



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

**The Dual Process of Identity Formation and Collective
Mobilization from Below:
Turkish Diaspora on Kinship Care in Germany**

By

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Budapest, 30 September 2020

Görkem Atsungur



Abstract

In the literature, diasporas have been long considered as "objects" of the kin-states. Accordingly, they are mobilized by the political elites, when there are critical developments in the "homeland." Such communities are viewed as "agents of economic and social development" in the countries of origin. Several scholars thus demonstrate that diasporas are "passive, delineated, and altruistic communities," and their primary role is to support the homeland's interests. On the other hand, diasporas are not pre-existing entities, and they do not always translate their "emotional attachment" to direct actions. Besides, diasporas are not homogeneous ethnic lobbying groups, and they have different agendas with diverse interests. Rather, diasporas are identity- and interest-based communities, whereby they are mobilized in a variety of places and spaces beyond the homeland for various reasons.

In this vein, diaspora mobilization should be considered as a self-organized and grassroots social movement (with or without the active support of the homeland) whereby ordinary transnational migrants take an active part in various socio-political activities for their needs, interests, and identities. Diasporas subsequently act as social and political actors in everyday life, and challenge the state-centric power, and elite-driven top-down approach of mobilization diasporization. Diasporas, furthermore, form biopolitical collectivities on "the correct way of life," and (re-)influence the policies of both the homeland and the hostland.

Under these circumstances, there is a dual process of diasporic identities formation and collective mobilization based on those constructed transnational identities. Diasporic identities are not formed as a "natural and automatic result of migration;" hence, they are socially and politically constructed. Diasporas, "as communities that care," demonstrate their morality, care, and solidarity, particularly when they or their co-ethnics face precarious living conditions in the hostland. Apart from the homeland, the hostland environment also helps or hinders diaspora mobilization.

Consequently, the main aim of this dissertation is to analyze diaspora mobilization from below. Within a theoretically informed analysis diaspora-led mobilization and mixed methodology of the study of Turkish communities in Germany, this research examines an in-depth study of bottom-up diaspora mobilization on the selected issue (kinship foster care). The central research question of the dissertation is, "how does diaspora mobilization occur from below?" The sub-questions are "how do ordinary transnational migrants become diaspora entrepreneurs to construct diasporic identities in everyday life?" and "how do diaspora communities establish networks and relations for diasporic care and solidarity on threshold events?"

Since there is a lack of sensitivity and analytical capacity to examine diasporas as non-state actors in the literature, this dissertation offers a new theoretical and methodological framework in diaspora politics. It also highlights the importance of the hostland factor in diaspora mobilization rather than giving excessive attention to the homeland and kin-states' geopolitical interests. The dissertation, therefore, explores the precarious living conditions of the hostland and biopolitical discourses of diasporas on the correct way of life. The research findings demonstrate that diaspora communities are highly mobilized based on their needs, interests, and identities, whereby they participate in both online and offline socio-political activities. Through collective mobilization, diasporas resonate with their transnational, hybrid identities on and across the various web and social media platforms, and they take part in collective actions in everyday life. Online and offline worlds subsequently interact together in diaspora mobilization. As a result, this dissertation contributes to the literature on identity building of transnational communities such as diasporas, and mobilization of disadvantaged communities in the hostlands. The dissertation, furthermore, gives direct voices to diaspora communities and not talk about them in their absence and the abstract form.

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INTRODUCTION

Empirical Puzzle(s)

In recent years, the number of children in foster care in Germany has been growing. According to 2018 data, 52.590 children were taken away from their families by the German Youth Offices. The number was only 25.664 in 2005 and 36.343 in 2010. The German Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) is often accused of separating tens of thousands of children from their families based on “minor” or even “baseless” reasons. Some Turkish diaspora families believe that Turkish origin children make up the vast majority of those foster children, and they occasionally express that “Jugendamt systematically targets non-German migrant families.” Although the number of children with foreign origin (i.e., 28.204 in 2018) is available in the Federal Statistics data, the ethnic and religious background of a child is not known.¹

In this context, the Turkish descent population in Germany often claims, they are systematically discriminated by the German state institutions. According to them, Jugendamt aims to assimilate migrant children and makes them foreign to their own culture under Germanization policies. Migrant families have called policy-makers to end the practice of taking away migrant children from their natural parents when there is no maltreatment of a child in the household. Besides, they are in favor of kinship care, placing migrant children with their own kin community foster parents instead of German ones. Turkish migrant families are highly mobilized on child protection (both online and offline) and take collective actions to bring about the policy change within the German child protection system.

