events (such as Turkish national festivals or family gatherings like parties and visits) for the purposes of participant-observation.

In order to test the scope of my interview questions, I conducted one pilot interview. This gave me the opportunity to revise my interview protocol. Although the interviews were meant to carry on through a series of stages in order to build trust, only one interview was conducted with each participant. The number of interviews was determined by the participant, based on the participant’s availability. Interviews lasted about two hours. During face-to-face sessions with research participants, I identified myself as a Turkish graduate student -researcher and explained the goals and purposes of the research project. These interviews were conducted at a location specified by the participants, one in which they felt comfortable and safe. Unlike first-generation youth, second-generation immigrant youth wanted to conduct interviews in English (except for one case). With the consent of all participants, these discussions were audio-taped and transcribed for analysis. I did the translations myself.

**Ethnographic Participant Observations**

I took ethnographic field notes on personal (e.g., parties), social and community events (e.g., celebration of religious festivals or national events) or any meetings that Turkish immigrant youth may be involved in during the length of my research project. It should also be noted that I started to take field notes in 2007 (that is, two years before I was approved for formal investigation).

The participant observation method gave me the opportunity to engage in the web of the young people’s everyday lives, observe them within their own realm, capture the complexity of social relations embedded in their daily experiences, and supplement interview data. In other

\(^{17}\) The founder of the Turkish Republic.
words, this method helped me to understand, “underlying meanings,” “the subtle range of processes and nuances” (Connolly, 1998), multiple realities and unique experiences of immigrant youth. This is especially important for moving beyond reliance on formalized interactions and observing immigrant youth’s status symbols, their social performances and productions that may not be as readily accessible through interviews (Sansone, 2000). In my participant observation, I hoped to minimize the “distance” between young people and myself.18

**Individual Essays**

In my research I utilized individual essays or short stories as one of the qualitative techniques. I asked young people to write a letter to a family member back in Turkey to tell him/her about their immigration experience in Canada. I hoped that while this technique would provide me with “direct access to the level of social relations” (Bertaux cited in Kroeh-Sommer, 1995) of youth, it would also help young people to focus and thus allow them “to tell their stories with minimal interference, express their ideas and experiences through written text” (Poteet, 2008), and generate their own narration (see Appendix 2). However, this method was not very successful, as the return was low.

I also kept a daily personal research journal in which I recorded my feelings, impressions, reactions, questions and problems regarding the settings and the participants. This helped me to realize my own biases and became aware of potential gaps in my inquiry.

**4.2. Epistemologies, methodologies, and paradigms: Moving from the “field” to the “work”**

Epistemologies, as the “hidden rationales” for “our” methodological choices, cannot be separated from the methods of studying immigrant youth. As Schwandt (1997) argues, epistemologies provide justification for methodologies.

Similarly, examining the relationship between epistemologies (i.e., what knowledge is) and the methodologies (i.e., how the researcher goes about finding out whatever what s/he believes can be known) (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) helps us understand that a methodology necessarily includes various components of looking at phenomena “rather than simply the application of a specific method” (Tunchman, 1994).

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18 The problem of distance between the researcher and the participant could be considered a result of “subject/object duality,” or Cartesian dualism, which is based on “objective” epistemology.
Correspondingly, research has shown that methodology can be seen as applied epistemology by “looking at how our most general epistemological notions come to be applied to the special case of scientific investigation and knowledge” (Epistemology and Methodology, 2005).

In the same way, while assessing the assets and liabilities of the methodologies of representative studies of immigrant youth, the disconcerting dualities of methodological approaches (e.g., “subjectivity/objectivity,” “insider/outsider,” and “public/private”), might be considered as the outcomes of the dualities of the epistemologies. In other words, the “subject/object duality” or the essentialist Cartesian thought (the “knowing subject” versus its object), as the essence of positivist epistemologies, could be read as the primary source of positivist methodological assumptions as well as the limitations of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies of the research on immigrant youth. The problem of “distance” between the researcher and the immigrant youth (e.g., in a questionnaire) and the problematic of “objectivity” in the quantitative methodology might be explained in terms of the subject/object duality.

Similarly, the “insider/outsider” debate (e.g., the conflictual status of the ethnographer), and the “public/private” debate (e.g., the difficulty of entering into the “homes” and family life/relations of immigrant youth) in qualitative methodology, particularly in participant observation and interview, could be analyzed within the framework of the classic subject/object separation.

Finally, these discussions about the relationship between epistemologies and methodologies help us realize that qualitative and quantitative methodologies have a recognizable theoretical background and identify the political nature of the research (e.g., the choice of subject matter and its methodology can be seen as political choices). Choices of methodologies cannot be reduced simply to “pragmatic matters” (e.g., qualitative research as “subjective” and quantitative research as “objective”), since the choice of the methodology is a political action. In other words, the researcher’s paradigm, his/her epistemological (what is the relationship between the inquirer and the known?), ontological (what is the nature of reality?) and methodological (how do we know the world?) perspective shapes the entire research process (Denzin and Lincoln; 2005), from the relationship between the participants and the researcher to the results.
Based on my analysis, quantitative survey methods fail to identify the complex social processes that lead to inequalities in host societies. These studies are “blind to the subtle nuances of racism” (Blair, 1998, p.19). I think that the immigrant youth’s experiences of exclusion and racism cannot be reduced to and understood by multiple choices. Similarly, the statistical analysis of the educational performances of the immigrant youth only helps to reproduce racist stereotypes when the complex racialized processes are neglected in the host societies (Connolly, 1998). “Youthscapes” (i.e., youth subcultural formations and their relationships to place) and fluidity and complexity of minority youth identities cannot solely be captured by statistics (Nayak, 2003). So, if the aim is to produce an alternative (e.g., an anti-racist) methodology, studies utilizing quantitative methodology, survey/questionnaire method, and the right-wing positivist epistemology\textsuperscript{19} cannot be considered anti-racist alternatives, but rather, they should be construed as “good” samples of “anti anti-racist” research with regard to their negligence of the experiences of exclusion and discrimination among immigrant youth, their failure to highlight racism, and thus their participation in sustaining systemic racial bias. In this regard, methodology may act as a form of reproducing discrimination and may thus be a part of racist discourse. That is, research can be racist, “whatever its conscious aims and professional aims” (Gillborn, 1998, p. 34). Instead, a research methodology, including an epistemology and a method, is needed which “can accommodate the complexities and contradictions of racism” (Connolly, 1998, p. 3), in relation to different and multiple identities of immigrant youth.

As a result, I adopted a critical, feminist theory (Lather, 1993; Connolly, 1998; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Edgar and Sedgwick, 2005) in my research. These theoretical trends in methodology have led to reassessment of issues about identity, race and ethnicity and anti/racism (Connolly, 1998). Feminist, critical practices and its assumption of complex, multiple identities and truths have attacked the positivist methodology and epistemology, which advocate absolutely one, single “correct” scientific truth, in relation to a fixed “knowing subject” (Roman, 1992; Blair, 1998; Haraway, 2003). This conceptualization has led to an anti-racist, emancipatory approach which questions asymmetrical power dynamics between the minority and majority, the popular and state’s hegemony, patriarchy and social, educational and gender inequalities in the host and home country, while accepting subjectivist epistemology (accepting my subjectivity and

\textsuperscript{19}Re: Research is a political action.
bias in the research), relativist ontology (accepting multiple truths, and the hybridity of my participants and myself). Also, it takes into account the lived cultural realities, complexities, differences, pluralities and uncertainties of the diverse identities and unique histories of immigrant youth.

These considerations enable an understanding of social exclusion from a range of diverse perspectives, particularly the role of the national and local imaginary in the production of experiences of exclusion and its ‘real effects’ on young people in the city of Vancouver. Accordingly, my theoretical orientation takes into consideration the educational and social exclusion of immigrant youth as an inequality problem related to the structural inequities of the host country. I believe that youth’s problem (e.g., their lack of integration into the mainstream) is related to the unequal social, economic and educational opportunities of the country rather than “moral panic,” “youth crisis,” immigrant youth’s “low self-esteem” or their “psychological problems.” Similarly, my theoretical orientation aims to understand the forms and causes of “boundary” shifts, that is, the social distinction (e.g., religious and linguistic) between the minority and the majority, which affects the immigrants’ access to institutions and the social interaction between the minority and the majority. So, while developing a counter-argument against “established” dominant discourses (i.e., racism, patriarchy, positivism), it aims for a change to “realize the ideals of equality and justice” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007), and thus it “contributes to a more egalitarian social order” (Lather, 1992). Some information gathered in this study may also be useful in developing policies for promoting the social and political participation of minority youth in the public space and decision-making processes.

Finally, to gain better insight into the circumstances and experiences of immigrant youth in Canada, some critical questions were considered: How do first- and second-generation Turkish immigrant youth perceive discrimination in the host country? How do their class and cultural identities fit into their immigrant experiences? How can their “Muslim/non-Muslim,” “traditional/modern,” “western/eastern,” “European/Mediterranean/Middle Eastern” identities be explored? How are Turkish immigrant youth’s in-betweenness, their “hybrid” identities, in their home country transformed into a “diasporic hybrid identity?” and finally, which methodological

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20 See the Vedder et al. (2006) study for the discussion about the positive correlation between integration of immigrant youth and their “self-esteem” and “psychological problems.”
and epistemological variations can capture this multiple in-betweenness of Turkish immigrant youth in Canada?

In sum, it is necessary to adopt a research paradigm which interrupts the existing ones dominated by Euro-centric positivist epistemology. A research paradigm based on non-western, non-hierarchical, hybrid and anti-racist methodologies, epistemologies and ontologies, should be used to realize the nuances among immigrant youth and ensure that the voices of marginalized immigrant youth are heard.

4.3. “Situating a critical qualitative stance”

Critical qualitative accounts allowed me to observe, record, interpret, and understand complex and sensitive issues such as Turkish youth’s experiences and perceptions of exclusion, as well as conflicts within their families in Canada.

It is my belief that critical qualitative approach and its subjectivist epistemology indicates the cultural specificities and differences between and within Turkish immigrant groups regarding their history of immigration and religious beliefs (e.g., religious differences among Turks based on the range of religious branches and ideologies: for example, the Alawi, Sunni and secular and religious Turks). My study, therefore, while examining the transformation of youth’s subjectivity, takes into account the unique socio-political, historical and economical aspects of the home country, and the impact of these aspects on the pre-migration and post-migration histories of Turkish immigrant youth. As Scott and Marshall (2005) argue, “We must understand a culture\(^{21}\) on its own terms, through its own rules” (Scott & Marshall, 2005, p. 322).

My critical approach provides information about the language and social practices of immigrants and the impact of these practices on the integration and/or marginalization of the immigrant youth. Moreover, this approach indicates how these practices are socially constructed, while exploring the knowledge and power relations. Willis’ *The Ethnographic Imagination* (2000) shows that language is associated with cultural forms of life (i.e., social/cultural practices and experiences of people): “…there is no pure unreferential and nonfigurative language…no pure thought, no language free from social gravity” (Willis, 2000, p. 12). In addition to the

\(^{21}\) Here culture could be defined as “in transition,” including some elements of old and new, or home and host.
importance of the experience of people and material of everyday life in constructing identities
and languages, Willis emphasizes the importance of “ethnographic imagination” to understanding
the creativity of experience and practices of people and to allow, “the use of five-sense channels
for recording data relating to social atmosphere, emotional colour and unspoken assumptions
(Willis, 2000; p. xiii).

While critical qualitative study offers invaluable methodological and epistemological
insights for understanding the production of youth culture and “expressive cultural styles” (e.g.,
clothes and social interaction) of immigrant youth, it helps us to interpret the complexity of social
and material practices of young people. In this regard, religious practices (e.g., covering)
shouldn’t always be associated with radical religiosity, but might be a cultural style that goes
hand in hand with popular youth culture in the host country. Likewise, critical qualitative
approach provides information about the relationship between cultural/social and material
reproductions of immigrant youth and their cultural identities as well as their positions in the host society (Nayak, 2003, p. 167): “Musical dispositions, sporting affiliations or fashion preferences
could become racially encrypted scripts for the performance and interpretation of a particular
youth identity” (Nayak, 2003, p. 167).

A critical qualitative approach allows me to capture the importance of class, gender,
immigration status in shaping the everyday life of Turkish immigrant youth. Also, it helps me to
explain the relationship between the degree of discrimination they face and their class origin and
immigration status (Ataca & Berry, 2002; Aycan & Berry, 1996). Finally, this approach allows
me to explore any associated links between the educational attainment of immigrant parents and
their children’s educational and social attainment (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Critical qualitative study, in this regard, might be considered the more suitable method
compared to a quantitative survey method, since it develops a more refined analysis of everyday
life, and “garners a deeper understanding of ‘what young people actually do’ in particular places”
(Nayak, 2003, p. 27). This approach captures more ethically the complexities and pluralities of
racial identities and different realities of young people (Cary, 2004, p. 78).

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4.4. Attending to ethical considerations

Working with young people, gaining access through the research process in general result in specific ethical dilemmas. I was in an ambiguous status. I represented both an “insider” and “outsider” status and the difficulty of managing this uncertain status was an ethical challenge.

According to Schwandt (1997) and Andrade (2000), the debate about “insider/outsider” status, which is associated with the power relationship between the participant and the researcher, is transformed into the multiple roles and realities of the researcher and the participant. Discussing multiple roles challenges the idea of one, single, fixed status of the researcher as an “outsider” and the participant as an “insider.” The written text is a co-construction and there is always a negotiation of the roles of “insider” and “outsider” between the researcher and the participant (Mirza, 2004).

While a critical ethnographic approach challenges the dichotomy between the “knowing subject” (i.e., the researcher) and his object (immigrant youth), it also opposes any false dichotomies or separation between “insider/outsider”. The researcher, like the immigrant youth, has multiple identities and positions, which “locate [the researcher] fluidly in ever-shifting positions and assign [him/her] changing roles that are neither always emic (i.e., insider) nor always etic (i.e., outsider;” Mutua & Swadener, 2004). In other words, “outsider” and “insider” are not mutually exclusive positions but mutually engaged interactions (Adler, 2004), since both the researcher and the participant share the same “text” (Roman, 1992; Haraway, 2003). In this regard, ethnographic approach challenges the myth of neutrality in research: “As ethnographers we point to our own subjectivity, acknowledge that it undoubtedly shapes the story we tell and recognize the fact of the power we wield: the power of interpretation” (Bettie, 2003, p. 23). I think this subjective epistemology makes ethnographic approach superior to quantitative methods based on positivist epistemology, which advocates one, single truth, namely the “scientific truth,” rather than multiple truths. Similarly, the acknowledgment of the “partial truth” of the researcher might be considered the empowerment of the common-sense knowledge produced by immigrant youth.

Taking these epistemological discussions into account in my critical qualitative approach, I tried ethnically to capture the complexities and pluralities of multiple identities and different realities of young people and adopt a dual insider and outsider role. However, due to the nature of
the interview method, as a strategic social construction (Lather, 1993), there might be tension between myself as an interviewer and my participants. Narratives of the interview were created according to dominant social norms, as well as the expectations and the fears of the immigrant youth and myself, as a researcher, and as a Turkish immigrant/international student? In conducting qualitative research about immigrant youth utilizing these interview methods, some of the critical questions might be as follows: How was it possible to challenge “rational,” “in-stage” construction between myself and the immigrant youth?

The interview, as a process of “impression management,” is shaped by the distinction between “others” and “I,” that is between the immigrant youth and myself, and reinforces the social norms of “acceptability” and “rationality” (Goffman, 1959). Moreover, my insider status as a first-generation Turkish immigrant woman with a particular ideological, religious, class position and educational background might have affected the interview process. In this regard, certain potential barriers such as cultural may have reduced because of my “insider” status (i.e., I am a student from Turkey who speaks Turkish, belongs to the same Turkish community and identifies herself as Muslim). On the other hand, my age, social and educational background and gender might have created obstacles between the immigrant youth and myself. For instance, my age, nationality and my past experiences, meant that I went through a particular socialization process, whereas my educational background (an adult woman who was part of an authoritarian educational system) might have led to hierarchy, differences and barriers between immigrant youth and myself. Or these different experiences might have prevented me from understanding immigrant youth’s complex identifications, sense of belonging and different perceptions. Similarly, I think some of the difficulties of working with young people from Turkey were the categorization of Turkish immigrant youth, as well as defining their ethnic origin (such as Turkish or Kurdish). Therefore, self-declared ethnicity was the criterion for the definition of ethnic origin rather than the birthplace of Turkish immigrant youth22.

In addition, patriarchy as a cultural norm might be a barrier between myself as a female interviewer and a male Turkish immigrant youth, since the gender difference might have created a discomfort on the male youth’s side, with regard to ambiguity in approaching and expressing

22 Consequently, as Angin (2003) argues/according to Angin’s criteria, a person with an ancestry such as Kurdish, even though born in Turkey, was not included as Turkish if the only ancestry declared was Kurdish.
his views. Furthermore, the public/private division might have generated a distance and caused a challenge between two parties (the immigrant youth and the researcher) with regard to the transformation of the participants from private to public as well as for the process of knowledge production.

Another crucial point ethical issues is the concept of “neutrality,” which is associated with positivism which is assumed value-free. Interviewing, as a process of knowledge production, always comprises value judgment (Lather, 1993). Therefore, the main problem is not whether an interview is “neutral,” “objective” and so on, but what kinds of judgment it involves and how “true” and “false” judgments are defined and divorced from each other. For instance, in my research about the experiences of racism and the exclusion of immigrant youth, how was it possible for myself as an interviewer to make a “true” judgment, (e.g., understanding the participants’ experiences) without “knowing,” and “seeing” the event or without “being” there? How could I decide what a “true” judgment was? Finally, does making a “false” judgment reflect the general inability of myself, as an interviewer, to conceive knowledge? (Lather, 1993).

Although I am not sure about the “true” answers to these questions, I can assume that the vague nature of the responses to these questions may be an indicator of the ethical dilemmas in qualitative inquiry in general and the limitations of interviewing in particular.

4.5. In the “field:” Knowing me, knowing you

Sometimes dates are imprinted in human minds. You cannot delete them; you cannot forget or change them. August 15, 2005 is one of the dates inscribed in my memory, a turning point of my life. I see myself on my flight from Turkey to Canada. I was flying to a country I knew little about it; snowy, cold and far away, but wealthy. My knowledge was limited to very positive images about this foreign country. I was uncertain about almost everything about it; its people, culture, codes, values and so on, except the fact that I wanted to live there for at least four years and conduct my PhD research on Turkish young people and their experiences in Canada.

October 13, 2007. This is the date of my first formal encounter with my prospective participants in the “field.” It was a religious festival. I was in a house where only women and their children were present. In this first encounter I realized that it was “them” who would accept me into their circle or not. I was scared because it was obvious that I was not “one of them.” I
was Turkish just like them, but still different; I was not covered. I didn’t have one of those colourful headscarves that matched my blouse. I didn’t have their calm and careful attitude. I remember everyone went silent when I laughed loudly at some point. It was the second moment that as a single woman researcher I needed these women and their husbands’ approval in order to be able to talk to their children, especially with their sons. However, I was also aware of the fact that Turks consist of a very diverse population with different ideologies, backgrounds (social class, ethnicity, religion) and identities. So if I wasn’t accepted by a certain group, there might be a possibility that I would be accepted by another one.

Soon after my first, unsuccessful attempt to meet and recruit young people from a religious group, I made contact with some young religious girls from the same sect in a mosque. My assumptions about the diversity and openness of Turkish diaspora was verified when I had confirmed interview dates. Finally, I would be able to learn about Turkish young people’s experiences.

Meanwhile, I was trying to discover “other” Turks, who were “invisible” in the society at large. This time I was in a Turkish coffee house which was populated only by men. It looked “very” Turkish with Turkish flags, symbols and accessories (e.g., evil eye beads) which were reminders of Turkey. I was again an outsider in a similar but different way. I was the only woman in the kahve of men. In fact, it is one of the unwritten rules that kahves are the places of men in Turkey; women and children do not belong there. Naturally, I was exposed to suspicious and curious men’s gaze. As a Turkish woman researcher I was crossing this men’s border without any hesitation (and without any shame). Maybe because we were in a “foreign” land where the old games and rules were not supposed to be valid anymore or perhaps I didn’t have time to think about these borders anymore, as I was desperately looking for some participants for my research. Whatever the reason was it was clear that once again, the other party would decide to accept me or not.

My visit to the kahve was an eye opener in terms of observing the realities of marginalization in Canada. The men in this place were forgotten, not only by the Canadian state

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23 As I learned later, this group belonged to a religious sect called Nurcu sect.
24 I will use the word kahve (short version of kahvehane) instead of café house. Kahves have very different social and cultural connotations in Turkish context. For men, they have social, recreational functions from playing games to meeting and talking with friends rather than reading books or working, as in the Canadian context.
and the dominant society at large, but also by their own Turkish community. Some of the men in this place were unemployed or were working in low status menial jobs with low incomes. Their stories confirmed that these people occupied an outsider’s category in their home country, Turkey, as well. Some of them told me very interesting and exciting stories about their “migration” to Canada. I met those famous “fugitives” who jumped from a ship into the cold Pacific Ocean, in September 2005. They had jumped with the hope of seeking refuge in Canada. In the kahve I saw people who were struggling with economic and cultural challenges. I remember an old man, who was called uncle by other young men; he told me, “Canada is like a prison camp. If you don’t have money, a credit card and a car, then you don’t have nothing. Nobody helps you here; nobody gives you even one penny from his/her pocket.” He was not only emphasizing his economic struggles in the host country but also his emotional loneliness and anger towards the Turkish association. He stated that there was neither solidarity nor economic support for marginalized Turkish people. What is striking for me is that despite all these marginalization experiences from Turkey to Canada, these people had solidarity by creating a little Turkey in this small Turkish kahve. They were responding to marginalizing practices in the mainstream society, (both in the dominant and Turkish society) by forming their own community in which to seek refuge. While I was thinking about all these Turkish groups from religious housewives in a mosque, to marginalized Turkish men in a kahve, I was amazed by the fragmented, complex nature of this small minority group in Canada. And I wondered about the dominant group of this Turkish diaspora who were the members of the Turkish association. During my visits and conversations with people from both groups, I witness complains about the exclusionary, elitist nature of this secular association. Although I had participated in social events organized by the association, (such as celebrations of national and religious festivals), I didn’t have a chance to meet its members. So, I joined a choir in which the other singers also belonged to the association. In the choir I met some women who had migrated to Canada 30-40 years ago; they were the pioneers of the Turkish diaspora. They were all dressed up, wore make-up, and looked healthy and happy. They eagerly shared their migration stories and family pictures with me. I felt like they had been waiting for this moment; a moment when someone would come

25 dayi
26 The choir was predominantly populated by old women.
and ask them how they made it, how they survived in a foreign country without knowing a word of English. Despite the age and ideological differences (i.e., some of them were approximately 30 years older than me and Ataturk was a perpetual reference point in their conversation), their friendliness and willingness to talk about their adventures created an intimacy between us. What is striking about all these groups (from religious to secular) is that despite the diversity in their religions, genders, classes and ages there was something which connected them, it was their Turkishness and their strong connection to Turkey.

I faced particular challenges providing general information about the groups /participants, and the reference points in their lives, especially when these participants were new contacts. Regardless of the nature of the groups (secular or religious), my status as a single woman researcher was a conspicuous reference point and a topic for discussion, especially for women. I remember a house party that I was invited to on a summer weekend. The hosts were a wonderful, generous couple who prepared delicious Turkish food for approximately 50 people. As soon as I stepped onto the patio and I met some of the women, (though it was a mixed group consisted of both men and women, women and men were sitting separately). One woman, who looked middle-aged, and middle-class started bombarding me with very “tough” and personal questions. She said “I know you. You are doing research about Turkish youth, right?” I felt a little bit uncomfortable, since some of the guests were the parents of my participants. Then, she started asking rhetorical questions without waiting for my answers. She asked how old I was; what was my marital status; why was I still single; whether I was aware of inequalities in Canada? What about inequalities in Turkey? After this questioning part, she started giving me advice about my thesis. She said, “you shouldn’t talk about the Kurdish-Turkish conflict in your thesis because what ‘they’ [Canadians] want to hear in this country is other countries’ problems.”

Although the conversation was challenging in general, it also gave me information about adult Turkish women immigrants’ interests, curiosities and at the same time, their fears. Regardless of their age, social and cultural background, the marital status of a woman who is outside of their circle is one of the topics of conversation: Why would an adult Turkish woman still be single and, more importantly, living alone? Being a single woman can be a difficult status for some, as it contains negative connotations for the mainstream Turkish population. A single woman who lives alone may be subject to social pressure, and she lives under a constant gaze,
full of judgement and moral assumptions, which is perhaps due to selfish curiosity, jealousy or fear. Accordingly, the single status of an adult Turkish woman researcher may be a barrier between herself and her participants’ parents. They wonder: Is it appropriate to allow my children to hang out with her? This example is given to indicate the potential gap between myself and my participants due to patriarchal norms.

In sum, between 2007 and 2009 I made connections with Turkish people and their children and grandchildren, from different age, gender, religious and cultural background. I made some of my connections through my personal contacts (i.e., snowballing), through more formal methods (e.g., participation in a Turkish Youth Congress in Toronto, as a speaker). I also advertised my research through Turkish associations, participation in national (e.g., Turkish Republican Ball), social (Turkish Tunes music event and being a member of a choir) and religious events (celebration of religious festivals). However, as a result of all these preliminary analysis and observations, my curiosity about young Turkish people in Canada was increasing day by day. There were a lot of questions in my mind: Do Turkish youth consider themselves Turkish as their grandmothers or parents clearly do? What about their references? Is Ataturk still a hero for them? If not, who are their role models? Is there any difference between first- and second-generation, religious and secular, male and female youth with regard to their identities, and their social and cultural experiences in Canada? I was unsure about everything and was looking forward to starting my research.

On September 21, 2009, I finally started my interviews in Vancouver. My participants were from diverse backgrounds as I wished to present their different, unique experiences with regard to their identities. Young people’s gender and immigration status were my primary criteria and starting points for providing secondary information about their religious affiliations and socioeconomic backgrounds. I assumed that by looking at such variables as gender, immigration status, religion and SES, I could uncover Turkish youth’s social, cultural and educational experiences, their self-identifications and their sense of belonging. As a result, I conducted 16 interviews but skipped two interviews, as they were not sufficiently informative. So, seven male and seven female first- and second- generation youth were recruited accordingly. These young people’s religious affiliations and their parents’ occupations were also taken into account to discover their religious and socioeconomic backgrounds.
The following table provides us with general information about these young people’s gender, immigration status, social class (parents’ occupation) and religious profiles.

**Table 4.1 Profiles of the Turkish Youth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Immigration status</th>
<th>First language</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Father’s job</th>
<th>Father’s English</th>
<th>Mother’s job</th>
<th>Mother’s English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ahmet</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>High school student</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaya</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>University student</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emel</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>University graduate</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>University student</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Architect</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemal</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>ESL student</td>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osman</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>University student</td>
<td>Faculty member</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Pharmacist</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melek</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Didn’t complete high school</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leyla</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>Turkish then English</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>University student</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mehmet</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>University student</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yesim</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>University graduate</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Native speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musa</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>High school student</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Menial Worker</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riza</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Didn’t complete university</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gul</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Didn’t complete high school</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayse</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>Worker</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
<td>Menial worker</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we see from the table, the Turkish youth in this study basically come from either professional or working-class families. While families from professional class backgrounds...

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27 The definition of first and second language was made by my participants. Accordingly, first language is the language they use in their everyday lives.
occupy skilled, white-color positions (such as engineer), working-class families are doing unskilled menial jobs. Interestingly, mothers of young people, regardless of their social class position, are often housewives. This is a significant finding which indicates that the traditional nature of Turkish families hasn’t changed much in Canada. While men take their chances in the labour market, women prefer to support their family by working at home. In fact, this is not very surprising when we look at their educational level. Mothers are mostly either elementary or high school graduates. This fact is reflected by their language skills. Half of the mothers do not speak English. This may also indicate that women are surrounded and perhaps limited by their Turkish speaking friends in the public space. On the contrary, most of the fathers speak English fluently, and are more active in public life (at least they still fill the “breadwinner role” in their families).

