Doing Sport in a Headscarf?
German Sport and Turkish Females

Gertrud Pfister
INSTITUTE OF EXERCISE AND SPORT SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

“Sport is best played in a club,” “Ali is on our side,” “Sport is international”—these and similar slogans are designed to encourage foreigners living in Germany to join a sport club.¹ This interest of German sport organizations in attracting immigrants has a variety of aims. First, everybody living in Germany ought to have the chance of making use of the potentially positive effects of physical activities, such as improving health, establishing social networks, and having just pure fun. Further, sport can be used as a means of socialization and as a way of helping foreign people to adapt to the mainstream culture of the country in which they live. Moreover, sport organizations and officials hope that sporting activities, especially among young people, can contribute towards reducing deviant behavior and even violence. However, sport officials and the public seldom either question whether adaptation and integration is indeed the right goal for immigrants or consider that this kind of advertisement only attracts males, Sport fits in with their ideas and their ideals of masculinity, with their life circumstances, and with their habitus in Bourdieu’s sense of the term. A number of studies confirm our everyday knowledge that sport plays an important role in the lives of many male immigrants, especially Turks.² But is sport attractive for immigrant girls and women? And what do we know about the sporting activities of female immigrants?

The State of Research
Since the 1970s a plethora of scientific literature has been produced about the living and working conditions of foreign workers, as well as the prospects and conflicts they face.³ While early studies focused on how migrant workers might adapt to life in Germany with as little trouble as possible, migration research of the 1970s and 1980s increasingly turned its attention to such phenomena as the development and function of ethnic colonies, the emergence of bicultural identities, and the transformation of lifestyles.⁴ In addition, many published works have dealt with problems of education, bringing up children in an alien
environment, and immigrants as the clients of social workers. Most of the studies undertaken in the early phase can be classed as assimilation research, and those of the following period as ethnicity research.

Leisure and sport were not, at first, subjects for scientific discourse. It was not until the 1980s that sport was recognized as an instrument of integration and thus, subsequently, as an area of inquiry for the sport sciences, which first of all adopted the paradigms of assimilation research. The first extensive empirical study of the participation of immigrants in games and sport was undertaken by Thomas Abel in 1984. During the same period Eli Frogner investigated the links between active participation in sport and various forms of assimilation, but was unable to identify any general or specific effects of sport on integration. Dieter Romann-Schüssler and Thomas Schwarz inquired into the founding of sport clubs during the development of Berlin’s Turkish community, while Lars Hellriegel more recently has reconsidered the development of Turkish sport clubs in Hanover.

On the basis of new approaches to migration research, such as the concept of the ethnic colony and Wilhelm Heitmeyer’s theory of social disintegration, Marie-Luise Klein and Jürgen Kothy have undertaken an exploratory study to examine the significance of sport in settling interethnic conflicts. Their survey of members of Turkish football clubs revealed that sport—or more precisely football—can intensify conflicts between ethnic groups. The authors, however, do not examine the question of whether conflicts at football grounds spread to other situations in and outside of sport. This new upsurge of the segregation theory is closely related to growing social problems and the increasing tendency towards violence or, in keeping with Heitmeyer, to processes of modernization, migration, and disintegration. A new approach, which can also be applied to current trends in music and dancing, focuses on the interpretation of ethnic communities as a diaspora and in the analysis of the three-way relationship among the nation of ethnic origin, nation of residence, and the migrant community.

In these studies girls and women either do not appear at all or, if so, then merely on the margins. By contrast, Bernd Bröskamp, who analyzed intercultural encounters in sport in the context of Pierre Bourdieu’s social theory and identified distinctions in habitus and taste as the decisive factors of “physical otherness,” devoted his attention also, or even predominantly, to the special situation of girls since, here, “cultural differences in body images—attitudes, and norms and values relating to the body—manifest themselves in all clarity.” In this article, however, my aim is not to focus on question whether (and, if so, how) sporting activities have an assimilating, integrating, or disintegrating effect in immigrant societies. Instead, I will show the role which sport plays in the lives of female immigrants, the reciprocal effects of participation in sport and gender arrangements, the opportunities and problems which sport provides for immigrant women, and the effects of changes in their life circumstances over the last 40 years have had on their interest and participation in sport.
We Recruited Foreign Labor—We Received Human Beings

Interest and participation in sport depend to a very large extent on social and economic conditions, as well as on the cultural significance of sporting activities. In Germany, changing political, economic and social factors in the second half of the twentieth century influenced the development of sport—especially on women’s sport—and the participation of immigrants in sporting activities.

