

Guest Workers in the School?

Turkish Teachers and the Production of Migrant Knowledge in West German Schools, 1971 – 1989

by Brian Van Wyck*

Abstract: This article examines policies and practices related to Turkish teachers in West German schools in the 1970s and 1980s. Different stakeholders in Turkish education in West Germany – school administrators, parents, consular officials, and the teachers themselves – understood the role of these teachers in different ways over time, reflecting contrasting and shifting notions about the knowledge teachers were expected to pass on to Turkish pupils. In the late 1970s, West German officials began to privilege teachers' status as migrants capable of modeling their own successful integration for pupils, reflecting new assumptions about Turks in West Germany and their futures in the country.

In early 1972, Hasan Akıncı arrived in Osnabrück, Lower Saxony, to take up a post as a teacher for native language lessons (*muttersprachlicher Unterricht*) for the area's Turkish children.¹ Akıncı had interviewed for the position with the Turkish consulate in Hannover and had had no contact with either the Osnabrück school office (his future employer), the Lower Saxon Ministry of Education (Kultusministerium), or the schools where he would be working. Indeed, when he arrived at the school office, no one was expecting him. Nor did anyone know who, what, or where he would teach. After the officials' confusion cleared up, Akıncı presented himself at the five primary schools to which he was assigned.² The heads of these schools were similarly confused about his presence and the lessons he would offer. They were unsure what his classes would cover or if they would be mandatory or even graded. Receiving no instruction from his supervisors in the school office or the schools themselves, Akıncı had no guidelines, lesson plans, books, or materials and was left to his

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1 Hasan Akıncı, "Das Fleisch gehört mir, die Knochen dir." Lebenserfahrungen eines türkischen Lehrers, Norderstedt 2008, pp. 283 – 296. "Turkish" refers here to all citizens, former citizens, or descendants of citizens of the Republic of Turkey, including Kurds and Alevis.

2 His status was clarified when the Turkish doctor who had petitioned the consulate for a teacher returned from vacation. Id., *Das Fleisch gehört mir*, p. 286.

own devices to teach courses scheduled in the afternoons after most German teachers and pupils had left.³

In principle, Akıncı's role as a teacher for native language lessons was defined by 1972 education ministry guidelines.⁴ These were broadly consistent across all *Länder* with native language lessons in German schools – Bavaria, North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Hesse – and with federal recommendations. Lower Saxony's guidelines established that Akıncı would teach Turkish “native language, history, geography, and culture” to pupils for a maximum of five hours per week, using course material from Turkey approved by the *Land*.⁵ These optional classes were intended to ease pupils' eventual re-integration into Turkish schools, something most observers at the time assumed was inevitable. Teachers like Akıncı, the guidelines stressed, were responsible to the heads of the schools where they worked and to local school inspectors, not the Turkish consulate. Only West German officials could observe and evaluate teachers and lessons, even if teachers retained their tenured status in Turkey while abroad. Foreign teachers were to be treated the same as their German colleagues.⁶

The reality was quite different. Education ministry regulations left open a great deal of interpretation and leeway to the different actors involved in defining what was expected of Turkish teachers in West German schools. In the earliest years after the arrival of large numbers of Turkish teachers, the education ministries' vision of well-supervised teachers integrated into the life of the school contrasted with the hands-off approach of many local school authorities. For their part, parents, consular officials, German colleagues, and the teachers themselves also saw the role of Turkish teachers differently, with little regard for ministry plans. These different views were reflected in divergent expectations about the proper level of German oversight for classes, teachers' pedagogical and disciplinary styles, course materials utilized in lessons, and

3 This lack of preparation was more typical than not in the early 1970s. See Herbert Neuhaus and Şener Sargut, *Ausländische Lehrer an deutschen Schulen*, in: Hermann Müller (ed.), *Ausländerkinder in deutschen Schulen. Ein Handbuch*, Stuttgart 1974, pp. 113–126, here p. 114; Achim Schrader et al., *Ausländische Kinder in deutschen Schulen. Materialien aus den Grundausschätzungen der Befragungen*, Duisburg 1973, p. 149.

4 Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv [hereafter NLA] Nds. 400 Acc. 2002/159 Nr. 176, *Unterricht für Kinder ausländischer Arbeitnehmer*, Erlass des Kultusministers, 20.3.1972.

5 Guidelines for the content of native language lessons in other *Länder* were similarly broad, e.g., language, history, geography, culture, and religion in Bayern and NRW or language and culture in Hesse. Else Görgl, *Empfehlungen und schulische Maßnahmen*, in: Müller, *Ausländerkinder in deutschen Schulen*, pp. 99–112, here p. 110.

6 Nevertheless, foreign teachers were paid less in all *Länder* because their qualifications were allegedly of lower quality. NLA Nds. 400 Acc. 2002/150 Nr. 27, Kultusministerium to Portugiesische Botschaft, 18.8.1981.

expectations about teachers' integration in the schools and knowledge of German and Germany.

Differing perspectives on the role of Turkish teachers in West German schools and the ways these ideas changed over time reflected contrasting and shifting ideas about the knowledge teachers were believed to possess, the knowledge they were expected to impart to pupils, and how they could best convey that knowledge. Particularly in the early 1970s, school authorities, German teachers, consular officials, and parents often expected Turkish teachers to provide what will be referred to here as "migrating knowledge": knowledge about social, cultural, and political life and conditions in Turkey brought to West Germany and imparted in a way that recreated the conditions of the Turkish school as closely as possible. Teachers' direct and, ideally, recent knowledge of Turkey was thus valued, and this knowledge was to be disseminated to Turkish children to prepare them for a return to their homeland. Crucially, Turkish children in West Germany, it was believed, needed to be inculcated with knowledge about Turkey and Turkishness in the same ways as their compatriots in Turkey. Turkishness thus conceived was durable, natural, and above all unaffected by the conditions of migration.

Though such expectations about teachers' migrating knowledge were prevalent in the early 1970s, teachers themselves – and increasingly toward the end of the 1970s and into the 1980s other actors in West German schools – valued knowledge of another kind, which will be referred to here as "migrant knowledge." This was the knowledge teachers possessed about the effects of migration on their pupils (knowledge about migrants) coupled with insights they had gained through their own experiences as migrants (knowledge as migrants). This idea of teachers' migrant knowledge attributed importance to teachers' own biographies as successful migrants to West Germany who had themselves adapted to life in that country while retaining a Turkish cultural and national identification. Teachers believed this to be something that could be taught to pupils, but doing so required a hybrid Turkish education that incorporated the German environment and the pedagogical principles of the German school to which pupils had become accustomed. Teachers who brought migrant knowledge to bear on their lessons therefore prepared their pupils for life in a minority in West Germany.

Changing ideas about teachers' migrant knowledge took place against a backdrop of largely static *Länder* regulations governing Turkish teachers in West German schools. Thus, it is only by examining the application and interpretation of these regulations at the local level in the schools themselves that we can identify these underrecognized changes in expectations about Turkish teachers' roles, on the one hand, and in ideas about the knowledge teachers possessed and passed on to their pupils, on the other hand. Policies alone cannot offer insight into these questions. Such an approach, characterized by attention to the effects of scale and local interpretations of policies, has become more common in recent historiography on postwar migration to

Germany.⁷ More broadly, underlying changing ideas about Turkish teachers and knowledge were assumptions about the characteristics of the Turkish population, its future in West Germany, and what differentiated it from the German majority. Examining Turkish teachers through the lens of knowledge thus helps identify underrecognized changes in West German attitudes toward Turkish difference.

Contemporary observers considered the role of Turkish teachers and teachers from other countries of labor recruitment to be of crucial importance. For Franz Domhof, responsible for foreign pupils in the NRW education ministry in 1976, the success of foreign pupils in “forming their identities [...] as members of two cultures depended on the foreign teacher and his or her capabilities and engagement.”⁸ In the same year, education researcher Ursula Boos-Nünning lamented that foreign teachers had received little scholarly attention, despite their importance.⁹ This has largely remained the case.¹⁰ The few existing studies on Turkish teachers in Germany have offered insight into their activities, professional challenges, and pedagogy without tracking changes over time. This article approaches Turkish teachers in West German schools from a different, as yet unexplored perspective. Namely, it examines how various stakeholders at different times envisioned Turkish teachers’ work

