

THOSE WHO CANN'T HOLD ONTO THEIR OWN STORIES ON THE MIGRATION ROUTE: THE EXAMPLE OF THE NOVEL 'UMUT PERONU'

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Introduction

The establishment of relations between Turkey and Germany, driven by trade, education, and similar reasons, dates back to the 1760s*. A special regulation issued by the Ottomans for Germans in 1857 formalized this emerging social proximity, facilitating a mutual labor and migration relationship between the two countries, contingent on the condition that migrants were farmers or artisans (Mortan and Sarfati, 2011: 14). While the influx of workers may not have begun with Ahmed Talib, who was sent to Germany as an apprentice in 1917, the step taken under those circumstances was highly significant. Ahmed's journey learning shoemaking with three German youths, leaving his master in 1923, selling his household goods to open a small shop, and becoming engaged to a German woman, which cost him his Turkish citizenship marks the beginning of an extraordinary story. Although Ahmed applied for German citizenship and his application was rejected following the rise of the National Socialists to power, leaving him stateless. He was eventually granted East German citizenship in 1961 but died in 1983 without ever fulfilling his deep desire to see Istanbul. A similar story is that of Rebia Başokçu, who employed 60 tailors. Arriving in Berlin from Paris with only 7 Franks in her pocket, it opened first tailor's shop, closely observed German society, and became an influential figure in fashion. Noting that, 'women stopped wearing hats and stockings for economy due to the continuous devaluation of the German currency, and men reused old top hats at home to avoid buying new felt hats' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 227), Başokçu would later be remembered as one of 44 prominent Turks. Herr President, Prof. Theodor Heuss's visiting to Turkey in 1957, his invitation of 150 young people to Germany for vocational training and the subsequent decision of their interns at the Ford Plant in Cologne (1958), who are referred as 'Heuss Turks' and have opted for retirement instead of repatriation in the 1990, were phenomena of sociological nature. Similarly, the acceptance of Prof. Fritz Baade's project by the German Foreign Ministry to bring skilled individuals from Turkey and provide them with 'vocational and language training' marked a foundational step. The arrival of 12 Turks in Kiel, with their travel, language course, and accommodation

* On April 2, 1761, a Treaty of Friendship, Navigation, and Commerce was signed between Prussia and the Ottoman Empire. Although this treaty is considered the beginning of official relations, the interaction is more notably remembered for the campaign of Frederick Barbarossa, the first German Emperor, who passed through Konya (Battle of Iconium, 1190) on his way to Jerusalem during the Third Crusade (1189-1192).

expenses covered by the ministry, can be viewed as the first strides toward hope. Approaching the present day, it is known that relations reached their most intense period in nearly every field during the years of the First World War (Ergün 1992: 193); and that 45 years later, with the change in conditions, a new Labor Agreement was signed between Germany and Turkey. Following the wars, Turks were admitted as ‘guest workers’ (Gastarbeiter) in the early 1960s to contribute to the country’s development mobilization (Abadan-Unat, 2002: 47); the majority of these first migrants, who were predominantly of rural origin, desired to save some money and return. Nevertheless, their experiences were poured into poetry, letters, and novels, focusing largely on issues of communication, housing, and transportation, work discipline and increasingly heavy longing. Thus, migration initiated a distinct literary genre with unique narratives; as expectations changed, so did the stories and the language. One of those works, *Umut Peronu*** (2015), refers to the story of 3 million Turks by that period. The author Halit Çelikbudak, adding slices from his own biography, narrated his experiences and observations of his cultural identity in the host country in 11 chapters and 261 pages. Çelikbudak, explaining his profound concern with the reflex of his journalism as ‘not losing the quality of truth being true’ highlighted the difficulty of achievement solely through hard work. The disembarkation of the mother and father from the train at Platform 11 of Munich Central Station sparked the hope for a second homeland, which Feridun Zaimoglu describes as ‘where a person’s body and soul find a place’ (Çelikbudak, 2015: 14). In this respect, *Umut Peronu* possesses much more content than a documentary or a single family’s life. The Western society, which has long considered itself competent in everything, despite its multicultural structure, doesn’t refrain from denying similar content today, even critical approaches; indeed, with the tacit support of authorities, it even labels origin identity with the tag Kanake***, which expects that content to be well understood. Tendencies towards denigration and violence have provoked both counter-reactions and literary responses; the implicitly ongoing assimilation has heightened national sensitivity, adaptation to the new society, and the effort for interaction. Husserl Esser’s reference to the difficulty of finding a place among the definitions of adaptation to ethnic culture as ‘segregation’, adaptation to the new culture as ‘assimilation’, adaptation to both cultures as ‘multiple integration’ and the rejection of both cultures as ‘marginalization’ (Esser, 2000: 58-61), coupled with the concern that social integration is linked to ‘segregation’, was interpreted as a process of classifying individuals. That the comprehension of German society encapsulated in the sentiment ‘When we look at you, we will have looked in a mirror!’ and the notion that ‘when integration is mentioned, politicians primarily visualize a Turk in their minds’ (Der Spiegel, 20.11.2000), coincided with the prominence of mocking forms of self-expression (Brunner, 2004) through characters were transferred into literature as a common response. In this frame *Umut Peronu* has framed the effort of finding or not finding what one seeks into scenes, zooming in on the human struggle to hold onto one’s own story.