Interestingly, while both first and second-generation youth’s mother tongue is Turkish, except Yesim’s, for most of the second-generation youth, English is their first language. The choice of first language is worth considering; why is it that while some mothers can only speak Turkish, their children cannot, or can hardly speak Turkish? I think this reminds us of the importance of schooling as part of the socialization process in un/learning languages. The place of birth, just like mother tongue, may not be a decisive factor for language acquisition of immigrant youth. Immigrant youth’s environment, people who raise them, and people whom they communicate with could be more affective in determining their learning, unlearning, relearning of languages than the place of birth per se. Leyla’s case, for example, indicates that a second-generation youth, who was raised in Canada, may not speak English as a first language. Leyla states,

It’s not fun obviously saying like I was born here, so it’s kinda weird that I cannot speak English. So Turkish is my first language which is extremely strange for people to hear and to say that English is my second language because now it is completely opposite [English is her first language].

This case indicates that language shift is a complex, life long process for immigrant youth.

28 In the definition of class positions of my participants, their parents’ occupational position was the main criterion (Kennelly, 2008) though education, income and lifestyle are other significant categories in determining one’s class position especially in the Turkish context. Accordingly, it should be noted that youth’s class position change from professional to working class as their parents’ diplomas are not recognized.
Another striking point in the table is the contrast between first-generation and second-generation youth’s schooling experiences. While second-generation youth do fairly well in schools, the first-generation youth from working-class families tend to drop out of school. The educational experience of Turkish youth is a significant reference point and will be discussed in chapter 7.

In sum, as a result of my fieldwork and in-depth interviews with young people, I ended up with four themes: Complex and conflicting identities of Turkish youth, their sense of belonging, social and cultural experiences and finally their educational experiences. Youth’s identities and sense of belonging will be explored with regard to their understanding of the issues of majority and minority, their attitudes towards Canadian holidays, the cultural gap, feelings of being in-between, and their future plans (i.e., going back plan to Turkey). Their social and cultural experiences will be discussed in relation to young people’s lives in Canada, their challenges in everyday life, experiences of accent and cultural discrimination, friendship relations, tensions with other minority groups and their parents’ immigration experiences. Finally, their educational experiences will be discussed regarding to Turkish young people’s understanding of school, experiences of discrimination, their challenges at school, segregation at their schools and teachers’ approaches towards Turkish youth.

Although some of the themes were expected, as they were part of the interview questions (e.g., their educational experiences), some of them were generated by the dialogue between myself as a researcher and the young people (e.g., tension between Turks and other minority groups, i.e., Chinese). Accordingly, while some of the themes and subthemes match the literature, (e.g., cultural identity, sense of belonging, educational and cultural discrimination) some of them didn’t (e.g., future plans, parents’ immigration experience and friendship).

4.6. Analysis

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), data analysis consists of a particular set of steps that the researcher should go through in order to make sense of the data. So, the challenge for me was to find out the particular means to “make sense” of my data, while exploring the realities of young people in an ethical way. Although during my fieldwork I had some rough ideas about my participants’ lived experiences in Canada, I had question marks on
the techniques of my analysis, from generating concepts, interpreting the data and manipulating and application of the theory.

As an initial step of my analysis I read my transcript documents over and over again, I wrote margin notes in my fieldnotes, drafted summaries of my fieldnotes, and took detailed notes about my participants, their “general features” (e.g., their SES background), the “tone of their ideas” (e.g., their general outlook about life), “major topics and highlights,” “unique issues” that each participant brought up in the interview, and finally “leftovers” (e.g., the issues brought up by my participants but which may not have been highlighted in the writing process) (Creswell, 2007). All these processes led me to start generating my concepts, a process which continued throughout my data analysis and writing my findings.

For my data analysis in general, and generating concepts in particular, I used a computer program called NVivo, which helped me locate text associated with a category (Creswell, 2007). In this process I would read the text, then assigned a category, either by using the words of my participants or creating my own categories that seemed to relate to the situation. Here, I followed the “constant comparative method,” in which I examined the similarities and differences of the coded data from other data that had been categorized in the same way (Glaser and Strauss in Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). So, it let me compare and contrast my participants’ discussions about the same issue; I could compare male and female, religious and non-religious youth’s approach towards schooling and their everyday life experiences. This constant comparison of the categories by looking at different data sources (i.e., interviews and individual essays) also let me produce categories and subcategories. So, the “constant comparative method” helped me to “build levels of analysis and see the relationship between the raw data and the broader themes” (Creswell, 2007). In this way, I attempted to be open to multiple concepts, perspectives and assumptions before reducing categories to themes and describing and interpreting the data and specifying my theoretical approach.

Interpreting the data was the trickiest part in my analysis. I was aware of the fact that “it does matter who does research” (Harding in Lather, 1992). In other words, I knew that my subjective position, my culture, education, class background, ideological stand and gender position affected my analysis. Therefore, in my analysis, “the purpose [was] not to eliminate sources of bias but to clarify them” (Locke et al., in Zhu, 2005, p. 87). In this regard, I kept in
mind the following questions during my analysis and interpretation: Was I too into my research? How much was my own personal experience (i.e., being an immigrant woman) and emotional character shaping my interpretations of the data? Was my personal interaction with my participants affecting my perspectives towards their lives, sufferings and personalities?

These questions reflected my ethical concerns in this research as well. During my analysis I questioned the nature of my interaction with my participants: I built a closer and more emotional interaction with first-generation female youth than with second-generation male youth. Did this affect my emotions and feelings towards them in particular, and my analysis in general? Another issue related to my interpretation of the data involved the experiences of my participants, in particular, second-generation youth’s social and cultural lives in Canada. During my interviews I observed that some of the second-generation youth were minimizing their past experiences of discrimination in Canada (one of them didn’t even want to use the word ‘discrimination’), that is, their positive interpretations conflicted with their lived experiences (such as enduring the dominant society’s racist comments “go back to your country,” name calling and stereotyping). Although I interpreted this as young people’s strategy to forgive, forget and survive, I also strongly believed that these experiences should be reported as narratives of racism and discrimination. However, I am still not sure what some of the second-generation youth might think about my interpretations and analysis of their own personal experiences. Would they approve of my perspective? In fact, this issue is also related to my application of the theory.

In the initial steps of my analysis I was conflicting with regard to the number of questions and applying the theory to my data: is the data already a theory (Creswell, 2007)? How could/should I link my ideas with others? What should be the nature of the theory and the theorists that I wish to use? Would my participants agree with my choice of theories? How much theory is too much (that is, how could I apply the theory without imposing too much of my own theory on the data)? While I was dealing with these questions, I didn’t realize that I was sacrificing descriptions for the sake of the theory. I was interpreting the data before describing it. Also, I was trying to fit the data to the theory instead of creating my own theory using my data. It was a dangerous path. I was destroying my raw data. In sum, I wish to state that my
interpretations are open to reinterpretations and rereading as this document is the end product of a subjective and partial project.

4.7. Reflections

For the most part, I was able to conduct my research without any difficulty (e.g., accessing the Turkish community). However, my interview and participant observation techniques might be reconsidered with regard to their suitability in providing better insights about the realities of young people. First, deciding the number of my participants was one of the challenging issues in my research. Although there is no consensus in choosing the number of the participants in a qualitative study, I think that large number of participants might give a broader sense of data and more complex results. Second, interpreting the data based on my participant observations was another complication with regard to the issue of reflexivity. Although I conducted my participant observations in diverse settings where immigrant youth were present from 2007 to 2009, I realized that I haven’t highlighted my observations and haven’t revealed enough multifaceted dimensions of the lived experiences of young people throughout my thesis. Finally, although I have chosen Vancouver as my site, to conduct a comparative study between Vancouver and Toronto or even to focus only on Toronto might give rise to more complicated and interesting results, as the Turkish population is almost five times larger in Toronto than it is in Vancouver (3,380 in Vancouver versus 14,975 in Toronto according to Statistics Canada, 2006 census). Toronto’s larger Turkish community may represent a wider range of Turkish religious and ethnic groups such as Suleymanci and Nurcu religious sects, as well as Kurds.

4.8. Summary

In the preceding analysis, I discussed my methodological and epistemological approaches and methods for exploring the circumstances of Turkish immigrant youth and their experiences of social and educational inclusion and exclusion. The purpose of this critical analysis was to address the strengths and the limitations of my methodological and theoretical approach. In other words, while I tried to capture multiple truths of hybrid identities and “ethnic-nuances” of immigrant youth throughout my ethnographic approach, I also wish to acknowledge the partial, subjective nature of this written product: I spoke from “somewhere,” instead of from nowhere.
(Bettie, 2003). Therefore, “what is required […] is a radical reflexivity that acknowledges that there is always a place from which we speak” (Bettie, 2003, p. 23).
Chapter 5: Complex and Conflicting Identities of Turkish Youth and Their Sense of Belonging

This chapter explores Turkish youth’s multiple and complex identities and their sense of belonging and attachments. While investigating the factors in determining youth’s identities and belongings, I will analyse the home and the host societal contexts, including the dominant values and norms and the state’s policies. The chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section I will discuss youth’s complex identities (such as atheist, Muslim, Turkish-Canadian), with regard to the factors affecting their self-identifications (such as the context of the country). In the second section, youth’s emotional and social sense of belonging will be explored. In the third section I will discuss the cultural gap between the second-generation youth and the dominant culture in Turkey, which is due to language differences and the dominant culture’s norms (i.e., patriarchy).

5.1. Identity formation of Turkish youth

All identity is individual but there is no individual identity that is not historical or, in other words, constructed within a field of social values, norms of behaviour and collective symbols (Balibar, 2004).

In this statement Balibar argues that identities are produced and evolved through cultural practices, language and social institutions (such as education, family and religion). Similarly, the data indicates that dominant social values, narratives (national stories), collective images and symbols, norms of behaviour, language, religion affiliation, the context of the home/host country (discriminatory/welcoming), youth’s emotional ties with their home/host country, physical place and cultural expressions are the most significant factors in the identity formation of Turkish youth. In other words, the young people’s sense of belonging and identities are constructed through these factors.

As a result of these multiple factors, Turkish youth identify themselves with multiple, conflicting identities. Turkish, Turkish-Canadian, Western, Mediterranean, Middle-Eastern, Muslim, non-religious, spiritual Muslim, secular, modern, white-washed, mixed, in-between, confused, and “other” are the identities reported by the young people. These complex identities indicate that Turkish youth are already multicultural, due to their pre- and post- immigration
histories, cultural background and experiences; so the question is what multicultural Canada offers these super-hybrid, multicultural identities.

Despite these conflicting and multiple identities (such as being secular and religious), some of the identities are more dominant than others with regard to the immigration status and religious affiliation of the young people. For example, most of the first-generation youth report that being Turkish is more dominant than any of their other identities, e.g., being Turkish-Canadian. While first-generation youth underline their single, Turkish identity, second-generation youth emphasize their hybrid Turkish-Canadian identity, their ability to live in different cultures and their capacity to switch between different settings, successfully. It seems that second-generation Turkish youth, “through bicultural experience develop knowledge and skills which fit different contexts accordingly” (Abo-zena et al., 2009).

Religious and non-religious youth’s identity construction differs widely, as well. While religious youth consider themselves Muslim and Turkish, non-religious youth identify themselves as Turkish-Canadian but not Muslim. In other words, there is a correlation between cultural identity and religious affiliation for religious youth, but such correlation does not exist for non-religious Turkish youth. The association between religious and cultural identity makes me think about whether religious affiliation is an achieved or ascribed status for youth. According to Mourchid (2009), Muslim people who were born into Muslim families and a Muslim milieu, turn to Muslim characteristics and identity. I think that a minority youth’s religious affiliation, like any other identity, is not static but an active, achieved status which changes through socialization, context and time. Archer’s (2003) argument about, “minority ethnic cultural beliefs, practices such as language and religion and their decline with each generation,” confirms the mobile status of religion for minority youth. Accordingly, any monolithic, linear assumptions claiming that people from Muslim countries are the same and are all Muslim, should be called into question.

In fact, it is worthwhile to study differences among Turkish young people towards their religious choices. Being a religious minority may have some negative impacts on Turkish youth, which in turn causes them reject or hide their religious identity (Mourchid, 2009), or just deny their association with any Muslim group in Canada, due to the fear of Islamophobia. Research (c.f. Mourchid, 2009) indicates that after 9/11, some Muslim youth adopted the strategy of
distancing themselves from their Muslim identity, especially in public life, since the events increased unfavourable sentiments about Islam and Muslims. So, social context for this host country, encompasses peer pressure and Islamophobia as a form of racism, which can be factors that affect Turkish youth’s religious affiliations.

It should also be noted that while young people reject, accept, and reshape their religious identities, they also create alternative definitions, hybrid identities, and a “third space” against monolithic, essentialist meta-narratives (see Bhabha, 1996), where religious identities, like any other identities, are renegotiated and redefined. Consequently, Turkish youth create their own religion, their own version of Islam, a hybrid belief system.

The data indicates that emotional and psychic belonging within the home country is one of the most important factors in first-generation youth’s self-identification. The statements of Mehmet, a 19 year-old first-generation youth, indicate clearly, that immigration might increase first-generation youth’s cultural, social and emotional attachments to their home country, which in turn affects their sense of belonging. Mehmet explains his Turkishness:

I am not confused [about my identity] because I am 100% Turkish. Immigrating to a country and feeling like you belong are very difficult. [...] My parents’ decision to immigrate was to have better opportunities but not to become a Canadian. I would be glad if I could do something good for Turkey while using those good opportunities here. If not, then I would continue my life here as a Turkish person.

This statement also shows a young man’s pride in asserting his Turkishness. In fact, it is a common phonemenon for most of the first-generation youth to express pride in being Turkish. Gul states, “at school people didn’t know my name and they were calling me Turk. I have always had a Turkish identity.”

The first generation youth’s affirmation of their Turkishness can be related to their pre-migration history, which goes back to their education and socialization process. In other words, their strong identities are the result of the construction of national identities by different mechanisms of the Turkish state, including its education system. Neyzi (2001) argues the oath recited by elementary school students every day is one of the strongest vehicles of this Turkish identity construction: “I am a Turk, upright, hardworking[...] My law is to love my country and nation more than myself [...] How happy is he who can say ‘I am a Turk!’” This oath is not only nationalistic and authoritarian but also very exclusionary for non-Turkish ethnic minorities.
In this regard, first-generation youth’s assertion of their cultural origin may have various readings, rather than simple claims such as their integration or disintegration in the host country. Their imagined realities, diasporic habitus, and emotional ties with the past, create different relationships with the host country as well as their sense of un/belonging.

Unsurprisingly, the dominant ideologies of the home country (e.g., secularism, modernism), and important figures in the Turkish history (e.g., Ataturk) are still reference points for some of the first-generation youth’s self-identification. Mehmet underlines his identity as a modern Turk (i.e., open to changes, not traditional), a concept which is associated with secularism, one of the basic principles of the Turkish Republic. Mehmet reports, “to tell the truth I don’t care if someone is covered or not. That’s her choice. But I do not prefer a covered girlfriend or wife. I don’t like radicalism.” Mehmet’s case indicates that ideological dilemmas and oppositions of the home country (modern versus traditional and religious), are still important to shaping first-generation youth’s lives in Canada. Being covered is associated with radicalism and not being modern. Although this perspective is not surprising considering the ideals of the Turkish Republic and its main ideology, Kemalism, interestingly, it fits into the mainstream ideology in North America with regard to Islamophobia, Eurocentric and ethnocentric perspectives towards other people’s ways of living and belief systems. In sum, Mehmet’s statement indicates the power of the dominant ideologies over young people’s identification and their approach towards other people who have different ways of living.

Similarly, Kaya’s report indicates the interplay between the construction of the Turkish identity through ideologies of the home country. Kaya states,

to live in Canada I didn’t distance myself from Turkishness or Kemalism. While I am listening to the Turkish anthem, I still get goose bumps. That’s weird. I mean how can I still have this feeling? Eventually, I came here when I was 4 …maybe it is in my blood. I was very young I don’t remember anything maybe because my father was telling me stories about Ataturk. They have been asking me who my role model is since primary school. Ataturk is my first and foremost role model. He is my unknown, first role model.

Kaya’s case indicates that immigrant youth’s sense of belonging and the construction of their identities often occur through childhood stories, memories and maybe fantasies. Kaya’s father’s stories about Turkish national figures are a way of constructing Kaya’s identity. Hall

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29 “İstiklal marsını dinlerken tüylerim diken diken oluyor.”
argues (2006, p. 253), “[national identities] are not literally imprinted in our genes, […] but are formed within and in relation to representation,” that is, through images and stories. In fact, the relationship between identity and imagination leads us to consider Hall’s theory on the interrelationship between identity and the unconscious: “Identity is itself grounded on the huge unknowns of our psychic lives, and we are unable, in any simple way, to reach through the barrier of the unconscious into the psychic life” (Hall, 1989a). Here, while Hall’s statement describes the power of the unconscious over identity construction, it also explains Kaya’s identity construction through the national anthem, his unknown, unseen role model or his psychic imagination. On the other hand, the significance of heroic figures for Kaya, shows how patriarchal, collectivist features influence on Turkish youth (Mardin, 1978). According to Mardin (1978), ideologies of the Turkish Republic, such as supra-nationalism, authoritarianism and heroism, function/ed “as an identity-anchoring mechanism for the young people.” It is fascinating to see how these permanent attachments – heroic figures or ideologies – work by binding immigrant youth to their homelands, despite the fact that identities are, “temporary attachment[s] to subject positions which discursive practices construct for us (Hall, 2006, p. 9).” So, while space is important in transforming identities, (e.g., from Turkish to Canadian), some identities may stick to their “original” starting point (e.g., “siege mentality” and “frozen clock” among Turks in Germany; Kaya (2005)).

Leyla’s case, similarly, offers fascinating example showing that memories, objects and self-identification can be interrelated. Leyla recalls her childhood in Turkey,

when I was 18 I remembered everything when I was 7. I still knew my ways around the street… I still remember how to go to my aunt’s house. The streets and everything. I knew where the coffee shop was, I knew where the bakkal30 was. It is huge city and in a couple of days still I knew how to get from my aunt’s house. You still have that memory. I can still pick the street… It is my favourite things I remember…Even if you were not born there you still remember that stuff, you know. And you still hold those things.

Objects and places are connected to memories and memories remind us of where we come from. Leyla states that her childhood memories of Turkey make her feel she belongs in Turkey, and help her make connection between her current identity and her past. In this regard, frequent

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30 A small market
visits to Turkey have a significant impact on Turkish youth’s sense of belonging. In other words, we all come from somewhere even it is only imagined, as Hall aptly puts it. Moreover, memories may cause emotional attachments between immigrant youth and their home country though they weren’t born there and perhaps cannot speak the language.

While first-generation Turkish youth’s self-identification is constructed through imagined Turkishness, (un/consciously learned social and cultural norms and practices) and the state’s ideologies, second-generation youth’s Turkishness is more hybrid and complex. They are not only Turkish but Turkish-Canadian. Some of the factors which affect young people’s Turkish-Canadian identities are being born and raised in Canada, speaking English as a first language, getting along well with both the Canadian and Turkish culture. In this regard, for some of the participants, in terms of identifying themselves as Canadian or Turkish, culture is more important than holding citizenship or a passport. In other words, citizenship seems to be a bureaucratic instrument rather than an important component of their sense of belonging. For example, Leyla reports that although she is not a Turkish citizen, she considers herself Turkish-Canadian because she grew up with Turkish-Canadian culture.

Similarly, some of the Turkish youth underline these cultural aspects as important elements in self-identification, such as life-style, habitus, and having a collectivist orientation, that is, recognizing the importance of group roles and responsibilities over individualistic ones; see Coon and Kemmelmeier, 2001 in Mossalli, 2009). Gul, a first-generation, female, reports that from a Turkish perspective, she looks like a Canadian because of her behaviour and her life style. According to Gul, her independent way of life in Canada distances her from Turkish traditionalism:

I feel myself very independent here. I have been working for years, I have everything here, I have a car, I have a job. I am not dependent on anyone. I can live alone without my parents. But in Turkey everything is different; I don’t have these things.

It is fascinating to see a covered, first-generation Muslim woman’s interpretation of her identity with regard to her life-style and categorization of Turkey and Canada on two different poles, traditional versus free and independent.
On the contrary, for some of the first-generation youth, lifestyle, ways of thinking and behaving (habitus), can be the main reasons for not “being” a Canadian. Mehmet explains why he does not identify himself as Canadian:

it is very difficult to feel like a Canadian. I like it here. Opportunities are great. But I am not Canadian because I cannot think like a Canadian. We are different. Eventually I am Turkish.

This statement indicates the importance of habitus (e.g., lifestyle, tacit knowledge) in someone’s self-identification. To be included, materially, in the host country (such as holding a citizenship, having a passport and having access to institutions), does not guarantee the first-generation youth’s emotional belonging. Emotional aspects of not/belonging affect first-generation youth’s self-identification and attachment to the host country.

Unsurprisingly, some of the first-generation Turkish youth report that they have difficulties in defining their identities. They feel they are the “other,” in-between, confused, uncertain. This in turn may lead to identity crises for some (due to having too many reference points in identification). Emel explains her liminal state, sense of loss, uncertainty and guilt during high school, very well:

When I was in ESL, I was with other ESL students who were mostly Asian and they had their own group and did not accept others much. I was so alone….I was having difficulty in defining my personality; I was Turkish… There were no Turkish people at school except me. Nobody. I was so confused in those days. My father was unemployed, I was wondering if we would stay in Canada or go back to Turkey. I was enjoying the way of life in Canada, and I was saying to myself I was not Turkish, I couldn’t be Turkish. I was looking down Turkish lifestyle. But, at the same time, I was feeling guilty. I was saying, no you weren’t Turkish etc. It was very weird.

Emel goes on to explain the possible reasons for being confused and lost. She reports that since she had no Turkish friends (that is, number of Turkish population/friends was too small), she wasn’t exposed to Turkish culture (there was no Turkish TV channel), she forgot her Turkishness as well as her Turkish language. Emel’s experience of “back to reality” goes parallel with her connection with other Turkish people and immersion in the Turkish culture through Turkish music, travel to Turkey and memories about her past. She explains this connection with her past as a recovery; she was recovering herself and her Turkish identity. As a result, Emel regenerated her identity as a Turkish-Canadian rather than just a Canadian. Emel’s case indicates
the importance of a Turkish community for immigrant youth’s self-identification, to remember, accept and embrace their cultural background and their identities. In addition, it shows that memories (pre-migration histories and experiences) and travel to Turkey have an impact on youth’s self-identification.

On the other hand, a second-generation, female youth Mine explains that she is still struggling with the question of identity. Mine’s challenge with her identity seems to stem from the dominant norms and values about Canadianness and her sense of being outside of these norms. Mine reports,

I still don’t know [how to identify myself]. I worked in research myself. When you look at the possibilities in terms of like ethnicity, it is either you are Caucasian, Asian, black or other… So I always put myself in “other” category just because I’ve never been treated as a Caucasian. If you ask me in research where there is a forth option, I typically circle “other,” I don’t circle Canadian.

Although during the interview Mine seemed not to care about her perception of being “other,” in Canada, her statement strongly indicates that her otherness works not only through bureaucratic procedures but also in her mindset, her internalized identification of the “other.” Due to their physical features, some Turkish youth are treated as foreigners in their own country which arises from not only popular hegemony but also from the state’s exclusionary practices (this issue was discussed in details in the chapter on the Social and Cultural Experiences of Turkish youth).

Moreover, Mine’s case confirms that identities are constructed through difference and exclusion: Mine separates herself from the dominant group; she is physically different and thus a minority. Mine states, “I know I look different. I don’t look like any person on the side of the street.” She accepts her difference without asking what makes her think that way. Her self-identification as the “other” and her definition of beauty, (i.e., blue eyes, blond hair) verifies the dominant norms, which in turn lead her to consider herself not only the “other,” but also the not-ideal one:

I think in high and elementary school I didn’t have many ethnic friends. Most of my friends had white skin, blue eyes, blonde hair…You know to me the definition of the pretty was blue eyes, blonde hair and thin. I always wanted to have white skin, blonde hair, blue eyes but my hair is dark, my eyes are brown. So as a teenager I really struggled with that.
Although Mine is from a well-educated, middle-class family, her perception about her physical difference from the dominant group makes her think that she is not Canadian. Some of the Turkish immigrant youth, regardless of their social class background and immigration status are struggling with the question of who they are and what they look like. The “other” represents the unknown, unstudied, underestimated, unfit, “none of the above” category. Her statement also indicates that having minority friends is important for the wellbeing of young people and their identity developments.

As a result of the struggles to fit into the dominant categories, some of the youth assert their whiteness in the white host country. For example, Ayse describes herself as whitewashed; she is westernised, out of tradition, more Canadian and free and thus not very Turkish. Ayse’s dislike for Turkish traditionalism, while separating her from mainstream Turks (who are not hybrid enough), makes her more Canadian. Ayse says,

I am very different from my home culture. [...] some Turkish people here they think, oh my girl is covered, she is perfect. Look at other stuff too before judging other people’s kids….I don’t wanna give like a stereotype to Turkish people but like they are always sitting down with their pogacas31 ‘blah blah good girls sit down with their own skirts, don’t look at them [boys].’ Yeah, that’s not me…So I might say I am a little bit whitewashed in that version. I am more open.

It is fascinating to see that Ayse, a second- generation covered Muslim girl, using this term to describe herself. In fact, the question might be why Ayse underlines her whitewashedness or whiteness? Is that because she is asserting her Canadian identity, her “insider” status within the host society and among other Turks? Could her whitewashedness be a “personal ambivalence to whiteness” (Nayak, 2003) or a “psychic splitting” (Fanon cited in Nayak, 2003).

Apparently, Ayse’s whitewashedness affects not only her Turkishness and Canadianness but her Muslimness as well. Her Muslimness is different from the dominant, stereotypical Muslim image that is a conservative figure that submits to authority, traditional values and patriarchy. In this regard, Ayse’s argument is significant to indicating that some of the Muslim youth are critical to their Turkish traditional and religious values. Ayse’s case falsifies those widely accepted stereotypes against Turkish Muslim youth which argue that Muslim girls accept
traditional values (e.g., their only ideals are to get married and have children). However, Muslim women are challenging the old values.

In the same vein, the mainstream culture expects youth to choose one single identity which does not fit the realities of Turkish youth who have multiple and complex identities. Young people report that when they are in Turkey, people treat them as Canadian and when they are in Canada, they are treated as Turkish. People’s constant questions about where they are from or comments that they are not Canadian or Turkish enough cause immigrant youth to think they “act or look different” from the majority. Some of them state that people in both Turkey and Canada expect them to say where exactly they belong. Mine says,

a friend of mine is also identified as a Turkish -Canadian and I remember they asked her to introduce herself and somebody turned to her and said, ‘you have to pick one, you were born in Canada, you are Canadian.’ So I hesitate. People always ask me what I am. When I say I am Canadian they kind of say, ‘ok seriously what are you.’

Despite the mainstream culture’s insistence that youth choose either/or identity (i.e., Turkish or Canadian), young people’s identification changes according to the place that they have been. That is, they “strategically” decide their cultural origin/identity. Ayse says,

because of my behaviours I am different. And they say ‘ohh you are different, where are you from?” [...] It’s kinda different cause in Canada when they ask where I am coming from I say Turkish. But in Turkey I say I am Canadian. Because in Canada you don’t see so much Turkish people so I am like I am Turkish. It is like a cool country for some people. But I am in Turkey I am just like ‘yo, I am Canadian.’ Because they are like ‘no, you are Turkish cause your mom is Turkish. I am like no, I was born in Canada, I am Canadian.

It seems that despite the mainstream’s effort to attribute an identity, this young woman takes the initiative to assert her Turkish identity in Canada and her Canadian identity in Turkey. Identities can be contextual, personal and strategic rather than fixed and single.

Similarly, the results indicate that young people are successfully living in different cultures with their in-between, multiple and positional identities, though it may lead to some challenges with regard to their multiple belongings or their feeling of being caught up in-between, that is being Turkish and Canadian and uncertain about their identity and sense of belonging. Kaya explains his feeling of in-betweenness:

\[31\] A kind of Turkish pastry
Both of them [Turkey and Canada] are two different worlds.... Here my friends call me Turk, in Turkey they call me Canadian....I always feel myself in between. [...] You live like a Canadian here, and you miss Turkey. [...] When I am coming back from Turkey, I don’t feel I belong to Canada. When I come back to Canada, I feel I came to a foreign country, a foreign country again. But when I am in Turkey, I think ‘Oh I am really part of Canada’ and I am really proud of being Canadian in Turkey. I think this is stuck in-between. I feel handicapped. I feel like I am caught in between.