- 7 With these studies, historians have responded to earlier calls for bottom-up research on migration and structural integration. See Klaus J. Bade, *Europa in Bewegung. Migration vom späten 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*, Munich 2000, pp. 166 f.; Sarah Thomsen Vierra, *At Home in Almanyay? Turkish-German Spaces of Belonging in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1961 – 1990*, Ph.D. Diss. University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill 2011; Sarah Hackett, *Foreigners, Minorities, and Integration. The Muslim Immigrant Experience in Britain and Germany*, Manchester 2013; Mark Spicka, *City Policy and Guest Workers in Stuttgart, 1955–1973*, in: *German History* 31. 2013, pp. 345–365; Malte Borgmann, *Zwischen Integration und Gleichberechtigung. Migrationspolitik und migrantischer Aktivismus in Westberlin, 1969–1984*, MA Thesis, Freie Universität Berlin 2016. The conference “Neuere Migrationsgeschichte im Südwesten” in 2016 brought together practitioners of this approach in Germany, including Maria Alexopoulou, Tobias Ranker, Wolfgang Weber, and Mathias Beer.
- 8 Franz Domhof, *Ausländische Lehrer an den Schulen NRW*, in: Ursula Boos-Nünning (ed.), *Ausländische Lehrer im Spannungsfeld zwischen Herkunftsland und Gastland*, Düsseldorf 1976, pp. 8–25, here p. 21.
- 9 Boos-Nünning, *Ausländische Lehrer in deutschen Schulen. Daten und Analysen*, in: id., *Ausländische Lehrer im Spannungsfeld*, pp. 32–46, here p. 34.
- 10 Gerhard Weil, *Türkische Lehrkräfte an öffentlichen Schulen in Berlin (West). Probleme der Ausbildung, des Status, der Unterrichtsarbeit und der Zukunftsperspektiven*, Ph.D. Diss. Freie Universität Berlin 1991; Horst Unbehaun and Harald Schüller, *Türkische Lehrer in Bayern*, Bamberg 1998; Serhat Karhan, *Türkische Lehrkräfte der ersten Stunde. Erfahrungen pädagogischer Professionalität in Nordrhein-Westfalen*, Wiesbaden 2016; İ. Türker, *Federal Almanyay’daki Türk Öğretmenleri*, in: *Çağdaş Eğitim* 50. 1980, pp. 16–18; Ali Naşit Aras, *Federal Almanyay Cumhuriyeti’nde çalışan Türk öğretmenlerin mesleki, sosyo-kültürel ve ekonomik sorunları*, MA Thesis, Ankara University 2007; Cemal Yıldız, *Yurt Dışında Yaşayan Türk Çocuklarına Türkçe Öğretimi. Almanyay Örneği*, Ankara 2012, pp. 173–184.

in German schools, and how and when these ideas changed. Doing so will reveal ideas about, first, the knowledge policy makers, teachers, and other actors assumed Turkish pupils would need in their future lives, second, how that knowledge could and should be imparted and, third, who should impart it.

I. Turkish Teachers and Their “Dual Task”

Like other foreign teachers who worked with the children of foreign workers recruited to West Germany, Turkish teachers were to educate pupils according to policies shaped by what was often referred to as the “dual task” (*doppelte Aufgabe*). According to the earliest expressions of this principle in the 1960s, enshrined in the recommendations of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusministerkonferenz, KMK) and the guidelines of the *Länder*, the goal of educating migrant children was integration in the German school and simultaneous preparation for eventual return to the homeland and re-integration into its school system.¹¹ This twofold aim was in keeping with broader West German policies through the 1970s, which presumed – both before and after the end of foreign labor recruitment in 1973 – that the presence of foreign workers and their families was a temporary phenomenon.¹²

In the initial years of so-called guest worker recruitment, the policies of the *Länder* vis-à-vis the dual task were relatively similar. Foreign pupils were placed in preparatory classes to learn German. These classes were co-taught by a foreign and a German teacher, in early grades usually with two-thirds of all classroom time in the pupils’ native language and one-third in German. The ratio of material covered in German increased progressively over time to the point where the pupil could be integrated into mainstream classes within a maximum of two years, though in reality some remained much longer.¹³ After integration into mainstream classes, the *Länder* interpreted their responsibilities under the dual task differently. In some – NRW, Bavaria, Lower Saxony,

11 Bundesarchiv [hereafter BArch] B 304/3735, KMK Beschluss, Unterricht für Kinder von Ausländern, 14./15.5.1964.

12 Klaus J. Bade, *Vom Auswanderungsland zum Einwanderungsland. Deutschland 1880 – 1980*, Berlin 1983, pp. 59 – 124; Ulrich Herbert, *Geschichte der Ausländerpolitik in Deutschland. Saisonarbeiter, Zwangsarbeiter, Gastarbeiter, Flüchtlinge*, Munich 2001, pp. 191 – 263.

13 Detlef Friberg and Manfred Hohmann, *Schulpflicht und Schulrecht. Die Situation in den einzelnen Bundesländern*, in: Manfred Hohmann (ed.), *Unterricht mit ausländischen Kindern*, Düsseldorf 1976, pp. 11 – 26. Detailed examination of *Länder* policies in Brittany Rose Lehman, *Teaching Migrant Children. Debates, Policies, and Practices in West Germany and Europe, 1949 – 1992*, Ph.D. Diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 2015; Annemarie Bippes, *“Gastarbeiterkinder” an den Schulen des Landes Hessen von 1961 bis 1980*, Hamburg 2011.

and Hesse – education policymakers saw both halves of the dual task as a German responsibility. As such, in addition to integrating foreign pupils in mainstream classes, these *Länder* offered native language lessons to citizens of the six main countries of labor recruitment in the language, history, and culture of their respective homelands.¹⁴ These classes were taught by foreign teachers employed by local school authorities. As the number of foreign pupils entering school with insufficient German skills slowly declined and preparatory classes were phased out in the 1970s, foreign teachers were commonly reassigned to teach these native language lessons.

In other *Länder*, preparation for re-integration in the homeland's schools was the responsibility of the country of citizenship. It was left to the consulates to organize and supervise native language lessons and pay teachers. The *Länder* provided classroom space and in most cases contributed to defraying – though nowhere close to fully – the salaries of so-called consular teachers (*Konsultslehrer*) employed by the consulate.¹⁵ Though these *Länder* did not assume responsibility for native language lessons, some, like West Berlin and Hamburg, still employed a substantial number of foreign teachers in a variety of capacities, ranging from experimental bilingual classes to supplemental tutoring. Despite repeated Turkish requests, these *Länder* refused to take on the costs and organizational challenges associated with offering Turkish native language lessons with German oversight.¹⁶

The first Turkish teachers in West German schools were hired without the involvement of the Turkish government at a time when the numbers of Turkish schoolchildren were dwarfed by those from other countries of labor recruitment. As the number of Turkish pupils rose from 2,956 in 1965 to over 57,000 in 1972, the Turkish government sent its first full cohort of 101 teachers, after a trial group of 15 in 1966.¹⁷ The 1972 cohort was followed by 500 the following year and increasing numbers thereafter.¹⁸ Information on selection criteria used by the Turkish government in this period is scarce, though by the late 1970s it included interviews and an exam probing political beliefs.¹⁹ Teachers

14 These six were Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Portugal, and Yugoslavia.

15 Berlin paid DM 105,940 in 1973. Landesarchiv Berlin [hereafter BE] B 002 23738, Senator für Schulwesen to Generalkonsulat, 29. 3. 1973. Teachers in German schools are the focus of this article. Consular teachers are thus excluded, though not from the larger project from which this article originates.

16 Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes [hereafter PA AA] B 93 860, Kommuniké über die 2. Tagung der gemischten deutsch-türkischen Kommission, 11. – 13. 4. 1978.

17 Lehman, Teaching Migrant Children, p. 175. PA AA B 85 643, Auswärtiges Amt to KMK, 6. 1. 1966; PA AA B 85 1044, Botschaft Ankara to Auswärtiges Amt, 6. 3. 1972.

18 PA AA B 85 1277, Vermerk, 4. 4. 1973.

19 By the mid-1970s, teachers' associations in Turkey claimed exams had been designed to favor supporters of the right-wing Nationalist Movement Party. Ingrid Mönch and Rıza Baran, Gesellschaft und Erziehung am Beispiel der Türkei. Über den Einfluss der türkischen Regierung der Nationalistischen Front auf Erziehung und Ausbildung der türkischen Schüler in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 1. 5. 1977 [unpub. manuscript].

were sent for a period of between four and six years. Based on years of service in the 1972 cohort – the only one for which detailed information is available – most would have been tenured in Turkey and thus incentivized to return, even if their contracts with West German school authorities were renewed. In the initial cohort, teachers were overwhelmingly male and married with multiple accompanying children. To send for teachers, a school with a sufficient number of Turkish pupils contacted the local school office, which in turn contacted the consulate to pass on the request to the Turkish Ministry of National Education. The German side thus had no control over any aspect of the selection of teachers sent by Turkey.

Table 1: Turkish teachers in West German schools (consular teachers excepted)

Land	Native language lesson oversight	Teachers (1972/73)	Teachers (1982/83)
Baden-Württemberg	Consular	11	29
Bavaria	Land	7	509
Bremen	Consular	2	38
Hamburg	Consular	1	53
Hesse	Land	15	241
Lower Saxony	Land	6	169
NRW	Land	122	1016
Rheinland-Pfalz	Consular	0	83
Saarland	Consular	0	8
Schleswig-Holstein	Consular	2	3
West Berlin	Consular	59	334
West Germany		225	2483

Source: PA AA B 85 1044, Botschaft Ankara to Auswärtiges Amt, 6. 3. 1972 B 340 3280, KMK Vermerk, 15. 10. 1971. Archiv der sozialen Demokratie [hereafter AdsD] GEW HV Abt. V I GEWA 08007, Pädagogische und gewerkschaftliche Aspekte der Arbeit von türkischen Lehrerinnen und Lehrern in der Bundesrepublik. Fragebogen, 18.–20. 4. 1986.