In the literature, Turkish communities in Germany are highly stigmatized by claiming that they are “the least integrated and politically passive immigrant group” (i.e., Koopmans & Statham, 1999; De Wit & Koopmans, 2005). However, they are actively mobilized for their needs, interests, and identities (with or without the active support of the homeland). They pay

¹ Since January 2000, children born in Germany, whose parents had resided legally in the country for the past eight years, automatically obtain German citizenship.

enough attention to the precarization of their livelihoods (insecure, volatile, and vulnerable human conditions), and attempt to establish the transnational social justice in their country of residence. They have approached both the hostland (Germany) and the homeland (Turkey) institutions for many years, and successfully raised the public as well as political awareness to the distress of Turkish origin children in Germany caused by Jugendamt.

The self-organized grassroots diasporic social movement activism and collective mobilization on their own needs, interests, and identities (bottom-up diaspora mobilization or diaspora mobilization from below) on the threshold events (such as kinship care) get significant attention by Turkish co-ethnics as well as the homeland institutions. There is a tremendous discursive politicization effect of bottom-up diaspora mobilization in the homeland. Turkish Media has begun to tell the stories of the Turkish diaspora families on how they have lost their (grand-)children by “illegal actions” of Jugendamt. “Stolen lives” and “Victims of Jugendamt” have become typical news headline to describe how Turkish migrant origin children are being torn illegally from their parents by the Youth Welfare Offices. Although it is not possible to figure out the number of Turkish origin children who are taken into foster care in Germany,² Turkish media portrays that “the rate of seized Turkish immigrant children in the German Youth Offices makes up more than 25 percent of the total number (with approximately four to five thousand children per year), and this number has been significantly increasing in recent years.

In this vein, “*Turkish origin children brutally seized by the German Youth Welfare Office for assimilation*” become typical news that you can often come across in Turkish media, including social media. While news articulates sad and horrifying stories of Turkish diaspora families, Turkish co-ethnics (both in Germany and other countries – including Turkey) share the pain of families. Turkish diaspora communities are collectively organized under the discourses of child abduction and systematic institutional discrimination in their country of residence. A large number of petitions, street demonstrations, and other types of (online and offline) activities attempt to attest to the “unjust practices” of Jugendamt towards migrant families.

² The German state statistics do not indicate the racial, ethnic, and religious origins of children.

The Turkish descent population in Germany furthermore asks Turkish political elites to intervene in the “problem” and solve it. According to them, every case needs to be examined without any delay and discussed by the Turkish political elites since the issue is not a matter of some isolated cases, but a systematic injustice towards Turkish migrants abroad. In return, Turkish political elites started to accuse German policy-makers of destroying transnational and multicultural families by Islamophobia and Xenophobia motivations but doing nothing to promote migrant families’ cohesion and their integration to the host society. They even compare Jugendamt with Nazi Germany’s Lebensborn adoption system. Child protection practices of Jugendamt, therefore, have become a hot political debate in Turkey. Turkish politicians often instrumentalize the issue for their internal interests and domestic politics. Diaspora mobilization from below, however, has a more significant effect on Turkey’s diaspora engagement/management policies with the institutional innovation (i.e., the Attaché of Social and Family Policy within the Turkish Consulate).

Consequently, the foster care practices of Jugendamt have caused diplomatic and political disputes, even tensions between Germany and Turkey. Protests and social media campaigns with the hashtag “Give us back our children!” paved the way to intense criticism towards Jugendamt in the Turkish political and social life. Edanur Karademir (2006), Muhammed Oral (2014), Esen Brothers (Baran, Atakan, Kaan, 2015), Elif Karakaya (2018), Elçin Bilgiç (2020) became just a few examples of the Turkish immigrant children who were “forcibly” taken away from their parents by Jugendamt in Germany. Although their names are forgotten, they became a symbol of the “silent,” “apolitical,” Turkish migrants to engage in a dispute over the concept of kinship care both in Germany and Turkey.