Kaya’s statement shows us that living in-between may create impasses when he needs to choose only one place, while he wants to live in different places at the same time: Canada or Turkey?

However, Kaya’s in-between experience also goes parallel with an appreciation for living in different worlds with different lifestyles, being familiar with and adapted to different cultures and having friends with various cultural backgrounds. In this regard, Kaya’s case illustrates that although some youth feel ambiguous with regard to their sense of belonging, this feeling does not always lead to marginalization and disconnection from society. Rather, the feeling of in-betweenness turns into a feeling of affirmation and maybe pride in their capacity to adjust to various milieus. In other words, Kaya’s in-betweenness makes him a cultural hybrid who “is the product of several interlocking histories and cultures, belongs at one and the same time to several ‘homes’ (and to no one particular home)” (Hall, 2006), rather than a nomad within two worlds as Abadan-Unat (1985) puts it. Kaya describes his hybridity well in his individual essay:

as a Turkish Canadian it is deeply complicated to relate your experiences but the simplest way of explaining what I have endured is by saying, ‘we are different and similar all at once.’ I have friends in both countries that I can compare, I can speak both languages, I know both cultures and most of all I know what it means to be a Canadian and a Turk at the same time. I tend to use them everyday throughout my life.

Kaya’s statement confirms Hall’s argument about the flaws of meta-narrative assumptions of one single identity;

It may be tempting to think of identity in the age of globalization as destined to end up in one place or another: either returning to its roots or disappearing through assimilation and homogenization. But this may be a false dilemma. (Hall, 2006, p. 265).

In this regard, Kaya shows that this dilemma, based on binary oppositions, is false. Young people have multiple belongings and identities.
Similarly, Mine explains how her in-betweenness helps her to make connections with people from diverse backgrounds:

I was also accepted by other ethnic group. So I remember there was a group of Asian girls and they called me ‘Asian friend’ because Turkey is Asia Minor and my family’s practices were so similar to theirs than the western kids so they were comfortable around me…I usually fit in cultures like Guatemala and East Indian. I got my first job because they thought I am East Indian.

It is interesting to see that young people’s in-between, confused identities are also reinforced by the geographical location of their home country, Turkey, and its history: a country between Asia and Europe, a “peculiar” place with multiple histories and identities. Osman reports,

I consider myself not European, not Middle-Eastern, not North American. It is just a mix. A mix of north American, European, Middle-Eastern….Turkey itself is sort of European and Middle-Eastern sort of mixed together…so I believe I am all three put together.

In-betweenness is a common state both for first- and second- generation immigrant youth. While sometimes this feeling leads to the state of liminality and feeling of suspension which may have negative impacts on their self-identification (such as the feeling of loss and uncertainty about their identity), they are also aware of the fact that they are beyond the norm, they challenge the myth of the nation-state as one single nation and identity. As “cultural hybrids” they enjoy the state of being in-between which gives them the ability to live in, and adapt to, different cultures at the same time, with multiple attachments or in some cases without any particular attachment.

The data indicates that geographical location has an effect on the identity of young people. This is in tune with Hall’s (2006) discussion about the impact of “time-space relationships on how identities are located and represented.” Some participants define their identity according to geographical terms (e.g., North American, Mediterranean) and the sociological implications of these terms (e.g., western). While some of the first-generation youth’s definitions of the west is limited within the boundaries of Turkey and is shaped with regard to the conditions of Turkey (the regional inequalities of Turkey –the developed western region versus the undeveloped eastern and south-eastern regions), second-generation youth discuss it more globally; the developed-west versus undeveloped-east. Interestingly, the west and
east dichotomy dominates both first and second-generation youth’s self-identification in different ways.

According to Riza, first-generation youth, Istanbul is a reference point for being considered Western. Riza reports,

I do not know if I have any eastern ties, but my dad and mom and their parents were born and grew up in Istanbul. So, I define myself as Turkish and a little bit western ‘cause living in Istanbul...I do not know how to call it but I got used to that modern life style.

Here Riza’s statement indicates the importance of the place (city) and region (i.e., the western region) in identifying and categorizing Turkish people in daily life, which in turn designates the regional inequalities and polarizations in Turkey. Someone can be labelled modern or traditional, religious or secular, Kurdish or Turkish according to where s/he is from. Being born and growing up in Istanbul, in this regard, gives a prestigious position to a young person, compare to someone from rural, eastern Turkey. Oncu (2000) in her study discusses the privileged status of being Istanbullu (i.e., someone’s from Istanbul) in the Turkish context. For Oncu, there are Istanbullus and the “others,” who are regionally, culturally and socially underprivileged. Interestingly, some of my participants report that Istanbul is the only well-known city in Turkey for the mainstream culture in Canada. For some Canadians, Istanbul is a country in itself.

For the second-generation, on the other hand, being western means being born in Canada and adopting western values, ways of living and ideals. Yesim reports,

[being Western means] like my quality of life here. Say the medical [system] is free here. I expect clean water. I follow American movies, American music and Western food. I think that is very Western.

In this statement although the west refers to Canada and the US, Yesim’s interpretation goes beyond the definition of these countries; she associates the west with lifestyle, values, and its “developed” aspects, which may be considered an ethnocentric perspective, since it is opposed to the “undeveloped” east. As a result, although the reference points are different (west is the western civilization for Yesim and modern Istanbul for Riza), the west has positive connotations for both first and second-generation youth. Young people’s perspective (maybe their bias) in favour of the West makes me think that although binary oppositions are components of stereotypical practices, as long as they are part of the young people’s realities and perceptions
they should be taken into account in the research which explores young people’s identity formations.

In addition to these self-identifications, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern are other identity categories for Turkish youth. While being Mediterranean is associated with certain dispositions, such as being warm and liberal, which have positive connotations, being Middle Eastern is discussed with the mainstream’s prejudices and negative terms. 

Leyla reports,

[I am] not Mediterranean, cause I am from the northern part of Turkey, it is weird because Turkey is so separate. In certain areas it is like the conservative north versus the sensual south. And it is funny that actually I am, my family are from the conservative north but I identify with the sensual south. So I would love to identify myself as a Mediterranean but unfortunately I cannot because that is not where I am from, you know. So I pretty much own the values of Mediterranean like [being] liberal, like I am still Muslim, but like fanaticism for me is not gonna happen.

While sometimes the region and geography of the country (the region that their parents are come from and their place of birth), are reasons for self-identification; sometimes Turkish youth’s dispositions and habitus (e.g., being warm, or liberal) and their own strategic personal choices (e.g., being Turkish-Canadian) are important factors in their identifications. Leyla’s statement is also interesting because we can see that young people’s juxtaposition between regions, ideologies and their identities. Leyla considers Mediterranean culture liberal. However, the northern part is coded as conservative and therefore religious and undesirable. It seems that in addition to the west and east, urban and rural dichotomy (modern vs. traditional) there is a polarization between north and south with regard to ideologies which has a significant place in young people’s lives and their identifications and sense of belonging.

According to the results, the Middle East is a controversial term which is associated with prejudices and stereotypes. Like Mine, Leyla reports that the Middle East is a value-loaded term, which refers to “war-torn” countries like Iran and Iraq and also terrorist attacks. Leyla argues that this term does not fit Turkey and thus she refuses to use this word. On the contrary, Yesim reports that she uses this term because that is what people understand. She adds that although Turkey is part of Europe, people understand it as a part of Asia. These examples indicate that although young people are aware of the negative connotations of this term, their reactions are
vary from rejection to internalization, which in turn may give clues about their sense of belonging and their approach towards dominant norms and values.

So, while regional background, life-style, the dominant norms and popular hegemony, psychic/emotional belongings are the significant factors in identity constructions of young people, being Muslim (an ideological category representing world-views and practices) is coded as one of the most controversial youth identities.

According to the results, there are significant differences among youth with regard to their approach towards Islam, its practice, interpretation and the issue of the headscarf. While some of the youth assert their Muslim identity, others report that they consider themselves non-religious despite the dominant culture’s categorization and assumption about their Muslimness. Leyla’s argument teaches us about dominant stereotypes about Muslimness and young people’s responses to these:

when I say I am Muslim they are like what do you mean, no you are not, no you are not. Yes, I am Muslim Turkish. People are “Muslim?” So it is kinda shock to them. And they are like you don’t wear hijab or headscarf. And I am like “do I have to? To be a Muslim?” That is my choice as someone who is a Muslim I wanna wear what I want to wear.

This finding is similar to Khan’s (2009) discussion about the meta-narratives of western ideology which read Muslims as a monolithic group and therefore anyone from a predominantly Muslim country is an authority and representative of Islam. It overlooks differences between and within Muslim groups and individual differences of those whose self-identification does not fit into these monolithic assumptions of Muslim/ness identity. Variations among Muslim youth with regard to their self-identifications (Muslim, non-religious or atheist), choices in appearance and ways of living and social class lead to different experiences of inclusion and exclusion in the public sphere.

Accordingly, the data shows that there is no single fixed Muslim identity or Muslim youth, but different, multiple and contradictory Muslim identities. Religious identity like any other identity is dynamic and complex, which cannot be fixated by essentialized meta-narratives. Kaya, a first -generation youth, reports “although in my ID it is written [that I am] Muslim, I am not related to any religion.” This finding is similar to Ayhan Kaya’s (2005) discussion about “atheist Muslims” in France. According to Kaya (2005), in France, Muslim youth hold their
Islamic identity only at a symbolic level. Kaya calls this process “symbolic religiosity,” in which “religiosity gains a more symbolic than instrumental function in people’s lives, and loses its importance …[and] becomes a leisure time activity” (Kaya, 2005, p. 9).

Parallel to this argument, the results confirm that some of the Turkish youth are aware of their “Atheist Muslimness” and their “symbolic religiosity.” Some of the second-generation state that young Muslim people in Canada are not only “ignorant” about their religion, but they also have contradictory interpretations of Islam: while they do not pray, fast, or associate with any Islamic practices, they avoid certain Islamic sanctions such as eating pork. Not eating pork seems to be one of the symbols of resistance for hybrid Muslim youth; it serves as a resistance to assimilation and standardization. Resistance to a single identity (either orthodox Muslim or atheist), creates new, multiple, complex identities.

Leyla states that she feels, like her friends, that she doesn’t need to follow every single rule in Islam. According to Leyla, although her Muslim friends have sex before marriage and they drink, they fast during Ramadan and they don’t eat pork. Leyla’s emphasis on not eating pork while refusing other religious rules (for example, those which prohibit alcohol) may have some significant implications: Young people’s interpretations and approaches towards religion and its practices are complicated, and they cannot be explained either through orthodox religious terms or scientific rationalizations (such as pork is not a clean or healthy meat). Young people show us that their religiosity or religious practices include a mixture of spiritual, symbolic and cultural expressions including their parents’ pre- and post-migration histories and the youth’s own everyday experiences in a predominantly Christian country. So this super-hybridity makes their symbolic religiosity unique. Maybe that’s why Leyla’s interpretation and practice of Islam not only contradicts the dominant, mainstream practices which assert certain rules and regulations, but also with the host culture’s assumption about Muslim youth and their “radicalism.” Leyla explains this “contradiction” as a shift from religion to culture. She reports,

In the summer I can’t fast. It is impossible like sun goes down at 9 o’clock it is not gonna happen. I talk with Allah ‘sorry man it is just not gonna happen’. When it comes back to December again I am back on it. I will do it again. But when it is the summer it is not gonna happen, you have to drink water and in the summer time you cannot even do that. And summer time is party time. It is really cutting [into] my party time…. I don’t think I will burn in hell. My mom says cause my belly is pierced it is gonna hung by your belly when you are hell. I am like ok I will deal with that
later when I talk to god. Don’t worry. How do you know I am gonna hang by my belly button. A lot of people are ignorant on their religion. … I am not knowledgeable [either]. I know certain things. I drink. I don’t smoke cigarettes. I go out. I don’t eat pork. I hate that I pick things cause it is like if you [do] all these bad things why you are not eating pork? If I am hammered why I am not eating pork? There is no answer.

Leyla’s case indicates that young people bring a different and liberal interpretation to Islam and its practices. They create their own religion in some sense. In this regard, the term “culturally Muslim” might be appropriate for some Turkish Muslim youth who are creating their own version of Islam.

Emel is one of the young women who states that she created her own hybrid belief system, her own Muslim identity. Emel reports,

Although in my id it is written ‘Islam,’ I do not believe certain things in Islam. For example, I don’t understand why eating pork is forbidden in Islam. When they ask my religion I tell them spiritual Muslim. I believe in spirituality but I don’t care about other stuff, like if I have to believe in the prophet Mohammed or Jesus Christ. My coping mechanism is to believe in god and to live in the moment. I don’t categorize myself [as Muslim or something else]. I learned something from every kind of religion, and eventually created my own religion.

The data indicates that some of the Turkish youth liberate themselves from their home countries’ ideological impasses and cleavages. While in Turkey the Muslim (religious) and secular dichotomy is one of the most significant polarizations, which divides people into two different camps, in Canada some of the Turkish youth use these two exclusive categories as complementary. In other words, by identifying themselves as secular and religious at the same time young people create new alternative identities in Canada and challenge their secular parents’ and grandparents’ ideological dogmas. The youth’s arguments clarify that their secular parents consider the headscarf a symbol of backwardness and fanaticism. The headscarf is something that contradicts their modern outlook and ways of living. Turkey’s conflict on the matter of headscarf always causes tension between secular and religious groups. For some second -generation youth, this conflict is incomprehensible. Yesim reports,

when I grew up my father said ‘don’t be religious’ …he really said ‘I don’t want you to read the Koran. I don’t want you to be religious.’ I don’t know why actually. He doesn’t agree with women who wear the scarf. When he sees that it makes him angry….I think
it’s because we are in Canada you know if you wear a headscarf people notice and then what they think of you might not be good which is really sad.

Similarly, Leyla reports that her father finds to being covered fanatical and out of norm. She argues “I asked my dad why don’t make us covered cause a lot of Muslim families’ kids are covered. And he is like why would I need to do that. Are you crazy? […] we are in Canada. People who have hijabs, people look at them differently.”

However, these “contradictory” and unorthodox practices and interpretations of “Atheist Muslim,” or “culturally Muslim,” or “secular Muslim” Turkish youth, can be criticized by some other youth who affiliated with Islam (such as fasting, praying, covering). Ayse, for example, thinks that some Turkish Muslim youth misrepresent Islam because they do not follow Islamic rules “properly.” She explains,

there are some people who are just covered and they just dress like that or they put open pictures on the internet and they go out with open hair and then Canadian people, my friends they ask me like ‘oh this person does this, why don’t you do it?’ and they think it’s normal and I am like, ‘no it is not normal.’ They are not supposed to do that which makes me look bad. Because you know it is like if you are doing it either do it properly or don’t do it at all; that makes me angry.

It seems that Islam and Muslim identity are the issues that cause divisions and tensions among Turkish youth (non-religious and Muslim). I can assume that these tensions are more serious than the ones between Muslim Turkish youth and the dominant society. These contradictions make Turkish youth interesting, unique and hybrid. They can be Turkish but not Muslim; they can be Muslim but have fun with hip-hop and have a piercing in their belly-button; they can be culturally Muslim and create their own values and rules; or, they can be atheist but obey some Islamic rules such as not eating pork. I think these complex identities of young people can be understood by their pre-migration histories; Turks are polarized according to different ideologies (world views, belief systems, ways of living). Some of young peoples’ discussions indicate that conflict among Turks may have more complex explanations, than simple ideological differences.

Riza complains that some Turkish students isolate themselves from the other Turks at SFU. They do not participate in any students’ events. He goes on to explain that although they
are all the same, he doesn’t understand why they pretend that they are different from each other, why they distance themselves from other Turks. Riza asks,

why they don’t hang out with Turks? Is this because they grew up in Canada and are familiar with this culture? I know that some of them studied high school in Canada. Is this so? But why? Because they are so embarrassed by Turks and don’t know how to explain this [they are originally Turkish] to their friends? I am really curious about that. It is bad.”

Similarly, Musa reports that some Turks hate other Turks and Turkey. Musa complains, 

some Turks are escaping from other Turks, they are embarrassed by being Turkish and they are not Muslim anymore. When Chinese people ask who they are, they say ‘I am Canadian, I am white.’

While all these discussions indicate that there is definitely a tension among Turks based on ideological differences and their self-identification, namely Turkishness, disguising one’s cultural identity from the dominant culture or other minority groups also raises various questions: Why do some youth need to hide their Turkish identity? Is that because they are marginalized in the dominant society due to their Turkish identities? Or is that because they are ideologically and culturally excluded in Turkey and among Turks in Canada, and thus they want to be identified as Canadian rather than Turkish?

These conflicts among Turks are also reflected in social gatherings and events of the Turkish community in Vancouver. Some of the Turkish youth report that the nature of the Turkish events, (e.g., whether or not there will be any belly dancing in 29 Ekim Republic Ball), create tensions in the Turkish community, especially between religious and secular groups. Correspondingly, some youth state that every year same people participate while most of the Turks do not get involved in the events. Mine explains,

I am part of this Turkish Canadian group….Interestingly, I have noticed that one thing hasn’t changed, and that’s the people that come [to Turkish events]. Usually we have a fairly standard group of individuals that attend all events. I am always left to wonder why this is….I often hear people speaking in Turkish when I am at the shopping mall, however, for some reason I’ve never seen these people at events. I am sure everyone has a reason for not attending; it would be nice to know if there is a trend.

Mine wonders what makes some people continue coming and others refuse to attend those events. It seems that some people feel excluded and/or do not feel they belong to the

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32 Riza reports in Turkish: “İkimizde birbirimizin ne mal olduğunu biliyoruz, nedir bu yabancı tavılar?”
community, or they just choose not to attend because of ideological differences. Similarly, according to my observations, religious Turkish youth do not get involved in any of the Turkish community events organized by the secular Turkish-Canadian society. I can assume that religious youth do not engage in these events since the nature of the events is secular, from dress code, to drink and food. So, the Turkish community might not be so inclusive with regard to welcoming religious youth and respecting their identities and values.

In sum, Turkish youth’s super-hybrid, complex and conflicting identities stem from their multiple attachments (emotional/psychic, cultural and social), partially through their parents’ past (their pre and post immigration experiences), and youth’s own experiences both in Turkey and in Canada. Their multiple attachments and identities lead us consider a question about Canadian multiculturalism: What does Canada offer to these already multicultural identities with regard to their sense of belonging and inclusion? In the next section I wish to discuss young people’s different feelings of un/belonging in relation to their identities.

5.2. Turkish immigrant youth’s sense of belonging in Canada

The data indicates that young people’s sense of belonging is a complex phenomena which includes social and “tacit belonging” (emotional and affective bonds), more than territorial and national belonging (respect and love of homeland) to the host and/or home country. Social and emotional belonging is reported as remembrance and commemoration of ancestors in the home country and being comfortable with home and host cultural practices and traditions. In this regard, youth’s attitudes towards Canadian holidays (such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Halloween, Easter), which represent dominant norms and habits, give us information about their immigration experiences and their feelings of belonging.

According to the results, there is a significant distinction between Muslim and non-religious youth with regard to their attitudes toward Canadian holidays. This difference arises from the fact that Muslim youth equate these holidays with Christianity. In other words, Muslim youth’s aversion to these holidays is partly because of the religious overtones of these holidays. While Muslim youth argue that they do not celebrate them, because these holidays have no place in Islam and the Turkish culture, for non-religious youth, celebrating Canadian holidays is necessary for being part of the dominant culture.
Kaya, a non-religious youth, states,

The holidays are important because they make people get together rather than their meaning or whatever. As far as I know when Turks do not participate in those events, it becomes more difficult for them to get used to living here. As an immigrant I suggest they attend these events. You should celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas and Halloween. We have a very close Canadian family who invite us to their family dinner every Christmas and Thanksgiving. Can you imagine that? We hang out not only with Turks, but also with Canadians.

In his statement Kaya underlines that celebrating the holidays is an indicator of the extent to which people can “fit in” with Canadian society. It is also striking that according to this young man, having friends from the dominant culture is important for being accepted by the majority and being “like” them (i.e., Canadian). It seems that these holidays are like rites of passage, from immigrant to Canadian for some of the Turkish youth. Melek, a Muslim female youth, on the contrary, thinks that these holidays are not part of “our” religion, so there is no reason to celebrate them. Melek reports, “We don’t celebrate them, because those are their holidays, they are not related to us.”

Similarly, Mehmet reports, “when I say I feel I belong here, it does not mean that I am Canadian. basically, I am not Canadian.” Mehmet further explains that what separates him from being Canadian are his feelings towards dominant values and ways of thinking:

Canadian values and traditions [Christianity] are different. For example, in thanksgiving I don’t feel that excitement, because I am not Canadian. In the end I do not share the same feelings with a Canadian. I have different opinions about things. I am Turkish. I am different.

It seems that the dominant values and norms of the host country, namely Christianity, and events such as thanksgiving, negatively affect first- generation Muslim Turkish youth’s sense of belonging in Canada. Mehmet’s Muslim identity goes parallel with his Turkish identity in his rejection of Canadian values and self-identification (e.g., his detachment from Canadian holidays). It is also fascinating to see that Mehmet’s explanation of his disassociation from Canadianness by his dispositions (his body language and emotional nature): “my Canadian friends are surprised when they see my enthusiasm, when I shout and swear, in a football match [Besiktas football match]. [...] I mean there is lack of enthusiasm [on their side].” Here, Mehmet talks about how his “habitus,” rules of etiquette, taste, and language style (Gole, 2000; Bourdieu,
differentiate him from his non-Turkish friends. In this regard, Mehmet does not feel that he socially and emotionally belongs in Canada. This may be because his “untransformed habitus” (his Turkish diasporic habitus with his body language and emotional nature), separates him from the dominant culture. So, in Mehmet’s case we observe an interrelationship between his body language, gestures and his feeling of acceptance and sense of belonging. In Al Houseini’s (2009) study we observe similar kind of discussion. Al Houseini (2009) in her autobiography explains that due to her hand gestures, she received negative comments from the dominant culture in Canada. So, it seems that the dominant culture regulates many different unwritten rules of etiquette and codes, including verbal and body language, that the minority youth are expected to obey to be like “them” and to feel included.

Hage’s (1998) discussion on “national capital” is helpful for explaining different un/belongings experienced by first- and second- generation youth. According to Hage (1998), the possession of national capital or accumulation national and cultural practices and elements is linked to one’s cultural practices, possessions and dispositions –habitus, which in turn leads to national belonging. In this regard, cultural possessions and dispositions of a first- generation immigrant youth (language, accent, body language, ways of living, habits and taste) will lead to different national capitals, and a different sense of belongings than the dominant culture and second- generation immigrant youth.

Consequently, this social and emotional gap (wherein minority youth do not obey the dominant cultural norms) is one of the reasons for the disconnection of first- generation youth from the dominant culture and it may account for their feelings of attachment to their home culture. In other words, for first -generation youth, there is a significant difference between the emotional and social sense of belonging to Canada (being comfortable with cultural practices, habits, ways of living, body language) and official/institutional belonging, that is, having a valid passport and citizenship. Although these categories are not mutually exclusive, they are not compatible either. That is, holding a Canadian citizenship and passport do not automatically lead to identity transformation of the minority youth. Social and emotional attachments to the host country; the feeling of being accepted and included make young people feel at home and comfortable. For example, Melek’s emotional detachment from the society and the host country leads to her alienation and marginalization: “I am aware of the kind of challenges and troubles I
face here. And you cannot explain those problems to people here. So, when I go to Turkey I don’t feel this distance from my own culture.”

Similarly, the mainstream culture’s lack of knowledge about the immigrant youth’s past, history and memories, as well as the presumed pressure of the immigrant youth to conform to mainstream everyday practices increases the gap between first- generation immigrant youth and the dominant youth. Conditional acceptance by the host country, (if they speak and act like us) leads to conditional belongings of immigrant youth.

Moreover, religion seems like a significant factor in creating implicit or explicit boundaries between Muslim youth and the dominant society. Muslim youth’s withdrawal from certain events due to parental pressure may cause them to be excluded from the host country. Gul reports, “There were family rules and you could not have friends beyond these rules. For example, [we couldn’t do] what friends wanted, clubbing, going out at night etc. But as your family does not allow these, you cannot make friends.”

In addition, Turkish youth emphasize the positive correlation between visits to Turkey and their feeling of belonging to Turkey. Osman states, “I can get along well with all my cousins [in Turkey]. I see them probably every second summer. I see them quite often. I think that is what keeps me really Turkish. If I didn’t go to Turkey, I wouldn’t feel like a Turk.” Not surprisingly, first -generation youth’s constant and intense relationships with their home country is one of the most important reasons for a strong sense of belonging from their homeland. Moreover, being familiar with the environment, feeling comfortable, having memories, seeing relatives and friends and making frequent visits are other significant factors which determine their emotional attachments to Turkey.

Despite first-generation youth’s feelings of not “fitting in” with the host society, second- generation youth feel at home in Canada. Second-generation youth’s accumulation of the host society’s cultural values, practices and dispositions through the socialization process, causes them to develop a sense of belonging. That is, their proximity to the host culture through accumulation of national capital (through socialization and education) confers advantages in terms of feelings of belonging. Second- generation youth, in this regard, underline the fact that they feel they belong “100%” to Canada, and they accept “Canadian traditions.”
These different attitudes towards Canadian traditions and habits between first and second-generation youth may be interpreted as a different sense of belongings and a culture gap. Despite these differences, however, young people use similar stereotypes to explain their feelings of un/belongings: Watching hockey or eating maple syrup are seen as factors necessary for adopting Canadian habits and thus the sense of belonging. So, while explaining people’s life experiences by the means of binary oppositions and stereotypes is inflammatory, neglecting them may also cause theoretical flaws since binary oppositions occupy an important place in young people’s everyday lives. A first-generation youth, Emel, offers a critical statement about being a Canadian, and a second-generation youth, Yesim, accepts and internalizes Canadian values; together this data shows the validity of stereotypes in the lives of two young women. Emel reports:

I don’t even know what that means if there is a Canadian identity. […] as a Canadian identity if there is one probably I don’t belong. I mean if Canadian identity means thinking about hockey, eating maple syrup you know, if it means going to Starbucks and reading books or only seeing your family during Christmas or drinking till you get drunk instead of drinking to enjoy what you drink… if these are Canadian identities I am not Canadian.

This discussion indicates that while Emel resists having a Canadian identity, she also refuses to practice some of the cultural habits. Yesim, in contrast, reports, “I grew up here. I do love the Canadian things. I love maple syrup, I love hockey. But whether or not I belong to Turkey I don’t know. I think Canada is where I will end up living the rest of my life.” It seems that for some of the second-generation immigrant youth, being born and raised in Canada, being comfortable with the dominant habits, are factors that lead to feeling of belonging in Canada. Moreover, these different perspectives of Turkish youth towards the dominant habits and norms demonstrate that Turkish youth are not a homogeneous entity, but a heterogeneous group of people with different ideologies and values. While these diversities are proof of the hybrid identities of Turkish youth, they can also be interpreted as disconnecting Turks from each other.

In sum, my results indicate that while both first- and second-generation youth consider social/emotional belonging (adopting dominant habits and norms, celebrating cultural holidays) more important than territorial belonging, first-generation and Muslim youth’s diasporic habitus creates boundaries between the dominant culture and themselves, and they have a tendency to
associate these traditions with Christianity. At the same time, the host country’s social and cultural context (welcoming/discriminatory, accepting/rejecting minority youth’s realities) seems to be a significant factor in determining minority youth’s sense of belonging and their adaptation to the host country.

5.3. Second-generation Turkish youth’s cultural barriers in Turkey

While most of the first-generation youth’s challenges in the host country and their attachments to Turkey cause them to feel a partial sense of belonging in Canada, second-generation youth’s statements indicate that these young people are subject to mistreatment in Turkey. Language barriers, patriarchy, dominant habits, values and norms are reported as the basic reasons for the culture gap between Canadian born youth and the home country.