II. Turkish Teachers as Conveyors of Migrating Knowledge

In the early 1970s, Turkish teachers like Hasan Akıncı arrived in West Germany with little preparation for their new roles in German schools. For teachers, Hermann Müller lamented in 1974, there were “no guidelines for lessons, no clear supervision or responsibility, no professional development or continuing education, and no integration in the German school.” This led to teachers and

pupils being “pushed into ghettos.”²⁰ For much of the 1970s, many local school officials regarded this not as a problem but rather as the proper role of Turkish teachers as conveyors of migrating knowledge. Local school authorities treated Turkish teachers and the classes they taught as separate from the rest of the school, as following foreign pedagogical and cultural principles. These officials believed they should not interfere with the work of Turkish teachers by offering guidelines or supervising lessons closely, as teachers fulfilled the second half of the dual task by transmitting this knowledge in an environment as similar to that in Turkey as possible in order to enable eventual re-integration in the homeland. That pupils in West Germany had different experiences than their peers in Turkey was not taken into consideration, and integration in the German school – the first half of the dual task – was seen as the responsibility of German teachers.

When asked to assess Turkish teachers, German officials remarked on their outmoded teaching style or perceived disinterest in cooperation with German colleagues, though neither was treated as a problem to be addressed. In 1975, Baden-Württemberg prepared a pilot project for classes akin to the model in Bavaria, with most subjects in Turkish. During the planning phase for the project, Bavarian teachers and administrators shared their experiences working alongside Turkish colleagues.²¹ Turkish teachers, they reported, taught in a markedly different style than was usual in West Germany, with more emphasis on lecturing and less on group work or other “socially integrative” pedagogical practices. Though personal relationships with German teachers were collegial, “interest in pedagogical cooperation with German teachers and the German school administration was scant.” Turkish teachers “felt emphatically devoted to their own school system.” After evaluating these reports, Baden-Württemberg proceeded with the project, as the attitudes and practices described in the assessment were consistent with the goal of native language classes to “encourage the ties of the foreign children to their native language and homeland school and education system, particularly in light of a potential return to the homeland.”²²

Notably, there were no observations made about the material teachers taught. This is unsurprising, as German administrators commonly knew little about what happened in Turkish classes and did not make any great effort to find out.²³ An Osnabrück school inspector visited one of Akıncı’s classes for a cursory observation for the first time months after he had begun teaching. At the end of the lesson, the inspector told Akıncı that, while he had not

20 Müller, *Ausländerkinder in deutschen Schulen*, p. 113.

21 Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg [hereafter BW] EA 3/609 Bü 74, Kultusministerium Abt. II, *Besprechung mit Pädagogen aus Bayern*, 24.3.1975.

22 BW EA 3/609 Bü 102, Kultusministerium to Stadt Ludwigsburg, 28.11.1975.

23 Ursula Boos-Nünning, *Situationsanalyse*, in: id. et al. (eds.), *Schulbildung ausländischer Kinder*, Bonn 1976, pp. 3 – 132, here pp. 23 f. and p. 63.

understood what had happened in the class, he was pleased Akıncı could teach multiple grades at once without losing control of the class.²⁴ Most assessments of Turkish teachers by their nominal supervisors were similarly focused on superficial observations about classroom discipline or pupils' handwriting.²⁵

Some reasons for the leeway Turkish teachers had in their classes were logistical, though this only reinforced the sense that these classes existed outside the world of the German school. Like Akıncı, many Turkish teachers taught in multiple schools, necessitating long commutes and hampering supervision by administrators, collaboration with German colleagues, and integration in the schools.²⁶ Teaching in multiple schools in the afternoon often meant Turkish teachers had no contact with their nominal supervisors. One teacher related that, at some schools, he had only met the caretaker and custodial staff, the only personnel left in the building during his classes.²⁷

Even when serious complaints about Turkish classes were brought to the attention of school authorities, lack of supervision or insight into the classes made it unlikely that teachers would be disciplined or dismissed. In 1976, three-quarters of the parents of pupils in native language lessons at a primary school in Celle sent a letter of complaint to school authorities. Celle's Turkish teacher, a supporter of the right-wing Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), allegedly routinely mocked his pupils' Kurdish heritage and refused to teach Turkish to Kurdish children. He was accused of skipping lessons often to concentrate on his lucrative work as an interpreter in the employment office.²⁸ School authorities blithely dismissed the complaint, responding only that records indicated the teacher in question had not taken an inordinate amount of sick days.²⁹ There is no evidence that the parents' concerns were investigated further. Whether German officials believed such behavior was acceptable in a Turkish classroom or they simply lacked awareness of what was happening in the classes for which they were at least nominally responsible, Turkish classes and the conflicts originating in them were treated as inter-Turkish affairs in which German supervisors were loath to meddle.

24 Akıncı, *Das Fleisch gehört mir*, pp. 288 f.

25 See BW EA 3/609 Bü 77, Reinöhlschule to Oberschulamt Nordwürttemberg, 20. 9. 1976; AdsD DGB-BV 5/DGAZ000884, Grundschule Weyer to Schulamt Solingen, 26. 3. 1982.

26 Akıncı, *Das Fleisch gehört mir*, pp. 289 f.

27 GEW Niedersachsen, *Arbeitsbedingungen für ausländische Lehrkräfte*, Hannover 1984, pp. 11–14.

28 NLA Nds 120 Acc 22/86 Nr. 160, Anonymous to Regierungspräsident Lüneburg, 24. 6. 1976. Two similar cases with allegedly MHP-affiliated teachers were reported in Münster in 1975 and also went unaddressed. AdsD DGB-BV 5/DGAZ000244, GEW Münster and Münster İçi Derneği to DGB BV Abt. Ausländische Arbeitnehmer, 17. 11. 1975.

29 NLA Nds 120 Acc 22/86 Nr 160, Regierungspräsident Lüneburg to Schulleiternrat der Altstädter Schule, 20. 11. 1976.

Teachers in native language lessons had limited contact with their German colleagues. When it existed, relationships were often challenging. Turkish teachers reported being treated as second-class, a sentiment reinforced by differences in salary.³⁰ German colleagues typically viewed Turkish teachers as a cultural resource, walking repositories of cultural and linguistic knowledge expected to translate between the Turkish “mentality” and the German school.³¹ Turkish teachers felt German teachers expected them to perform a “police / interpreter function” and to solve the problems of Turkish pupils on their own. German colleagues, teachers claimed, were guilty of “exploiting the low position of [their] foreign colleagues” to demand far more from them than was expected of other teachers.³² As Gisela Tramsen, a German teacher, observed, Turkish teachers, despite their valued cultural expertise, “still had the status of guest workers” in the school.³³

Discipline was an area in which German teachers commonly assumed Turkish teachers were particularly and uniquely knowledgeable. A German teacher recalled that misbehaving Turkish pupils in mainstream classes in a school in Berlin were sent to the Turkish teacher for discipline, with an understanding that he understood these pupils best and could correct them most effectively in the style to which they were accustomed.³⁴ Though pupils in native language lessons spent more time with German teachers than with the Turkish teachers they saw for a maximum of five hours a week, it was still assumed Turkish teachers possessed a special understanding of these pupils and their behavior.

But if Turkish teachers operated without effective supervision from West German school authorities, this did not, as some outside observers believed, lead to de facto Turkish state control over classes in German schools, even if

30 See Nebahat Ercan, *Mein Leben als türkische Lehrerin in Deutschland*, Hamburg 2005, pp. 296 – 299. More than 75 % of teachers in Karhan’s sample at least partially agreed with the statement that German teachers saw them as less qualified. Karhan, *Türkische Lehrkräfte der ersten Stunde*, p. 127.

31 When Schleswig-Holstein hired its first Turkish teachers, they were described by the education ministry as “multipliers” who would help German teachers understand the “Turkish mentality.” Anon., *Türken als reguläre Lehrer. Drei Anwärter beginnen nach den Sommerferien im Status von deutschen Beamten*, in: *Kieler Nachrichten*, 9. 7. 1981.

32 Ali Uçar, *Die Stellung der ausländischen Lehrer in der Berliner Schule und die Kooperationshindernisse*, in: *Berlin Schulpsychologische Beratungsstelle Mitteilungen* 19. 1983, p. 53.