Throughout the years, I also have witnessed several demonstrations of Turkish diaspora families in Germany against Jugendamt, and occasionally found myself part of these protests. I very often realize the importance as well as the sensitivity of the subject and became interested in the issue not only as a Turkish diaspora in Germany but also as an academic researcher. Besides, I figured out that there are not enough statistics and scientific research on the topic. Migrant families and youth welfare officers have different narratives on the policies and practices of child protection in Germany. For instance, German policy-makers claim that they will not allow the maltreatment of any child in the country, regardless of the citizenship and ethnic and cultural background. Germany indeed has one of the most advanced legal frameworks for protecting minors and promoting child welfare in the world. However,

sentiment has formed among some Turkish diaspora families, who label Jugendamt as a “state-sponsored mafia organization” and accused it of being behind “brutal child kidnappings.”³ This shows that there is an incompatibility between migration governance and child welfare policy in Germany. Although the Turkish descent population in Germany usually claims the child protection is one of their most important everyday problems, there is no systematic study and academic examination on the topic. For these reasons, it is needed to examine how the Turkish descent population is mobilized on kinship care and take collective actions both online and offline for the policy changes.

Theoretical Puzzle(s)

In the literature, diaspora is an essentially contested concept. The term has no set clear definition yet, and its meaning has been continually changing. Various definitions of the phenomenon from different perspectives (both theoretically and contextually) have undoubtedly caused some confusion and stimulated academic debates. Under the “primordial and essentialist” approaches, several scholars consider diasporas as “passive, delineated, and altruistic communities.” The literature mostly demonstrates that diaspora communities are mobilized by “the homeland” to support the “interests of the kin-state,” particularly when there are critical developments in the country of origin. The literature thus focuses on diaspora engagement/management policies of the kin-states and deals with “how to manage remittance and financial flows properly.” Most scholars consequently consider diaspora as a “geopolitical object of the kin-states” and explain “why and when diaspora mobilization occurs” from the top-down approach under the extensive attention to the homeland.

Most scholars in diaspora literature also analyze the socio-economic situations of “foreign workers” in the hostland and their potential role to reduce poverty in their respective homeland. Such communities should not be seen only as “economic tools” of the homeland. Diasporas re-articulate the critical issues not only in the homeland but also in the hostland. They challenge the state-centric power and elite-driven top-down mobilization; however, there is still a lack of sensitivity and analytical capacity to examine the diaspora as a non-state actor.

³ Diasporas are not homogeneous communities, and there are various discourses on Jugendamt within the Turkish descent population in Germany.

This study, therefore, aims to make “invisible the visible,” and bring the marginalized transnational diaspora families into the center of politics. Diaspora communities are not objects of the kin-states, but they are subjects of policy-making. The homeland factor does not explain everything since diaspora mobilization is based on human experiences. Thus, we need to understand the diasporic narratives without judging what is right or wrong. Rather than analyzing top-down elitist diaspora engagement/management policies of the kin-states, we should talk about the needs and self-interests of diaspora communities.

Migration is a dynamic process, and there are no clear-cut differences between the categories of “migrants, transnational communities, and the diaspora.” Although all diasporas are transnational migrants, not all migrants are diaspora. However, migrants do not become a diaspora overnight. What makes “diaspora as diaspora” is their socio-political collectivities and ability to collaborate based on their hybrid diasporic identities. Diaspora mobilization is a complex phenomenon, and there is a dual process: (1) identity building process, and (2) mobilization based on those constructed identities. The multi-facets processes are linked together, which usually interact with both directions. It is also true that the term diaspora is not a self-identified category. It is not very common to hear from dispersed transnational migrant groups to identify themselves as “diaspora” (only a few diaspora communities such as Jewish and Armenians call themselves as diaspora). The majority of such communities continue to label themselves in terms of their ethnic or cultural identities. Under these circumstances, the researchers should have the flexibility to interpret the subject of the research. Indeed, it is more useful to discuss “diasporic stances, projects, claims, idioms, and practices than a or the diaspora itself” (Brubaker 2005: 13). As Brubaker (2005) argues, diaspora communities “make claims, articulate projects, and mobilize energies.” Since collective actions of diaspora communities are mainly based on their identities and interests, any research on diaspora mobilization should focus on two interrelated processes: identity building and mobilization based on those “constructed” identities.