Turkish Immigrant Workers in Germany

In the wake of Germany’s post-war “economic miracle” in the mid-1950s, migrant workers from Turkey and other countries were “invited” to come to Germany to solve the country’s problem of an insufficient industrial labor force. After the “recruitment contract” was signed between the Federal Republic and Turkey in 1961, the number of Turkish workers living in Germany rapidly increased. Between 1961 and 1973, 865,000 workers left Turkey for Germany, around 40% of whom did not return (or at least return permanently) to their homeland. Although almost all immigrant workers of the first generation intended to return to Turkey, the great majority remained in Germany, which, as a result, became de facto an immigration society. Almost two million foreign nationals lived in Germany in 1968, rising to 3.5 million by 1972. Especially among the Turkish minority, however, there was a constant flux of migrants both to and from Germany, constituting a considerable exchange of the Turkish population, which must be borne in mind in studies concerned with the integration of the Turkish minority. Although the federal government decided in 1973 to put an end to the active recruitment of foreign workers because of the lack of jobs, the Turkish community continued to increase in size because family members followed the immigrant workers from Turkey to Germany. By 1985 the number of all foreign nationals had risen to 4.4 million, and by 1995 to 7.2 million. Today around 30% of all immigrants in Germany are Turkish nationals and carry Turkish passports. In densely populated industrial areas and large cities like Berlin, the Turkish share of the population is much higher than this. In 1994 Berlin had 3.5 million inhabitants, of whom 139,000 were of Turkish nationality. Almost all of them lived in the western part of the city and, before the fall of the Berlin wall, they represented 13.5% of the population of West Berlin.

The composition of the Turkish population in Germany underwent considerable change during this period. At the beginning of the 1970s, 91% of Turks living in Germany were employed and paid social insurance contributions: 89% of those employed were men. In the 1990s, by contrast, more than 30% of the Turkish population were young people between the ages of 12 and 29, many of whom had been born in Germany and some of whom “commuted” between the two countries. Most of the male immigrant workers and about two-thirds of the relatively few female immigrants were married, but came to Germany in advance of their families. In the 1970s, 62% of married foreign males and 92% of married foreign females lived in Germany with their spouses. In 1995, because of the great number of young foreigners, the proportion of married couples had dropped to only 56%, and today almost all married foreigners live with their spouses in Germany.
The first wave of Turkish immigrant workers consisted to a large extent of men who considered their stay in Germany to be temporary and planned their lives there accordingly. Many of them came from rural areas and arrived in a country whose culture was alien, whose language they did not understand, and whose rules they first of all needed to learn. Many aspects of German life were unfamiliar, even menacing. Which foods could be eaten by Muslims; how could one cook in such cramped conditions; what was to be made of such strange hygiene practices? Why was there paper in the toilets to clean oneself instead of water, as was the custom in Turkey?

When immigrant workers first arrived, they found work mainly as unskilled or semi-skilled workers in jobs for which it was difficult or impossible to find German workers. As a rule, these jobs involved heavy and monotonous work with low status and low pay. At first, most employers provided accommodation in special workers’ lodgings, the men usually sharing a frugally furnished bedroom with several others. Their lives were governed and controlled by numerous rules and regulations, and absolutely no privacy existed. The men spent most of their spare time in the lodgings, partly because they felt more at ease among their fellow-countrymen, but also because leisure activities meant spending money—the immigrants were intent on saving up for their return home and so spent as little as possible on consumer goods and services. Life in these workers’ lodgings, and later in Turkish parts of town, made integration into the mainstream of society more difficult.