33 Gisela Tramsen, *Gastarbeiterin im Schuldienst. Türkenklasse*, Wuppertal 1973, p. 33.

34 Other teachers eventually discovered the Turkish teacher was striking pupils when a boy complained that he had to go all the way up the stairs to the Turkish classroom just to get hit. Interview with Gerhard Weil, 4.5.2016. Anecdotal evidence suggests corporal punishment was not unheard of in Turkish classes in the 1970s. Tramsen, *Gastarbeiterin im Schuldienst*, p. 9, p. 16 and p. 30.

there was Turkish interest in such oversight.³⁵ Despite limitations imposed by West German school laws, Turkish officials – particularly those sympathetic to right-wing political parties – attempted to supervise and monitor teachers. Teachers were the subject of intense interest in the consulates. A German journalist visiting the consulate in Essen in 1975 was surprised to find a map of NRW with pins for each Turkish teacher in the *Land* displayed prominently over the consul's desk.³⁶ By the early 1970s, each of the twelve consulates in West Germany was assigned a dedicated education attaché. Though these officials directly supervised consular teachers in *Länder* with consular native language lessons, they could only visit lessons under German oversight with permission from school authorities and accompanied by a German official.³⁷

Other avenues for influencing lessons or controlling politically unreliable teachers were available, however. Parents informed Turkish officials about teachers they considered politically suspect or dangerous and, in some cases, the consulate agitated for teachers' removal.³⁸ The long-serving attaché in Bonn, an alleged MHP partisan, secured postings for like-minded attachés. He himself purportedly attended meetings organized by and for teachers and ostentatiously recorded politicized discussions.³⁹ The same official ordered the Frankfurt consulate to distribute surveys to teachers in the region with a pointed question about their passport expiration date. This action was interpreted by many teachers as a veiled threat, given well-known cases of consulates refusing to renew passports in order to force political dissidents to return to Turkey. The Frankfurt consulate also contacted teachers to inform them, inaccurately, that they were required to sign paperwork to become Turkish civil servants, if they were not already, a ploy seen as an attempt to gain legal leverage over teachers employed by German schools.⁴⁰ For their part, despite nominal restrictions, German school officials frequently gave

35 Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen Abt. Rheinland [hereafter LAV NRW] NW 353 Nr. 124, Gutachten zur Schul- und Berufsbildung der Gastarbeiterkinder, Verband Bildung und Erziehung, 1972.

36 Anon., "Wenn wir mittags schließen, steht keiner mehr vor der Tür." Essen beherbergt größtes Türkenkonsulat der BRD, in: Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, 17. 2. 1975.

37 BArch B 304/ 6254, Gespräch des Präsidenten der KMK mit dem türkischen Erziehungsminister, 14. 5. 1979. This regulation dated back to unauthorized classroom visits by Greek school inspectors. Lehman, *Teaching Migrant Children*, p. 219.

38 AdsD DGB-BV 5/DGAZ000884, Generalkonsulat to Schulamit Solingen, Beschwerdebriefe türkischer Eltern, 20. 3. 1982; Sacit Somel, *Almanya'da Türk işçileriyle içiçe*. Bir başkonsolosun Lübnan, Amerika, Etyopya, Danimarka ve Almanya'da yaşadığı olaylar, Ankara 1989, pp. 140 f.

39 See Kreuzberg Museum [hereafter KM], Akpınar, FİDEF to Ministerpräsident Rau, Einsetzung des ehemaligen türkischen Botschaftsrats am NRW-Landesinstitut, 12. 2. 1979; Dokumentationszentrum für Migration in Deutschland [hereafter DOMiD] AL 058 Türk Öğretmenler Birliği to Rau, 1. 3. 1979.

40 AdsD DGB-BV 5/DGAZ000635 DGB Frankfurt, Aufforderung türkische Behörden an türkische Lehrer die Rückführung in das Beamtenverhältnis zu beantragen, 27. 3. 1977.

consulates information about teachers in their employ, a once accepted practice, which the *Länder* sought to curb after the 1980 coup in Turkey.⁴¹ Like local school authorities, Turkish parents expected teachers to create conditions as similar to those in Turkey as possible. Parents complained when teachers did not use corporal punishment or when their pedagogical style was too lax or too “German.”⁴² Even parents who valued the creativity and free expression permitted in German schools were still critical of the supposed lack of discipline.⁴³ Parents, many of whom in the 1970s at least nominally intended to return to Turkey, were exposed to reports in the Turkish press on the problems of re-integration in Turkish schools and thus saw teachers’ migrating knowledge as essential for their children’s future.⁴⁴

At the same time, parents saw Turkish teachers as useful intermediaries possessing a certain level of migrant knowledge, and teachers were called upon to utilize this knowledge in a variety of roles in and outside the school. Teachers functioned, in Nebahat Ercan’s words, as “life preserver and fire extinguisher,” alternately serving as translator, social worker, and replacement parent for the many pupils whose parents worked long or irregular hours.⁴⁵ Though West German teachers and administrators often considered Turkish teachers’ German inadequate, parents sought out teachers for translation and guidance when dealing with all manner of bureaucracy. Akıncı translated documents for and from foreigners’ registration offices, hospitals, banks, courts, or doctors, and interpreted during meetings with German teachers and administrators.⁴⁶ Akıncı’s home became something of an *ersatz* community center for Turkish families. On weekends, a long line of Ford Transit vans, a favored model for Turks in West Germany, formed in front of his home. Parents often described an ideal teacher as a “defender of pupils’ rights,” able, by virtue of their education and migrant knowledge, to advocate for their children in West Germany in a way they themselves could not.⁴⁷

41 BW EA 3/609 Bü 102, Kultusministerium to Generalkonsulat, 5.6.1973. Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv [hereafter HE] Abt 806/6 Nr. 77, Kultusministerium to Regierungspräsident Darmstadt, 25.2.1981.

42 Citing the folk expression “where the teacher has struck, a rose grows,” parents criticized Akıncı for not employing corporal punishment. Akıncı, *Das Fleisch gehört mir*, p. 42. In an article on a visit to a Turkish class, the teacher was praised repeatedly for conducting the class exactly as if she were in Turkey. Şerafettin Özdemir, *Burası Waltrop von Galen Okulu. Okulda Türk çocuklarının kültür derslerine büyük bir önem veriliyor*, in: *Anadolu*, 8.2.1980.

43 KM Akpınar, Emiroğlu and Öztürk to Türk Veliler, n. d.

44 See Brian JK Miller, *Reshaping the Turkish Nation-State. The Turkish-German Guest Worker Program and Planned Development, 1961 – 1985*, Ph. D. Diss. University of Iowa 2015, pp. 168 – 206.

45 Ercan, *Mein Leben als türkische Lehrerin*, p. 320.

46 Akıncı, *Das Fleisch gehört mir*, pp. 297 – 300.

47 Türk Velilerle Öğretmenler Üzerine Söyleşi, in: *Yenidil* 1. 1988, pp. 38 f., here p. 39.

Though Turkish teachers were valued by parents for their knowledge of Germany, this knowledge could also be used against them. Ercan recounts being accused of not being a true Turk – of “not having a drop of Turkish blood” – when she could not provide help requested of her.⁴⁸ Though relationships were generally good, teacher-parent interactions could be fraught. Some teachers looked down on those they considered uneducated and unsophisticated, resenting that their German colleagues and German society lumped them together.⁴⁹ At the same time, teachers and parents were interdependent. Parents relied on Turkish teachers for assistance with issues in and outside the school, and teachers needed parents to enroll their children in native language lessons in order to have a measure of job security.⁵⁰

III. Turkish Teachers as Conveyors of Migrant Knowledge

When Hasan Akıncı began teaching in April 1972, he encountered immediate challenges. The pupils in his classes were heterogenous, both in terms of age and Turkish skills. Some had recently arrived from Turkey – their parents having sent for them when they learned about Akıncı’s arrival – whereas others had spent years in West Germany and spoke better German than Turkish. Generally, Akıncı found his pupils withdrawn, listless, and prone to aggression – reactions he attributed to social isolation, lack of parental contact, and the absence of a supportive extended family. Despite these behavioral issues, Akıncı believed Turkish pupils were excited about native language lessons, seeing them as a respite from the isolation experienced in mainstream classes. Akıncı marked his classrooms as Turkish spaces, decorating them before lessons with a flag, a portrait of Atatürk, and a timeline of important events in Turkish history.⁵¹ An observer could have been forgiven for assuming Akıncı’s classroom was a Turkish school in miniature and a space for imparting migrating knowledge.

Like most Turkish teachers, however, Akıncı quickly learned that pupils could not be taught in the same way as their compatriots in Turkey, nor could the

48 Ercan, *Mein Leben als türkische Lehrerin*, p. 246.

49 Necati Şahin, *Kraldan çok kralcı*, in: *Arkadaş* 2. 1982, pp. 26 f.

50 That native language lessons were optional contributed to teachers’ insecurity. 76 % of teachers in Karhan’s sample described it as very or somewhat burdensome. Karhan, *Türkische Lehrkräfte der ersten Stunde*, p. 115.