Second-generation female youth explain that this culture gap might result from the fact that they are perceived as “looking, speaking and acting differently” in Turkey. Mine’s statement illustrates that she feels different because she is treated differently in Turkey. Mine states,

I know I am different [in Turkey]. Here like I am more independent I usually do things on my own, I don’t necessarily contribute to the family as much as I should but in Turkey I know Turkish girls are expected to always help in the kitchen and know certain things, like how to make Turkish coffee and be able to bring it …she is a little bit shy, reserved and respectful, which I think I am. But every time I go there they reteach me how to make Turkish coffee even though I make it here I think the main reason that I feel different, is actually because of my accent in Turkish. Because I know that my Turkish is not as good as it could be.

While Mine is describing her difference from a “typical Turkish girl,” her emphasis is not only on the dominant norms and values, but on the language barrier between herself and other Turks which makes her feel like a foreigner in her home country. It is also striking that while Mine separates herself from her home culture, she uses some stereotypical images as measures of being Turkish (e.g., a traditional Turkish woman makes Turkish coffee) which may be seen as another barrier between young people and the mainstream culture.

Correspondingly, while Ayse talks about her feelings of being different from the rest of the population in Turkey, she complains about the traditional, patriarchal values of the country. Interestingly, although Mine and Ayse have different family backgrounds with different religious perspectives (Mine is a non-religious woman, from a middle-upper class, professional family.
Ayse is a Muslim woman, from a working-class family), they are subject to similar patriarchal norms and practices in different ways in Turkey. Ayse reports,

I do not like Turkish traditions, to tell you the truth. All the girls have to serve everything. I mean I do work at home just because I wanna do it for my family not because its tradition. I hated that there are some people, when they come over here they are like ‘ohh you are Turkish girl you have to wash dishes, you have to serve, you won't get a husband’. That's so like what the hell [...]. Girls have to do it all the time then it pisses me off.

In some cases young women are exposed to traditional values of their parents and the community both in Turkey and Canada. Emel’s case indicates that female Turkish youth’s “transformed” Canadian values (e.g., being independent) are mismatched with their parents’ traditional values and norms. Emel states that fundamental differences in applying rules, regulations and restrictions in daily life are the reasons for the conflict between Turkish youth and their parents. So, in Emel’s case the generation gap is connected with the culture gap, and vice versa. Emel reports

My parents still continue a very Turkish way of life. Their friends are mostly Turkish. Everybody is very interested in what I am doing and my parents think that they need to protect me and explain to them what I am doing. I cannot tell them I don’t care what everybody thinks. They live a community life; “what will we say to everybody? When I was living with my boyfriend, my parents kept this like a secret. This annoys me and limits me a lot and causes conflicts.”

Emel explains that these expectations arise since she is woman and Turkish. This argument shows that the community pressure is still strong in Canada, although Turkish youth assert themselves as independent individuals. In this regard, the community pressure can be seen as a different form of patriarchy and masculinity which forces young women to obey social norms, keep traditional values (not living with their boyfriends travelling freely) in the name of protecting their family’s honour.

Some of the young women from traditional and working-class families are subjected to more serious forms of patriarchal norms than other Turkish women from well educated, upper-middle class families. Gul, for example, cried during the interview, which indicates the level of patriarchy controlling and limiting her life, by the means of her brother’s masculinity. Gul reports,
there was a guy from my work. We went out for a coffee and my brother saw us. He approached us and asked me ‘what the hell are you doing with that guy? Who is he? Go home. I will not see you again with him. Or I will kill you.’ He said these things in front of people in the coffee shop.

Gul’s brother still felt entitled to certain patriarchal discourses in the host country (such as the family honour) though they are outside of these influences most of the time (especially if we are talking about the issue of dating).

The young women’s statements explain these double standards of traditional values very well; while women are told what to do, men are not obliged to follow rules most of the time.

Leyla’s report confirms that patriarchy is mostly experienced as women’s reality in Canada and Turkey:

So when you go there [to Turkey] it is very difficult to get along with people when you do not have the same values in a way. E.g., you can wear shorts, t-shirts things like that here. As soon as you go to a Muslim country which Turkey is, it is a lot harder to wear what you wanna wear, do the things that you wanna do, especially like females are criticized a lot for everything. So my cousins [male] pretty much do whatever they want to do but for me it is a lot harder for me to do what I wanna do. It is interesting cause I am the oldest cousin on my mother side so I don’t understand why my 14 –15 years old male cousin can do what he wants but me as a 21-22 year old cannot do what she wants. It is kinda culture shock cause I am so used to Canadian culture, so it is completely different. It is much freedom […] with regard to feelings for my culture in Turkey, completely [I feel distanced from my home culture]. It is really hard to live here and then go there for 2 months and expect to like conform to their rules and all that stuff… I talk with my uncle and aunt normally. I think they treat me a lot more differently than I treat them. So I treat them like my uncles, aunts, they treat me like I am a Canadian. Like do you know what this is? Obviously I know I am not dumb. They treat me different. It is funny cause even I don’t treat them different, cause you are covered up but they treat me differently. They modify everything to fit me but I am like what the hell, I am still what you guys are, I am not alien. You know what I mean…tension [happens] only when I get irritated with them. In Samsun there is humidity ohh my god it is horrible. It is like 100% humidity with 40 degrees outside and I am not allowed to wear shorts, flip-flops are you kidding me I am dying. That is the only tension that I ever have with them, is what I am gonna wear… But my parents are so lenient, surprisingly. My dad is actually not so much. He does not want me to go out, my mom does not care. I come home at 4-5 in the morning which is not allowed for females you know.

It is fascinating to see that Leyla has a complex identity, as a secular Muslim woman; she has a secular worldview towards Islam and its practice though this leads to a tension between
herself and her relatives. Leyla believes that Islamic rules should change according to the conditions of the country (e.g., weather conditions). Since these norms are impractical, it does not make any sense to her that she is forbidden from wearing light clothes; she doesn’t wish to be covered in hot and humid weather like her aunt is covered. There is a significant difference between Leyla and her religious family in Turkey, in their understanding and interpretation of Islam. Leyla’s case demonstrates that cultural differences, different understandings of religious practices and values, including feelings of being different or being rejected, create cultural barriers between immigrant youth and their home society.

It should also be noted that the region, where Leyla’s relatives are living and/or parents come from, plays an important role in Leyla’s feeling of exclusion and uneasiness. According to the immigrant youth’s discussions, different regions of Turkey have different characteristics and values. In this regard, the Black Sea region seems more traditional and conservative compared to other parts of Turkey (e.g., the Aegean costs and some metropolitan centres such as Istanbul and Izmir).

Mine also explains her confusion about having to abide by changing dress codes in different regions of Turkey:

You know what is funny? We used to think that we should be more conservative [than people in Turkey] and every time we go to Turkey sometimes I found myself going like I wouldn’t wear that…. I go to summer places all the time like Bodrum, Kusadasi, see all these women who are in all shapes and sizes in bathing suits or naked, ‘cause in Turkey sometimes they are topless right… but there was an instance actually, we went from Kusadasi to a small town to get something and I was wearing a skirt and a tank top and it was very apparent I was the only girl in the town wearing a jean skirt and a tank top, and cause I hadn’t thought about like so I was drawing attention and it made me feel very uncomfortable.

It seems that Mine is confused by the secular and religious faces of Turkey. She is surprised by the significant difference between two towns, which are very close, geographically, but very far in terms of norms and values. These diverse characteristics of place shape identities and affect the experiences of young people who have been living in constant in-betweenness, dealing with polar-oppositions and tensions. The multiple identities of Turkish people might be seen as a product of these cultural and traditional diversities of different regions of Turkey. Turkish youth carry these hybrid, complicated, confused, multiple identities. Thus, they have
diverse perspectives together, at the same time; they are Muslim and secular, traditional and modern, Eastern and Western.

Similarly, Yesim reveals that the distance between herself and her relatives in Turkey, and her feeling of being “out of place,” arises from her western upbringing, in particular, her Canadian mother’s influence, Yesim’s inability to speak Turkish and her lack of Turkish friends. Yesim reports,

[in our hometown in Turkey] I feel out of place because it is a small town. They know I don’t belong there. They see me and they say ‘oh who is this white girl?’ But last year I spent four months in Turkey and for two months I went to school in Antalya and learned Turkish. So I think last year I felt more welcomed or more in place than I ever had before, cause I understood people. When we went to the bazaar I could tell them, ‘I am not a tourist, I am Turkish.’ So I felt better. I felt more in place than I ever had.

Correspondingly, Osman underlines the importance of speaking Turkish in Turkey, to feel comfortable and to be included. Osman states, “that feeling of being an outsider in Turkey…well. The most common one is the language barrier. My vocabulary is very limited.” These statements show that the dominant culture makes the second-generation Turkish immigrant youth feel different, like outsiders, due to lack of Turkish language skills. Youth, as a response, learn Turkish to break the barriers and to feel at home.

In sum, second-generation youth, regardless of their religious beliefs, ages, genders and social classes, report that due to the language barrier, cultural and religious differences and practices (traditionalism and patriarchy), there is a cultural gap between themselves and the dominant society which make them feel alien and different in their homeland, even among their own family members. However, the nature and the degree of this culture gap varies according to the gender and social class of young people. So, while patriarchy mostly affects female youth with regard to their choices and opportunities compared to male youth, young women from working-class, religious families are more affected by patriarchy than women from middle-class families. Also, the nature of patriarchy changes according to the regions that immigrant families come from. Accordingly, it is reported that patriarchal pressure is stronger in the Black Sea region or small towns of Anatolia compared to the Aegean region and metropolitan centres. Despite the double standards of patriarchy, young women fight against these patriarchal rules, they are creating alternative discourses in both countries.
Turkish youth’s hybrid identities generate opportunities to diminish the generational and cultural conflict caused by traditionalism, patriarchy and masculinity. Ayse’s case seems different from other young people who talk about the generation and culture gap, due to different values. Ayse’s hybrid identity (a Muslim and “white-washed” Turkish-Canadian woman) works as a buffer to prevent serious cultural and generational conflict. Ayse reports,

I really like live music. I have never been to a concert. But my dad is not into music. I like rock a lot. Rock stuff. I like to go to concerts but I don’t know. I have never had a nightlife like Canadian students have here. I think because I am really religious maybe.

Ayse’s expression of her multiple identities is reminiscent of Hall’s discussion about the hybrid identities of youth: “... the Muslim student who wears baggy, hip-hop, street style jeans but is never absent from Friday prayers, are all, in their different ways, ‘hybridized.’” Hybrid identities have the ability to negotiate, adapt and experiment with different ways of life; they may pray five times a day and fast but at the same time they adopt western taste in their lives.

Consequently, these complex identities of youth are reflected in their future plans and life expectations. The most fascinating result is about their plans regarding Turkey. While first-generation youth want to go back and live in Turkey, second-generation youth’s future plans are more strategic and conditional, which in turn provides us with information about Turkish youth’s sense of un/belonging and lack of integration in Canada. Various push and pull factors (such as opportunities as well as challenges in Canada and the human factor - relatives, friends- in Turkey) in both countries have affects on their future plans.

Results indicate that first-generation youth’s pre and post-migration experiences and knowledge of Turkey and Canada are correlated with their future plans. Young people are aware of all of the opportunities and possibilities in both countries. Kaya reports that there are certain things he likes and dislikes in Turkey and Canada which make him feel in-between but also allow him to enjoy all of the opportunities:

In Turkey life is faster than in Canada. Atmosphere, friendships are different. People are warmer, you are always surrounded by people. And nightlife, everything is more vibrant in Turkey than here. Here life is: go to work, come to home. That is why people are living longer here (laughter)...You are not being able to be so close with your Canadian friends. Friendship is at some point (there is a limit in your friendship)... But for family and children, Canada is better. Opportunities are better here.
For some of the first-generation youth, challenges, marginalization and cultural factors are the reasons they make plans to go back to Turkey. Melek reports that the lack of connection and interaction between herself and the rest of the society in Canada make her think of going back to Turkey:

I want to go back to Turkey and never come back again. I didn’t get used to it here. I didn’t like it here. There is nothing, nobody makes me like it here…[In Turkey] there are people that I like. But here there is nobody that you can talk to about your worries and happiness. You cannot be happy here.

This statement strongly indicates loneliness and marginalization of a young woman who has limited connection with people from the host society. Lack of communication and emotional bonds alienate and push some of the youth to the margins of this society. While this may come from the dominant society’s unwelcoming and distant attitude towards newcomers, Turkish youth’s cultural differences (religious, cultural practices, ways of living and habitus) and their sense of un/belonging (feeling of being different), trigger the gap between themselves and the host society.

While most of the first-generation Turkish youth report that they want to live in Turkey, some of the second-generation youth argue that they do not want to go back to Turkey because of the different world views (e.g., religion), ways of living and traditional values (e.g., patriarchy) within the dominant society. Leyla reports

[…]never moving there [Turkey] ever. … cause it is a lot different for me. Like obviously growing up in Canada you are so accustomed to like social aspects here. So, when you go there it is very difficult to get along with people when you don’t have the same values in a way.

Leyla refers to traditional values in the home country, particularly patriarchy, which restricts female youth’s daily lives and causes inequalities between male and female young people.

Interestingly, some of the Muslim youth also report that they prefer to stay in Canada in the future, since they have more choices in jobs and ways of living (namely, the headscarf). Ayse states,

first of all, ihhhm freedom of the way I dress, I am covered, as like I wear a scarf, and in Turkey they don't allow you to do that. In school if you wanna be a teacher,
if you wanna be a lawyer, a doctor anything, if you wanna work for the government, you cannot do that. If you wanna work for the embassy like I was planning to work maybe at the embassy like, but I doubt that they would let me work there. Or in a bank you know. And I am hearing from my friends in Turkey and some of them are saying that ohh it is getting worse, they are making fun of people who are covered and it’s so stupid…and if I find a job where I can be comfortable with how I dress and people respect me that way then I will stay in Turkey but if not, then I live a better life here. Why would I ruin my interself for that?

For some secular youth, Canada, as a western country, gives female youth freedom of choice in what they want to wear (such as wearing shorts, as in the case of Leyla). In a similar yet different way, some of the religious covered young women complain that in Turkey they are not allowed to be covered at work and school. As a result, ironically, both secular and Muslim female youth think of Canada as a country which offers opportunities in occupation, education and social life, though both groups experience discrimination and stereotyping.

In sum, Turkish youth’s future plans and expectations vary according to their immigration status and gender and their lived experiences in their home and host countries. While first-generation youth’s lack of connections and their challenges in Canada are the reasons that they wish to return to Turkey, some of the traditional, dominant norms (such as traditionalism and discriminatory behaviour) in Turkey, and opportunities in Canada cause the distance between second-generation youth and their homeland.

5.4. Summary

The data shows that multiple, conflicting, hybrid identities of young Turkish people in Turkey and Canada stem from their multiple attachments, complex histories, multifaceted feelings of un/belonging as well as the context of the home and host country. Youth’s super-hybrid identities, in particular those of second-generation youth, create alternative knowledge both in Turkey and Canada: They are Muslim rock fans with their colourful headscarves; they are Turkish-Canadians who have the ability to live in-between lives and have the courage to negotiate between old and new, east and west, modern and traditional. Despite the dominant cultures’ values about “purity,” sameness, standardization, traditionalism and masculinity, young people are generating hybrid, different, inconsistent, unorthodox, human spaces.
6 Experiences of Social and Cultural Inclusion and Exclusion of Turkish Immigrant Youth in Public Space

This chapter attempts to address cultural and social experiences of inclusion and exclusion as cited by Turkish immigrant youth. The chapter is divided into three sub-sections drawing on life experiences of young people. In the first section I discuss young Turkish immigrants’ living conditions in the public space with regard to accent and cultural discrimination against and stereotypes about Turks and Turkey. In the second section, I examine social interaction of Turkish youth with other Turks as well as with the dominant group and with other minority youth, namely Chinese youth, in order to uncover the multiple and complex social and cultural encounters, tensions and discrimination faced different ethnic groups. Finally, I scrutinize parents’ immigration experiences to reveal the pre and post-migration histories of Turkish youth.

6.1. Life experiences of Turkish youth in Canada

In my interviews and participant observations with young people I observe that first- and second- generation youth have different life experiences as a result of their different immigration histories (i.e., immigration status), habits, norms, perceptions, perspectives and challenges. For some second- generation youth, being born, raised and educated in Canada confers advantages in terms of learning the system, having access to the institutions, knowing the culture and the society, (including all unofficial rules and codes). By contrast, for some of the first -generation youth, life in Canada is challenging, uncertain, discriminatory, and lonely. They are aware of the fact that they need to overcome their linguistic, cultural, and educational disadvantages, including the prejudices of the host society. Their partial access to the institutions, due to their limited linguistic and social capital (e.g., lack of social networks) affects their integration and happiness in Canada. In this regard, some first-generation young people report that the institutional structures, especially the bureaucratic governmental system, are a daily challenge in their social lives. Riza, a first-generation male youth, states “I don’t have a MSP (Medical Service Plan). I am trying to apply for it but they don’t accept my application. That is sick. If something bad happens to me, then I am in trouble.” On the contrary, second generation youth have a better position in the society which seems related to a better understanding of how to take advantage of
the institutions. Yesim, a second-generation young girl whose mother is Canadian-born, emphasizes her happiness in Canada. She states “I love my life in Canada. I have to be thankful for everything, my education, all of my values, morals… We got education, social assistance, health. I think it is a very developed country.”

These discussions clearly indicate that for first-generation youth immigration is a challenge per se; moving from an unknown country with “peculiar” cultural values, ideologies and religious practices, into a foreign country in which the cultural and social capital of their home country is not recognized. So, the first generation youth’s challenges arise from many different factors, which are beyond their control. The norms and values of the dominant group have an impact on immigrant youth’s sense of belonging and cause them to feel uncertain. Constant comparison between the home country and the host country is part of the adaptation process.

6.1.1. Cultural discrimination against Turkish youth

Cultural background, religious practices, lifestyles and accents are the reasons for stereotyping and discrimination against Turkish youth in the public space. Although Turkish youth reported being subject to stereotyping, regardless of their immigration status and ideological perspective, their perceptions and responses (from internalization to resistance, through such devices as humour) to discrimination vary with regard to their immigration status, religious affiliation, gender, social class backgrounds, and the nature of the discrimination. So, while second-generation and non-religious youth subjected to name-calling define it as a “minor” issue, first-generation and Muslim youth express their concerns about racism and marginalization by the dominant group.

Muslim Turkish youth, unlike second-generation youth who tend to be non-religious, have double challenges as cultural and religious minorities in Canada. While being Muslim carries some negative connotations, especially in the West after 9/11, being Turkish also leads to a variety of stereotypes, such as Middle Eastern, violent, oppressed, and suppressed and so on.

Correspondingly, youth’s social class background is another factor in determining the experiences of young people in the public sphere. Working class, religious immigrant youth are

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33 the idea that someone might be “middle eastern” might be a stereotype in itself.
more disadvantaged compared to second-generation and non-religious youth from middle-class families, as the former lacks cultural, symbolic and economic capital. In addition, as they are ideologically different from the dominant secular group of Turks in Vancouver, they lack social capital and a “community” (i.e., Turkish-Canadian society in Vancouver is a secular Turkish community which reflects the dominant, official ideology in Turkey – Kemalism –. For religious Turkish people, the Turkish-Canadian community fails to represent alternative ideologies which are outside of the Turkish official rhetoric. As a result, Muslim youth become outsiders in their own Turkish community because of this ideological clash). Religious Turkish youth inhabit an “undesirable” religious category called “dinci”, a pejorative term which refers to religious Turkish people. Consequently, working class Muslim youth suffer from double marginalization; the dominant society complicates their adaptation and integration into the host country while they are marginalized within their own minority community.

Since the headscarf is seen as a symbol of difference, a symbol of non-Christianity, and religious radicalism by the dominant society, Muslim female youth become more “visible” and disadvantaged than Muslim males and non-religious youth. Female Muslim youth are exposed to questions such as, “why don’t you take off that piece of cloth?” Or they face stronger racist comments such as, “go back home to your country!” Turkish youth’s experience of racism and discrimination due to their religious practices and cultural differences (e.g., Muslimness, Turkishness and accents) could be read as cultural racism which constructs hierarchical and essentialized categories between the majority and the minority (such as western/eastern, insider/outsider, dominant/subordinate) in which minority youth are represented as not Canadian (Abo-Zena et al., 2009).

The association of Islam and Islamic practices, including any religious symbol related to Islam such as names, headscarves, beards and prayer make religious youth targets of Islamophobia and racism (Abo-Zena et al., 2009). The dominant society’s belief in ethnocentric, Eurocentric meta-narratives about Muslim people—as oppressed, backward and inferior—cause religious youth to feel alienated from the/Canadian society. Gul reports,

when I was a child, people were asking me ‘why are you covering your hair, are you bald?’ One day when I was at work a woman came and asked me, ‘oh are you having a bad hair day?’ I asked why. She said, ‘you covered your hair on such a hot day.’ And I said it is not about my hair, it is about my religion. Then she asked me ‘oh what kind of
religion is that?’ Since there is such thing as customer rights I only told her I respect you, you should respect me too. And she is ‘oh I didn’t say anything.’ But you said something actually by asking why I am covering my hair. [And telling me] It doesn’t look good blah blah.’

Gul explains that she is discriminated against as a result of people’s ignorance. According to Gul, people, who have knowledge about Islam, have more tolerance towards her religion.

The fact that immigrant youth are made to feel undesirable is related to the dominant group’s fear of the other. Immigrants are a threat to the primacy of the dominant culture. This is related to the fear that “their” land will be invaded by foreigners. So, here we can talk about the spatial dimension of racism (Hage, 1998). Ayse states, “a couple of years ago my mother and her friends were walking on the street and someone was like, ‘go back home’ and my parents and friends were like, ‘you go back home too’.”

Muslim male youth, by contrast, report that they are affected by the discrimination suffered by their female acquaintances. This implies that even though Muslim Turkish young men are not as “visible” as their sisters, mothers and Muslim female friends are, but they directly witness and indirectly experience discrimination through their female acquaintances. Kemal reports,

[when I say I am Muslim] how to explain, hm, some of them change the topic or turn their back and walk away… they stare at my mother (who is covered). I have a Turkish friend in my class who is covered. A Japanese friend asked me one day 'why she is dressing abnormally’ and I asked him what normal was. I laughed a lot. I think they have a certain thing on their mind. A prejudice. But this is our belief.

This finding is the opposite of Mossali’s (2009) study which indicates that male Muslim youth face challenges from stereotyping, feeling subordinated and alienated. Having more than one wife, riding camels in their home countries, being teased about their names (e.g., Osama), being seen as potential terrorist, these are some of the stereotypes and forms of discrimination suffered by young Muslim men. Similarly, Stonebanks (2009) argues that while certain Islamic symbols, for example, beards can be seen as “cool” by the mainstream, Muslim men still can be targets of Islamophobia which is associated with prototypical images such as “terrorists.”

While some Muslim youth experience discrimination and stereotyping due to their belief systems and ways of looking, some of my data indicate that cultural racism is caused by more
complicated stimulants such as cultural practices, life styles and the languages used by the immigrant youth. Leyla, a second-generation female youth, reports,

actually I am gonna say I am the victim of racism. Just because I don’t speak English, my culture is not known, we are Muslim, it was really different to people. It is weird ‘cause you look at me and I have light skin, blonde hair, green eyes, you know? So it is like, how [could people] think that I was different, cause I didn’t speak English very well. So I had a lot of racist comments. [...]they were telling us to go back to our country, telling us to go back where we came from. But I was like ‘we have the same skin color … I was born here.’ I am a Canadian. So how can you tell me to go back to my country? My country is Canada… It was really, really bad. I didn’t have friends.

Leyla’s case indicates that cultural racism can be overt rather than subtle, contrary to the findings of studies which argue the existence of subtle racism in Canada (Fleras, 2004). Leyla continues,

…I remember completely. I was 6 or 7 years old. A high school student lived next door, I think he was 17 years [old or] something. He came up to me and I didn’t speak English well either during that point cause I was just learning, pretty much. He called me a ‘fucking bitch’ and he pushed me. You are 6 you know. I don’t know if he said it because of my culture or just because of hatred but that happened… he called me that word. They threw rocks at us, telling us going back to our country. They physically threw stones and rocks at us and told us go back to our country ‘we don’t want you here’ blah blah, like all that stuff. It’s really bad. And they made their dog chase us, like really bad stuff. They stole our bunnies and killed them. And they put them on our porch. Cause obviously if you find your rabbit like dead. The rabbit was on the porch. They killed it and put it on the front door step, you know what I mean. It was really really bad.

Leyla’s case indicates that cultural differences of immigrants may cause cultural racism which is based on the idea of differentiation and exclusion of the minority from the host country. Turkish minority youth are constantly reminded that they do not belong to Canada; they are from somewhere else despite the fact that they were born and raised in Canada. Minority youth’s cultural practices and different habitus; non-verbal, unwritten codes, gestures, and habits may be the cause of racism and discrimination. Yesim, a second-generation female youth, reports, “I am not discriminated against at all because I am so western.” By being “so western” Yesim refers to her Canadian look; her blonde hair, her Canadian background, her Canadian mother. Being, looking, and speaking “western” seem to be factors which ease someone’s life in multicultural Canada. As a result of cultural racism, some people become a target of stereotyping, essentialisation and humiliation; Leyla and her family were subjugated, or in Leyla’s terms, “they
were terrorized” by these racists who were empowered by exerting their power to dominate the minority (Hage, 1998). And this asymmetrical power dimension between the dominant and the subordinate is the salient factor that separates the Canadian from the immigrant Turk.

Essed’s concept of “everyday racism” is another significant notion which should be taken into account with Turkish youth’s experiences of racism. According to Essed (2004), everyday racism is an individual’s daily life experiences of racism in which racism occurs through everyday practices.” What is striking about this phenomenon is that it happens as part of everyday life. It is unquestionable, normal and ordinary. In this regard, constant domination and repression of Turkish youth by the dominant society can be explained by everyday, cultural racism in which their experiences of racism are embedded in their everyday, mundane social relations with the dominant group and therefore such racism is difficult to identify and target.

Mine argues in high school her peers made jokes about the name of Turkey: “gubble gubble what you eat in thanksgiving.” Name calling, teasing about their country’s name are all parts of everyday racism which is considered “fun” by some of the Turkish youth since it is daily, mundane talk, and maybe humour works as a survival strategy (where will they go if they take it seriously?)

Conflicting and complex identities of Turkish youth with regard to immigration status, age, class, gender and religious background affect their social and cultural experiences in Canada. Religious youth are less welcome than non-religious youth, since their belief system is “seen,” and it is seen as fundamentalist and intimidating by the mainstream. With regard to gender, female Muslim youth are more marginalized than male Muslim youth, since they are more “visible” and considered less “cool” in their headscarves, and thus they are more vulnerable to attacks by the dominant culture, including by secular Turks in Vancouver. Regarding class, Muslim working-class youth are the most marginalized among these groups, since they are economically, socially, symbolically, and religiously disadvantaged more than any other group, especially compared to non-religious youth from middle-class professional families. In terms of Muslim working class youth’s parents, – while their mothers are typically housewives, their fathers are mostly workers, they have poor English, they lack diplomas from Canadian institutions, so they work in menial jobs, earn lower incomes and have lower social status, which
leads to a lack of economic, social, linguistic, cultural capital with limited access to economic, cultural, linguistic and social mobility.

6.1.2. Accent discrimination against Turkish in the public space

According to the results, first generation Turkish youth, unlike second generation youth, are subjected to accent discrimination in the public sphere. They live with the fear of being rejected, being misunderstood and excluded by the dominant culture. They are in a constant struggle, not only with language barriers, but also with unknown social codes and norms which are significant barriers to their action and speech in the social sphere. Their accented speech creates a gap between Turkish youth and the dominant youth culture. Riza, a first -generation, male, reports,

accent...I wish I could take it off. Because of my accent I am blocking myself. For example, I know I can [speak with a person], but eventually I prefer not to speak. Because I think we will not understand each other. It is the same thing when I go to a club. If I am not eliminated because of my physical appearance, then the next step is how to approach people [women]. When I start speaking, she disappears right away because of my accent. [She] doesn’t even understand me. [My] accent makes it difficult. [She] knits her eyebrows. [She] looks down on me like what the hell. I experience that kind of behaviour very often. I think if a Turkish [man] is refused, [he] experiences that mostly in clubs.