And Then the Women Came...

At first women were a small minority among Turkish immigrant workers. Of all the countries which sent immigrant workers to Germany, Turkey was the country which sent the smallest proportion of women. In 1965 the percentage of women among Turkish workers in Germany was 13%, which by 1973 had risen to 27%. Unlike their male counterparts, they mostly came from large towns; moreover, they tended to come from families lacking strong religious beliefs and had a comparatively long schooling. That Turkish women were generally not inclined to work in Germany was closely connected with hierarchical family structures and the prevailing gender order. In Turkey women were regarded as “second-class beings forced into obedience and not as responsible citizens with equal rights,” although it should not be forgotten that women in Germany, the “land of the economic miracle,” were in many respects the “second sex” as well.

In the early years, approximately half (later, in the 1970s, around two-thirds) of female immigrant workers were married. Many conflicts took place with their husbands in Turkey, who were impatient to join them. Unmarried Turkish women were supervised strictly by both their families and the people around them. The motives of women immigrant workers differed greatly, ranging from financial reasons to a thirst for adventure or the desire to free themselves from the constraints of a traditional background. Jamin commented: “The migration biographies of several of the women interviewed... can be read as stories of successful emancipation.” In 1996, 3.2 million foreign girls and women lived in Germany, making up 7.7% of the female population. Among these were 912,000 Turkish females.
There are neither reliable studies nor representative statistics on the situation of Turkish girls and women in Germany. Difficulties in collecting information about the lives of minority-group girls and women arise, among other things, from their “fluctuating” biographies—many young women marry in Turkey but come back to Germany and, if they take up German nationality, they drop out of many statistics. We can, however, make use of the results of pilot studies and of the following, more general information about Turkish immigrants.  

Federal Government Policies and Attitudes of Mainstream Society

Immigrant living conditions have always been affected by attitudes of the people in Germany and by the social and political environment. In the 1960s Turkish people were welcomed as workers to fill the gaps in the German labor force. In the 1970s Turkish immigrants faced increasing pressure to either integrate or return to their homeland; they found their stays in Germany strewn with numerous obstacles, and German citizenship for the second and third generations of immigrant families remains under discussion today. In 1982, for example, as a precept of immigration policy, the federal government decided “to effectively limit immigration in the Federal Republic of Germany, to improve the economic and social integration of foreigners who have lived in the Federal Republic for many years and to support them in their wish to return home.” A great number of measures, ranging from new regulations concerning residence and work permits, restrictions on the number of family members being able to join workers in Germany, and an increase in the kinds of offenses leading to deportation, to grants of approximately DM 10,000 each for those wishing to return, were taken with the aim of encouraging foreign workers to return to their country of origin.

These legal provisions were accompanied by changing attitudes towards the Turkish population in mainstream society. It must be noted in this respect that immigrant workers from other countries such as Italy, Spain, Greece and Yugoslavia either assimilated or eventually returned to their homeland. Turkish people, by contrast, represented a large and “visible” minority in Germany and, through the years, attitudes towards them changed from acceptance of the Turkish workforce (albeit along with complete indifference towards their culture) to demands that they assimilate and even to rejection. Today, opinions of mainstream German society are just as varied as the lives and the orientations of the immigrants. It must be pointed out, though, that especially in the new federal states (those that formerly made up the GDR) there are strong xenophobic currents.

Between Secularization and Fundamentalism

Most members of the Turkish community in Germany are Muslims, the majority of them Sunnites; there is also a minority (around 20%) of Alevis. Since statistical data are scarce and unreliable, we do not know exactly how many Muslims practice their religion in Germany; figures vary between 25% to nearly 50%.

Empirical research on young Turks in Berlin has revealed that 11% of them are closely attached to their religion, while 60% report that they take a more detached view of Islam. Even fewer Muslims are adherents of fundamentalist tendencies. However, although a process of secularization can be observed over the past decades, the attraction of funda-
mentalist Islamic groups for young people seems to be growing. The way life, leisure and active participation in sport can be influenced by religion is discussed below.