** This name, given to Platform 11 at Munich Central Station because the Italians were the first to arrive in Germany, became established with the meaning of a place from which those who left did not return but multiplied over generations.

*** Kanak(e): This term, a pejorative originally used for Polynesian natives, began to be ascribed to Turks following the oil crisis and the reunification of Germany. Although it is a stigmatizing label, Turks defiantly appropriated it, utilizing it to reflect prejudice back as fallacy. (Note: Quotations from foreign sources have been translated into Turkish by the author, and excerpts from the novel under review are provided in quotation marks.)

Research Gap

The question of why Turks haven't been fully assimilated in Germany, despite having contributed to the workforce for over half a century, paid taxes, and participated in the political and economic structure, remains unanswered today. Labor migration hasn't only failed to erase the unease of that era, but the potential of Turkish people to disrupt the existing order and the accusation that they create instability have also turned into criticism and mockery.

Research Design and Aims

Hope is as important as defining the 'other'. Our study, based on qualitative data aims to seek answers to why Germany's preferring to recruit Turkish workers and recognized their dedication and skills, yet arbitrarily interpreted their presence within cultural diversity.

Confronting Life Abroad, Hope-Confidence-Adaptation-Identity

The journey that began at Sirkeci Station initiates the experience of life abroad (gurbet) laden with hope, excitement, melancholy and anxiety. According to Çelikbudak, the term abroad, which entered German as 'die Fremde', 'doesn't merely encompass foreignness, longing, or travel. It also tells of trains, folk songs, letters with burnt edges, and poems' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 21). The fragmentation of the 50-hour journey, marked by curiosity and excitement, and sharing provisions, 'as if we would never return/we will return soon' would only be understood with time. The train had barely left the station when the excitement Fahrettin imbued in his words, 'Let me save up for an apartment and a car, then I'll return immediately' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 27), turned into shock at Munich Central Station, a hub for hundreds of transferring passengers. The station was essentially a shelter, instantly conveyed German discipline and coldness. Although Adalet Günel's remark upon the train stopping at Platform 11, 'I was expecting heaven, but encountered a shelter'. It wasn't meaningless, and the first passengers were captivated by the 'Foreign Worker' statue erected in Obertürkheim. The two-carriage 'Cowboy Train' that had been shuttling between Göppingen and Schwäbisch Gmünd since 1911, and the 15-block granite artwork depicting suitcases inscribed with the names of the migrants' home countries. The story of Anna Maria (Türkenmaria), a Muslim-Ottoman girl who was baptized as a Christian, fought in Hungary dressed as a man, was discovered to be a woman when captured, and was pardoned by the Duke of Stuttgart, undoubtedly moved many Turks. The hope that exists everywhere was preserved through instances like father Çelikbudak, who received for giving mathematics lessons to its general manager a pair of shoes as a gift. What opened the doors of the famous shoe company Salamender Werk Faundau for him, was of course his behavior that creates opportunities. After seeing a machine there, had a similar one made for the shoe manufacturers impoverished by the Bursa Covered Bazaar fire. It was easy to assign the image of German-Turk (Alamancı) to those like him. Back then, in his first days, weeks, and even months in Germany, he didn't know a single word of German besides saying 'thank you'. But he dared with time to work as translators in factories, with their felt fedora hats, foreign cigarettes in their pockets, and easily noticeable nylon white shirts. Amid unemployment, poverty, and political problems in Turkey, questions like *Where do we come from? Who are we? Where are we going?* may have multiplied, but living abroad had to be both a burden and a step towards renewal.