Popular hegemony (i.e., hegemonic consensus of the mainstream), in the form of “the anxieties and uncertainties of ordinary people,” is part of symbolic and cultural racism, imposing dominant linguistic and cultural norms (Cohen, 1972; Hall, 1978, 2000a). The accents of Turkish minorities, in this regard, are de/valued in relation to these dominant language norms. In this dynamic the dominant culture works as a secondary closure mechanism, after the state, with regard to deciding “who is out” and “who is in” in the nation-state. In other words, formal acceptance by means of citizenship doesn’t guarantee the dominant culture’s acceptance, as Hage (1998) states, “institutional-political acceptance,” and “practical-cultural national acceptance,” may not be compatible. This incompatibility may lead to further marginalization of the Turkish youth as in the case of double-standards and impasses of multiculturalism between the levels of the state versus the dominant society level: The minority’s distinct features and values are waiting for the dominant culture and state’s approval.
Accordingly, first-generation Turkish youth do not have appropriate “national capital” (i.e., accumulation of national and cultural practices and elements; Hage, 1998). Their cultural practices e.g. mother tongue, and national values do not match the values of the host country. In the accent hierarchy, status is determined by proximity to the dominant norm; a British accent is more valuable than a Turkish accent, thus first-generation Turkish youth, like other minorities, suffer from accent discrimination.

Accent discrimination (or linguicism) must be seen in the context of the state’s official language policy, and the imposition of the dominant, official languages, cultures and knowledge which serves to manipulate minority cultures and their languages. We must also examine the nationalist, hegemonic discourses, such as the “visible minority” discourse, wherein the critical question is: what makes the majority “invisible” in opposition to the “visibility” of the minority? All of these discourses/forces cause a devaluation of minority languages and accents and legitimate the refusal to recognize alternative identities, histories and memories of minorities.

Accent discrimination, as an exclusionary mainstream state practice, reminds the minority that the dominant Anglo/Franco community is still in charge of regulating the language market and other related institutions (e.g., the educational market); the official languages are English and French and the mainstream values and norms are white and Christian. Minorities should speak “standard” Canadian accent, if they want to be heard by the dominant group. In this regard, accent reduction training can be a ritual, or a rite of passage for Turkish youth; newcomers move from alien to immigrant, from immigrant to citizen and so on. And there are times when the linguistic accent of a Turk turns into a cultural accent.

Accent, like other cultural elements, is associated with habitus; it refers to non-verbal codes, body language and bodies of minoritized people. Someone who has a western look and a British accent is more acceptable than someone who has a Middle-Eastern look and a Turkish accent, because British accents, like whiteness, are considered national and symbolic capital. This is confirmed by the statements of the second generation youth who emphasize that their parents speak English fluently but they have accents! The “linguistic habitus” of a Turk is not acceptable because it is always associated with other cultural elements; his/her alien look, his/her body, his/her different values and all those images signify the “other.”
Accent discrimination is an obstacle to the integration of the Turkish population in this society. It restrains their social, political participation and thus it inhibits their right to speak and act meaningfully in the public sphere. Speech and action, as “human conditions,” (Arendt, 1971) are vital deeds which make young people who they are; unique actors, doers and speakers and speech and action can lead them to change the world. As Arendt reports (1958, p. 179), “in acting and speaking, men [sic] show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world.” So, to speak and act are absolute human rights and without them, “we are deprived of our humanity and hence are absolutely rightless” (Arendt in Parekh 2004). In this regard, mainstream intolerance towards Turkish youth’s accents and their mother tongue, in the public sphere, reduces Turkish youth to “ethnics,” different, superfluous, alien, speechless and, finally, rightless in multicultural Canada.

6.1.3. Misrecognition of Turkish in the public space

According to results, first -generation and second -generation Turkish youth have different experiences with regard to speaking Turkish in public and people’s reactions towards them. Non-religious second-generation Turkish youth do not face any discrimination or negative reaction from the dominant culture, since they do not speak Turkish (most of them are not fluent in Turkish) in the public sphere. Some of the first generation Turkish youth’s experiences in the public sphere, unlike second -generation’s, shows that Turkish young people who speak their mother tongue receive negative comments and reactions. People make faces at them or warn them not to speak Turkish.

Gul’s report indicates that only English (not even French) is seen as the approved, dominant language in multicultural, multilingual Canada.

I was at work. A friend of mine [Turkish] was visiting me at work and she was speaking Turkish with me though I was not answering her. There was a customer who turned to my friend and said ‘excuse me, don’t speak your language. You cannot speak about us’. This is Canada, speak English, ok?’ One day I was with the same friend again. A white woman came and said ‘oh do you think I don’t understand you, I know French. You have to speak English!"
Intolerance towards languages outside of the official language is an obstacle to diversity and creation of new possibilities and projects for our common world. First generation Turkish young people, who are silenced, are not only separated from their language but also from their past, their cultural identities and their communities. Turkish youth are made “worldly alienated,” uprooted, homeless and stateless; they are deprived of a public place to act and speak.

The statements of Ayse’s, second generation, female youth, indicate that first generation Turkish youth who have difficulties speaking English are lonely and marginalized in the public space. Ayse:

I was in Richmond high and my friend was there too. She is Turkish, I am Turkish. But people don’t see me as Turkish. They see me as not Canadian [either] but I can speak English fluently, I was born here. I am very social. She [my friend] wasn't very social, [...] she has been here for 5 years and hasn't talked to anyone.[...] people make fun of her but they didn’t know anyone. They are very lonely.

As a result of this mismatch between the home and host countries’ norms, habits, youth experience marginalization and some of them seek refuge in their own Turkish community. Young religious newcomers are especially likely to state that they live close to other Turks, visit Turkish families and maintain the same Muslim lifestyle in Canada that they had in Turkey. Kemal, a young man who migrated from Turkey with his parents and two siblings a year ago, explains his struggles with learning English, starting a new life and most importantly dealing with loneliness and isolation. In his essay he writes:

someone feels alone here without learning English. We have to relearn and start everything from zero. That’s why there is this feeling of loneliness. We made some Turkish friends here, without them it would be harder for us. [...] I live in Canada and I am Turkish. That’s how I feel.

Kemal’s experience indicates that the difficulty in making connections with people confines young people to their familiar and safe circles, leads them to retain their identity and thus postpones their adaptation to the host society. Moreover, this also indicates that working-class Turkish youth are less mobile and more dependent on their cultural groups than youth from middle-class families who have higher educational and social capital and hence have a greater interaction with the larger society.
Misrecognition of Turkish language in the public space confirms Bourdieu’s conceptualization of language as a symbolic capital and its power in the “field;” Canada. Turkish youth, in this regard, do not hold a valid symbolic and national capital.

Moi (1991), with a reference to Bourdieu, explains the relationship between field and capitals and their impact on habitus. For Moi (1991), field can be interpreted as a battlefield in which agents compete for the accumulation of capital which leads to a position of domination. Agents should develop strategies in order to gain appropriate capital to compete in the game in the field. In this regard, habitus is regenerated by the competition to accumulate capital among agents within the field. So, I think, in a Marxist perspective, capital can be seen as an infrastructure which determines habitus (and field provides the necessary conditions for that).

When we adapt this theoretical picture to first- and second- generation, religious and non-religious Turkish youth and their efforts to build up capital such as education, social, cultural, and economic capital in Canada, we see that the habitus of second-generation youth, unlike that of first-generation youth, is cultural capital per se. Since “each field generates its own specific habitus which is adjusted to the game of the field” (Moi, 1991, p. 1021), second-generation youth’s habitus is already adjusted to the rules of the game in Canada (the Canadian educational system is the most important factor in transforming their habitus with regard to legitimating the dominant group’s knowledge, language and values); simply put, their habitus is more valuable than the first-generation youth. Accents and ways of talking, expressing themselves are not simply a result of personal style of immigrant youth, rather they are valuable sources of information about their cultural, political backgrounds and socialization. In other words, second-generation youth are equipped with the “right” habitus which, “enables them to know and recognize the immanent laws of the game, the stakes and so on” (Moi, 1991, p. 1021). First generation youth, by contrast, do not have the “right” dispositions; they are not attuned to the dominant norms, values, knowledge, non-verbal codes and signs. They are not familiar with unspoken, unspeakable and unwritten rules of the game in the social, political and educational field. They are left helpless and alone to learn the rules of the game, especially if we consider that “the whole field functions as a form of censorship” (Bourdieu in Moi, 1991). In this regard, it is not surprising to observe first-generation youth’s feeling of exclusion and experiences of marginalization, because it is not only the whole system- field and habitus- working against them. The whole system is
exclusionary per se. The first generation youth are forced to transform their habitus, (e.g.,
through accent reduction) to survive in the field. This is a kind of symbolic violence since the
dominant group’s values are not only imposed on minority youth, but also their habitus is
remade. Their bodies, accents, and tacit knowledge are governed by the state’s hegemony and the
popular culture. “Diasporic habitus” (gestures, ways of talking, walking, lifestyles, and accents)
can be re/produced and transformed by social power relations (such as relations among agents,
their habitus, competition for capital, the state’s hegemony), through “diasporic habitus” they
might resist racism and assimilation.

“Diasporic habitus” is a political entity in itself, since “even such basic activities as
teaching children how to move, dress, and eat are thoroughly political, in that they impose on
them an unspoken understanding of legitimate ways to represent their body to themselves and to
others. The body –and its apparel such as clothing, gestures, make-up and so on–becomes a kind
of constant reminder of sociosexual power relations” (Moi, 1991, p. 1031). In other words, while
habitus works as a system of classification and distinction between agents, accent as a
“distinctive sign,” which is “inscribed in bodies” of the immigrant youth, becomes one of the
most important reasons for the marginalization of Turkish immigrant youth in the public sphere.

Unrecognition of minority youth’s habitus, their mother tongue, and their accents proves
the failure of multiculturalism. The critical question regarding multiculturalism is whether the
policies promote cultural diversity, respect, cultural and linguistic differences or reinforce
discrimination. In other words, does multicultural Canada respect distinct identities, cultural
practices, values, languages, ways of living (including clothes and beliefs) of Turkish immigrants
or does the society assimilate differences in the name of multiculturalism? In this regard, the
place of Turkish immigrants in the social and political sphere regarding the dominant culture is
salient to understanding the nature of multiculturalism in Canada; who is in the centre and who is
in the periphery? Or, who has the power and who does not? And finally, who is “tolerant” and
who is tolerated? So multicultural tolerance can be considered a form of symbolic violence in
which the headscarf of a Muslim woman or the Turkish accent of a young man might be tolerated
by the dominant community but will not be respected. This power of the dominant people to
legitimize, to recognize, and to name are the forms of domination and violence that variously
include or exclude Turkish minority youth.
Turkish young people are excluded, on the one hand they are discriminated against for their unique cultural and linguistic differences in the social and political space and thus they are made to feel like outsiders. On the other hand, Turkish youth and their parents are kept partially inside the labour market, in order to exploit their labour power (since their diplomas and work experience from Turkey are not recognized by the state, they ended up doing menial jobs) This indicates that exclusion and inclusion can be complementary rather than mutually exclusive categories in the host society (Hage, 1998). Partial inclusion of minorities and their exploitation are necessary for the processing of the exclusionary hegemonic system where “the cultural organization of foreignness is created as both support of, and threat to, the regime in question” (Honig, 2001). In this regard, immigrant youth are kept in an insider-outsider, wanted-unwanted ambiguous position in which they are “neither totally included nor totally excluded” (Hage, 1998).

As opposed to following the wisdom of Charles Taylor, who says, “we all recognize the equal value of different cultures; that we not only let them survive, but acknowledge their worth” (in Hage 1998, p. 138), I have found that first-generation immigrant youth are deprived of a public place where their unique identities, and their cultural and linguistic differences are recognized. They are deprived of a place for interaction, negotiation and recognition. They are deprived of a “space of appearance” where plurality and particularity (e.g., Turkish youth’s distinctions) are acknowledged, accepted and respected. Instead, Turkish youth live in a public space where power and privileges are distributed in favour of the dominant people. Turkish youth live in a place where they are not considered actors, doers, speakers but ethnics who have linguistic and cultural “accents”: Is there a way to overcome this worldly alienation and homelessness of first generation youth in multicultural Canada? Can Turkish youth be the writers of their own history, in the face of alienation and subordination by the dominant society and the state’s hegemony?

6.1.4. Stereotypes about Turkey and Turks

Intolerance towards the Turkish language and Turkish accents in the public sphere goes parallel with the popular culture’s ignorance of the Turkish minority group and stereotypes about Turks, their identity, culture, language and history. This stems from hegemonic “representational
practices” and racism. The mainstream culture often thinks Turks as radical Muslims; they are dangerous; they have dark-skin; they are not European, women are shy, quite, and veiled; and they speak Arabic, Greek or something?

The mainstream culture’s ignorance about Turks and Turkey brings the possibility of the positive correlation between the number of the Turkish minority group and their recognition in the host country: Are people unaware of the existence of Turkish people in this host country because the number of Turkish people is limited? Kaya argues,

when I speak Turkish people stare at me. But I don’t think they consider it something bad. They are just curious about it. They ask me if it is Italian, Arabic, Greek? What is it? They don’t know anything about Turkey. That is why.

Leyla, Ahmet and Emel’s arguments indicate that people have some prejudices about Turkish youth’s physical appearance and characteristics, which are considered different and less popular than the dominant features and norms. Ahmet reports,

when I say I am Muslim or my parents are Muslim they say, “oh you don’t look Muslim,” because my skin is very white. They’re usually very surprised, they think that I am Canadian. …When I say I am Turkish they say “do you eat lots of turkey,” or something like that; they try to make joke or something.

Similarly, Emel reports,

when I meet people and tell them I am Turkish, if they are Iranian or Persian ‘they say oh really, cool.’ But if they are white/European, they are surprise and say ‘you don’t look Turkish, you don’t act like a Turkish person’…they expect someone who has darker features, a bit conservative, a bit more shy, not hyperactive, a bit quieter. I mean they think that a Turkish girl cannot be so open and free like that.

Turkish youth have to deal with all these stereotypes, which put young people in certain categories; if they have darker features, they are automatically Middle-Eastern, otherwise they can fit into any category which is another struggle for Turkish youth.

Leyla reports that when she speaks Turkish, people get very surprised because her appearance –as a blonde, white girl- does not conform to their expectations of someone who speaks Turkish. Turkish is coded as the other’s language; an unknown language from somewhere else. Leyla states,

People look at me and say ‘ok she just looks like a white girl’ but when I start like when I tell someone that I am Turkish they are like ohh ok and tells someone I am Muslim like
ohh even more shocking, I speak Turkish woow like you are actually not like a Canadian you know what I mean.

Leyla’s story indicates that one of the main struggles for Turkish youth is the fact that they are not seen as Canadian. Leyla continues to explain they ask me “ohh are you Russian?” I am like “no.” And then they are like “are you Polish?” I am “no.” “Czech Republic?” “No.” [...] They guess a million other cultures and in the end they still don’t guess Turkey [...] I don’t understand why they would think I was Russian or I don’t know if I look Russian. I don’t see how I look Russian. It frustrates me. I hate being called Russian. I freaking hate it. Complete stereotypes.

In Leyla’s case, we observe the essentializing, reductionist and exclusionary effects of stereotyping. While the essentializing effect of stereotyping divides the objects and subjects into two binary oppositions such as Canadian/Turkish, it reduces complex entities into simple categories; one of the categories is always dominant over the other and the subordinate is always the opposite of the dominant. So, in Leyla’s case, the dominant is western, white and Christian, while the immigrant is non-western, non-white, and non-Christian.

According to Hall (1997b), stereotypical discourses, “powered by the fears” of the mainstream, are meaning-making processes which function through language, images, symbols and values. Stereotypes, then, are representational practices which entail power to represent the other. In other words, representations of Turkey and Turkish youth by stereotypes are a question of, “the spectacle of the ‘other’” (Hall, 1997b) which functions through “psychic fixations,” essentialism and fantasies, regardless of whether they are positive or negative features of Turkey or Turks.

Kemal’s experience clearly indicates how these representational practices work in representing Turkish youth in Canada. His statement shows that people are not only ignorant about certain facts about Turkey (e.g., Turkey is a secular Muslim country), but also they make generalizations about Muslim countries in the area (that is, all Muslim countries are ruled by Shari’a).

There are certain things they know about Turkey and they talk about those, for example, they talk about Istanbul. Then, they ask me if I am Muslim. Then they ask me if everybody is veiled in Turkey. Then they ask me about women. They say women in Turkey are veiled, they swim with their veils -carsaf-. Some of them ask me if Canada or Turkey is better. I say they are the same. Then they ask me, ‘but there are deserts in Turkey, right?’ (laughter) and I say no, it is surrounded by seas. The ones who don’t
know anything about Turkey, they have prejudices about it: Deserts, Islamic regime, and a country where people live under oppression.

So, in this picture it is not surprising to see the construction of Turks as “Mohammadens” (a pejorative term to describe Muslim people, see Said (2004)), Middle Easterners with dark skin, or interchangeable Arabs, (see Abdurraqib, 2009, for Muslim/Middle Eastern/Arab equations) who live in deserts with their camels. This Orientalist fiction is an attempt to dominate the Turks, including Arabs, through the means of stereotypes and prejudice(s).

Yesim reports that most people believe that Turkey is an aggressive, underdeveloped and dangerous country. She argues,

they really believe that it is a Middle Eastern country where women are oppressed and politics are corrupt...I think people get scared. I have some friends who want to visit Turkey. They ask ‘can I walk alone by myself...are people gonna come and hurt [me]?’ you know. I think that is [what] a lot of people think.

These statements indicate that Turkey is the “other” of Canada; a war-torn Middle Eastern country.

The Middle East (together with the Middle Easternness) is a value-loaded term, which leads to stereotypes such as war, danger, terror, radical Islam, it’s seen as not western, not white and undeveloped. Although Leyla thinks that there is no stereotype about Turkey because people don’t know anything about Turkey, she argues that there is stereotyping about Middle Easterners and, indirectly, Turks. She reveals “you are Middle Eastern, you are Muslim, and you are automatically a terrorist.”

Stereotypes are troubling when they generate assumptions about other people’s identities, values, habits. While some of the Turkish youth deal with these stereotypes and name-calling practices tactfully (e.g., making jokes or normalizing the stereotypes), some of them have a hard time because of serious racist comments of the dominant society, which in turn leads them to hide their Turkish identities in the public space.

Kaya and Osman are some of the young men who deal with stereotyping by the means of humor and normalization: Osman says,

The most common remark is ‘do they have turkey in Turkey?’ (laughter) like food (laughter). It is the stupidest thing. Ihhm (laughter). Until we tell them in Turkey a turkey is called hindi which means Indian (laughter) and they get confused.
Kaya normalizes and learns to live with the stereotypes he faces in his daily life: in high school they were making jokes, for example, ‘is that how you do [it] in Turkey?’ but after a while you got used to it and sometimes it is funny. In my soccer team all my nicknames are Turkish delight, Turkish tornado. They make fun of doner 35. They ask me ‘what [will] you have tonight? doner? tea?’ Other stereotypes are being hairy, having an accent and [living in a] desert. Not racism but stereotype. Chinese and Indians live that as well. I mean it is not only related to Turks. It is funny and normal.

For some, on the other hand, these comments may be very destructive. Riza reports that some of his Turkish friends hide their Turkish identities while meeting people and socializing, due to their previous experiences of discrimination. Riza states, this is about my Turkish friend. He met a girl in a café. The girl asked my friend where he was from. He told her to guess it. She was like ‘are you Greek, Persian, Spanish’, and she had stopped and asked him ‘are you fucking Turkish!’ So the girl was not happy with the fact that my friend was Turkish. It is a terrible situation. What you could you say, yes, I am a fucking Turkish? So, some of my [Turkish] friends are hiding their identities while socializing [clubbing]. They either say their Cypriot, Greek, and Catalan from Spain because very few people speak Catalan. I mean they try to hide their Turkish identities.

In addition, Mine reports that the mispronunciation of Turkish names can be a daily challenge for Turkish youth. She explains that because of difficulties in pronunciation, some Turks change their names and adopted English names. However, for Turks and Muslims, names have symbolic and ritual dimensions. Turkish names have mostly meanings and they are given through a religious and cultural ceremony (Safak, 2004). In this regard, a name can be considered a part of the identity of an individual. As a result, to accept a foreign name may be seen as adopting a new identity and thus a transformation. Despite of all these values attributed to Turkish names, some of the participants argue that to find a job and make their social and educational life easier, they had to change their names.

Turkish immigrant youth, regardless of their immigration status, religion, gender and age, are subject to various stereotyping practices. In the orientalist and stereotypical representation, Turkish youth are depicted as unwanted, radical, “middle-eastern,” backward and non-western; the end product of this fictive, essentialist, Eurocentric fantasies is that Turkish youth are simply not Canadian. In this regard, the dominant discourse works as a racist construct which confines

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35 A kind of traditional Turkish food.
Turkish youth and their home country in essentialist narratives and makes them feel inferior and subordinate.

6.2. Friendship

According to the results, friendship is an important indicator of adaptation/acculturation of immigrant youth to Canada. While 1st first-generation youth have difficulties making friends with people from diverse backgrounds, second-generation youth are more comfortable and getting along with people from diverse backgrounds. Culture and language are the determining factors which affect first-generation youth’s interaction with the dominant group and minority people.

It strikes a Turkish newcomer to Canada that dominant norms of Canadian culture include being distant, individualistic, independent, and refusing to share material and personal things with neighbours. For first-generation youth, these dominant cultural norms constitute serious obstacles to building friendship. These obstacles remind us the importance of habitus (e.g., non-verbal codes of culture) in interaction, among people with different cultural backgrounds. In other words, their “untransformed habitus” inhibits their success in adapting to the new culture and decoding the dispositions of other agents from different cultural backgrounds. Kaya, a first-generation male, explains that while there is always a distance between himself and his Canadian friends, this distance does not exist with his Turkish friends: “You can share with them [Turkish friends] everything. You can hug them and sacrifice your life for them. But here you cannot even ask your friend to lend you $1000, [let alone sacrifice your life].”

Kaya goes on to explain that although making friends is easier for him since he arrived Canada when he was four, his best friends are still Turkish. According to Kaya, the reason for the distance between himself and his Canadian friends is cultural. Kaya reports,

It is weird. I see them [Turkish friends] only in the summer but still we are very very close. When I go to Turkey my friends hug me and maybe it takes 30 sec. but when I am back in Canada hugging with my Canadian friends lasts maybe only 1 sec. Hmm… I mean culture. And when I think about friendship, here my friends think that friendship is having a good time together. But in Turkey my friends36 do not think that way. They think that [being] my friend is [being] a part of my life.

36 Dost means very close friend which does not exist in English vocabulary. Kaya’s emphasis on the meaning of dost in Turkish makes us think whether vocabulary compatible with cultural norms.
S/he is my brother/sister. S/he is me. Here “I” comes first and friends come later. But in Turkey I and friends are together.

Kaya emphasizes two important issues here. First, he talks about the importance of body language in interactions. The duration and warmth of hugs between friends determines cultural contexts. In other words, body language as part of habitus (non-verbal codes and dispositions of agents) regulates the nature of the relationship between immigrant youth and other people in all interactions. Hugging, in this regard, represents a physical gap that is closed between people from different cultures. Moreover, hugging is seen as part of the socialization process and cultural codes. In this regard, to consider Canadian friends individualistic and independent and Turks collectivistic is another indication of the cultural gap between first-generation immigrant youth and the dominant society. While the first-generation youth lived a community-based life with their families and relatives in Turkey, they feel isolated, atomised, lonely and uprooted from their old, kin-based connections as a result of migrating to Canada.

Correspondingly, Osman’s argument supports the collectivistic vs. individualistic dichotomy between Turks and the dominant society. Osman stresses the importance of the phenomena of neighbourhood arrangements in Turkey which leads to solidarity and assistance among people. Osman reports,

In Turkey because of the culture your neighbours are like your family. Here you don’t get that. In Turkey your neighbour is really your family. It is amazing. In my father’s village our neighbours are pretty much are our family. We treat them like family. They can randomly come over and have tea or do each other favours. Like ‘I am gonna go for a week can you look after my house?’. Things like that. I think that is why they say Turkish people are so friendly. Everyone is like a neighbour there.

Consequently, first generation immigrant youth feel more comfortable building friendship with Turkish people rather than people from different backgrounds. Moreover, some other factors, such as sharing the same feelings, values and memories, cause Turkish youth to choose Turkish friends. Riza emphasizes the importance of sharing similar feelings in friendship in his individual essay. Riza writes,

you feel so lonely if you are coming from a culture, like ours, where people have very warm relations with each other. And this is the most important requirement for us. Here

37 Dostum benim canım.
you cannot easily talk with people. You cannot even make jokes. You cannot share things. How do I explain it...nothing is like in Turkey. Like you cannot eat sunflower seeds with your friend; you cannot talk with your friend; you cannot watch a football match at your home with your friends; you cannot fight with your friend about who will eat the last olive in the plate; you cannot laugh for no reason; you cannot find someone to help you when you need it. I am very negatively affected by this. There is lack of connections among people.

Similarly, for Emel, Canadian youth’s carelessness in making friends is the result of their carelessness about other people (e.g., having no connection with neighbours) and their independent ways of living: “They don’t care about other people. The most important thing in life is themselves. There is something missing.” Correspondingly, Riza, who migrated from Turkey two years ago, argues how the boundaries between Turkish youth and young people from different cultures limit Turkish youth’s friendship circles:

Of course it is easier to make friendship with Turks…they [Canadians] put limits. They are not much into it [friendship]. There is always a limit in our talk. A close friendship does not happen. Because of their ways of life, they put a distance. I try to build friendship as long as they allow me to do so.

In addition to lack of social cohesion and connection among people, the dominant way of life, that is regular, planned ways of living, cause alienation and distance among people. Riza complains about the “robotic” way of life in Canada. According to Riza, having an agenda, living a very organized, planned life with lots of rules and regulations and having no place for spontaneity and surprises these all contribute to the robotic way of life in Canada which in turn causes a dehumanized and isolated life; there is no room to casually drop by to see friends and relatives.

Besides their limited social capital, first generation immigrant youth are also linguistically disadvantaged in socializing. For example, Emel complains about the language barrier in making friends at school. According to Emel, her challenge at school arose from her lack of English proficiency and other girls’ attitudes towards her; seeing her as a threat (a beautiful girl who takes boys’ attention) she was therefore excluded. Emel reports, “If I could speak English fluently, I would belong to their group.” It seems that the school culture was ruled according to language proficiency; native English speakers (the dominant groups) versus non-native speakers (minorities). In addition, there is a gender dimension to exclusion.
For girls from the dominant culture (i.e., female students who know the dominant cultural and linguistic codes in Canada), a foreign “good looking girl,” like Emel, should/can be excluded. Moreover, Emel’s statement indicates the importance of attending school in making friends in Vancouver. Since the majority make friends at a certain age, mostly in high school and university. It is not easy for first-generation immigrant youth who didn’t attend Canadian schools, to break into these friend/social circles.

Some of the first generation youth think that they can get along better with people who are in-between, that is, not “too” Turkish or not “too” Canadian. Emel reports,

[my boy friend] has to accept my experiences even he has different ethnic origin and life experiences. I don’t think I can be with someone who is too Canadian or too Turkish. Canadians are carefree and don’t consider any ties. Everybody lives his/her life. Turks, on the contrary, are very possessive and controlling like, “you are mine.” That does not work either.

Emel’s self-identification as in-between, (i.e., having different life experiences both in Turkey and Canada) causes her to choose friends and partners who are also in the middle; people who have various life experiences and multiple attachments and identifications or in Emel’s terms, “people who are confused with all these diverse experiences.”

For religious young people, developing friendship has different challenges. Due to their belief system and parental norms, they are kept away from certain friendship circle and ways of living, (such as those involved in the night life and drinking). Parents expect Muslim Turkish youth to be friends with Turkish and Muslim people. However, the small Turkish population in Vancouver limits the lives of young people and constricts their choices of friends. In addition, the difference between young people and their parents’ choice in friends leads to intergenerational conflict. Gul complains that her parents’ insistence that she associates with Muslim and Turkish youth, causes tension and conflict in the family:

they always pick my friends. E.g., when I was in high school, I don’t want to call them [my parents] racist but they were almost like that. They were kinda saying, “you cannot be friend with that infidel.” For them, my friends should stay at home, not go out (cries).