**Education for All?**

Many of the children of the first generation of migrants came to Germany as part of the process of reuniting families. They frequently had considerable difficulty both with the language and in education, many leaving school without any qualifications whatsoever. At *Hauptschulen*—the third tier of German secondary schools, below university preparatory schools (*Höhere Schulen*) and modern secondaries (*Realschulen*)—Turkish pupils were greatly overrepresented. But, partly due to a lack of support by the family, Turkish children born in Germany, too, attained on average lesser school-leaving qualifications than German pupils. 

Today, foreign children and adolescents represent an integral part of German school life. In 1993, 9% of all pupils at German schools were not of German nationality; of these, Turkish children and adolescents formed the largest group, at 41%. The percentage of Turkish pupils differs considerably depending on federal state, size of community and type of school. In large cities the percentage of Turkish children in a class or school can be as high as 80%.

Although Turkish parents have always been and remain mostly achievement-oriented, and although the education of their children, including their daughters, is given high priority, even today Turkish students are greatly underrepresented in higher education. In 1995, 15% of foreign, but only 7% of German, pupils left school without obtaining the lowest school-leaving certificate (*Hauptschulabschluß*). One quarter of German pupils, but only 9% of pupils from other ethnic groups, obtained the highest school-leaving certificate (*Abitur*), which gives access to colleges and universities. Around 50% of young non-Germans start their working lives with no formal qualification whatsoever, whether a post-*Hauptschule* apprenticeship or a technical college or university degree. There are various reasons for this discrepancy between aspiration and realization, including a lack of information about the German system of education and the different ways of teaching and learning in German and Turkish culture are important. And even children of the third generation often have considerable language problems, not least because they do not speak German at home. Since many Turkish men hope to find a wife in Turkey, the language spoken in many families is either Turkish or a mixture of Turkish and German.

The situation with regard to female vocational training is especially precarious: “the social discrimination of girls in the generally inadequate conditions of work training... is also marked by the small, gender-specific range of vocations (‘typical women’s jobs’) open to them and the way in which both the family and society allot roles to them.” Moreover, many Turkish parents press their daughters to take up a “decent” occupation which does not conflict with their traditional role—a typical women’s occupation like that of nurse, hairdresser or teacher. These jobs emphasize the domestic skills related to women’s traditional role.
Thus, many young immigrants—both men and women—get off to a very poor start in the labor market. Many of them work, as did immigrant generations before them, in marginal jobs with a high risk of unemployment, low wages, high work loads and often in shifts. In the first generation female immigrant workers concentrated on “typical women’s jobs,” especially in the electrical and textile industries as well as in the service sector, above all in hospitals and old people’s homes. 39

Since the 1960s the number of qualified workers in the Turkish workforce and the number of office staff among Turkish women has greatly increased. However, only a very small number of Turkish immigrants has succeeded in climbing the social ladder as a self-employed professional or an academic. Even in 1995, approximately half of all employees with a Turkish passport were still employed as unskilled or semiskilled workers. Moreover, since 1970 the number of unemployed foreigners has risen from 0.3% to 18.9% in 1995. According to Ursula Boos-Nünning, up to 40% of young foreigners find neither work nor a training scheme; “they are doomed to a life at the margins of our society.” 40

Women are particularly affected by unemployment. In 1985 approximately half of all women of Turkish nationality were not employed; by 1995 the figure had risen to two-thirds, even though many of them were actively seeking work. One particular problem—which is not confined to Germany—centers on employment among women with children. One of the major problems for all mothers in Germany is the difficulty to find good child care. Whether Turkish mothers go out to work or not is influenced by many factors, and the barriers facing Turkish mothers are much higher than those facing their German counterparts. Turkish women have to overcome many restrictions: they need, for instance, a work permit; they often have no formal qualifications for better-paid jobs; and they are also confronted with the norms and values of the family. In a study of German and Turkish mothers who worked outside the home, Bernhard Nauck discovered that both groups experienced a high burden of work inside and outside the home, but that the burden was much higher among Turkish women. 41

The family plays a major role in the lives of Turks—in their mother country as well as abroad. In the 1960s and 70s one of the great problems facing immigrants was the separation of family members, most of whom had to wait years before they could come to Germany to be reunited with their families. Living in Germany changed many concepts and patterns of life. For example, the number of children born to Turkish immigrants living in Germany is much smaller than in families in Turkey, averaging two or three children. In contrast to German families, one-child families are very rare among the Turkish population.