51 Akıncı, *Das Fleisch gehört mir*, p. 300. Portraits of Atatürk were frequently mentioned in West German media descriptions of Turkish classes, emphasizing their exotic nature. See Susanne Singer, *Atatürk im Klassenzimmer. Türkische Kinder fühlen sich in Wesseling wohl*, in: *Kölnische Rundschau*, 17.1.1975.

content of lessons be the same as in Turkey.⁵² Pupils had adjusted to the German educational system. They spent the majority of their classroom day with German teachers, who favored interactive and group-based learning, and they responded poorly to attempts to import a forward-facing, teacher-centric pedagogical style learned in Turkey, becoming confused and nervous.⁵³ Teachers felt the content of classes also required adaptation to the West German context and consideration of pupils' migrant situation, as teacher Mevlüt Aşar reflected upon in his poem "Ders" ("Lesson"):

[...] With what should I begin this lesson?
 With human rights?
 Or with the Foreigners' Law?
 Perhaps first with the hardship of the labor migrants
 And their cheaply-purchased sweat
 What should I teach you about?
 About Hasan, the street sweeper in Munich?
 Or about the Janissaries before the gates of Vienna?
 Perhaps first about the War of Independence
 And then about the imposed backwardness of our homeland.⁵⁴

Teachers found imported lesson plans, course materials, and textbooks ill-suited to what they felt pupils in West Germany needed. Thus, lesson planning and preparation represented a source of frustration and considerable effort.⁵⁵ The education ministries did not offer anything in the way of guidelines for content in native language lessons until well into the 1980s.⁵⁶ As a result, Akıncı spent nearly every evening of his first few years writing original lessons.⁵⁷ Other teachers formed groups to procure and produce plans and

52 There was some disagreement among Turkish teachers like A. Naci İşsever about the source of differences between Turkish pupils in Turkey and West Germany, whether it was assimilation to German values, the absence of supportive parents and relatives, or social dislocation caused by migration. A. Naci İşsever, *Almancı dedigin...*, Gelsenkirchen 1987, pp. 222 f.

53 Mustafa Şükrü Çakiroğlu, *Analyse türkischer Schulbücher der 5./6. Klasse mit Hinblick auf ihre Bedeutung für den Unterricht in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Frankfurt 1984, pp. 24–30. A study concluded that the "daily back and forth [...] in the course of an afternoon between the expectations of the German and the Turkish teacher" led to aggressive, withdrawn, and nervous pupils. *Pädagogisches Institut der Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf, Ausländische Kinder an unseren Schulen. Das soziokulturelle Umfeld türkischer Kinder in Deutschland*, Düsseldorf 1980.

54 Mevlüt Aşar, *Ders*, in: id. (ed.), *Dilemma der Fremde. Gedichte*, Oberhausen 1986, p. 52.

55 Yaşar Kaynar, a teacher in Duisburg, considered course materials teachers' single biggest problem. In 1973, he opened a bookstore specializing in Turkish course books. Yaşar Kaynar, *Tutku Pınarı*, Istanbul 2002, pp. 122–130.

56 HE Abt. 806/6 Nr. 77, *Handreichungen für den muttersprachlichen Unterricht in der Grundschule*, Jan. 1982; Ali Rıza Özgüç, *Handreichung für den muttersprachlichen Unterricht mit türkischen Schülern*, Soest 1985.

57 Akıncı, *Das Fleisch gehört mir*, p. 287.

materials.⁵⁸ Some based lessons on plans from the Turkish Ministry of National Education, but those required substantial modification. Native language lessons covered material from multiple subjects; given the heterodox age and language levels of Turkish pupils, imported material was ill-suited. Pedagogically, teachers found un-adapted Turkish material challenging, based as it was on the frontal lessons and rote memorization that – at least formally – characterized Turkish schools. Teachers saw their responsibility as assessing the needs of their pupils, shaped as they were by their experiences as young migrants, and identifying what material from Turkish lesson plans would be relevant for them and for their lives in West Germany.

Textbooks presented similar problems. Like all books for German schools, Turkish textbooks needed approval from the education ministries, a process requiring an assessment from a German teacher fluent in Turkish. Finding suitable auditors – usually former teachers from the German School in Istanbul – was difficult. When auditors were located, textbooks were not rigorously scrutinized and were rarely rejected.⁵⁹ Books were meant to be assessed based on adherence to the democratic norms of the German Basic Law, but in practice evaluators afforded considerable leeway for expressions of nationalism and militarism short of direct calls to violence. One evaluator wrote, when considering a textbook glorifying the Turkish army, that “the Turkish mentality contains national self-confidence. This mindset will survive, even if we do not approve such books.”⁶⁰ German teachers assessed foreign books based on what they perceived to be the standards of Turkey, not West Germany. Course books like a fourth-grade mathematics textbook that taught geometry by means of drawing the Turkish flag, or class readers praising the nationalist paramilitary Gray Wolves, were thus approved for use in schools.⁶¹ For Turkish teachers, the upshot of this blanket approval was the freedom to choose whichever books they preferred.

58 Anon., Sunu, in: Türk Eğitimciler Grubu Aylık Bülteni, 1.1980, April Issue, pp. 3 f. Teachers still often shouldered the expense of producing this material well into the 1980s. Yavuz Kuşçu, Yabancı Öğretmen Okulun Bütünleyici Parçasıdır, in: Arkadaş 21. 1988, pp. 23 – 26, here p. 24.

59 Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv [hereafter BY] MK 64580, Staatsministerium to Prüfer, 3.9.1973; BY MK 64580, Karl Steuerwald to Staatsministerium, 4.1.1974; BY MK 64580, Sigrid Weiner to Staatsministerium, 5.1.1974; By 1979, Bavaria had evaluated more than two dozen Turkish books and rejected none. Since these evaluations were shared with other *Länder*, these books were also approved elsewhere in West Germany. NLA Nds. 400 Acc. 2000/066 Nr. 68, Bayerische Staatskanzlei to Kultusministerien und -senatoren, 11.9.1979. On assessment of foreign textbooks more broadly, see Lehman, Teaching Migrant Children, pp. 213 – 228.

60 BY MK 64580, Weiner to Staatsministerium, 5.1.1974.

61 Anon., İlk Okullar İçin Matematik Sınıf V, Istanbul, n. d.; Dilbilgisi Dersleri 1, Istanbul 1976. All textbooks were consulted at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research.

Despite this freedom, teachers found imported textbooks wanting. Teachers in preparatory courses using a textbook for German as a foreign language with dialogues and texts set entirely in Turkey and examples drawn from Turkish life – with exclusively Turkish names or dialogues teaching vocabulary for riding a *dolmuş* (minibus) – felt it necessary to supplement the book with readings, assignments, and activities drawn from the environment in which the pupils lived. Otherwise, pupils became confused and disinterested.⁶² Turkish textbooks often depicted an idealized vision of Turkish rural life unfamiliar to children in West Germany, as in the case of first-grade books that taught the letter “N” with a picture of a horseshoe (*nal*). Nebahat Ercan found this only confused pupils growing up in industrialized, urban settings. She and her colleagues in Hamburg produced their own material with more familiar examples from the environment of a large West German city.⁶³ In the 1970s, only one series of textbooks was produced specifically for Turkish pupils in West Germany. Between 1972 and 1975, the Ministry of National Education collaborated with Baden-Württemberg on three books for the first through fifth grades.⁶⁴ Most of the content was culled from a popular Turkish reader, and the writing and editing was done in Turkey. The books shared with their source material an emphasis on nationalist values and preparation for life in Turkey. Dialogues set in the supermarket or the post office were accompanied by illustrations with German signs, the only indication that the first two books were intended for pupils living outside Turkey.⁶⁵ In the fourth- and fifth-grade text, pupils were asked to discuss why their parents had come to Germany and were given geographical information about Baden-Württemberg.⁶⁶ Though the books were advertised by the consulates in other *Länder*, there was little enthusiasm among Turkish teachers with the freedom to choose their own material.⁶⁷ Such texts and the vision of migrating knowledge they represented did not suit classes taught by teachers who privileged knowledge of another form.

IV. From Migrating Knowledge to Migrant Knowledge

Beginning in the late 1970s and continuing into the 1980s, ideas about Turkish teachers as conveyors of migrant knowledge began to gain newfound currency among German administrators and teachers. These changes influenced and

62 Anon., *Almanca Ders Kitabı 1*, Istanbul 1976.

63 Ercan, *Mein Leben als türkische Lehrerin*, pp. 180 and p. 197; *Bizim Dilbilgisi 5*, Istanbul 1972.

64 Ferruh Şanır and Satı Erişen, *Türk Çocuklarına Kitabı I*, Tübingen 1975; Kemal Demiray, *Güzel Türkçemiz III*, Istanbul 1961.

65 Şanır and Erişen, *Kitabı I*, p. 48 and p. 59.

66 Şanır and Erişen, *Türk Çocuklarına Kitabı IIb*, Tübingen 1972, pp. 97 – 101.