38 gavur
This statement indicates that Gul and some other Muslim youth, especially female youth, have a dilemma; they are caught in between their friends and their parents’ values and decisions. While young people adapt to their environment and the social life in the host country, their parents’ traditional and patriarchal values, their unrealistic expectations and thoughts about their children’s ways of life, preventing Muslim youth from adapting to Canada.

For Muslim covered girls, breaking cultural barriers and making friends seems more difficult compared to non-religious Turkish youth, because of Muslim female youth’s “visible” religious identities and practices. Melek’s complaint indicates that religious differences between the dominant and the minority is a challenge for religious Turkish youth in making friends:

In Canada I experience exclusion. This happens everywhere. People don’t like you. We are not liked because of our headscarves…. This happens in Turkey as well. My covered friends are subject to this [exclusion] in Turkey.

Melek’s revelation shows that political and ideological conflicts in Turkey, and prejudice (Islamophobia) against Muslims after 9/11 in North America, results in discrimination against Muslim youth both in their home country and in the host country. So for some youth, pre and post-migration histories do not affect their marginalization. Past experiences of exclusion run parallel with post-migration realities and affect their everyday lives in Canada.

In some cases, the feeling of isolation, loneliness and marginalization are combined with uncertainty and uneasiness in daily life. Musa, a second generation religious youth, confirms that despite the diversity, it is quite difficult to find someone to speak with, and share his questions about his religion. Here Musa emphasizes the cultural and religious gap between himself and other people. Musa’s challenge with diversity goes parallel to his feeling of fear and uncertainty with regard to his life in Canada. Musa reports,

In Turkey we know our religion, we have a big family there. If problems occur like an injury or financial problems, there are people who can help us. But here you have to get a loan from the government or something like that. There is a backup plan in Turkey, but not here. If something happens here, God forbid, there is nothing to do, nobody helps here. You may have friends here, but if a problem occurs, people forget you.

This young man makes a very strong statement, expressing feeling of distrust and uneasiness towards “other” people, his own community and his life in Canada. It seems that, although he was born and raised in Canada, all these challenges, uncertainties and worries
distance him from his country and the dominant society, which in turn may negatively affect his sense of belonging to Canada. Musa’s feeling of discomfort and distrust to “others” increases with some other complications (e.g., language barrier). Musa reports,

Here while you are walking, someone who is behind you speaks Chinese and a person in front of you speaks Hindi. You don’t know if they are talking about you. Or while people are staring at you and talking, you don’t know what they are talking about. In Turkey people speak the same language, and you know what they are talking about and even if they are talking about you, you don’t care much. I mean there [in Turkey] you are more comfortable because you know what is gonna happen, but here [in Canada] you don’t know what is gonna be coming in front of you.

Musa’s divisions between here and there, us and them, indicates uneasiness about his everyday life in Canada and maybe his unconscious sense of alienation within Canada (it is unconscious because he underlines his happiness and coziness in Canada). In addition, diversity may lead to cultural gap among people which increases uneasiness in communication as well as in negotiation. Kaya, a first-generation young male, confirms that living with people from different backgrounds can be difficult for some immigrant youth:

There are people from different cultures here, so it is difficult to change your personality according to these cultures. In Turkey, generally speaking, people are very outgoing and very similar but here everybody is diverse. [...] I think I negotiate differently from Canadians. Canadians are easy-going and I think I am more aggressive. This definitely comes from my Mediterranean background. Here everything is rules, rules. Canadians should learn to be more aggressive.

Kaya’s argument can be interpreted as a critique of the apolitical, conflict-free nature of Canada.

While first-generation and religious youth choose their friends mostly from Turkish and Muslim groups, second-generation Turkish immigrant youth don’t prefer to hang out with Turkish youth, due to differences in their ways of living, habits and worldviews. These differences between Turkish youth lead us to consider a cultural gap between first-generation Turkish youth and second-generation youth.

Some of the second-generation youth report that they find Turkish youth scary, different and not compatible with their life styles and habits. Emel reports that since her Turkish female friend’s gossip and express jealousy, she spent difficult years in high school. Similarly, Leyla
states that she does not have Turkish friends because she thinks that either there are not many good Turks, or she does not feel comfortable with Turks. She goes on to explain

...you don’t see good Turks. I have never met a Turkish girl here that I can be friends with, like ever [...] even then Turkish girls are so bitchy (laughter) they are so so so bitchy. I don’t know why. It is the weirdest thing to me. They are so stuck up, especially some of my cousin’s friends; I hate the way Turkish girls talk like you know, “yaa ihhh”. Aghh it is irritating to me. So annoying. You know whiny\(^{39}\) kind of. Why are you talking like that? Like a child. [...] You look dumb. I just cannot get along with Turkish girls. Cause they are the ones coming from Turkey. They are mostly students. So they are very Turkish and I am very Turkish Canadian. So their views and my views completely clash. I don’t say they look down on me but they look on me like we are not the same calibre. You know my Turkish is bad, I am a Canadian girl, like ohh she was born in Canada like she is completely Canadian. I find it pretentious and annoying. I don’t know if I can be friends with people like that. I found that Turkish girls are like that. Even ones I met in Turkey. They are really irritating.

Leyla’s statement indicates that due to cultural differences, worldviews and habitus, (ways of speaking and behaving) cultural clash exists within and between Turkish youth even though they have a common cultural background.

Consequently, young people’s linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds affect their interactions with people. In this regard, first-generation youth are socially and linguistically disadvantaged compared to second-generation youth who were born, raised and educated in Canada. First-generation youth have to rebuild their social and education network, which takes time and effort. In the early years of migration they are mostly limited to their Turkish circle, which slows down their adaptation to the host society. Finally, the language barrier is not only a barrier between Turkish youth and the dominant culture but also between Turkish youth and other minority youth (e.g., Turks and Chinese people).

6.3. Turkish Youth’s cultural encounters with the dominant group

According to the results of the study, first- and second-generation youth have different perspectives on the dominant culture. While first-generation youth use “us/them” dichotomy while describing the Canadian culture, second-generation youth have an “insider” perspective towards the dominant culture and how to develop a relationship with the dominant society.
Some of the first-generation immigrant youth think that building relationships with the dominant society requires that one party should adapt and adopt certain “Canadian” habits and characteristics (e.g., eating pork, clubbing, watching hockey). Kemal explains “although they want to learn other cultures, when it comes to friendship, close friendship⁴⁰, then they are friends with each other, not with immigrants. They put limits on their friendship.” So, for Kemal, Turks and Canadians are not only different, but also their habits, ways of living and choices of in friends are different. This indicates that for most of the first-generation youth there are borders/limits in the host society with regard to socializing, acceptance and inclusion. It seems that understanding the nature of these limits and borders in social interaction between minority youth and the dominant society is important to uncover the realities of inclusion and exclusion in Canada.

Similarly, Emel, a first-generation immigrant youth, makes a division between people who have cultural experience (e.g., immigrants) and people who have no immigration and travel experience. Emel reports that she feels she is close to the first category which is comprised of “confused” people like her: People who migrated to Canada and are puzzled by all these cultural diversities and differences. For Emel, these people don’t know where exactly they are coming from and where they belong, but they are purely focused on, and interested in, other people and cultures. By contrast, people who have no cultural experience, do not have much curiosity about other cultures. Emel reports “when you ask them a question, they don’t ask you the same question. It means that they are not interested. They already have friends. Why should they know about you, why should they care about you?” Emel’s discussion about friendship indicates that first-generation Turkish young people have a critical perspective towards friendship. The other party’s cultural background and immigration history affects the nature of their interaction with other people.

These critiques indicate that first generation youth describe Canadians as “the others.” That is, Canadians are different from “us” and “we” are not Canadians. In other words, the “us”/“them” dichotomy exists for the first-generation. In this regard, while such divisions may keep a distance between the dominant culture and the immigrant youth, this cannot be considered a barrier to adaptation, because Turkish youth have multiple attachments and complex identities. In

⁴⁰ Close friendship means dostluk in Turkish.
other words, although they talk about binary oppositions and us/them dichotomies, they do not live their lives through fixed and standardized styles and categories. Their inconsistent, ambiguous and changing ideas should be taken into account to understand their constantly changing lives and identities.

On the other hand, while Turkish youth are busy with decoding the new codes and adapting themselves to these norms and codes in the host country, second-generation youth have an insider look on the dominant culture. For most of the second-generation youth, us/them division have a new direction: while they identify themselves as Canadians, newcomers or immigrants comprise the category “them” for the second-generation youth. So, it is fascinating to see this shift from “they are the Canadians” of the first-generation, to “we are the Canadians” of the second-generation. How can this transformation be explained? Is this transformation an indicator of integration? These are significant questions, pertinent to understanding immigrant youth’s experiences of inclusion/exclusion in Canada.

Ahmet’s statement shows that some of the second-generation youth feel not only accepted, but also they feel entitled to accept non-Canadians. Ahmet reports

For me, as a Canadian, if I wanna accept someone else I don’t care like what they do, like they don’t have to act like a Canadian. To me that is not a problem if they watch hockey, act Canadian, if they speak English at home. It does not really matter to me as a Canadian. I will accept them.

Here Ahmet determines not only the Canadian lifestyle, habits and norms but also he emphasizes his Canadianness by accepting the others who are not Canadians.

Similarly, Osman, considers himself to be part of the majority (i.e., Canadian) and gives suggestions to immigrants or the “others” about their integration to the society. He reports

you should simply hang out, spend time with Canadians, instead of secluding yourself into people of your culture….Most Taiwanese or Chinese people come here because there are so many Chinese and Taiwanese, their first step is to hang out with those people cause they are more comfortable that is the biggest mistake you can make if you want to be comfortable in Canada, the biggest mistake. Maybe it is obviously good to find someone that they feel comfortable but at the same time you have to force yourself to try different things so you get used to living here. That is probably the hardest part for people who immigrated from China or Taiwan and when they come here they are so tempted, like they always speak Mandarin or Cantonese with their Chinese, Taiwanese friends; like they always go to Asian markets like everyone speaks their own language and there is their own writing
their own culture everywhere. So tempting, so available, but if you keep doing that you are never gonna learn the language, the culture or anything. s/he is basically gonna be a Chinese or Taiwanese person living in Canada. Watching hockey games with Chinese people speaking Chinese then it is not gonna make any difference. Not what you are doing, what people you are with.

Osman’s statement can be interpreted in two ways. First, as one of the majority, Osman separates himself from immigrants and advises what an immigrant should and shouldn’t do in Canada. I think this dominant language; “we, as Canadians, know better what is good for immigrants,” is the most striking difference between first and second-generation. Second, interestingly, like other Turkish youth, Osman’s target group is Asian immigrants rather than Turkish immigrants. Osman’s report indicates once again the asymmetrical power dynamics between minority youth; why is the Asian population seen as a threatening minority group by Turks? Might the growing Chinese population be a factor causing tension among Turks and Chinese? Is this a culture clash with regard to religious differences between Turks and Chinese? Or, is it just because the Asian population is the only reference point for Turkish youth? In other words, because of the housing segregation Turkish youth, especially in Richmond, mostly encounter Asian minorities rather than upper-middle class, white people. Kaya’s argument confirms that Chinese people are seen as the majority, due to the size of their population in Vancouver, and hence Turks may see the Chinese as rivals: “in Richmond more than 50% of the population is Chinese. Whites are the “visible minority”. Chinese are the majority.” It is interesting to see that immigrant youth categorize white and Chinese people in binary opposition. If essentialism is one of the realities of youth, then as researchers we should try to uncover these realities to understand young people and their experiences.

On the other hand, some of the arguments of the young people indicate that categories such as white and non-white are changing with regard to the nature of the neighbourhood (that is, whether it is mostly populated by whites or non-whites). For example, Musa reports that he is treated white because he lives in a minority neighbourhood where there are not many people from the dominant –white- culture. Musa reports,

There is either American white or European white. European white is calm, quite, short hair, girlish, blonde and American white is loud, arrogant, and cool. They think that I am American white because of skin colour and how I act. Since there are not many
Europeans, you are white here... So when they know I am Turkish, they are like ‘oh I thought you are white or European’.

Results indicate that Turkish youth’s cultural encounters with the dominant and minority groups change according to Turkish youth’s immigration status, their sense of belonging and, indirectly, their approach towards the concepts “minority” and “majority”. While first-generation youth are limited by the cultural and linguistic boundaries between themselves and others (i.e., dominant and the other minorities), second-generation youth’s multiple forms of identities, their reconstruction of categories, (such as “visible minority” vs. “majority”) are responses to essentialism, stereotyping and racism. The boundaries among young people can be overcome by the hybrid, complex identities of immigrant youth. Meta-narratives are subject to change and young people are the main agents of this change.

6.4. Tension between Turks and other minorities

The results indicate that the tension between Turkish youth and other minorities is complex and multiple, primarily based on religious and ethnic differences and spacial factors (e.g., housing).

While certain neighbourhoods (e.g., within Richmond) are mostly populated by minorities (e.g., Chinese people and Turks), neighbourhoods like Point Grey are mostly populated by well-educated, upper-middle class, white people. In this regard, it might be assumed that to a certain extent housing segregation exists in Vancouver, based on social class and ethnic background. Due to this limited contact between minority and dominant groups, social interaction and tensions arise mostly among minority groups, rather than between minority and majority groups.

Accordingly, first and second-generation Turkish immigrant youth complain about the predominant Asian population in their neighbourhood, especially in Richmond. Turkish youth utter discriminatory statements about other minority youth, namely Chinese and Taiwanese people, which may be considered an important sign of a potential ethnic conflict among minorities in the future. Kemal, a first-generation religious youth, states [Taiwanese] youth have their own group. I mean I can also be in their group but I cannot communicate with them cause they speak weird. They swear constantly. They always speak about the same topics like girls and clubbing. I am trying to stay away from this group. Somehow I choose my own friends.
Kemal’s argument indicates that regardless of their immigration status, Muslim youth, unlike non-religious youth, have a limited and sometimes conflictual relationship with other non-Muslim minority youth. This, as a result, may be considered a dilemma; religion is a factor which creates boundaries between other non-Muslim minority youth and non-religious Turkish youth, or it is a factor which fosters solidarities among Muslim youth.

Similarly, Musa reports,

I am disgusted with the newcomer Chinese who think that they are in their home country. Their numbers are constantly increasing…. Too many Chinese. When you walk through the school everyone speaks Chinese, you smell noodles, you smell weird food things, most Chinese people, when you go to class, they know everything before they go into class cause they have tutors and stuff, so it gets annoying for them to be looking smarter than you, it is annoying and they are annoying.

Musa goes on to explain the tension between himself and other minorities in general and his dislike and intolerance for Chinese in particular:

Chinese look at you and laugh at you. You don’t know what they are saying…The number of Chinese people is constantly increasing. There is no difference between Hong Kong and Canada. Everywhere is full of Chinese. Chinese irritate me. Therefore, Turkey is more comfortable. You can express your religion as you like. Here [in Canada] while there is only one mosque, there are more than 20 churches in Richmond. Here they don’t allow to azan, in Turkey they do.

It is fascinating to see that Musa interprets Chinese people, who are minorities, as a majority in Vancouver, as though they are the dominant and thus the target population. For Musa, Chinese people are non-Muslim and therefore the “other.” Musa’s feelings about Chinese people lead me to generate some hypothesis about the relationship among minorities. Is there minority racism, as Nayak argues? Or how can Turkish youth’s intolerance against Chinese people be explained? What might be the nature of minority racism among two or more minority groups which have limited power and are subordinated by the dominant society? Or how can minority racism be explained while social privileges associated with skin color and accent are valid indicators of the status of a non-white minority youth? Do minorities have conflictual relations with each other because they don’t interact with the dominant society as in the case for minorities in Richmond?
Correspondingly Ayse reports,

I am kind of sick of seeing Chinese people here. I don’t wanna be racist or anything but it’s too much….i dont like the way they act. I don’t know, it is just so weird. It is like I feel like I am in the village sometimes. They fight over everything, even for one penny. I don’t wanna be mean or anything but they act like they don’t know English so they are not in trouble “ohh me no English no no” but they know English perfectly well. They are acting stupid so you won’t get mad at them they were just so, oh my god, dump. I don’t know (pause) [...] They all live here and they are all wealthy and prices are going up in Richmond, and everything is so expensive here now, and everybody is running away from here cause they are all here. I do not know (pause) [Chinese are] hill billies. Like walking in the middle of the street, not caring about anybody, bad driving... I don’t know, they are just weird sometimes some of them [Chinese people] are annoying.”

The occurrence of ethnic tension between two minority groups –Chinese who are the majority of the minority and Turkish who are the minority of the minority- with regard to using the space in general, and housing in particular, leads me to think about the spacial dimensions of racism/ethnic conflict: Chinese people are blamed for various reasons: Turkish youth condemn them for overpopulation, bad English, bad driving, carelessness, and high prices in Richmond. Interestingly, although both Turks and Chinese are minorities, in terms of their limited access to power, the “overpopulation” of one minority is seen as a threatening factor for the other minority.

Power is also a crucial issue that we must consider related to the ethnic conflict between two minority groups. Can we talk about asymmetrical power relations between Chinese and Turkish minority youth? In other words, do they occupy different categories of power? If so, what could be the nature of this unequal relationship? Is this unequal power relation based on the fact that they live in the same neighbourhood and occupy the same space? Is this a question of asymmetrical power dynamics, conflict, racism, exclusion and negotiation among minorities to gain access to markets (e.g., housing and education) which are in fact regulated by the dominant society? That is, does the privileged position of the dominant trigger inequalities and lead to tension among minorities? Is Turkish youth’s intolerance toward the Chinese population in Richmond a reflection of the dominant ideology? Why does the overpopulation of Chinese people, that is, the size of the population become a threatening factor for an underpopulated minority? Research indicates that the minority population is a critical factor for the dominant

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41 Muslim call to prayer
42 Resmen dagdan inmisler.
culture and the state with regard to maintaining control over the home (Hage, 1998). However, it is fascinating to see that large population of the Asian minority, namely Chinese, can be a threatening factor for another minority groups, the Turks. Can we refer to this ethnic tension between two minority groups as racism, although they are both subordinated by the dominant culture? While Turks and Chinese are targets of cultural racism, how can a subordinated minority group dominate another minority group? Is this because of the lack of governmental belonging, the lack of capacity to deploy personal power, as Hage (1998) discusses? It seems that while the power dimension explains racism between the dominant and subordinated, it fails to explain racism between and within minorities (e.g., how can we explain discrimination against one Muslim minority group by other Muslim minority group?). What about solidarity between Turks and other minorities, say Indians? How can this solidarity be explained among minorities who have no common history or cultural background? If this solidarity is based on diaspora psychology, (such as the belief that minorities should support each other to survive), then why is there tension between Turkish and Chinese minorities?

In sum, the tension between Turks and other minorities stems from various reasons, such as ethnic, linguistic and spatial. Turkish youth’s intolerance of Chinese can be conceptualized as minority-minority racism. Due to the size of the population, Chinese people are seen as rivals and threats to the Turkish minority. Racism among minorities seems a complex issue with multiple influences and thus needs further scrutiny.

6.5. Parents’ immigration experiences and its impact on Turkish youth’s adaptation to Canada

The results indicate that there is a positive correlation between how immigration was experienced by the parents of Turkish youth and the youth’s experience of immigration and their subsequent sense of belonging. Political uncertainties, occupational and educational inequalities and natural disasters (the earthquake) in Turkey are some of the reasons that parents chose to immigrate to Canada. Mehmet’s case indicates that educational inequalities in Turkey and the Turkish educational system’s obsession with exams, (especially the university entrance exam – OSS) are push factors encouraging Turkish youth and their parents to migrate to Canada. Mehmet reports, “we migrated to Canada for a better education and a better future. Bosphorus
and METU are the universities everyone wants to enter, and to enter into these universities you are spending your whole life. [...] it is very frustrating.” In addition, Turkish youth report that finding jobs and housing, dealing with financial issues, building a social network and overcoming the language barrier are the most important challenges their parents face in the first/early years in Canada.

The data indicates that Turkish immigrants comprise primarily two different social classes; professional and working-class and these groups have different challenges after immigrating to Canada. People from the professional group, who comprise the secular group in Turkish community, experience difficulties in the labour market and often settle for jobs with low qualifications (e.g., taxi driver), since their diplomas and jobs experiences are not recognized (see also Aycan and Berry, 1996). Mine reports,

In order to be recognized here as an engineer, my father worked as a dress person for a long time which is as far as I understand still in engineering but more technical. And then because here engineers have their kinda organization, to be recognized by them he did his masters and then unfortunately at the time the market wasn’t very good so he kind of did odd jobs here and there he drove a taxi for a while he did a lot of labour work… So 5-6 years passed until he found this job after they migrated to Canada… [my mother’s] degree was not recognized as an architect… she was able to work as an architect, just not call herself officially an architect, cause there were 11 exams she needed to pass before she could be called an architect. […] I remember she failed one exam the score she needed was 75 and she scored 74 and so they failed her and she had to do it again. …So it took her over 10 or 15 years before she was fully registered as an architect here.

Immigrants from working-class background, who comprise the religious group, face difficulties with immigration procedures such as paper work and family reunification. As a result, some Turkish youth didn’t see their parents in Canada for up to 5-7 years and had financial problems, (e.g., selling their homes to immigrate to Canada) which in turn affected their sense of belonging and adaptation to Canada. Melek states,

first my father came to Canada. We arrived here 7 years after his arrival. We had a lot of financial problems. We sold our house. My father came here for us. He thought we would be better here. He struggled for 7 years to bring us here. We were separated for 7 years. We grew up without our father. It was very hard.
While Turkish youth are struggling with the new environment and financial difficulties, their parents are also having difficulties in adaptation and building a social network. Emel’s individual essay indicates the difficulties faced by parents of Turkish youth’s in the host country:

My family kept meeting other families in the Turkish community since that was easier than trying to make friends with neighbours. That helped us to keep our sanity in the lonely world of migration. Yet, it definitely hindered the speed at which we were able to absorb and to be immersed in the language and culture. It took an unhealthy two years before I felt like I was truly a resident of Vancouver, BC. I think it might have taken my brother shorter since he was younger, but it was definitely a lot longer for my parents to feel a part of the community. They still have trouble sometimes and I don’t think that that will ever change.

Emel discusses the dilemma faced by her parents, and indirectly herself, in adapting to Canada after migration: people must choose to build a social network within their own community or immerse themselves in the new culture and people from diverse backgrounds.

In addition to the adaptation problems of the parents, some of the working class families come up short in responding to youth’s educational and social challenges. Gul reports,

we didn’t know English. Our teacher was giving us homework, we didn’t know anything about that. There was nobody to ask for help. Everybody was busy. It was very tough. My dad was working for someone else. You know this was not his country. Different. I was crying to go back to Turkey. In Adapazari we had our own home. Everything was great. We had friends. We left everything behind and started living in a one bedroom apartment.

Moreover, some of the Turkish youth from working-class families report that they had difficulties finding housing when they migrated to Canada. Leyla states,

Right now I am satisfied. Before it was a lot harder like when they [her parents] first immigrated to Canada. They really didn’t have a stable living arrangement...I remember when I was a lot younger, me, my mother, father, my sister, aunt, uncle, two other cousins, grandma, grandpa all live at one house. We were together from the age of 3 or 4 till about grade 3. So I can say 9 [years] maybe. So for a while we were with the family. So, it was really crowded. But now it is really spacious. Cause my parents they built their own business now.

It seems that there is a positive correlation between immigrant youth’s housing conditions, their parents’ employment and financial circumstances, and the time spent in Canada.

The struggles Turkish immigrants undergo(e.g., emotional and financial difficulties) in Canada also explains why some of the Turkish youth and their parents want to go back to Turkey
after they spent so many years in the host country. Both secular and religious Turkish immigrant families have “retirement plans” that involve going back to Turkey. In addition, they make investments, (they have summer houses) and they have emotional attachments, (strong ties with relatives and friends) in Turkey which in turn influence their children’s attachments and sense of belonging.

6.6. Summary

This chapter examined the life experiences of Turkish youth by looking at their cultural and social experiences in the public space in Vancouver. According to the results, young people’s immigration status, religious affiliation, gender and social class background determine their social experiences of inclusion/exclusion in the host country. While the state’s policies and the mainstream’s prejudices are important factors in affecting the experiences of minority youth in general, due to the linguistic and religious gap, first -generation, Muslim female youth are more subject to discrimination than second -generation, non-religious youth. First -generation youth are also disadvantaged socially, as they are uprooted from their social ties and they don’t have a back-up plan or a social network in Canada as they did in Turkey. The second -generation youth seem more equipped with the dominant codes and therefore they are more successful to handle discrimination and stereotyping. Their multiple and complex identities deconstruct the old, essentialized, stereotyping categories of racism.

On the other hand, some of the Turkish youth report that while they haven’t experienced exclusion personally, have witnessed the marginalization of other minority groups (e.g., Indian and Chinese). One of the fascinating results of the study is that while some of the Turkish youth report that they are treated badly by Chinese people, some of the statements indicate that Turkish youth discriminate against Chinese, as well. This shows that minorities can exclude and be excluded by others at the same time, which may be seen as potential racism among minorities. Also, it can be concluded that minorities live side by side with each other, but separated from the dominant particularly in Richmond. So, it can be assumed that partial segregation exists between the minorities and the majority culture. Turkish youth’s intercultural relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds, and finally their parents’ immigration experiences, positively impact young people’s lived experiences in Canada. Parents’ temporary and precarious
status in the host country, as well as their struggles in the labour market, negatively affect young people’s sense of belonging in Canada.
Turkish Youth’s Educational Experiences in Vancouver

This chapter attempts to address educational experiences of Turkish immigrant youth in Vancouver. The chapter is divided into two sub-sections drawing on everyday accounts of schooling as expressed by young people. The first section discusses young Turkish immigrants’ educational challenges with regard to discrimination at school. In the second section, segregation in high schools in Vancouver will be discussed in order to uncover the interplay between the social aspects of education, and Turkish students’ positions within group dynamics in particular, and school culture in general.

Results indicate that it is important for Turkish youth to be social and have friends in order to feel accepted and included in the school culture. In addition, significant survival strategies involve managing the transition periods (especially grade 8 and 9)- being able to adapt to a new environment and institution, coping with language struggles, dealing with differences in cultural norms and rules in school. As first- and second-generation youth have different immigration experiences and cultural identities, they have different opinions and experiences with schooling in Canada.

First-generation immigrant youth’s pre-migration educational experiences, (i.e., the Turkish educational system and their social and linguistic capital) and their post-immigration experiences affect their educational impressions in Canada. In this regard, their parents’ changing decisions about where to live, and their constant movement back and forth, within Canada and between Canada and Turkey, have both positive and negative impacts on first -generation immigrant youth’s school experiences. Also, this temporary but perpetual migration affects young people’s first and second language choices (they learn, unlearn, and relearn English and Turkish) which influence their educational achievements, their relationships with their peers as well as their sense of belonging. In sum, there is a correlation between experiences of immigration and schooling of first -generation immigrant youth in the host country.

Consequently, the positive correlation between the experiences of immigration and academic attainment of immigrant youth separates the first- generation from the second -generation. While first- generation youth talking about challenges especially in the social aspects of education (i.e., their inability to make friends and their disconnection due to language and
emotional barriers), second-generation youth emphasize education’s welcoming aspects, such as their ability to make friends and have fun at school.

7.1. Turkish Youth’s challenges at school

According to the results of the study, first-generation youth, unlike second-generation youth, have linguistic, social, economic, cultural and emotional challenges at school. Due to language and cultural barriers, first-generation youth have difficulties building social network, making friends and attending curricular and non-curricular events (e.g., home parties). In addition, their parents’ temporary migration between Turkey and Canada affects young people’s educational experiences. Moreover, because of financial difficulties some of the first-generation youth (three out of seven), from working-class families, had to drop out of school. In Vancouver Turks can be seen as a minor minority, (or an other amongst others) given that the Turkish population is very small in a city with many minority communities, some of which are a visible numerical majority in some spaces. This state of being the other’s other, or a minor minority has negative emotional impacts on Turkish immigrant youth. Finally, some of the first-generation youth have social challenges at school. They struggle to “fit in” with the dominant school culture, to make connection, to be included, to be accepted, to be understood by their peers. The Second-generation, by contrast, do better in school (five out of seven attend university and two of them are high school students) and have more positive experiences in school. This indicates that in the educational sphere first-generation youth, especially from working-class families, are more linguistically and economically disadvantaged than second-generation youth from middle-class and well-educated families.