Many Turkish families live in densely populated urban areas with a high percentage of foreigners from different nationalities. Often, Turkish immigrants live close together and form ethnic communities, which strengthens their sense of solidarity and their feeling “at home,” but leads to ghetto formation—with all the problems connected with this. In the 1980s one-third of the Turkish immigrants lived in twelve big cities of West Germany.

Everyday Life in the Family

The family plays a major role in the lives of Turks—in their mother country as well as abroad. In the 1960s and 70s one of the great problems facing immigrants was the separation of family members, most of whom had to wait years before they could come to Germany to be reunited with their families. Living in Germany changed many concepts and patterns of life. For example, the number of children born to Turkish immigrants living in Germany is much smaller than in families in Turkey, averaging two or three children. In contrast to German families, one-child families are very rare among the Turkish population.

Many Turkish families live in densely populated urban areas with a high percentage of foreigners from different nationalities. Often, Turkish immigrants live close together and form ethnic communities, which strengthens their sense of solidarity and their feeling “at home,” but leads to ghetto formation—with all the problems connected with this. In the 1980s one-third of the Turkish immigrants lived in twelve big cities of West Germany.
The greatest concentration of Turks was in Berlin (110,000), followed by Cologne (60,000), Hamburg (55,000) and Duisburg (40,000). Further, Turkish families often live in cramped conditions in low-standard housing. There are two sides to this: Turkish immigrants often prefer cheap flats in order to save money for a planned return to Turkey later. However, there are also landlords who do not like to rent flats to foreign families, especially to families with children. All the same, the number of families who have bought their own flats or houses has increased over the years, from 4% in 1985 to 7% in 1995, compared to 41% for the population at large.

Turkish Women Living in Germany—Contradictions

In addition to poor living conditions and other difficulties, Turkish girls and women face uncertainty about the duration of their stay in Germany, insecurity with regard to their futures, and last but not least, great differences—often contradictions—between the norms and values of their own culture and those of the new society in which they have come to live. Nauck emphasizes in this context the “triple discrimination” of minority-group women—in the workplace, as members of minorities, and as women. These “conflicting roles” are not limited to the academic literature; many programs have also been implemented to support girls and women in this difficult situation.

However, one must also consider that the conditions of life, the problems as well as the resources, of Turkish girls and women can be very different. The endless repetition of stereotypes about Turkish females cannot cover the complex, differentiated and different worlds in which immigrants live. The Turkish female president of a German university has very little in common with a Turkish cleaning lady.

A comprehensive yet differentiated evaluation of the situation of immigrants is extremely difficult, and always a matter of perspective. Whereas the mass media emphasize the difficulties and the discriminations immigrants face in Germany, a recent empirical study of young Turks in Berlin has revealed that the tendency to integrate into German society is growing among young people. Of those interviewed, 90% reported that they felt content or relatively content in Berlin. And one of my Turkish students who had lived in Berlin for five years confessed that she liked to go to Turkey for her summer holiday but that she “could not imagine living there any more. I feel at home in Germany.”

A Preliminary Summary

Many of the immigrant workers who came to Germany 30 years ago have now reached retirement age. Most of them have come to terms with life in Germany without having completely adapted to the German way of life. The second and third generations of Turkish immigrants differ from the mainstream of society in many respects, for example in educational achievement, the type of work they do, and the extent to which they are affected by unemployment. Experience of discrimination and marginalization as well as increasing competition in all sectors has encouraged segregation tendencies, and thus the formation of Turkish colonies. On the other hand, parallel to this retreat into the Turkish community, new forms of cultural blending and the formation of German-Turkish identities and leisure activities can be observed. German-Turkish discotheques, fashion and music, new forms of orientation, and Inszeneirung (adopting and acting out identities
between the typical Turkish and German) are spreading among more and more young Turks, although it is still difficult for young Turkish women to spend evenings away from home. But what is also observable, finally, is the growing attraction of fundamentalist orientations.