The son Çelikbudak, a graduate of Middle East Technical University (METU) and a High Mechanical Engineer (1970-1979), took his step from Germany to Turkey by founding the International Trade Company (UTE). However, political tension, the university's frequent suspensions of classes, social unrest, and bank robberies

directed him back to Germany. With his credentials deemed sufficient, Çelikbudak began working at the University of Stuttgart. He drew attention by pursuing a doctorate on energy machines, the great interest in his presentation in Düsseldorf, and his motor research being referenced by NASA. Despite all this professional ascent, his role as Europe Publication Coordinator for Hürriyet Newspaper, educational projects for migrant youth under the Hessen State Chancellery and Ministry of Culture, his work in publishing, authorship, and engagements in art and politics forced him to leave the university. He wrote his experiences and observations in *Works Fifty Portraits* (2013), *White Places Will Turn Black* (2014), *Umut Peronu* (2015), *Those Who Lost Their Homeland* (2016), *Sunday Writings* (2019), *Fate Knocks on the Door Like This* (2020), *The Teachers' Lounge* (2023), *A Life Laden with Poetry, Agony, and Love: Hölderlin* (2023) and announced the first generation's idea of returning after saving some money. Mrs. Çelikbudak described the years when lunch pails and thermoses were carried to factories and public transport was used, the makeshift lives of neighbours waiting for the day to return to Turkey, their use of electrical/electronic appliances 'with the remote control's protective plastic still on', and their hopes of returning once they secured their desired savings, while also sharing how their initial plans and cultural adaptation didn't hold.

The first generation of Turks fell into the anxiety of not disappearing within German society and losing their language, culture, religion, and identity. Therefore, a portion naturally formed groups with like-minded individuals and preferred to live amongst them. This disconnected them from the society they lived in... Some sociologists describe the second generation, stuck between two different cultures and identities, as the 'lost generation' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 189, 191).

Although the fact that some of them were selected and arrived in Germany as skilled professionals might seem like an advantage, the factors of family and social environment would become associated with issues of integration. The poet Nevfel Cumart defined himself with words: 'Even though I have a German passport in my pocket, I am not a German... If I claimed to be Turkish, it would be nothing but a lie'. This generation, 'those who see their own culture as dominant and reject German culture, those who reject their own culture and become assimilated within the dominant German culture, those who oscillate between two cultures, those with dual identities, bilingual, at peace with both societies' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 195) wouldn't truly escape this state of limbo, even if some returned partially after receiving their pension contributions. Since the erosion of identity and sense of belonging due to the cultural influence of the host country and globally developments was seen as natural, direct alignment could not be expected. The cornerstones of culture, such as language, religion, flag, art, and national and spiritual values, could certainly create conflict. As the author quotes from Ayhan Kaya: 'Islam and communitarianism do not necessarily have to conflict with Europeanness, cosmopolitanism, modernity, and globalization. On the contrary, Islam and such moderate communitarian tendencies can offer an alternative practice of modernization' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 203). Despite the attitude of 'they will return anyway' not being taken seriously based on the mentioned values, and despite the topic of Turks remaining constantly on the agenda in Germany leading to 'the update of the citizenship clause based on descent preserving one's heritage' (01.01.2000) have been made contingent on mutual expectations. In Çelikbudak's words:

German culture will have an influence on the understanding of Islam in Germany... Muslim

Turks who are German citizens define their Muslimness through the Islam practiced in Turkey... The German manner of speech, mimics, and gestures are such that, while you are being elevated, Turks are being demeaned. Often, the person who loses rational control in that moment is busy deriving a sense of pride from it, occupied with feeling different (Çelikbudak, 2015: 206, 207, 211).