The Research Gap(s) in the Literature

In the literature, several scholars argue that diasporas are mobilized and take collective actions for two reasons: (1) to support the homeland and (2) to promote the well-being of the co-ethnics in the host state (Sheffer, 2003; Quinsaat, 2015). As mentioned, the existing literature predominantly focuses on the first concern – how diaspora communities are

mobilized to support the homeland. Diasporas are “held together by active solidarity and dense social interactions” (Brubaker, 2005: 6); however, not all diaspora members play an active role in collective actions. Such communities do not always translate their “emotional attachments” into direct actions. Diasporas are heterogeneous communities with diverse interests, and they have different attitudes and actions towards the homeland, the hostland, and their kin community. In the literature, how they are mobilized and promote the well-being of their co-ethnics in the hostland is not well explained. In this dissertation, I thus focus on bottom-up diaspora mobilization and analyze their online and offline activities.

In this context, several scholars have already answered, “who and what produces or disseminates diaspora mobilization” (either the kin-states or political elites). The top-down diaspora mobilization is concentrated on the formal procedures, policies, and institutions of the kin-states. In the top-down approach (homeland-calling literature), diaspora institutions and associations, which are formal institutional arrangements of the kin-states, initiate the diaspora activism. Therefore, it is more visible in the top-down elitist approach “by whom and which purposes diaspora mobilization occurs” (due to the clear visibility of the kin-states’ institutions, policies, and programs for protecting the homeland interests). However, the process is not that evident and systematically explained in the bottom-up diaspora mobilization.

As a result, the literature does not illustrate how transnational members of dispersed heterogeneous diaspora communities organize the solidarity-based collective actions, particularly in the hostland, for the promotion of the well-being of the co-ethnics. Apart from analyzing the dual process of identity building and diaspora mobilization, this research fills in some pieces of information missing in the literature, such as how diaspora communities are mobilized on the well-being of the co-ethnics in the host state and establish their networks and relations for the solidarity-based collective actions online and offline.

Aim and Purpose

Under these circumstances, the primary purpose of this dissertation is to understand the diasporic identity building process through different stages of mobilization as well as diaspora mobilization based on those constructed identities by ordinary transnational migrants. The diaspora mobilization from below (bottom-up diaspora mobilization) is the

method adopted by transnational dispersed communities to mobilize other co-ethnics for the diasporic care and solidarity (with or without the active support of the homeland). This study consequently analyzes how diaspora communities promote and ensure the well-being of the co-ethnics in the hostland, particularly during the time of precarity, and construct their diasporic identities through mobilization. As a case study, the research examines Turkish diaspora mobilization on kinship foster care in Germany, and analyzes how diaspora communities utilize the welfare policy of the hostland, and in what ways they organize collective actions both online and offline.

Research Questions

The central research question of the dissertation is: “*how does diaspora mobilization occur from below?*” The supplementary questions are (SQ-1), “how do ordinary transnational migrants become diaspora entrepreneurs to construct diasporic identities in everyday life?” and (SQ-2) “how do diaspora communities establish networks and relations for diasporic care and solidarity on threshold events?”