This survey of immigrant living conditions also makes it clear that while in the various phases of immigration history different possibilities arose for taking up sport, as well as different constraints, the participation of girls and women in sport was always fraught with problems. Generally speaking, a differentiation took place in the Turkish population, giving rise to different conditions and opportunities as well as different outlooks and behavior, also for girls and women. Nonetheless, the strict hierarchy of the gender order appears to be extremely resistant to change.

Sporting Activities of Male and Female Immigrants

In certain respects Turkey is, or was at least, a “developing country as far as sport is concerned.” Especially in rural areas, organized leisure and recreation, including sport, remains largely unknown.

Sport in Turkey—especially football, which is very popular—seems to be a spectacle which attracts spectators and fans rather than a leisure activity in the sense of “sport for all.” This view is corroborated by Lale Agkün, who states that in Turkey “sport in clubs and centers is something for rich people or for the ‘newly rich’... In the poorer classes people can often only afford bathing shorts in order to swim in the sea. Besides, everybody who supports a soccer team feels he is a sportsman.” There are, therefore, only a few sport organizations, most of which are oriented towards competitive sports; in these organizations, girls and women play only a marginal role. A 1998 pilot study carried out in Turkey by Gertrud Pfister and Kari Fasting revealed, among other things, that in the large towns fitness and fitness studios were becoming increasingly popular, especially among women of the middle and upper classes since they wished to conform to the ideals of a slim figure which were now gaining ground in large parts of Turkey. In an analysis of the prospects and the barriers facing Turkish women in sport one must take into consideration above all the great differences between orientations and the reality of living conditions in Turkey, which depend on where a person lives and to what social class he or she belongs. In general, however, it can be stated that participating in sport has never been an integral part of Turkish culture.

Sport as a Man’s Domain

In Germany sports clubs and associations are all affiliated to the Deutscher Sportbund (DSB), or German Sports Federation, founded in 1950, which sees itself as a unified movement and the sole representative of German sport, and is responsible for both competitive sport and “sport for all.” For the Gastarbeiter (guest workers) of the 1960s, sports and sports clubs were not attractive for the following reasons; they were completely focused on their work and avoided spending money on consumer goods or services since they planned—an illusion in many cases—to return home soon; in addition, their work took up most of their time and energy and the spare time that they had they spent with their fellow-countrymen.
At the end of the 1960s as a result of the growing numbers of immigrants and the development of Turkish colonies in large German towns, there arose, sporadically, Turkish football teams and sport clubs, one of the first of which was Türksport in Berlin, founded in 1965.53 In the early days, the immigrant workers simply wanted to kick a ball around with their friends and workmates in their spare time. After a period of stagnation in the early 1970s increasingly more Turkish sport clubs were founded, the majority of them football clubs. Ever since, they have been important centers of contact in the Turkish community’s social network, especially since they have always been closely connected with other organizations, religious communities and political groups.54

Although no differentiation was made between either the sexes or nations, surveys undertaken in the 1980s confirmed what had already been suspected on account of the dominance of football among the different types of sport: girls and women were virtually non-existent in the sport clubs of ethnic minorities.55

In the 1990s there developed an increasing degree of organization and differentiation among the foreign population, and this was also true of sport clubs. Alevi, for example, founded football clubs which were totally distinct from the clubs of Islamic fundamentalists, or those of the right-wing “Grey Wolves.” Today ethnic sport clubs have become an established part of the sport scene in Germany, and there is a great demand among Turkish and other ethnic groups to take up sport. Reasons for the growing sport enthusiasm of immigrants may be the improvement of the conditions of life, the use of sport to build personal identity, and the model of the mainstream population. Nevertheless, these clubs continue to be “men only” clubs, as the example of Berlin shows. But this is also true for other parts of Germany. In Berlin there are about 50 sport clubs with a majority of non-German members; Turkish immigrants founded 33 of them—mainly soccer clubs. Half of the Turkish men and boys who are members of a Berlin sport club belong to a Turkish club.56