The reasons why cold communication and clichéd comprehension turn into intolerance and even harassment can be understood through the words of West German Chancellor Social Democrat Helmut Schmidt (1974-1982). While Schmidt stated in his political approach, 'No matter what the future of Europe holds, Turkey has no place in it. We cannot have 70 million Turkish citizens moving freely within Europe...' (Karaman, 19.12.2006). There was essentially an unspoken truth. German Chancellor Angela Merkel, with the belief that 'the issue was progressing incorrectly' emphasized that 'the multicultural society model has failed and Germany's liberal democratic leading culture must now be taken as an example' (Narlı, 2009: 2). Although the public was intended to be informed through these approaches and a message was meant to be sent to Turkey via the Turks in Germany, it is argued that the problem isn't one-sided. The fundamental basis for this is mutual adaptation. What is meant here is not adopting the elements of the dominant culture unquestioningly and abandoning one's own core elements, but the ability to reconcile one's own cultural elements with those of the dominant culture. The opposite of this is not integration, but the often-debated policy of assimilation (Çakır, 2011: 383). Integration, which is also adopted as political material and even complicated by the perception of 'Islamophobia' encompasses a difficult process that is hard to internalize, particularly regarding the genuine acceptance of Turks as citizens in Germany (Doytcheva, 2009: 75). As the attitude of competence among superficial solutions gains strength through prejudice and intolerance between ethnic and religious groups (Çakır, 2011: 8), hope is turning into a problem. The fact that racist tendencies, described as existing in the social structure, but through biological and cultural factors, different races and ethnic groups (Todorov, 2000: 214) support the problem, and closeness is shown towards foreigners only during election processes, confirms that the trauma always falls to the children. According to the assessments of Yüksel Kocadoru and Onur Bilge Kula:

It must not be forgotten that as long as Europeans, who continue to commit crimes by permitting the use of communication tools (all kinds of posters and other visuals) that target foreigners, especially Turks, in election campaigns, do not end this attitude, the multi-colored visuals hung in the streets that process anti-foreigner sentiment will leave heavy marks on the tender minds of underage children and youths... (Kocadoru, 1990; Kula, 1993).

Similar prejudiced views that criminalize race foster discrimination and fear. This vulgar policy pursued by Europe eventually raised the consciousness of the foreigner; preventing the socio-cultural, economic, and political dynamics of the multi-cultural integration process from being damaged by social marginalization has become more meaningful (Yılmaz, 2008: 215). Because, within the spiral of migration, being a migrant, integration, and assimilation, indifference becomes an attitude of exclusion, while economic exclusion also leads to exclusion from social, political, or cultural processes (Tartanoğlu, 2010: 2). Mehmet Taş, who attributes this attitude towards Turks to Turkish youth being seen as a prototype doesn't consider academia innocent in his explanations.

The statement by the rector of the Free University in Berlin, Germany's capital, that Turkish children are mentally retarded is the clearest example of prejudice. With this statement, the rector reduced all Turkish children to a single negative attribute, contributing to the formation of a specific Turkish prototype. Foreigners were introduced with attributes such as 'occupiers,' 'vagrants,' 'hashish smugglers,' 'street terrorists,' 'strange habits,' 'Muslim fundamentalists,' 'social welfare state exploiters,' 'those without work habits,' etc... (Taş, 1999: 22).

From this, it is understood that sociological classifications increase anxiety and erode trust. Moreover, it is known that comprehensions expressed through deliberate or spontaneous behavior deviate from normative values. The fact that shared attitudes, the most classical attitude, which tends to reappear when faced with an unexpected situation and is undoubtedly based on solid psychological foundations, consists of the clear reflection of forms that are distant from the cultural, i.e., moral, religious, social, aesthetic forms with which one identifies (Lévi-Strauss, 1997: 25) are observed and reflected in literary works, helps to understand the intent. For example, in his work *Lowest of the Low* (1986), where he shares his experiences by assuming the role of a Turkish worker, Günter Wallraff emphasizes that Germans view Turks with the most coldness. The expected interaction, especially with the economy's unconcealable fragility, leads to the internalization of constantly attributed devaluing characteristics (Schnapper, 2005: 140), forcing the person to behave according to the image imposed from outside. Making the role constructed as specific to the attributed 'other' perceived as real, i.e., labeling, delays the reaction but doesn't diminish it. Since the psychology of failure to adapt causes psychological destruction in the individual, the reaction becomes natural. This behavioral opposition has been summarized as follows:

Subject to constant social exclusion and difficulty with adaptation, and forced to live sometimes under the pressure of significant psychological disorders due to the fear of exclusion from the work process, they increasingly experience a relative loneliness, relative poverty, being despised, humiliated, exploited, worn down, and insecure. In short, they begin to reach a relative consciousness of being a second-class person and even a 'stateless' person who has begun to be severed from the homeland, and when no ways out are found, the devastation and psychological depression of this, along with severe physical fatigue, become increasingly more audible (Teber, 1980: 260).

Following the oil crisis and the reunification of Germany, branding Turks, who were burdened with heavy taxes, as 'non-integrated' was considered equivalent to xenophobia, robbery, and violence; like other media outlets. *Der Spiegel* magazine featured headlines such as anger Against the State, The Asylum Seeker Problem, Xenophobia, Poverty in the East (20.11.2000), carrying hatred to its cover. Former President Johannes Rau conveyed both his reactions and concerns in words, 'All these efforts are in vain. You cannot change the world...' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 217). Despite this shared concern, although Turks try to adapt, German society chooses not to accept them with their values. In a geography where the far-right is rising, those who confront the problems and uphold national-spiritual sensitivities are directly excluded.