Figure 1 – *The Matrix of Research Questions (in the Literature vs. Dissertation)*

<i>Why, When, By Whom, and How Diaspora Mobilization Occurs?</i>		
	Top-Down Approach (Homeland-Calling) Literature	Bottom-Up Approach (Diaspora-Calling) Dissertation
Why?	To support the homeland To fulfill emotional attachment	To perform diasporic care, morality, and solidarity.
When?	When there are critical developments and changes in the homeland	When there is a precarity in the hostland to promote the well-being of co-ethnics.
By Whom?	By the kin-state and political elites: Diaspora institutions and associations	The literature says by “diaspora entrepreneurs.” BUT how do transnational populations become diaspora entrepreneurs? (SQ-1)
How?	Through kin-state’s policies, programs, and actions	Through mobilizing structures and collective vehicles: “networks of people:” diasporic associations/ organizations and kinship ties. BUT , how do they establish such networks and relations? (SQ-2)

Hypothesis

- *The hostland factor*: apart from the homeland factor, diaspora mobilization occurs in response to “specific critical events, policies, and issues in the country of residence” (Sökefeld, 2006). Hostland’s environment thus helps or hinders diaspora mobilization.

- *The construction of identities*: not all transnational migrants act as diasporic entrepreneurs. Diasporas are moral entities, whereby they share moral values (at least at the minimum level). In everyday life, such communities construct diasporic identities and produce (biopolitical) collectiveness.

- *Mobilization is based on those constructed identities*: Diasporas are social and political entities, and they are mobilized for their needs, interests, and identities (bottom-up diaspora mobilization). They are highly active on selected threshold events, particularly during the time of precarity.

- *Agency of diaspora*: diaspora mobilization is a dynamic socio-political process, whereby several actors, including the diaspora itself, deploy resources, frame issues, and make claims about their needs, interests, and identities. Although there are specific conditions and mobilizing vehicles, diasporas perform care ideals, practices, and responsibilities.

- *Online Participation and Offline Activities*: diasporas are virtual communities, and they strategically use online platforms to show their diasporic togetherness. They use digital space for diasporic communication, care, and solidarity. Diasporic care and morality are the preconditions of collective solidarity. The need for diasporic solidarity brings collective actions, both online and offline. However, the stages of diaspora mobilization (morality as preconditions, mobilization as a process, and collective actions as outcomes) should not be considered in linear and under the cause-effect relations. There is a correlational effect, and most of the time, they reproduce each other.

Novelty and Contributions

This study contributes to the literature by analyzing diaspora mobilization “from below.” It explains “how ordinary migrants become diaspora entrepreneurs and establish their transnational/trans-local networks for collective actions online and offline.” The dissertation offers “a new theoretical as well as a methodological” understanding of diaspora mobilization on the promotion of the well-being of co-ethnics in the country of residence. The novelty and contribution of the research can be summarized as follows:

1. Bottom-up Approach of Diaspora Mobilization: Self-Organized Grassroots Movement

As mentioned, the literature predominantly considers diaspora communities as a geopolitical object of the homeland and focuses on “when and why kin-states develop diaspora management/engagement policies.” Most scholars, therefore, analyze top-down diaspora mobilization under the primordial and essentialist state-led approaches. Accordingly, diasporas are naturally rooted in distant homelands. Diasporic identities are formed as a natural and automatic result of migration, exile, and dispersion. As a result, the literature predominantly focuses on the homeland factor (methodological nationalism) and shows that diaspora communities are mobilized to support the kin-state’s political interests. The literature consequently underestimates the importance of other factors, such as the hostland environment and the agency role of diasporas.

On the other hand, in this study, I examine diaspora mobilization from below and highlight that diasporas are active social and political agents to act for their needs, interests, and identities. Such communities are not bounded and pre-political entities. For these reasons, we should not consider them as robust communities under the common ethnic origin, kin, and descent of the homeland. Rather, they are politically and socially constructed and involve in several socio-political activities online and offline.