The German sport organizations began to regard Turkish citizens as potential club members in the early 1980s. In keeping with the demands of politicians, sport was believed to be an important means of encouraging integration. This is not only to be read in the declaration of the DSB on basic principles “Sport for Fellow-Citizens from Abroad” (1981), but also to be heard in speeches of politicians such as Wolfgang Schäuble, former leader of the German Christian Democrat Party.57 The aim of the sport organizations, however, was to recruit individuals, thus preventing, as far as possible, the founding of ethnic clubs.58 The DSB achieved only partial success in its strategy: even in the 1990s the percentage of members of sport clubs was around 6—10% of the immigrant population, while that of the German population was nearly 30%. Thus, the proportion of foreigners among club members was below 1%. Moreover, it is doubtful whether sport is indeed able to fulfill the demands made of it in furthering the integration of foreigners. The pilot studies on Turkish football clubs mentioned above tend to point to the opposite: sport contests between teams appear to provide an arena in which ethnic tensions are built up rather than lessened.59
The Sporting Activities of Female Turkish Immigrants

There is, of course, no question that girls from ethnic minorities participate in physical education at school. How they like it, what they experience, and what effects it has on them are questions we cannot yet answer, as research has yet been conducted in this area. In Germany, discussions on this topic center on questions of coeducation and the problems of Muslim girls doing sport together with the other sex. However, because of the limited space I cannot discuss here in detail with physical education at school.

With regard to the sporting activities of female immigrants there is unfortunately scarcely any information available which can be regarded as representative, partly because studies to date have made little or no differentiation between gender and ethnic origin. And studies on the situation of foreign girls and women are focused on education and employment, as well as such factors as development of the personality; conflicts of identity, leisure, and sport were subjects that were not touched upon at all.

Various pilot studies and regional statistics, however, all point in the same direction: until the 1980s Turkish girls and women took virtually no part in sporting activities. In a representative survey of young Turks undertaken by Ursula Mehrländer in 1983, only 1.5% of the employed young women and not a single one of those who did not work reported that they spent their leisure hours as a rule at the sportsground. By contrast, 12% and 17%, respectively, of the young men interviewed named sport as their preferred leisure activity.

Since then the Turkish population’s interest in sport seems to have increased. A representative study of the sporting activities of Turks in Germany shows that 33% of the over-fourteen men and 19% of the over-fourteen women interviewed practice a sport at least several times a month. Because of the broad spectrum of the term “sport,” however, and the imprecise data on how frequently they practiced their sport, it is impossible to draw definite conclusions from this study.

As mentioned above, the most important providers of sport in Germany are clubs, and this also applies to girls’ and women’s sport: today, 38% of club members are females. However, as the regional sport associations, with the exception of Berlin, do not make a note of their members’ nationality, we do not have any exact information on the numbers of foreign women in German sport clubs. Precise figures can only be given for Berlin. Of the 51,000 Turkish girls and women who lived in Berlin in 1985, only 391 (0.8%) were members of sport clubs. Women made up 5.6% of Turkish sport club members. By 1994 the number of Turkish women in sports clubs had risen to 1,029 and their share of Turkish sport club membership to 8.4%. In comparison, the overall proportion of women members of the Berlin regional sport association was approximately 35%.

As shown above, Turkish sport clubs do not provide a significant alternative for Turkish girls and women. In 1985 there were 151 women members of Turkish sport clubs in Berlin compared with 2,995 men—a proportion of 5%. The situation has not changed since. A study carried out in Duisburg, an industrial city in the Ruhr area, revealed that none of the Turkish sport clubs there offered any courses for girls and women.
In a study of the sport activities of schoolgirls between thirteen and fifteen years of age, Christa Kleindienst-Cachay discovered that the percentage of girls active in sport increased with the standard of education. In *Hauptschulen* (the schools in Germany with the least academically able pupils) only 23% of the girls—both German and foreign—were members of a sport club, compared with more than 50% in *Realschulen* (attended by more academically able pupils). A further great difference emerged with regard to the ethnic origin of the girls. Only 8% of Turkish girls at *Hauptschulen* were members of a sport club, compared with 30% of the German girls, but 70% of the Turkish pupils admitted that they would like to do more sport in their leisure time. Asked about the types of sport they were interested in, they named above all dance, games, and other recreational physical activities.