67 BY MK 6450, Generalkonsulat to Regierungspräsident Mittelfranken, 21. 2. 1973.

were influenced by new ideas about the dual task.⁶⁸ In the years after the end of labor recruitment in 1973, it became clear to local administrators that foreign pupils would be in German schools for the long term. New definitions of the dual task therefore prioritized integration. Rather than focusing on preparing pupils for a return to Turkey, the second half of the dual task became retention of Turkish identity and preservation of Turkish as a native language. In this, Turkish teachers were believed to be crucially important. Whereas previously they had fulfilled only one half of the original dual task, that is, preparation for return, Turkish teachers now came to embody both sides of the reconfigured dual task. They appeared to be intermediaries who could model integration for pupils, including the retention of a Turkish cultural and national identity. Teachers experienced life in West Germany as members of the Turkish minority and could teach their pupils how to be not merely Turks but Turks in West Germany. Though, as demonstrated above, this was a function teachers already sought to perform, German authorities began to recognize and encourage them in this role and to actively privilege hiring teachers seen as capable of filling it.

These new ideas emerged at the local level at a time when programmatic federal and *Länder* statements about the goals of educating foreign pupils remained mostly static. Indeed, new KMK guidelines in 1976 and subsequent *Länder* policies re-emphasized preparation for return to the homeland.⁶⁹ In this regard, relative positions between *Land* bureaucracies and local school authorities were effectively reversed. Whereas previously the *Länder* had mandated the integration of Turkish teachers in the school and required German oversight of their lessons, with local authorities implementing classes in a manner that ensured neither, now local authorities pressed the *Länder* for more control over the selection, training, and supervision of teachers. They sought teachers who would be easier to monitor, who taught in a “modern” pedagogical style, and who had the language skills necessary to collaborate with German colleagues.

A representative example of this new vision of the dual task and the place of Turkish teachers within it can be found in a white paper sent by the city of Duisburg to the Minister-President of NRW in 1979.⁷⁰ The paper claimed that the worsening economic and political situation in Turkey ruled out the return of the city’s rapidly growing Turkish population for the

68 These are rough dates. Hesse stopped relying on teachers sent from Ankara by 1978, whereas Bavaria still received nearly all its teachers from Turkey in 1982. Bippes, *Gastarbeiterkinder*, pp. 219–228; BArch B 138/61831, *Kommuniqué über die 6. Tagung der gemischten deutsch-türkischen Expertenkommission*, 30.11./2.12.1982.

69 Lehman, *Teaching Migrant Children*, pp. 256 f.

70 LAV NRW NW 353 Nr. 128, *Stadt Duisburg Dezernat für Bildung und Kultur to Minister-Präsident Rau*, 28.8.1979; Dietmar Seher, *Türkenkinder sollen erst Deutsch lernen. Duisburgs OB macht Vorstoß bei der Landesregierung*, in: *Neue Ruhr Zeitung*, 11.10.1979.

foreseeable future. This reality demanded that “the present strategy of double integration [in the German and in the homeland school systems] cannot be achieved by the school and should be abandoned. The point of emphasis for the school must be learning German and graduation from German schools.” Despite this, the city did not call for linguistic or cultural assimilation. It argued that pupils should still receive instruction in Turkish language, geography, culture, and history from a Turkish teacher. The city furthermore advocated allowing Turkish pupils to choose Turkish as a first foreign language in lieu of English, institutionalizing Turkish in the school in a way optional afternoon native language lessons never could.⁷¹ Thus, a goal of the school would be preserving native language and identity, not the ability to rapidly reintegrate in Turkish schools.

The city’s current group of Turkish teachers, the paper claimed, were not up to this new dual task. To begin with, newly arrived teachers spoke insufficient German. If Turkish lessons were more integrated in the normal curriculum, these teachers would be brought out of their isolation in afternoon classes. They would be required to collaborate with German colleagues by coordinating lesson plans and learning outcomes, something teachers arriving with what the paper characterized as “no or insufficient German language skills” would be unable to do. A second problem had to do with hiring trained teachers already in West Germany. Those teachers, reportedly numbering perhaps more than 7,000 in 1974, had given up teaching positions to come to West Germany to work in other capacities and, after living and working in the country for years, were proficient in German.⁷² Per education ministry guidelines, these local teachers (*Ortskräfte*) could teach native language lessons, but the responsible school authority was required to submit prospective teachers’ credentials to the consulate for certification. This process lasted months, and assessments were often arbitrary or politically motivated, as the consulates almost always preferred sending for a carefully selected, politically reliable teacher from Ankara.⁷³

Problems with language skills and with hiring local teachers had been present as long as there had been Turkish teachers in West German schools. However, it

71 Turkish as a foreign language took place during normal school hours and grades were considered in post-primary school placement. The Lower Saxon education ministry mandated that such classes have a “substantially higher level of requirement” than native language lessons. NLA Nds 400, Acc. 2000/066 Nr. 72, Kultusministerium, Ref. 301. Vermerk, 25.1.1983.

72 Ali Bozkurt, Vortrag an der GEW Tagung zur Situation der ausländischen Kinder und Jugendlichen, 28.2.–1.3.1974, in: Berliner Lehrerzeitung 3. 1974, pp. 6–23. By the mid-1970s, there were reportedly 9,000 such teachers in West Germany. Numbers increased after the 1980 coup. See Karin Hunn, “Nächstes Jahr kehren wir zurück...” Die Geschichte der türkischen “Gastarbeiter” in der Bundesrepublik, Göttingen 2005, p. 315.

73 NLA Nds. 120 Acc 22/86 Nr. 160, Generalkonsulat to Regierungspräsident Lüneburg, 7.7.1976.

was only at the end of the 1970s that local school authorities like those in Duisburg pressured the *Länder* to address them. Over time, Duisburg's recommendations and those of other local school authorities were followed in one form or another.⁷⁴ Though native language lessons remained mostly confined to afternoons, Turkish as a first foreign language was adopted in some *Länder* – including in ones with consular native language lessons – though Turkish as a second foreign language was a more common and popular offering.⁷⁵ All *Länder* save Bavaria began to hire more local teachers by the end of the decade.⁷⁶ By 1982, a narrow majority of the more than 2,000 Turkish teachers in West Germany were local teachers. Of those brought in from Turkey, roughly half were employed in Bavaria, which remained an outlier.⁷⁷

In this period, the education ministries received more frequent complaints from schools and local school offices about the German skills of so-called imported teachers.⁷⁸ It was reported that newly arrived teachers relied on their pupils for help with shopping, banking, or visiting the post office, thereby ostensibly diminishing their authority.⁷⁹ Rather than a decline in the linguistic preparation of such teachers for their work in West Germany, these complaints reflected greater exposure to the work of Turkish teachers and different expectations for their interaction with colleagues and school administrators.⁸⁰ Though the *Länder* sponsored classes to help remedy this problem, when German language skills became an important criterion for

74 LAV NRW NW 353 Nr. 128, Minister-Präsident Johannes Rau to Stadt Duisburg, 28. 9. 1979.

75 By 1980, all *Länder* save two offered Turkish as either a first or second foreign language. BArch B 138/38660, KMK, Vorbereitende Notizen auf die 5. Tagung der gemischten deutsch-türkischen Expertenkommission, 28. 10. 1980.

76 Bavaria opposed policies prioritizing integration in German schools well into the 1980s. Since 1973, pupils in Bavaria had the option of receiving a Turkish education, with German as a foreign language. Bavaria continued to send for large numbers of Turkish teachers until these native language classes fell out of favor toward the end of the 1980s. See Hans Meier, Eindeutschung um jeden Preis?, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 16. 6. 1979.

77 BArch B 136/17534, Botschaft Ankara to Auswärtiges Amt, 23. 7. 1982.

78 Hesse assessed foreign teachers with a mandatory exam in 1978. HE Abt. 814/1 Nr. 57, Klausurtagung des Ausländerbeirates der Landeshauptstadt Wiesbaden, Schulische Situation ausländischer Kinder und Jugendlicher, 5. – 7. 10. 1979.

79 BArch B 138/38661, KMK, 6. Tagung der gemischten deutsch-türkischen Expertenkommission. Vorbereitende Notizen, Nov. 1982. Though the impetus for more German offerings came from local school authorities, teachers had advocated for classes tailored to their needs for years. See Neuhaus and Sargut, *Ausländische Lehrer*, p. 117 and pp. 124 f.

80 BArch B 304/3304, Gespräch zwischen dem türkischen Erziehungsminister und dem Präsidenten der KMK, 22. 8. 1979.

selecting Turkish teachers, local teachers had an advantage over those sent by Ankara.⁸¹

Similarly, administrators called for measures to address perceived deficits in Turkish teachers' pedagogy, but their observations about lecturing, call-and-repeat, and a lack of group work were the same that had been made and left unaddressed earlier in the 1970s.⁸² Pedagogical training offerings for Turkish teachers increased in response to these complaints, both locally and in workshops hosted by *Länder* teacher training institutes.⁸³ Besides instruction in "modern" pedagogical methods, these courses offered guidance on topics such as preparing reports and attendance lists in German, school organization, and teachers' rights and responsibilities.⁸⁴ Modernizing Turkish teachers' pedagogy thus also served to make their lessons more transparent for German supervisors.