2. Theoretical Innovation(s): A New Conceptualization of Diaspora Mobilization?

The literature explores the process of diaspora mobilization within the “triadic nexus” (the relations between the homeland, the hostland, and diaspora) and transnational activities of diaspora communities towards their respective homeland. In this dissertation, I combine three theoretical/conceptual layers: “triadic nexus,” “transnationalism/trans-localism,” and “life as politics” under the single study. It is hard to separate each from others since they are bounced together in everyday life. In the complex and multi processes of diaspora identity construction and collective mobilization, there is also a need to focus on biopolitics. Biopolitics helps us to examine narratives, moral ideals, everyday practices, and outcomes of social relations of “caring about” and “caring for.” As Cohen (1997) argues, diaspora communities share a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnics. Rather than the geopolitical interests of the kin-states, biopolitics plays an essential role in collective mobilization. Although biopolitics constructs the identities as a channel of communication between the actors in the triadic nexus, it is not commonly used to understand diasporic identity construction and collective mobilization.

Furthermore, none of the works in diaspora literature, as well as in other ones such as welfare policies and multiculturalism, have attempted to conceptualize the diaspora mobilization with its preconditions (diasporic care and morality) and outcomes (collective actions). I propose different variables in the process of identity construction and mobilization (diasporic care, morality, and solidarity) rather than analyzing classical variables of the literature (i.e., citizenship status).

There is still a state-centric approach in International Relations; however, the formation of de-territorialized/multi-territorialized diasporic identities and their mobilization challenge the state-centric power, identity, and territorial borders. In this study, I highlight that diasporas are non-state actors. Diasporas are spatially diffuse communities, and they challenge the state-centrism as well as power. Diasporas are transnational communities and always in-making “here and there” or “the elsewhere” who are active agents of politics in everyday life.

Besides, the literature highlights diaspora mobilization under the “elite-driven processes.” Accordingly, nation-state and political elites mobilize kin and related groups abroad for the

benefits of the homeland. With the increase of the use of the Internet, ordinary transnational migrants contribute to the construction of diasporic identities and collective actions, and they become diaspora entrepreneurs. This study, therefore, challenges the elite-driven, state-centric, top-down approaches of diaspora mobilization.

Last but not least, there is another theoretical contribution to the literature. Diaspora communities affect the homeland's diaspora management/engagement policies with institutional innovation. I coin this positionality as "boomerang effect of diasporization." In the following chapters of the dissertation, I will further examine these contributions in detail.

3. Methodological Innovation: A Combination of Data Ethnography with Digital Ethnography

In the diaspora literature, there is still a need for more diversified methodological approaches with a combination of various methods ranging from the quantitative and qualitative. Single case qualitative ethnographic methods mostly dominate the literature. This research has a mixed methodology and combines data ethnography with the digital/virtual ethnography. In this dissertation, I used Netnography to collect much larger and more representative samples. Since digital technologies construct a new distribution of power and identities, scholars need to apply digital methods (Schrooten, 2012). Whereas most of the works in the literature examine only the offline activities of diaspora communities, I highlighted the importance of online activities and analyzed them with offline participation. In the Digital age, it is hard to underestimate the close link between online and offline participation. I thus combined online and offline activities and followed one of the new methodological research paradigms in the literature.

4. Policy Recommendations: Controversial Issue(s) with Possible Solutions

There is a research gap on the well-being of migrant children in the hostlands. The childcare policies and practices in Germany are one of the critical problems of Turkish immigrant families. Kinship foster care has continuously been on the agenda in recent years, yet not been researched holistically so far. This research is solution-oriented and offers policy recommendations for all parties. It also provides new terminology in the existing literature. The literature predominantly considers informal practices of kinship care among close family

members such as grandparents and uncle/aunt. I expanded the informal kinship care of close relatives into formal kinship practices of diaspora communities. I thus developed a new conceptualization of diasporic kinship care rather than informal practices of close family members or friends. Policy recommendations will further be discussed in the following chapters.

Under these circumstances, this study offers both theoretical, methodological, and policy recommendations that researchers might further develop in the future.

Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter I reviews the theoretical and conceptual framework of the dissertation. First of all, the chapter aims to re-conceptualize the term *diaspora*. The chapter examines the diaspora literature and then develops its own theoretical and conceptual framework. The literature mostly portrays the top-down approach of diaspora mobilization as a kin-state-led project. However, in this chapter, I advocate the necessity of bottom-up, actor-centered diaspora mobilization. I argue that diaspora communities are mobilized for their own needs, interests, and identities (with or without the active involvement of the homelands). This chapter helped me to find the research gaps theoretically in the literature and allowed me to develop a unique theoretical framework on the phenomenon. I combined three works of literature, (1) triadic nexus, (2) transnationalism/trans-localism, and (3) life as politics, which has never been addressed before.