Discussions

Social problems are sometimes carried into literature through naive, and sometimes through harsh, expressions. The increase in exclusion, harassment, and violence towards Turks, and the rare employment of those who have lost their jobs, are among the most important truths not spoken by official voices. It is understood that implicit policies are being pursued today against nearly 4 million Turks who have not reached a level of interaction. As Birol Ertan describes the pursued policy, it is defined by the expectation that if Turkey were to become an EU member, German hegemony would be endangered, and millions of Turkish citizens would become an economic force in Germany. As also quoted in *Umut Peronu*, and Bekir Yıldız in his work *Türkler Almanya'da* (Turks in Germany), speaks of the identity of the migrant 'who thinks they are winning from both perspectives'. When considering who the loser is, the emerging identity is understood through the analogy: 'German customs officers were smilingly seeing off Turkish workers at the border, who invested all the money they earned working in Germany for a year into electronic goods to take to Turkey, just like bar owners smilingly seeing off a customer fleeced at the bar...' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 266). As far as can be understood, although the first generation thought they overcame the problems they grappled with through a psychology of temporariness, they not only failed to escape the labyrinth they entered but also began to react with the second generation.

As Amin Maalouf also said, 'adaptation and gain' depend on the quality of the attitude shown towards the two cultures. This attitude, which finds its explanation in the novel, can be expressed as follows: 'The more an immigrant feels their culture is respected, the more they will open up to the culture of the country they have come to... If you feel your language is despised, your religion is mocked, your culture is denigrated, you react by ostentatiously displaying the signs of your difference' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 273). Since culture and a sense of belonging are a crucial part of belief for humans, no problem related to adaptation should be mentioned here either. However, being religious is seen by Europeans as being at the axis of cultural conflicts (Güngör, 2014: 17) and because of this, the interaction provided by acculturation, socio-economic-political placement, and identity (Esser, 2000: 58) can't be achieved. The assertion that positive expectations are merely a delaying tactic, and that the East has been othered by the West in various ways, and while othering the East, the West has constructed its own identity (Said, 2004: 13), has today become a manifest reality.

Life in a pluralistic society is shaped by the influence of the dominant culture. Adaptation is confirmed as long as it can be developed without being swept away by that influence; the range of adaptation widens. Adaptation can be 'the ability to live and let live, with awareness of the differences in the opposing culture, without trying to change what is different from one's own habits, by accepting elements belonging to a different culture as they are, without rejecting phenomena originating from one's own culture' (Çakır, 2001: 14). If values specific to an identity are sought to be assimilated to the values of the dominant culture, the comprehension turns into assimilation. In his article titled *Anadolu İnsanın Dirliği* (The Well-Being of the Anatolian People), written about the negative transformation, Ahmet İnam seems to seek answers to a series of questions frequently directed at Turks living in Germany. Why would Turks want to become citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany? Merely because it is a place where they can fill their stomachs and sustain their lives? Will religious values bring them together? What common values will be formed through which interpretations? Can a democratic country exist with the religious values of a single segment? How many people in this country are pondering the spiritual, intellectual counterparts of democracy, so often mentioned in the political sphere, and how to overcome adaptation problems, without trying to impose their own dogmas on the other side?.. (İnam,

2009). As the questions multiplied, the safeguarding of social rights has unfortunately rarely been realized. In other words, the meticulous avoidance of acts aimed at revealing additional problems (Arslan, 2009) unfortunately doesn't connect today to yesterday. As Ali Özsoy points out, even a good reading of recent history may suffice to see the historical truth. In his own words: 'Although the accuracy of these advocating the view that 'European history is full of genocidal events against Muslims and Turks' that 'we are faced with a civilization that left not a single Arab in Spain, and destroyed by massacring millions of Turks and Muslims in the Balkans' is debatable, it mustn't be forgotten that these and similar counter-opinions, put forward in the context of studies seeking consensus on adaptation, find supporters inappropriately and untimely (Özsoy, 2005). Though it is well-established by many examples that life does not consist of a single prejudice, the changes of the era and different thoughts cannot prevent humans from pursuing their own lineage.