To further facilitate this increased supervision, *Länder* hired experienced Turkish teachers with good German skills to accompany school inspectors during observations.⁸⁵ Local teachers or those sent by Ankara who had not returned at the end of their posting were the only realistic candidates for such positions. In addition to assisting with inspections, such teachers also served as points of contact for others in their region on pedagogical and bureaucratic questions, and were particularly helpful in facilitating the sharing of teaching materials, thus alleviating one of the Turkish teachers' biggest challenges. These positions also gave veteran Turkish teachers opportunities for stability and career advancement formerly unavailable to them.⁸⁶

A long-held perception that locally hired teachers were more beholden to local school authorities and the West German school system caused official Turkish resentment of increased local hiring. In almost all correspondence between

81 Teachers often devoted time outside the classroom to house visits or lesson planning, little time was available to study German. Uçar, *Die Stellung der ausländischen Lehrer*, pp. 47–50. In 1970 NRW was the first *Land* to offer supplemental German instruction in the form of an optional correspondence course. Lehman, *Teaching Migrant Children*, p. 201.

82 NLA Nds. 400 Acc. 2002/150 Nr. 27, Kultusministerium Ref. 301. Gespräch zwischen den für den Unterricht mit ausländischen Schülern zuständigen Dezernenten, 2.2.1982.

83 Teachers had organized their own workshops and trainings before local authorities took this interest in their pedagogy, though there is little indication this initiative on the part of teachers was recognized as such. Uçar, *Die Stellung der ausländischen Lehrer*, p. 50; DOMiD AD 0858, Türkiye Öğretmenler Derneği, Çalışma Programı, 1985.

84 NLA Nds. 406 Acc. 94/92 Nr. 91, Landesinstitut für Lehrerfortbildung to Schulamtsdirektor Wolfenbüttel, Lehrerfortbildungskurs. Die Arbeit des ausländischen Lehrers für den muttersprachlichen Unterricht, 5.1.1982; HE Abt. 806/1 Nr. 16, Schulrat Wiesbaden, Teilnahme an der AG für methodisch-didaktische Fragen, 8.2.1978.

85 At the suggestion of the Stuttgart school office, Baden-Württemberg introduced such a program in 1979. BW EA 3/609 Bü 82, Kultusministerium to Oberschulämter, Unterrichtsbesuche zur Feststellung der dienstlichen Leistung bei ausländischen Lehrkräften, 20.2.1979.

86 Görgl, *Empfehlungen*, in: Müller, *Ausländerkinder in deutschen Schulen*, pp. 102 f.

Turkish and German education officials from the mid-1970s on, the issue of local teachers was raised and West German education ministries were encouraged to rely only on teachers sent by Ankara. Many local teachers, Turkish officials warned, were political extremists with inferior credentials who were unqualified to teach Turkish children. Teachers sent from Ankara, these officials claimed, were politically reliable, well-trained, and selected from a highly competitive pool of applicants.⁸⁷ Whereas in the past, education ministries had declined to hire political opponents of the Turkish government in the interests of bilateral relations, German officials now prioritized hiring local teachers with the migrant knowledge these officials now saw as desirable, without regard for political affiliation.⁸⁸ As the hiring of local teachers continued apace, so did Turkish attacks on local teachers through official channels and in the Turkish press throughout the 1980s.⁸⁹

In April 1980, the Turkish newspaper *Hürriyet* published a short item announcing the Turkish government would recall all Turkish teachers in West Germany, including those employed by German schools.⁹⁰ These “leftist” and “separatist” teachers would be replaced by a new cohort of reliable nationalist teachers who would ensure pupils retained their national culture. An SPD politician in Lower Saxony concerned about the planned recall brought it to the attention of the German media, the education ministries of the *Länder*, the KMK, the Foreign Office, and the Federal Ministry of Education and Science (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Wissenschaft, BMBW). Misgivings about the proposed recall were expressed in the parliaments of Lower Saxony and Baden-Württemberg. In a BMBW summary of the controversy, the interests of the *Länder* in opposing the recall and retaining local teachers were expressed:

For the German side, these local teachers are attractive because, they have, through their long residence in the Federal Republic, better knowledge of German and Germany and they themselves have gone through an integration process, whereas newly dispatched Turkish teachers have this process ahead of them. Since foreign pupils are growing up with two languages and two cultures and cannot find among their parents, or their foreign or German teachers people who are competent in both fields, it would be in the interest of foreign pupils

87 BArch B 136/17534, Botschaft Ankara to Auswärtiges Amt. Besuch BMA-Delegation, 23.7.1982.

88 “In the interests of the Federal Republic’s political relationships to the partner countries,” the Foreign Office recommended “avoiding hiring political opponents” and this recommendation was reportedly generally followed. LAV NRW NW 353 Nr. 124, Auswärtiges Amt to Kultusministerium, 14. 10. 1971; Boos-Nünning, Situationsanalyse, pp. 58 f.

89 Articles in the newspaper *Tercüman* in 1987 resulted in death threats for teachers. GEW Mittelhessen, Dokumente über Hetzkampagnen gegen türkische Lehrer, n. d.

90 Anon., Yurt dışındaki bütün öğretmenler geri çağrılıyor, in: *Hürriyet*, 9.4.1980.

to have, alongside imported teachers, a large percentage of teachers resident over the long-term in the Federal Republic.⁹¹

Besides language skills and knowledge of Germany, the BMBW stressed the value of local teachers' knowledge of the integration process, in other words, their knowledge as migrants. Such knowledge could be usefully imparted to children assumed to be struggling with questions of bifurcated identity or integration.

In the end, it emerged that *Hürriyet* had misrepresented the recall action. Instead of all teachers being recalled, something Ankara did not have the legal authority to do, 85 teachers whose rotation in West Germany had ended were replaced by 150 new and presumably politically reliable teachers.⁹² Though the recall was not real, West German reactions to the rumors revealed how official attitudes toward teachers had changed. Preferences for local teachers had solidified and a measure of suspicion about teachers hired from Turkey had emerged. The September 1980 military coup in Turkey only increased distrust of teachers sent by the Turkish state.⁹³

Like Turkish teachers before them, German officials in the 1980s also began to recognize the need for new teaching materials to reflect this newfound interest in migrant knowledge.⁹⁴ In West Berlin in 1980, the school senator supported a project to create a new type of textbook for pilot classes in Turkish as a foreign language.⁹⁵ The intention behind these books was consistent with the new vision of the dual task: retention of Turkish identity in a process that was "not conceptualized apart from the German environment but [on the contrary] included it to a certain extent."⁹⁶ The books were eventually written by a local Turkish teacher employed in West Berlin since 1970 and by an author, teacher, and former functionary in the state Turkish Language Association.

In their final version, the books presented Turkish history, culture, and language through a comparative lens. Pupils were asked to consider, for example, the difference between weddings or school systems in West Germany

91 BArch B 138/38660 BMBW Abt. II B 6, Türkische Lehrer in der Bundesrepublik, 5.8.1980.

92 PA AA B 93 1154, Botschaft Ankara to Auswärtiges Amt, 6.6.1980.

93 GEW often referred to teachers sent by Ankara after the coup as "junta teachers." See AD GEW HV Abt. V 010009, Pressemitteilung. Türkische Regierung entsendet linientreue Lehrer, 31.10.1983.

94 BW EA 3/609 Bü 90, Leopoldschule to Oberschulamt Karlsruhe, Situations- und Erfahrungsberichte des Schulversuchs Türkisch anstelle von Englisch, 23.11.1984.

95 Walter Jungmann, Türkisch für Europa. Die Berliner Entwicklung von Lehrmaterialien für den muttersprachlichen Unterricht unter den Bedingungen der Migration, Münster 1991. GEW Berlin, Türkisch-Bücher aus Berlin. Eine Dokumentation, Berlin 1987.

96 Klaus Schuricht, Sinn und Aufgabe eines Faches Türkisch im Fächerkanon der deutschen Schule, in: Helmut Birkenfeld (ed.), Gastarbeiterkinder aus der Türkei. Zwischen Eingliederung und Rückkehr, München 1982, pp. 78–96, here p. 79.

and Turkey.⁹⁷ The textbooks further contained units on life as a member of a cultural and national minority. Pupils were asked to discuss the challenges they had experienced in this respect, both in Germany as Turks and as *Almançular* (“those from Germany,” a term with some pejorative connotations) during visits to Turkey.⁹⁸ In addition to Turkish and German culture, the texts encouraged pupils to examine globalized culture and the histories of other nations and regions. The books contained lessons on topics as varied as the Vietnam War, Nazi book burnings, Rousseau, Abraham Lincoln, and architecture in Leningrad.⁹⁹ In an attack on these books, the Turkish newspaper *Tercüman* noted incredulously that Atatürk was mentioned just once in the fifth- and sixth-grade texts; that is, as often as the American television programs *Dallas* and *The Flintstones*.¹⁰⁰ The books, the article warned, de-emphasized national values and poisoned children with leftist ideology.