Chapter II outlines the research design and methodological choices of the dissertation. The literature mostly reflects on diaspora as a single case study with a tiny sample and based on locality under the ethnographic method. In this chapter, I developed a detailed research methodology on how to examine diaspora communities. The multi-sited study of the Turkish diasporas in Germany as a case study describes the research design, data collection method, and data analysis. The overall data includes a mixed-methodology approach, including the ethnographic approach at multi-sited fieldworks, qualitative interviewing, and digital ethnography – Netnography. The data corpus is approached with Content Analysis. The first part of the chapter presents the research philosophy, approach, and strategy under the multi-level study of design. The second part examines data collection methods and data analysis.

The third part finally discusses the main issues and limitations of the research design between ontological, epistemological, and methodological choices. The chapter furthermore legitimizes the case selection: why Germany, why Turkish communities, why in North-Rhine Westphalia, and why kinship care.

Chapter III reviews the literature on Turkish communities in Germany and gives a short introduction to Turkish migration to Germany. The chapter firstly examines Germany's Migration policy since the 1960s, and secondly, Turkey's Diaspora Policy. It is essential to know the brief policies of the hostland and the homeland to understand the construction of diasporic identities and collective mobilization. Although the literature excessively covers Turkish communities in Germany, it mainly focuses on integration and identity problems. Only a few studies focus on the nexus between family and migration, particularly in child protection and kinship care. This part of the dissertation, therefore, figures out the research gaps in the current literature on the Turkish descent population in Germany.

Chapter IV examines the child protection system from the state perspective. The well-being of children has become one of the critical sociopolitical, economic, and cultural issues in late modern societies. In many countries, including Germany, child protection has become the top issue of national public and social policy debates. In this context, this part of the dissertation first reviews the structures and legal foundations of child protection in Germany. It then examines the homeland response to the policies and practices of the hostland – “the boomerang effect of diasporization” (the re-influence of the diasporic identity building and collective mobilization based on those identities on the policies of the homeland and the hostland).

Chapter V firstly reviews the differences in foster care and kinship care to give a better picture of the importance of kinship in child protection. It secondly examines the kinship ties, belonging, and cares among diaspora communities. This part of the dissertation highlights the importance of diasporic care and moral responsibilities in establishing kinship networks and relations. The main question of this chapter is “how kinship ties, belonging, and care to create diasporic networks and relations.” While the dissertation focuses on cultural, national, and religious clashes between/among Turkish diaspora communities in Germany and the German child welfare system, the chapter concludes that the nexus between family and kinship ties became one of the leading resources of collective actions.

Chapter VI analyzes the online activities of Turkish diasporas in Germany on kinship care. In this dissertation, I argue that Turkish communities in Germany have a strong interest in the diasporic care ideals, practices, and responsibilities on the selected issues; therefore, there is a high level of political and social mobilization in both the country of residence and the country of origin. Turkish diaspora communities collectively politicize family issues and re-construct the (bio-)political belonging under the shared diasporic identities. The majority of Turkish diasporas in Germany are digitally connected under the theme of kinship care and quickly communicated through web-based connectivity to take action. Under these circumstances, the central question of this chapter is “how Turkish communities in Germany establish their networks and relations at the online platforms.”

Chapter VII examines the offline participation of Turkish diaspora communities in Germany in matters of child protection. Online and offline worlds interact together, and they are not independent of each other. I thus applied a relational approach to spatiality in online and offline platforms. I examined the interconnectedness of the relationship between online and offline activities of Turkish diaspora communities in Germany. This chapter also gives further details on the “boomerang effect of diaspora mobilization.”

The Conclusion part finally highlights the findings of the dissertation and summarizes the research questions. This part of the dissertation also recaps the policy recommendations for all parties “what to do and how to do” if/when they face such problems in everyday life, the limitations, and further study recommendations.