Conclusion

Migration-related relations between Turkey and Germany extend from the Ottoman period to the present day. Given that our study focuses on the recent period, it would not be incorrect to view Turkish participation in migration as economically motivated and to state that their dedicated work enabled Germany to achieve a growth rate of up to 12%. The characterization of Turks in his country as our 'second comradeship-in-arms' by the then Federal President Georg Kurt Kiesinger, and the emphasis on productivity and insurance utility by Josef Stigl, Director of the Federal Employment Agency, in an interview with the Süddeutsche newspaper, are noteworthy. Stigl's words, 'This economic development can only be sustained by more foreign workers coming to Germany. Furthermore, foreign workers are a great help for the pension problem. Because without them, we would have to pay higher contributions for pensions' (Çelikbudak, 2015: 241), confessing the twofold benefit, suggest that he perhaps knew the foreigner wouldn't be able to hold onto their own story. If, despite being discussed for 65 years, an understanding requiring the development of solution policies (Yıldırım, 2014: 104) is still not taken seriously, then the problem is deeper. The fact that the anti-immigrant policy pursued by the far-right (AfD) increased its share by 7.4 percentage points compared to the 2019 elections confirms the rise of anti-Turkish and anti-Islamic sentiment in the post-war period. Given the historical, commercial, and economic ties between the two countries, and the knowledge that Germany recovered with the help of qualified Turkish labour, why should hope be expected to end at the platform where it began? Is the treatment of xenophobia in the European Convention on Human Rights as not only a sociological issue but also one of public safety and national security (Bekar, 2018: 133) merely an intellectual game, as hope progressively weakens? If the primary rationale is explained by the combination of cultural difference and economic poverty increasing intolerance (Doytcheva, 2009: 115), will it not also become more difficult for mutual understanding to mature? The critical stance and claim to competence are weakening the expected understanding. If the problem and recommendation were to be summarized in one sentence: 'The German people should adopt living together with the Other by seeing and showing them not as they should be according to their own value prejudices, but simply as they are, without comparing the Other's culture to their own and without trying to make the Other conform to themselves' (Çakır, 2011: 383). Turks, who have contributed sufficiently to the fields of science, academia, politics, art, and employment, have moved beyond integration debates, become part of Europe, and haven't tied their hope to remaining the 'other'. Former German President Christian Wulff stated that 'Islam is one of the parts of Germany' and former Chancellor

Merkel, agreeing with him, in a video conference to CDU members, requested 'more tolerance towards the 3 million Muslims living in Germany, and more effort to distinguish between Islam and radical Islam' confessing that Islam is part of Germany. We must be very clear about this and say: Yes, they are part of us' (t24.com.tr/haber/islam). As can be understood from the statements of the state administration, Turks, and therefore Muslims, have become a part of Europe, an integral component. Why, then, are understandings based on privilege being implemented in institutions?

In conclusion, although migration is linked to hope and asserting the human rights and expectations of the foreigner, the contradictory developments of the era affect almost everyone. Halit Çelikbudak, who held a distinguished place in the society and lived in for a long time, is one of those people tired and discouraged by the increasingly contradictory modern process. He explains the anxiety of Turks in Germany not as 'serving two masters', but as the protection of their rights and ensuring their efforts are not overshadowed. To the extent that the attitude of German politics, institutions, and society towards Turkey and Turks changes positively, the shadows cast on coexistence and cold communication will end, and hope will continue with new platforms despite the geographical distance. Because although we witness how the search for hope is interrupted by social prejudices and how communication channels gradually cool along with a lack of trust, the individual's desire for a new life, belonging, and acceptance precedes exclusionary practices and stereotyped judgments. It is evident that prejudices not only damage interpersonal relationships but also lead to the disintegration of the social fabric and increase the psychological fragility of the individual. Therefore, there is no meaning in hope turning into a perpetually deferred ideal and in distrust. At this point, the educated and professional qualifications of Turks, exemplified by engineer-writer Çelikbudak, will be to their advantage. Although the new generation of today strives to achieve this, they can still be forced into making accusations against their homeland and society. Yet, sociological and political pressure causes the individual to cling more tightly to their cultural identity. A policy of marginalizing or assimilating the Turks, Germany's historical allies, could result in Germany being unable to retain qualified and productive people. Recognizing cultural belonging, combating discrimination and prejudice, viewing social cohesion as non-one-sided, providing equal opportunities in education and other areas, expanding spheres of participation, increasing points of social contact, and making multifaceted contributions visible will lead Germany to achieve a new 12% growth rate.

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