Though the critiques in *Tercüman* were inaccurate on many details – neither author was a leftist refugee from the 1980 coup, nor were the books part of an international plot to introduce Kurdish in schools – the criticism it levied was forcefully reiterated by the Turkish government.¹⁰¹ In sharply worded attacks on the books, the Ministry of National Education and the consulates called for the books to be removed from circulation, particularly because they contained damaging texts by leftist authors such as the poet Nazım Hikmet and the former prime minister Bülent Ecevit, the latter banned from political life in the aftermath of the coup.¹⁰² Attacks on the books only intensified as they were evaluated for use in other *Länder* and elsewhere in Europe. By 1987, a Turkish education official threatened that if West Berlin “continued to allow such

97 İncila Özhan and Adnan Binyazar, *Türkçe Dil ve Okuma Kitabı* 5, Berlin 1982, pp. 96 f.; Id., *Kitabı* 6, Berlin 1982, p. 49.

98 Ibid., pp. 64 f.; Michelle Lynn Kahn, *Almançular. The Historical Construction of the German-Turkish Transmigrant*, paper delivered at the 2016 Berlin Program Summer Workshop.

99 Özhan and Binyazar, *Kitabı* 10, p. 20, p. 23 and p. 27; Id., *Kitabı* 9, p. 15 and p. 23.

100 Anon., *Almanya'daki çocuklarımız zehirleniyor*, in: *Tercüman*, 13.2.1983. The textbooks did discuss Atatürk more than *Tercüman* alleged. A unit in the fifth-grade text was devoted to his role in the Turkish War of Independence. By the standards of Turkish textbooks, however, the absence is striking. Özhan and Binyazar, *Kitabı* 5, pp. 82 f. and p. 91.

101 Özhan was known to the consulate, having been the subject of a complaint in 1973 for alleged opposition to consular Turkish lessons. BE B 002 23738, Generalkonsulat to Senatorin für Schulwesen, 19.2.1973.

102 Süleyman Selçuk, “Gürbetçiye sahip çıkacağız,” in: *Hürriyet*, 27.2.1986; Hüseyin Parlak, *Kurze Stellungnahme*, in: Senator für Schulwesen (ed.), *Türkisch für Europa. Bericht über ein europäisches Kolloquium im Berliner Reichstag*, Berlin 1985, pp. 67 f. Özhan and Binyazar, *Kitabı* 6, p. 65.

damaging books [...] produced by extreme leftist authors, then I will publish Hitler's book in Turkey and introduce the history of Hitler in schools."¹⁰³

For several years, the West Berlin school senator rejected these attacks, balanced as they were against overwhelmingly positive reviews from teachers and education experts.¹⁰⁴ In defending the books in 1983, School Senator Hanne-Renate Laurien stressed that the books offered pupils the knowledge they needed as migrants in West Germany, unlike Turkish textbooks, which "prepare for a life in Turkish society, and therefore do not convey the environment and problem situation of Turkish migrant children."¹⁰⁵

In 1987, a belated translation of the entirety of the tenth-grade textbook revealed a page with a number of jokes based on national and ethnic stereotypes, including one about Jews relying on an anti-Semitic trope.¹⁰⁶ This attracted a firestorm of media and political attention. The production process for the books was criticized, particularly the lack of effective German oversight, as the responsible official had only "rudimentary" Turkish skills.¹⁰⁷ That the page in question was quoted from another book and was part of a lesson about stereotypes and tolerance did not make a difference. The school senator withdrew the books from circulation.

Opinion is divided among contemporaries over the influence of Turkish criticisms on this decision, as many teachers, union officials, and parents believed the allegations of anti-Semitism provided convenient cover for eliminating a project that had become a liability in relations with Turkey.¹⁰⁸ Notably, after the textbooks were pulled, West Berlin did not return to using imported Turkish material. Instead, as was the case in Hesse and NRW, Berlin opted to work collaboratively with pedagogical experts from the Turk-

103 Senat von Berlin, Kleine Anfrage 3495, Abg. Barthel (SPD), Drucksache 10/1609, 2.6.1987; BArch B 136/17534, Botschaft Ankara to Auswärtiges Amt, 23.7.1982.

104 DOMİD Çınar H03 GEW Türk, Pressekonferenz der Senatorin für Schulwesen, 5.4.1984.

105 BE B 002 23740, Laurien to Generalkonsulat, Lernmaterialien für Türkisch anstelle der 1. Fremdsprache, 26.11.1983.

106 Özhan and Binyazar, *Kitabı 10*, pp. 6 f.

107 Anon., Skandal um Schulbücher. "Judenwitze" im türkischen Lernmaterial, in: Berliner Morgenpost, 29.10.1987; Anon., Türkçe ders kitapları dağıtımı durduruldu, in: Hürriyet, 29.10.1987; *Tercüman* crowed that the scandal validated its attacks. Tahir Hacıkadıoğlu, *Tercüman*'ın yayına meyvesini verdi, in: *Tercüman*, 30.10.1987; The head of the Jewish Community threatened legal action against the production of the textbooks. Anon., Galinski erwägt Strafantrag wegen Judenwitzes in Schulbuch, in: *Der Tagesspiegel*, 29.10.1987.

108 Safter Çınar, then GEW Berlin deputy vice-chair, contends that the School Senator acquiesced to Turkish pressure. Gerhard Weil, who supervised the project, disputes this. Author's interview with Weil, 4.5.2016. Author's interview with Çınar, 3.8.2016; Protests against the decision from parents and the GEW in: *Presseerklärung*, in: Berlin Türk Veliler Birliği, *Beş Yıl Veli Çalışması*, Berlin 1990; Antisemitismusvorwurf gegen Türkischbücher nur ein Vorwand. Senat folgte "Demokratieverständnis" des Militärregimes, in: *Die Wahrheit*, 5.11.1987.

ish Ministry of National Education on new material.¹⁰⁹ That Turkish children required different knowledge than their peers in Turkey had become as self-evident to German administrators as it had long been to Turkish teachers.

V. Conclusion

During a visit to Berlin in February 2008, the then Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan expressed his government's willingness to send Turkish teachers to Germany. Reacting to this proposal, Chancellor Angela Merkel referred to the prospect of Turkish teachers sent to work in German schools as "difficult to imagine."¹¹⁰ What was hard to imagine in 2008 had been considered a self-evident necessity for many German officials throughout much of the 1970s. Relying on teachers sent from Ankara to teach Turkish children was consistent with prevailing views about Turkish children's future, the knowledge they would need for it, and the responsibility of German schools vis-à-vis Turkish difference. These attitudes changed slowly, reflecting an underrecognized shift in views about Turkish difference at the local level, a shift all too easily obscured by policies and political rhetoric maintaining that Germany was not a country of immigration. By the end of the 1980s, attitudes had changed enough that it was possible to view the prospect of recruiting teachers from Turkey into German schools with ambivalence, even as a strange idea.

The proportion of local Turkish teachers in German schools increased steadily throughout the 1980s. By the 1990s, a generation of Turkish pupils with German school qualifications was beginning to enter university, where some trained to be teachers. As of 1995, German universities had begun to offer Turkish as a qualification field for teachers. A new generation of German-trained Turkish teachers began to replace retiring teachers trained in Turkey.

At roughly the same time that the West German education ministries had begun to reject the idea of relying on teachers sent from Turkey, the interior ministries reached an agreement with the Turkish government to issue entry visas for employment as an imam only to imams sent by the Turkish Presidency for Religious Affairs.¹¹¹ Even while education officials had begun to view Turkish education in West Germany as a matter requiring German oversight, Turkish Islamic practice was constructed as an aspect of Turkish

109 BArch B 138/57681, Communiqué über die 8. Tagung der gemischten deutsch-türkischen Expertenkommission, 10. – 12. 6. 1985.

110 Anon., Türkische Lehrer. Erdoğan beißt bei Merkel auf Granit, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/deutschland-besuch-tuerkische-lehrer-erdogan-beisst-bei-merkel-auf-granit/1161850.html>.

111 BArch B 106/93422, BMI Referat V II 2, Einreise und Aufenthalt türkischer Vorbeter, 7.7.1983.

difference requiring management by foreign civil servants. In the same period in which teachers' migrant knowledge was increasingly recognized and encouraged, Turkish state imams and the migrating knowledge they conveyed were welcomed. In this respect, contrary to one possible reading of the history of changing ideas about Turkish teachers in the 1970s and 1980s, attitudes toward different aspects of Turkish difference in the period were far from uniform, nor did they progress linearly in the direction of a multicultural society.

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