The data indicates that there is a positive correlation between the parents’ decision to move back and forth between Canada and Turkey, language acquisition/loss, and the educational attainment of immigrant youth. Gul’s case shows that parents’ uncertainty about where to live has a negative influence on youth’s educational success. Gul states that she had to move back and forth between Canada and Turkey four times from grade 10 to grade 11. Finally, as a result of this constant demand to adapt and readapt combined with family and personal crises, she had to drop out of high school. Interestingly, Ayse’s case, by contrast, indicates that youth’s parent’s temporary migration and indecisive movements between two countries may not result in
educational failure, but may provide youth with different educational experience, cultural insights and improved social skills. Ayse reports,

Thanks to my parents, I changed my school every year. Even if I was just in Canada we kept on moving all the time. Because every second summer or every summer we went to Turkey for vacation and since it is a renting house we have to move to another place. That would be necessitate a new school. So, always I have to make new friends, which is one of the reasons why I am a very social person now.

Ayse goes on to explain her educational experience in Turkey:

in grade 5 I went to Turkey to a private [Muslim] Turkish school...Grade 5 it was good. hm how to say.. I was very rebellious in school. …I didn't know how I was supposed to do things and why I was supposed to do things because Turkish schools are very different you know.

Ayse’s argument indicates that Muslim schools in particular and the Turkish educational system in general can be a challenge for second-generation Muslim youth, though young people have the ability to live in two different cultures. Muslim Turkish youth are separated from the dominant society in Turkey because of diverse interpretations of Muslimness and religious world-views.

On the other hand, for some first-generation Turkish immigrant youth, the social aspects of education, living and studying with people from diverse backgrounds, seems to be a challenge in terms of understanding and being understood by others. Riza argues that although diversity is an asset, it creates distance between students:

Students do not care about each other. I mean they say whatever you do is none of my business and walk away. They try to participate in events etc. But other than that they don’t have sincerity towards each other. What they do is ‘hi, hi, how are?’ That’s it. There is nothing other than that. I feel this gap [between myself and others] so much. That’s why I don’t like here [Canada].

Here Riza underlines individualism and alienation which, he thinks, are negative qualities of social and educational life in Canada. He also implies that these values are factors which make his adaptation difficult, as they are different from his home culture. Moreover, his argument indicates that social and educational cultures are inseparable and interrelated. The dominant norms of social life affect the rules of the education system and vice versa.
Leyla’s story, on the other hand, indicates that minority youth have unique experiences: they have been exposed to different educational systems, and furthermore they have had to learn, unlearn and relearn languages. The account of Leyla, a second-generation female youth, indicates that elementary school was the most critical period in her educational life, wherein she was first made aware of the cultural and linguistic differences between herself and her peers. Uniquely, although she was born in Canada, she had to learn English and make connection with her class and schoolmates. Leyla reports,

…my grandma raised me. She didn’t know anything about English so obviously she could not teach me. I went to kindergarten so that is why I started learning it. I learned English for 2 years and then my parents made a huge mistake of going back to Turkey when I was 7. So guess what happens I forgot it all. I forgot all my English that I just spent two years learning. Elementary school was really really hard because of that. It made many things difficult, especially in the sense of making friends. Just because of the cultural differences and like being Muslim. It was just really hard making friends cause you cannot identify with people.

Leyla’s discussion shows us that for second-generation youth who do not speak English, elementary school may be the first transitional place where immigrant youth realize differences and gaps between themselves and the dominant culture. Linguistic and cultural differences are important elements which may negatively affect immigrant youth’s educational attainment, self-identification and integration into the school culture. Moreover, Leyla’s case demonstrates that in addition to language and culture (i.e., religion) there are multiple factors which affect immigrant youth’s social relations at school. Although the rules that regulate the social and educational relations among young people are unwritten, they are powerful in determining who is out/in, who is accepted/not accepted. It is worthwhile to discover how these unwritten and unseen rules run through language in school culture and how they affect young people’s sense of belonging in school and in society overall.

The reports from young people indicate that these unseen rules turn into tangible realities for young people, which decide their educational attainment, status, hopes, fears and identities at school. Riza and Emel’s cases show that while language defines someone’s academic career, it also manipulates his/her social relations. Riza reports that his basic challenge in university is language. Riza says, “when you have difficulty with language, you don’t understand the course,
you have trouble with communication. As a result, you don’t want to study…That’s why I failed in one of my courses.”

In some cases, especially in high school and elementary school, the dominant language makes the immigrant student an outsider. The dominant language regulates the linguistic market and the “linguistic habitus,” that is, students’ linguistic practices (such as accent and style of speech), which in turn affects Turkish immigrant youth’s linguistic and cultural capital, as well as their position in the field (Topper, 2001) - in classrooms. Emel explains her language struggle, fear of not fitting in culturally, and feelings of being alone and isolated in high school years due to her language struggles.

I was the only Turkish girl at my school and this definitely had its downsides…I was isolated. I already had no hopes of having friends with any of the Canadian students at the school because of my English. ...and all my fears set in; fears of not fitting in, fears of being rejected by the [school] community, classmates and so on. That was worsened by my actual experience of not being able to make friends right away.

These examples indicate that the ability to speak English and make friends constitute the social pressure of schooling or the social aspects of education. Immigrant youth are linguistically marginalized by their peers in the field, since their linguistic capital (Turkish accent) is different from the dominant, which creates inequalities and conflicts among youth from diverse backgrounds (e.g., economically, culturally, linguistically disadvantaged immigrant youth versus the majority).

Leyla’s argument shows that while immigrant youth are linguistically disadvantaged, they do not receive any extra assistance to make them feel welcomed and accepted, regardless of their English levels. Moreover, ESL classes may make immigrant students more vulnerable and isolated.

Leyla reports,

I was not really treated differently as in, like, “you don’t speak English so I am gonna make it a lot easier on you, like, help you out.” That never happened. The only extra assistance was in ESL…And I think that is really detrimental cause you are an ESL student and taken to a class for a special time. It just makes you look bad and it is easier to pick on you after that.
Similarly, Emel’s argument confirms that for some of the immigrant students to feel included their teachers and peers’ emotional support (i.e., caring, respect and acceptance) is more important than language support. Emel argues that although teachers are patient with immigrant youth, they do not care much about them. She reports, “The mentality is that you have all the help, if you ask me. Otherwise, that is not my problem to worry about you. I always felt like that. They never came and asked ‘are you ok, you don’t seem to be doing well.’” It seems that although some of the teachers are patient and approachable, immigrant youth need more than that. They need to know they exist; their existence should be acknowledged and recognized. They should not be marginalized because of their language struggles, accents, and cultural and religious differences. They need to feel that they are wanted and welcomed at schools.

While language, culture and religion are significant factors in student relations at school, the minority population in school can be a factor in their experiences of inclusion/exclusion at school. The data indicates that being others’ other (i.e., the Turkish population is very small in a city with many minority communities) and having no Turkish friends at school, makes immigrant youth feel isolated and lonely. These are disadvantaged conditions in terms of power dynamics and the possibility of being included in a group. In this regard, the overrepresentation of the Chinese population as a majority-minority at school is considered threatening according to some young Turks.

Similarly, Kaya states that one of the challenges in high school is making friends and being accepted and included in a group. The very limited number of Turkish students at school causes young people to feel isolated, lonely and disconnected from the school. Kaya reports,

It is easy for Chinese to find friends because there are at least 200 Chinese in high school. My high school was divided into two; Chinese and others (laughter). Chinese were also divided into different groups like geeks, weirdoes and jocks. There were a lot of Chinese and it was easy for them to be in a group. But we [Turks] were totally different. I think this was a challenge for me. That is, not being able to see Turks. If there were Turks, it could be easier for me…the bad part was I didn’t have a group that consisted of my own people [Turks].

Kaya’s argument indicates that numbers (that is, people who are overrepresented or underrepresented in a school population) are necessary for creating feelings of inclusion for young people. Therefore, belonging to a larger group of minority students may be considered an
advantageous and privileged condition (which in turn may lead to popularity) for Turkish youth who do not have a distinct population within school culture. Interestingly, the underrepresentation of Turkish youth is juxtaposed with the “overrepresentation” of the Chinese students. This shows that for young people the term “majority” is still associated with number and is considered a positive and dominant designation. And most importantly, the “overrepresentation” of a minority is considered threatening for another minority population.

While some young people emphasize the correlation between the demographics of the student population and their ability to be included in a group and thus the threatening nature of large numbers of Chinese students in schools, some youth mention the difficulty of socializing with Chinese students at school. Musa reports,

Most Chinese people, when you go to class, they know everything before they go into class cause they have tutors and stuff. So it gets annoying for them to be looking smarter than you. It is annoying. They are annoying.

I think this statement from Musa, who is a second-generation youth, is a strong one which has many educational and sociological implications. First, it shows a young Turkish man’s prejudice and intolerance against a minority culture; their cultural habits in school and public sphere at large. It seems that examining ethnic conflict and prejudice among minorities is an important inquiry with will uncover minority relationships in schools in Vancouver. Second, social class is also an important factor which can help us to understand ethnic/cultural conflict, tension and prejudices among minority students. Musa’s assumption about the academic success of Chinese students can be interpreted as a class conflict between minority students from working-class families (Musa is one of them) and Chinese minority students from upper-middle class families who are financially and educationally privileged. To uncover interethnic relations among youth requires that we understand the importance of class as a factor in their lives (Rizvi, 2006). This perspective may also explain the interplay between class, space and ethnicity in Turkish youth’s relations with other minorities in Vancouver. While tensions exist between Chinese and Turkish students in Richmond, we do not see the same conflicts between Turks and the dominant students, simply because Richmond is populated by working-class minorities. Finally, Musa’s complaint shows the clash between the minor-minority (Turks) and major-minority (Chinese) with regard to the size of the population of minorities in schools in
Vancouver. While a sizeable minority population may empower students and give them confidence in terms of asserting their identities and forming groups, small numbers may slow down their adaptation process and inhibit their sense of belonging. 

Parallel to this argument, Emel’s statement warns of the dangers of exclusion: Without Turkish friends or role models at school youth may face identity crises; they may deny or suppress their cultural backgrounds/identities, claiming to be Canadian, rather than Turkish, and ultimately this denial may lead to feelings of guilt. Emel states, “When I was in Turkey, I was in the popular group. I was on a basketball team. Then after we moved to Canada, I became someone unknown and that’s why I had very difficult times here.” Different group dynamics based on cultural background and youth power relations, (e.g., being popular) may determine an immigrant youth’s self-identification, sense of belonging and feeling of being included/excluded. Emel reports,

Grade 8 and 9 were very difficult because I couldn’t speak English. Since I was in ESL class, I was with other ESL students who were mostly Asian. They already made their friendship circle and didn’t accept others into their groups much. That’s why I was very lonely those days. But after I started dancing at the end of grade 8 and the beginning of grade 9, I built my own circle and started making friends. But for a long time I was under pressure. I couldn’t find my own personality. I was both Turkish and a teenager. Later we moved to Richmond. I was the only Turk in the school. There were no Turkish people at all. There was no Turkish TV at home. Since I immersed myself in the Canadian life style, I almost forgot my Turkishness. My Turkish was shaky. I did not even think about going back to Turkey. Maybe I was looking down on the Turkish life style. So, I was so confused. My father was unemployed too. Will we go back or stay? I was telling myself; I am not Turkish, I cannot be Turkish. But at the same time, I was feeling guilty about the denial of my identity. This period was very weird. I was 12-13 years old.

Emel goes on to explain that she started to recover herself, her Turkish identity, her Turkish personality, after she met Turkish people in Vancouver and after her visit to Turkey. After all these identity crisis and struggles, she regained her Turkish identity. Like Emel, Kaya reiterates that there is always inclusion/exclusion in high schools especially in grade 8-9-10-11. There are always borders, differences, groupings, but these in/visible lines are always subject to  

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43 but also, the flip side, being a conspicuously large minority group can have negative effects, as students become the targets of hatred for other minority youth who are similarly excluded not only from the dominant group, but also from the minority groups.
challenge, change and dis/appearance. Turkish youth report that in higher grades such as grades 11 and 12 these groups collapse and mix together. It is fascinating to see that while borders between young people are so intense in early grades, they are subject to change and often disappear in later grades. It is worth studying the reasons for these changes and group dynamics to scrutinize the interethnic relations among minority students. Such an inquiry might lead us to see the exclusion and ethnic conflict between minority groups, as well as between majority and minority groups.

Though they were born in Canada and speak English as a first language, the pressure to “fit in” with the dominant culture (that is white, middle-class, economically privileged) is another struggle for some of the non-religious, second-generation youth. In this regard Mine’s case indicates that minority youth, even if the minority youth are from well-educated, middle-class families, have difficulties fitting in with the dominant culture at school. Mine reports,

in high and elementary school I didn’t have many ethnic friends. Most of my friends had white skin, blue eyes, blonde hair. I always wanted to have white skin, blonde hair, blue eyes. …And I had none of them. So as a teenager, I really struggled with that. I always wanted it to be…I was going through ‘oh I just wanna fit in I just wanna be like everyone else.’

This indicates that for some second generation immigrant youth the dominant represents white, middle-class and well-educated people. In this regard, it is important for Turkish youth to have ethnic friends and role models, to feel included and part of the school culture. On the other hand, in order to understand the status and feelings of inferiority expressed by minority youth in schools, it is critical to question why the ideal prototype still has white skin and blue eyes.

These arguments of Turkish immigrant youth show that being social, extraverted and academically successful are school norms and indirectly significant factors which lead to acceptance in high school culture in Canada. In this regard, these norms may create inequalities among students and may put social and linguistic pressure on immigrant youth, especially on the first-generation youth, who have different languages and cultural codes from the dominant culture. This may explain why most of the first generation youth, who came to Canada after they graduated from high school in Turkey, have trouble making friends and forming “meaningful” relationships. In addition, the transformation from being someone who had a story that s/he left behind to being an unknown person affects young people’s identity and sense of belonging.
7.2. Discrimination at school

According to the results of the study, Turkish youth, regardless of their immigration status, age, gender, religious affiliation and social class, have experienced discrimination at school. Youth cite their language, religion, ways of living, habits, and cultural backgrounds as the reasons they are treated differently by their peers and teachers at school. Teachers’ discriminatory comments and behaviour against Turkish youth and the biased curriculum constitute the instruments of domination (i.e., the imposition of the dominant values and the negligence of minority’s history and culture).

The education system perpetrates symbolic violence by imposing dominant narratives, norms and values, without acknowledging Turkish immigrant youth, other minority students, or their cultural backgrounds and knowledge. Pedagogic practice turns into symbolic violence through which hierarchies and inequalities are created, the dominant society is elevated and Turkish immigrant youth are devalued when the master narratives is perpetually presented as the norm, the superior and singular truth in the classroom. As the sole figures of authority, teachers lend strength and validity to the biased curriculum.

In fact, Turkish youth are mostly aware that power dynamics work in favour of the dominant cultural and dominant educational values. Musa, in this regard, complains that in the Canadian educational system, the curriculum predominantly details British and French history, disregarding other cultures, including his own. The negligence of the minority’s culture and history by the official discourses (e.g., the state’s educational policies) might be an educational and social challenge for the immigrant youth. Musa reports,

The whole world knows that the Ottoman Empire was great. But here everybody talks about the British, British, French, French states. In schools mostly they speak about the same countries. I get irritated when they say the greatest was the British, and then Americans came, they did this, they did that. I mean mostly they talk about their own cultures in school. That is very annoying.

Musa is aware of the fact that the curriculum privileges the dominant cultures, not by the Chinese despite the “overpopulation” of Chinese students in schools. So, while living with other minority cultures is an everyday social challenge for Musa, his educational challenge involves dealing with the biased curriculum. As a condition for integrating immigrant youth, we must recognize the students’ cultural backgrounds in the social and educational fields. It is necessary to
enhance cross-cultural awareness in order to maximize minority students’ potential in classrooms.

Similarly, Ayse reports that she finds it very annoying that Turkey is absent from the school curriculum.

We are doing history. We are talking about food culture. It is like it is always about other countries and small stuff but they never talk about Turkey; how we ruled about for 400 hundred years. I just find it so stupid how it is never talked about. Something it annoys me a lot. We were never really known. …or when we talked about baklava, doner everyone is like ‘ohh these are Greek’ and I am like ‘no, it is Turkish’ and everyone knows about Greece but no one knows about Turkey… maybe you can ask [in your research]‘how do you feel about people not realizing Turkey.’ They never mention [Turkey] you know. Like in geography. We always talk about China, we always talk about those countries but Turkey is a Euro-Asian country that is like unique. Middle of Europe, middle of Asia, it has a very different, unique culture, we ruled, Osmanli you know, but they never talk about that. They talk about sushi, or talk about Germany, their little things or talk about Hitler and stuff like that. But they never talk about Turkish stuff which is very annoying to me.

It seems that neglecting minority students’ history and culture can be as discriminatory and destructive as naming their ancestors “barbaric.” Implicit and explicit discriminatory statements, comments, and behaviour may marginalize minority students. Kemal says, “the aim is to make communication better among people, to make people [minorities] feel better here, and to prevent prejudices. Prejudices are annoying.” It seems that ignorance leads to prejudice which is annoying for young people. So, the suggestion to overcome these annoying and exclusionary practices might be to teach alternative knowledge from other countries.

In addition to the biased curriculum, teachers’ discriminatory actions should be noted as another reason for Turkish youth’s marginalization at schools. It is important to take the teacher’s ethnicity, class, gender and ideological background (the teacher’s habitus) into account, to understand their position and perspective on students in the classrooms. As Bourdieu argues, “teachers take their habitus for granted precisely because [they are] caught up in it, bound up with it; [they] inhabit it like a garment” (Bourdieu cited in Herr and Anderson, 2003, p. 419). The significant point here is that although there are different power dynamics in the classroom, generally a teacher’s authority, and indirectly his/her habitus, dominates a minority student’s habitus, including his/her cultural and linguistic capital. And symbolic violence works through
this domination; the teacher imposes her/his knowledge, values and norms on her/his students as though it was a legitimate, single truth (Passeron and Bourdieu, 1990, p. 4) while refusing to recognize minority students’ cultural backgrounds and knowledge.

In fact, Mine’s case demonstrates how symbolic violence works through the teacher’s habitus, and the stresses the importance of matching a teacher’s habitus with a minority student’s habitus, because the teacher’s habitus does matter and goes beyond the issues of classroom interactions (e.g., teachers belief system or ideological perspective does affect his/her approach towards students as their habitus is created by multiple interactions). In addition, stereotypes circulated by the popular hegemony affect the classroom setting (Rizvi, 2006) and teachers’ approach towards minority students.

Mine explains,

in grade 8 I had a social science teacher. She was teaching us something, at one point she exchanged the words ‘the Turks are barbarians’ and it was awful because a friend of mine turned to me and the whole class went quiet. Because everyone knew I was Turkish. It’s never a secret. When I go anywhere usually first or second question somebody ask me is “what are you?” So everyone knew by that time what I was. So this woman said that and I kinda turned around and looked at her. I, as a child, I respected authority and kinda scared of it. So to me this teacher was like a big figure and I was scared if I ever questioned her and said anything to her out loud you know my grade would not be good and things like that. So actually I didn’t really address it. Looking back I wish I had.

Symbolic violence works through the teacher’s language as the legitimate language and her symbolic capital represents the sole authority in the classroom. Mine’s cultural background is not recognized and is not respected. Mine is literally excluded and becomes undesirable through her teacher’s racist comments. Although disregarding discrimination can be a strategy people use to deal with it, most of the time minority youth may be subordinated, especially if negativity comes from their teacher, the sole authority in class. The teacher’s authority, coercion and racism is justified and legitimated by pedagogic practice (Anderson cited in Herr and Anderson, 2003). So, we clearly see in Mine’s case that pedagogic action turns into symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991). The result is “institutional silencing” (Herr and Anderson, 2003) of Mine. Mine’s fear of failing prevented her from questioning/resisting her teacher’s racism and violence against her cultural identity.
Moreover, this case indicates that pedagogic practice can be a forceful catalyst for transforming the minority habitus of a Turkish student into the dominant habitus: the minority habitus should be turned into the primary habitus by the pedagogical practice, sooner or later. The social function of education is the cultural production of the dominant, (Bourdieu, 1990) or the standardization of students, instead of creating counter minority cultures and habitus. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1990, p. 46) argue, “in any social formation, the dominant mode of inculcation tends to correspond to the interests of the dominant classes; i.e., the legitimate addresses, the differential productivity of the dominant pedagogical work according to the groups or classes on whom it is exerted tends to be a function of the distance between the primary habitus inculcated by primary pedagogical work within the different groups or classes and the habitus inculcated by the dominant pedagogical work.” According to this conceptualization, one of the reasons for Mine’s exclusion from the classroom, is the gap between Mine’s minority habitus and the teacher’s primary habitus. Mine was born in Canada; English is her first language and finally she comes from a middle-class family; nonetheless, her diasporic habitus – her Turkish background and her perhaps “unpopular” physical appearance - does not fit her teachers’ and peers’ dominant habitus and the primary habitus (i.e., the habitus that the pedagogic action intends to inculcate).

Similarly, Muslim female youth report that they face stereotyping and marginalization at school due to their headscarves and Muslim identity. Gul reports that in grade 9 her science teacher was explicitly marginalizing Black and Muslim students, including her:

I had a Jewish teacher who was extremely excluding Muslims. S/he was so annoying, so annoying. S/he was always snapping at me and other friends, too. It was very obvious that s/he was racist. S/he was picking on students. S/he was paying attention to white students. A few students complained about her/him, but nothing happened because there was no evidence.

Likewise, Melek reports that she felt excluded and there was nothing she liked about her school in the past: “One of my teachers was approaching me well. The other teachers were looking down on us. It is tough. Maybe if we were not covered, it would have been different.”

While popular Islamaphobic discourse in society, including the state’s foreign and educational

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44 In Turkish the third person is gender-neutral. Therefore, I used “s/he,” as I do not know if the teacher is a woman or man.
policies especially after 9/11, justifies a teacher’s insult to a Muslim female youth in classroom settings, a teacher’s attitude towards her/his minority students reflects the dominant ideology, belief system and school culture. In other words, the popular culture, including the state’s language and school culture influence each other as the educational system is part of the social system and the society. As Bourdieu and Passeron argue (1990), the history of educational institutions is associated with the history of the corresponding social formations.

In addition to teachers’ discriminatory behaviours, peer’s prejudicial behaviour towards headscarves is also noted by Muslim youth. Melek explains that other students degrade and look down on her because of her headscarf. Melek reports,

One day a Chinese classmate asked me where I bought my headscarf from. I said I bought it from my home country. He asked if that is because of my religion. I said yes. He asked me to take off my headscarf. I said no. Then he said take off that *piece of cloth*. I felt bad. It is very tough when people push and shove you. It is extremely tough. You feel excluded. And this happens in Turkey too.

It seems that Muslim female youth are the “others” because of their religious belief systems and practices, both in Canada and Turkey.

Similarly, Ayse reports that although she was very good at basketball, she wasn’t accepted to the school team by her peers since she was covered. She states,

one thing was very annoying to me in grade 8, they didn’t accept me on the team…I went and asked them ‘yo, why didn’t make it?’ ‘oh because you are short’ this is what he told me and I am like, ‘excuse me, there are people who are shorter than me’. And I am like, ‘you, yourself are short too.’ He was a little bit taller than me and he was in grade 10 when I was in grade 8. It was so stupid like how they didn’t accept me on the team. I think there is some kind of racism in it…I think it was because of my scarf.

Ayse continues to explain her educational challenges in Canada:

[in grade 8] I went to a school in Richmond. There are a lot of white people there. Grade 8 these are the worst years in my life. So bad. I think because it was the first year in high school. You know the transition. It was very hard. It was like there were girls dressed like …in miniskirts, make up and their hair was perfect and they are looking at you like you are a piece of like whatever and that was my first year that I got covered. So I am like you know, I was covered. it is a new school, new start you know. No one made fun of me but I was the only person covered at school. But there is one case his name is Jeffrey he was not white, he was Chinese and he was fat, he was ugly and he was very rich, very very rich. So he buys his friends cause everybody needs him. So he comes up to me he says
ohh what is the piece of cloth in your head. And I am like ahh excuse me, I swear at him and then he is like da da you look so different, weird and I am like yeah ...my face and after that I became popular at school and all like hot girls were like my friends [so he started to act like nice to me, but of course it didn’t work out so we all kicked him out].

Ayse’s argument has many important points: First, it shows that for a minority Muslim youth attending a regular high school can be a challenge in different ways. High school represents both an institutional and emotional transition. A female Muslim minority youth, who enters into a secular high school in Canada, experiences emotional transition, since s/he literally realizes her cultural and religious difference from the dominant-and also from other minorities. Second, her “difference” has different implications; her difference is not coming from a “cool” tattoo but a headscarf which generates negative interpretations and prejudice (as a result of ignorance); and thus her headscarf makes her unpopular among her peers. The headscarf tells them ‘she is a covered weird girl with an unknown cultural background.’ Here we see the operation of Islamophobia as a form of racism through popular ideological practices. As Nayak (2003, p. 152) reports, “…a complex understanding of racism may invoke aspects of nationhood or religion as further points of discrimination.” “Racism’s two logics” (Hall, 2000a), that is: racism’s two basic premises, based on cultural differences (–i.e., language and religion) and biological differences (such as skin colour), nurture Islamophobia. Islamophobia proposes that Muslim people should be excluded because of their religious practices (prayers), names (Osama), clothes (headscarf) and customs (not eating pork) which are deemed inferior. As Philip Cohen (1999) argues, “racist discourses have never confined themselves just to body images. Names and modes of address, states of mind, clothes and customs, every kind of social behaviour and cultural practice have been pressed into the service to signify this or that racial essence” (Cohen, 1999, p. 14). Islamophobia, as a form of racism, explains the logic of harassment and psychological abuse of Melek and Ayse by their class/schoolmates. The other significant point is the operation of Islamophobia by another minority rather than a majority. In other words, a minority could perform the dominant role like in whiteness. As Nayak argues (2003, p. 173), “whiteness can be performatively conveyed through repetition, stylized gestures, parodic reiterations that purport that these racial inscriptions are somehow real.” This in turn indicates the complexities of racism, or “a plural concept of racism” (Nayak, 2003), as well as the
complexities of the relationship between minorities and their cultural performances in the host country. Here we should also consider the effect of context and circumstances on these plural forms of racism among minority youth. Thirdly, Ayse not only thinks/feels she is different, but also she thinks others are different. It does not mean that her difference makes her think of others as different but others are different because what they are and what they believe. For Ayse, others are not only “whites” (the dominant) but also non-Muslims (Chinese). Thus, regardless of second generation youth’s sense of belonging to Canada (re: their self-identification as Turkish-Canadian), their “Muslim look” becomes a “visible” border between themselves and others.

While cultural and religious differences of Turkish youth may create tensions between the majority and the Turkish minority as well as between the Turkish minority and other minorities, first-generation immigrant youth’s language insufficiencies make them marginalized in school. Melek reports:

In a project we were presenting different topics. While I was talking about Turkish food, I made a mistake and then everybody started to laugh at me. The teacher told me I made a mistake, she also laughed and asked me to sit down. I felt terrible. At that moment I just wanted to run away from the school. After that I didn’t go to school. They alienated me from school. They laughed at me while I was speaking English. How I could I speak well. We just came here.

This case confirms that while the dominant linguistic codes are valued, others are devalued, which create exclusions and inequalities in the educational market. As Bourdieu & Passeron (1990, p. 73) argue, “linguistic style is always taken into account, implicitly or explicitly, at every level of the educational system and in all university careers.” On the other hand, while dropping out can be an escape and thus a recovery from marginalization, in the long run it can ruin the academic life and general wellbeing of immigrant youth. (My interview with Melek was cut off repeatedly as she was crying while talking about her school memories). Melek’s push out from high school has slowed down her adaptation. Moreover, as a newcomer Melek’s uncertainties and fears made her vulnerable and unprotected against her marginalization in school. Melek is scared to take any action about her mistreatment at school. Melek reports, “maybe we had to complain about them [teachers] but you don’t know what comes after that. Maybe this would cause us more trouble.”
Similarly, the report of Emel, a first -generation youth, confirms that a minority student’s English level may determine his/her place in the school culture (i.e., as part of the school culture or marginalized), and the nature of her interaction with class/schoolmates. Her discussion shows that in the “social aspect of education” immigrant youth may feel excluded due to the language barrier. Imperfect language skills may inhibit communication and lead to misunderstandings among peers.

Since group formation based on communication and social skills constantly occurs at school, first -generation immigrant youth are disadvantaged compared to students who speak English as a first language. Emel reports,

I am sure I was also discriminated against. But this happens in social life at school… Hmm while you are getting education you don’t feel you are a minority but while you are moving to social aspect of education you feel you are a minority because of interactions. For example, I was in a group and we were preparing Year Book in grade 12. They [her peers] seemed like they listened to me but at the end they wrote their own thoughts but not mine. They didn’t care what I said. I felt that they formed a group there. I felt I was the one who was the most minority there because my English was not as good as others, not because of how I looked or where I came from….It is all about language. Language is very critical in interaction [at school].

According to Emel, students’ English level is the number one reason for their mistreatment at school rather than their skin tone. Students have different backgrounds with different skin tones, but as long as they speak English as native speakers they share so many things:

There was a black student who was born and was raised here. He was never treated like a minority. But I had a friend of mine who came from India. Since his English was bad, and he was immigrant, his way of living was different from others, he was treated like a minority at school. He was all alone.

Emel’s argument shows that cultural habits, ways of living, language and accent are significant factors for an immigrant youth’s acceptance by the school culture. It seems that students are not very tolerant towards differences. Acceptance is conditional and is determined by the dominant culture’s norms and values rather than acknowledgment and recognition of the minority’s cultural values. Acting and speaking like the dominant group are the keys for inclusion in school.

Some of the young people report that although they are not treated badly at school, they observe culture and language-based discrimination against their friends at school. Insufficient
language skills and shy personality are the reasons for marginalization and isolation at school. According to Ayse, she was not rejected by her peers because she is Turkish or Muslim, but because she was unable to speak English, because she was not social, and because she did not have friends:

I don’t think we are seen differently cause we are Turkish […] maybe we are seen differently because we are covered but it is not like seen differently as in being mean […] Because people didn’t know we are Turkish. Like you know when you see someone you know she is Chinese or Mexican, Turkish people do not have a look. They don’t know you are Turkish…people make fun of my friend but she didn’t know anyone, she didn’t know English, not because she is Turkish.

Ayse’s argument provides us with information to make a comparison between the first- and second- generation and their social life in school. Ayse, a second-generation immigrant youth, was born and educated in Canada, speaks English as her first language, has great social and communication skills; she also has an insider perspective on Canadian culture and the ability to deal with different issues in different context. On the contrary, a first -generation youth, who has just arrived in Canada, will fall behind his/her peers due to his/her educational, linguistic and social struggles though s/he does not have a distinct look. On the other hand, when Ayse and other young people state “Turks do not have a look” or “I am white,” this can be considered to be a counter-argument to the dominant belief, that Turks are Middle-eastern, dark skinned people. By contrast, Turkish young people do not consider themselves different from the dominant society in terms of skin tone and some of them even reject these categories. This has two implications: First, this perspective might help their adaptation and increase their sense of belonging. Second, young people are aware of the dominant categories and binary oppositions, (white vs. non-white) which divide people into different camps. Awareness might lead them to diminish/challenge the differences and inequalities between the dominant and the minority.

Despite the fact that English is their first language and they self-identify as Turkish-Canadian, some of the Turkish minority students are discriminated against by their teachers. Surprisingly, some of the youth minimize or deny the discrimination they face and claim that they have already forgotten, however, their accounts indicate that they still remember the incidents. Osman’s case is one example of the “forget and move on” strategy:
I was put into ESL in grade 3 for no apparent reason or something like that. Some other people in my class were also put into ESL even though they were born here. I think it has to do with the teacher. I think we had a slightly racist or fascist teacher. All I remember that she was a cold person. But I got out of it quick like my parents got me out of it. …I think a year or two [I was in ESL]. I didn’t really care. I was very carefree child.” Here Osman’s case indicates that young people can be forgetful, forgiving, neglectful or contradictory about their experiences even if it is about discrimination. Osman says he “wouldn’t use the discrimination word since it is harsh.”

Similarly, Mehmet’s case indicates that although Turkish youth face stereotyping and name-calling, they see this as a minor issue and that is not worth considering. Mehmet reports, “They [classmates] made fun of me because of the name of my country [Turkey] in high school. It happened, and it happens always, and it does not happen only to me. These are minor problems.”

These statements make me ask the following questions: What makes young people forget and forgive stereotyping? Is that a strategy to survive? Or is it about a sense of belonging? I.e., being a Canadian-Turk? Or are they just being uncritical and unaware of stereotypes and discrimination? Untangling these questions may give us information about young people’s sense of belonging and adaptation to Canada as well as their perceptions and attitudes towards inclusion/exclusion.

Riza, on the other hand, reports that although he didn’t face any mistreatment at school, Turks face stereotyping wherever they go in the world. Riza says,

They don’t know us well. We are Middle-eastern, Muslim, terrorist, blah blah. We don’t know how much they reflect on these thoughts in their daily lives. Maybe they say hi and smile at us but they try to stay away from us. I don’t know.

This statement indicates that current foreign political affairs in Canada and the US, especially after 9/11, have negative impacts on immigrant youth which may put them under constant suspicion, making them feel like criminals, and widen the division between the minority and the majority and the polarization between “us and them.”

Finally, some of the Turkish youth report that while personally they haven’t experienced any discrimination, they witness other minorities’ mistreatment at school. Kemal states that he didn’t experience bad treatment as someone from Turkey, but he witnessed Uygur Turks’ being discriminated against at school. Kemal reports, “Uygur Turks cannot say they are Turkish. When
they say so, people say you are nothing. So, they look down on them, they don’t care about them.” Similarly, Ahmet explains that some Indian students feel discriminated against because of their way of living and skin tone. Also, Kaya states that if discrimination happens, it happens to Chinese people, since they are the most visible minority in Vancouver. Kaya goes on to explain, “That is normal [if they are discriminated against], because they also discriminate against others, they mistreat other people who are not Chinese.” Turkish youth’s concerns show that complex asymmetrical power relations exist among minorities, rather than one dimensional majority-minority conflict at schools in Vancouver.

In sum, these results indicate that first and second-generation youth have different challenges in different stages and grades at school. While some of the first-generation youth endure discriminatory comments, name calling and stereotypes by their peers and teachers (in particular, Muslim youth are treated differently because of their alternative world-views and religious practices -e.g., wearing headscarves-), second-generation youth are doing better maybe because they are equipped with the dominant educational and social norms and values. However, some of them still have troubles fitting in with the dominant culture and they struggle with the dominant codes and values (e.g., their physical look -skin colour in particular-) and being accepted by their friends. Finally, the small number of Turkish youth at schools in Vancouver is another important challenge for young people, especially for the first-generation youth, who try to be part of the school culture, to be someone and assert their full identity, make friends, and participate in academic events and extracurricular activities.

### 7.3. Segregation

According to the results, group re/formation among students is an important part of high school culture. Students form groups based on their ethnic/cultural backgrounds, habits, hobbies and recent popular trends. Some of the participants report that grade 8-9-10 are the most critical stages for determining who will be accepted or rejected by the group members, while in later grades the borders, differences and groupings start dissolving. As a result of these constant and natural movements (forming, reforming, dissolving) within and between groups, someone’s inclusion or exclusion changes accordingly. Kaya says,
it must be teenager sociology. It is weird. Sometimes the most popular one becomes a friend of the most “loser” student and the most “loser” becomes out of the group again and then s/he becomes the most funny and so on. Stupid things.

Kaya explains the dynamics of groupings as something “personal and trendy”- depending on the trends of the school culture, thus being popular has nothing to do with social class or cultural background. Osman and Ahmet explain these groupings with reference to students’ cultural backgrounds, practices and habits. Ahmet reports,

In our school there are a lot of people from India. It is like the main population of our school. They don’t really really mix. There are not many people that are friends with them. Like Indian people and white people they don’t really mix much.

Similarly, Leyla reports that many high schools, especially Surrey schools, have cultural issues. Leyla says, “East Indian community are not accepted, so they are really dominant in Surrey. Like the Coquitlam, Port Moody area, they are predominantly white, upper class.” These examples indicate that although complex dynamics exist in school culture with regard to groupings, the cultural background of students is an important factor in these formations. In other words, as a researcher, I wonder how “personal and trendy” is different from culture, as schools seem divided according to cultural lines that separate one group of students from the other. In addition, I think it is problematic to divorce school culture from popular culture/society and the nation-state which is also dominated by images, prejudices and dominant practices and norms. As Rizvi (2006) puts it, there is a link between social and political factors, including the formation of the nation-state and the way schooling is structured.

Accordingly, Osman explains that his school is divided according to the cultural backgrounds of students. He reports,

you can go to the lunch room and look at and divide countries just like looking at it. You have a group of Chinese who speak in Chinese, eat their lunch made by their mothers, Chinese food and then you have Caucasian kids eating their peanut butter jelly sandwiches, eating their carrots (laughter), even at UBC it is all the same. So, Canada is like a bunch of countries in a country. It is divided but not at the same time.

Osman underlines that in spite of all these divisions, there is no discrimination among students from diverse background. In fact, this is an interesting statement showing that division is possible without discrimination. This statement can be accepted, if there is no ethnic, cultural
conflict among these different groups. If so, how might this divided but conflict-free interaction between groups be explained? Is it because of limited interaction between them? If so, what does the concept of community mean in a school culture which is divided along ethnic lines?

The data indicates that the number of students is important in determining group dynamics, that is, segregation and group re/formation at schools. In this regard, Chinese students seem to have more advantageous in forming groups since their numbers are higher compared to other minority groups in Vancouver, especially Turkish. Some Turkish students report that they see the overrepresented and homogenised nature of Chinese groups at school as annoying and exclusionary. Yesim reports,

Some people who were born obvious or immigrants. You know there are students who are immigrants like e.g., there are a lot of Chinese but when they came to my school they were treated differently from other students because they tended to hang out with each other but no one else like they didn’t hang out with most Canadians or with other groups of people. They kinda stayed in their own group. And they always say they are treated differently like I said we hung out with different groups but they didn’t hang out with other groups, so they were not invited out to other events or bon fires or parties or anything like that. Just because we really mingled with each other. Other than that I think pretty much you know. North Vancouver and Vancouver is so multicultural that we grown up with people from different cultures. We don’t single them out.

The “we” designator used by Yesim indicates that there is a division between Canadians and immigrants and most of the second-generation youth feel they are the former. In fact, it is interesting to see the second-generation Turks’ self-identification and their consequent attitude towards other minorities. Moreover, inclusion can be a reason for exclusion and vice versa; solidarity among Chinese students and their group formation causes them to be excluded from other groups. In addition, like many other Turkish youth, Yesim’s reference point is Chinese people rather than any other ethnic group. Although there may be many different explanations for this point of reference, it seems that for Turkish students Chinese students are intimidating and threatening in academic life as well as in everyday life.

This study shows that group dynamics- inclusion/exclusion and group formation affects first- generation Turkish youth’s self-identification, sense of belonging and educational experiences. As Emel explains, being a popular person (that is, not only belonging to a group but also belonging to a popular group) is very important for students who want to feel like they are a
part of the school and accepted: “I regained my self-confidence after I became a leader in the basketball team. Before that nobody knew me.” It seems that being someone goes parallel with being part of the school culture and participating in the school events and extra-curricular activities. In this regard, first-generation youth, as newcomers and outsiders, are disadvantaged, since they are constantly being checked out by their peers to determine the newcomers’ social and linguistic skills, popularity, cultural background, habits and finally their membership in a group. The linguistic and cultural gap between the first-generation and the dominant youth culture may limit immigrant youth’s social and educational participation. Moreover, first-generation youth’s pre-migration histories may negatively affect their post-migration experiences in terms of being someone. These young people should reclaim their identities; they should prove that they left their stories behind and they were someone in the past. However, this reassertion is not easy for some, since it may lead to identity crises and feelings of loss and grief due to the transformation from being someone to being an unknown someone.

7.4. Summary

This chapter examined the educational experiences and challenges of Turkish youth and their struggles with segregation in schools in Vancouver. The data, based on young people’s experiences, indicates that first- and second-generation and Muslim female youth have educational narratives which are different. First-generation youth, unlike second–generation youth, have added challenges of trying to be included and accepted by their teachers and peers. While linguistic, cultural and social differences are the reasons that first-generation youth have difficulties making connections at school, teachers’ racism, popular discourses on stereotyping and prejudices about Islam are the other factors leading to the marginalization of Muslim youth at school. By contrast, non-religious second-generation youth emphasize that their educational experiences are fun, though they have also experienced discrimination at some point in their academic lives. Their tolerant attitude towards discrimination makes me think about their sense of belonging, their socialization histories which differ from the first-generation youth, and other social aspects of education.

Segregation at schools, on the other hand, is an interesting subject matter which can provide information about interethnic relations among students, their potential/current conflicts
based on cultural, religious, linguistic, ethnic and class factors. Is division without conflict possible? What does community mean in a divided school culture? These are important questions stemming from the issue of segregation at schools.
8 Conclusion

In this thesis I aimed to explore Turkish immigrant youth’s experiences and perceptions of inclusion and exclusion with regard to their fragmented, complex, hybrid identities. Exclusion, as one of the key concepts, was discussed as an inequality problem and a process in which young people are “prevented from social, cultural, political and economic benefits for reasons having to do with race, ethnicity, religion, physical disability, or sexual orientation” (Merry, 2005). Therefore, I intended to discover the answers to wider questions about identities, and processes which change and transform according to time, place and space.

This journey started with the investigation of the conditions of marginalization endured by the youth in Turkey to evaluate the push and pull factors in the home and host countries. It has been found that ethnic and ideological conflicts and socio-spatial polarizations in Turkey have impacts on youth. Thus, young people are marginalized in the education and social sphere due to their ethnic, religion, gender, and class locations. After that I turned to countries in Western Europe, namely Germany, the Netherlands and France, where Turkish immigrants are largely located. The literature reviewed here indicates very strongly that Turkish immigrant youth face considerable educational and social exclusion in European nation-states, a result of exclusionary policies, practices, and popular beliefs all of which structure the society. One of the most significant results of the analysis indicated that integration of young people requires social and educational opportunities and equalities rather than legal status. Next I inquired whether the case is similar in Canada, a settler nation composed of immigrants, largely from Europe but also from many other parts of the world.

My initial analysis of the literature on immigrant youth in Canada showed that most studies focus on East and South-eastern Asians. My investigation, therefore, would be vital for our understanding of the social and educational conditions of one of the most understudied populations, Turkish immigrant youth, in multicultural Canada, which differs in significant ways from European or Asian immigrant populations in Canada.

8.1. Summary of the findings

The selective nature of the Canadian immigration policy (the “point system”), which favours skilled workers and entrepreneurs, raises the question of whether the social and educational
profile of Turkish immigrants in Canada is different from Turkish immigrants in Europe. Similar to Angin’s study (2003), my results indicate that while Turkish immigrants are coming to Canada largely for economic reasons, such as the hope of attaining higher salaries and social and educational benefits for their children, they tend to have either professional, urban backgrounds with higher educational levels or they come from working-class backgrounds with lower levels of education. It is important to uncover the social class positions of the Turkish immigrants in order to explore different levels of exclusion as well as academic under/achievement of Turkish minority youth, as Ataca and Berry’s (2002) have noted in their study.

According to Ataca and Berry (2002), Turkish immigrants’ experience of exclusion in Canada changes according to their socio-economic status. Similarly, my data indicates that Turks from working-class location face more challenges with paper work in their immigration application process, compared to professional, middle-class Turks. It should also be noted that professional Turks are less satisfied with the labour market conditions because of barriers with prevent their academic qualifications from being recognized, as Aycan and Berry (1996), and Esses et al. (1996) have noted in their studies. As Turkish immigrants lack the “right” national capitals (such as social skills, social network), and their degrees are often disqualified, they face downward mobility from middle-class to working-class positions.

Parents’ temporary (i.e., class position changes which result from immigration) and permanent (i.e., class origin prior to migration) social class position are significant, because “there is a strong association between social class and academic achievement, whatever the students’ gender and ethnic background” (Gillborn, 1997, p. 378). My data verified this, as three students who did not complete their education (two students from high-school and one from university), were from working-class Muslim families. It seems that although there are multiple factors which influence educational achievement, religion and class are significant ones. In other words, Turkish immigrant youth from working-class and Muslim families achieve lower average results and experience more racism at school than youth from professional class and non-religious families. In fact, this also indicates the double standards of racism.

According to my data, young people’s immigration statuses, religious affiliations, genders and social class backgrounds determine their educational and social experiences of inclusion/exclusion in the host country. First and second-generation, Muslim and non-religious
youth have different educational experiences and challenges in different stages at school. While linguistic, cultural and social differences are the reasons for the first-generation youth’s difficulties with making connection at school, the teacher’s racism, peers’ stereotyping and prejudices about Islam are the other factors leading to the marginalization of Muslim youth at school. Muslim youth, unlike non-religious youth, suffer from the effects of widespread Islamophobia. By contrast, non-religious second-generation youth seems to handle discrimination and challenges better, perhaps because they were equipped with an “insider” understanding of the dominant educational and social norms and national capital throughout their socialization process and education.

Marginalization of first-generation and Muslim youth from the education institution verifies Davies and Guppy’s (1998) study, in the sense that “the Canadian education system is accused of predominantly Euro-centric, Judeo-Christian, middle-class and white.” The imposition of the dominant language, values, habits and habitus to minority students as the legitimate, single truth (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990, p. 4) and lack of recognition of and respect for minority student’s cultural background and knowledge is another reason for the discrimination of minority youth in Canadian schools. Similar to Samuel et al.’s (2001) results, my study indicates that teachers’ unsuccessful interaction patterns with immigrant youth can lead to the marginalization of immigrant youth within Canadian schools. Specifically, teachers can be accused of exhibiting uncaring behaviour and using culturally inappropriate pedagogy that neglects or disrespects immigrant students’ cultures, histories and languages. Also, culturally offensive teaching leads to devaluation of minority youth’s native languages, confused cultural identities and lowered school performance as the literature shows (see Cummins, 1997; Samuel et al., 2001, Zine, 2001; Guardado, 2002; Rodda & Eleweke, 2002; Derwing, 2003; Nakhaie, 2006).

Literature indicates that depicting Turkish people as “undesirable” is not a recent issue, but it goes back to the sixteenth-century’s Orientalist literature and Euro-centric assumptions about Ottoman Turks (see Cirakman, 2002). According to the results, stereotyping Turks as dangerous Middle Easterners and Islamists is part of a focus of racist hostility, namely “Islamophobia” (Modood, 1997), which is effective in today’s multicultural Canada. In addition, the state’s manipulation of the language market (i.e., recognition of English and French as the only respected languages), the imposition of the dominant values (e.g., white supremacy and
Christianity) and the Canadian government’s invasion in Afghanistan and later Libya, leads to representation of people in the Middle East as infidel enemies, and indirectly encourages discrimination of Turkish minority youth in the social sphere. As a result, Muslim and first-generation young people, in particular, suffer from cultural and accent discrimination, stereotypes and general Islamophobia in the social sphere. “Accent discrimination,” like Islamophobia, should be considered an element of ethnic and cultural discrimination. Accent, dress, hair style, and skin colour are signifiers within racist social contexts (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992).

Correspondingly, some of the young people see their accents as barriers between themselves and the mainstream culture. However, I cannot make any inference about the relation between their social class background and their accents. Nor can I determine whether they perceive that discrimination is a result of their accents rather than a result of their ethnic background (i.e., their “Middle Easternness”) as Derwing (2003) has noted. But perhaps I can argue that there is a correlation between their diasporic habitus and their linguistic habitus and the mainstream culture’s stereotypes and ways of treatment: the more “Middle-Eastern” they look, more accent discrimination they experience.

Consequently, second-generation and non-religious Turkish youth are linguistically, culturally and educationally advantaged compared to first-generation and Muslim Turkish youth. Dissonance in terms of culture, language and religion are cited as grounds for the discrimination endured by first-generation and Muslim youth in Canada. The social marginalization of young people in the public sphere affects their conflicting identities, sense of belonging and integration in the host country. Social and emotional sense of belonging, that is, the feeling of being accepted, seems more important than institutional belonging, that is, having a valid passport, simulating a standard Canadian English accent, excelling in their ESL courses, or attending conspicuous citizenship ceremonies. More inclusive curriculum, which respects minority youth’s history and their cultural practices, would be significant for promoting the feeling of belonging.

Conditional acceptance and the discriminatory context of the host society leads minority youth to have a conditional sense of belonging. In other words, the national context, including state’s policies regarding official languages and other exclusionary practices, and the stereotypes and prejudices of the mainstream society against immigrants, are significant barriers both to the integration of immigrant youth and to their sense of identity and belonging within the host.
society (Miller, 2005). The apolitical nature of Canada causes people to be depoliticized, which
serves to cover the differences and possible tensions among people from different cultures/with
different world views. This depoliticizing process serves as another barrier, preventing
newcomers/immigrants from being “someone,” achieving a strong identity, and adapting to the
host society.

The data indicates that youth identities and their everyday practices, as well as their lived
experiences, are affected by ideological and political conflicts, social and educational
inequalities, and identity politics in the world in general and the host country and home countries
in particular. A young person is a political entity.

Correspondingly, while exclusions might alter according to youths multiple identities
associated with their classes, genders, cultural practices, pre/post migration histories and
immigration statuses, their super-hybrid identities change the context of the society. In this
regard, I would like to underline that Turkish immigrant youth’s in-betweenness is radically
different from the liberal discussions of immigrant youth as “lost between cultures” or “caught
between two cultures” (Poynting et al., 2004). On the contrary, young people are not caught up in
ideological, ethnic divisions. They not only challenge the traditional values of the home country
(e.g., patriarchy), but also the host country’s racist assumptions about Muslims as fanatic
mullahs. So, in-betweenness is not a matter of immigration status but the capability of combining
different lifestyles together. It is a process that indicates multiple experiences.

The Arendtian notions of the “right to have rights,” “statelessness,” and “public space,”
Bourdieu’s concepts of “symbolic violence,” “habitus” and “official language”, and Hall’s
cultural account of racism, the illusory aspects of citizenship and national identity, and “hybrid
identities” were necessary theoretical tools. I used these tools to examine the relationship
between the exclusion of Turkish immigrant youth from the educational market, their
“statelessness” within the nation-state, and racism as a form of the state’s official language. The
Arendtian concept of the “right to have rights” helped me to understand the social and cultural
realities of first generation youth in the Canadian nation-state. Unlike second-generation
immigrant youth, first-generation immigrant youth could be seen as “rightless” and “stateless,” as
they are deprived of full participation in the community and they lack the right to act and speak
meaningfully, due to accent and cultural discrimination. Bourdieu’s concepts of “symbolic

violence” and “official language” helped me to uncover the hegemonic Canadian state’s practice of creating, manipulating and imposing a dominant discourse (especially discourses of security and terrorism), which is responsible for the other-ization of Turkish youth. “Habitus,” on the other hand, as a system of classification, draws boundaries between the dominant habitus of the mainstream group and the diasporic habitus of the Turkish minority, and lead to the marginalization of the latter in the social sphere and in the education market. Finally, Hall’s cultural account of racism helped me to discuss racism as a wider category which includes discrimination based on ethnic and race/racial differences. So, this perspective allowed me to conceptualize Islamophobia⁴⁵ as a form of cultural racism. Hall’s notion of “hybrid identities” helped me to develop a counter-argument against established essentialist, hegemonic discourses on the aspects of citizenship and national identity (i.e. one single national identity), as forms of the state’s official language.

This study suggests a few directions for possible research. The racism within and between minorities, namely between Turks and Chinese youth, might be studied to uncover the multiple and complex social and cultural encounters, segregations and discriminations among different ethnic groups.

Moreover, internal conflicts and discrimination among people from Turkey might be examined. The data indicates that the polarizations and conflicts in Turkish society has an impact on their daily lives and interactions between people from Turkey. Turkish immigrants mistrust each other primarily because of their ideological differences. For example, some secular Turks in Vancouver have strong negative assumptions and perspectives towards Turkish Muslim people who practice their religion and are covered. During my participation in one of the events, a secular woman asked me: “why you are doing your research with them? They are not human!”

Similarly, uncovering the relationship between Turks and Kurds from Turkey might provide us with information about the internal dynamics of minorities and enable us to see if their diasporic identity changes the political impasses and hatred between them. Unfortunately, I haven’t had a chance to work with any Kurdish youth in my study. While this might be a limitation of my study as I ought to have explored all diversities, the reason I was not able to reach them is an issue to be considered. While recruiting my participants I heard that some Kurds

⁴⁵ I conceptualize Islamophobia as the fear of Islam and hatred towards Muslims and their practices.
were hiding their identities, which may give us clues about the nature of the relationship between Turks and Kurds in Vancouver, Canada. Finally, a cross-comparative study between Germany and Canada would be interesting to compare differences and similarities among the kinds of inclusions/exclusions experienced by Turkish youth.

Being aware of hegemony and epistemological violence is one of the ways to combat racism, to fight the domination which is legitimized through the state language such as “security,” “war-on-terror” or state institutions such as education and media. I hope that this project will be seen as a “trans-coding” (Hall, 1997a; Hall, 1997b) process for I tried to decode the established codes (e.g., inequalities) and create new ways of meaning-making. Although this anti-racist study is itself a biased, partial project, and it is questionable whether or not it will lead to any positive change in society, I believe that this journey led me to change myself; I have come to know myself better and to be aware of my own prejudices, and I have a desire to overcome them. Finally, this study helped me to reconsider educational institutions in the West, including their pedagogical practices. Recognition and acceptance of minority youths’ historical, cultural backgrounds and their distinct identities, including their linguistic and religious affiliations, would lead to more inclusive school cultures which promote minority youths’ sense of belonging and support their contribution to knowledge production. Non-inclusive, exclusionary educational practices, on the contrary, create obstacles for disadvantaged immigrant youth, particularly those young people coming from drastically different demographic and cultural locations as compared to Vancouver, Canada.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: In-Depth Interview Protocol

Educational experience
1- Do you go to school? Which school?
2- What do you like/dislike about your school?
3- What are the biggest challenges you face at school in Canada?
4- What does school mean to you?
5- What do you think about your teachers?
6- Some people say that minorities are treated differently in school. What do you think about that?
7- How is your relationship with your schoolmates/classmates?

Experiences of family and friendship
1- Which language do you speak at home? Which language do you prefer to speak?
2- What were your parents’ experiences coming to Canada?
3- Do you feel any distance between yourself and your home culture and family? If so, how does this affect your life and your relationship with your family?
4- Sometimes families do not always approve of one’s friends. If your family chose your friends, who would they be?
5- Has it been easy to make friends in Vancouver?
6- Where do your best friends come from? How do you build your friendship?
7- Is there any tension that arises from your friendship circle?
8- How do you negotiate with other people?

Personal experiences
1- How old are you?
2- Where were you born?
3- Did you migrate from a rural or urban region of Turkey? From which region of Turkey did you migrate?
4- How long have you been living in Canada?
5-What were your parents’ occupations and educational backgrounds in Turkey?
6-What do they do in Canada? (The same job or different?)
7-How well do your parents understand, speak, and read English?
8-Are you satisfied with the housing you have?
9-Would you like to move to another neighborhood?
10- Do you own a house or a condominium in Canada or in Turkey?
11- Would you like to go back to Turkey one day? Why?
12- How would you identify yourself?
13-Do you define yourself as “Muslim” or “secular,” “traditional” or “modern” “western” or “eastern,” “European” or “Mediterranean” or “Middle Eastern” or “Turkish” or “Canadian” or “non-white” or “white”?
14-What would you like to change in your life?
15-How do you imagine yourself 10 years from now?

Experiences of the city and Canada

1-How would you describe your life in Canada? Do you feel you belong here?
2-What are the biggest challenges you face in your everyday life in Canada?
3- Do people treat you differently when you speak Turkish?
4-Do you have any sense of being treated badly by people because of your accent, way of living, or parents?

Conclusion

1-Should I have asked other questions? Would you like to add other things?
2-Do you know other people who might be interested in participating?

Appendix 2: Short (Individual) Essays

1- Write a letter to a family member back in Turkey and tell them about your immigration experience in Canada.