**Causes of Limited Sport Activity Among Ethnic Minority Girls**

When looking for the causes of the widespread abstinence from sport among female Turkish immigrants, it must be emphasized here again that the Turkish population in Germany varies greatly in its attitudes and behavior, social situation, and ideological and religious orientation. We must not only distinguish between the different generations of immigrants and between immigrants who have lived in Germany for years and recent arrivals, but also between women and families who have come from large Turkish cities and those who have come from the countryside. So when seeking the reasons behind the lack of participation in sport among Turkish girls we must consider the conditions of life, the mentalities and the related needs of girls from ethnic minorities.

**Theoretical Considerations**

Physical culture is part of the culture of a society and as such is interdependently related to overall societal structures and the society’s attitudes and outlook. On the basis of the civilization theory drawn up by Norbert Elias, Hans-Peter Waldhoff has attempted to explain the specific mentality of Turks and contrast this mentality with the ideologies and behavior patterns encountered in Western countries such as Germany. Waldhoff focused on the different attitudes toward the control of violence and of power, on the specific importance of the family, on attitudes toward honor, on the definition of time and behavior regarding time, and on self-discipline. Waldhoff’s main thesis is that the Turkish state does not have a monopoly of power and that the welfare state and the social security system in Turkey are underdeveloped. This leads to a high level of close family relations and social networks, which can be more important for the individual than loyalty to the state. Katherine Newmann indicates a similar perspective in the United States, which suggests a crosscultural comparison relative to poverty, social networks, and coping. The “configuration” of society has also left its imprint on psychological structures and attitudes towards the body. For example, integration in and dependence on hierarchical social networks demand a set of fixed rules which must be followed even if this may be dysfunctional for an individual in a given situation. Discipline is socially controlled and not, as Elias postulates, based on an internalization of pressure. The body is the anchor of socially defined roles, and its exercise does not aim at “abstract” achievements for achievement’s sake. Neither does it aim at social distinction in the context of processes of individualization.
This approach explains values, orientations and behavior patterns which emphasize the historical developments and the different civilization processes that the two countries and also different social, class, and religious fractions in the same country have undergone. Some of Waldhoff’s interpretations can be applied to sport and behavior in sport. The role of the individualization process in modern consumerist sport, the importance of fitness and health, the presentation of immaculate and youthful sporting bodies, sport as a symbol of self control—these and other tendencies connected with modern sport do not play an important role in a country like Turkey. As already described, Turkish society is based on families and groups and their cooperation, which is structured according to traditional hierarchies—based on age and sex, among other factors—under significant external control. Thus, many values and behavior patterns connected with sport, like asceticism and internalized self-discipline, have little importance in traditional Turkish culture, or in Islamic societies in general. On the other hand, wrestling, a sport which does not aim at abstract records but emphasizes physical strength and dominance and demonstrates masculinity, is an integral part of traditional Turkish culture. However, as the preceding discussion indicates, modern sport has gradually “infected” the immigrants, even if only the boys and men.

This approach can be linked to Werner Schiffauer’s observations of family structures. As mentioned above, the strictly hierarchical organization of the family plays a central role in Turkish society Age and sex determine one’s social position in the family as well as in society. The prestige and the position of a family is dependent on honor, and honor also means the ability of the head of the family or its male members to fight or avenge aggression and abuse. The system of social relations based on the concept of honor forces its members to take over specific roles and duties, but guarantees in return support and protection, and also gives social prestige. Central to the honor of a family is the sexuality of women—the faithfulness of wives to their husbands and the virginity of daughters. Every action and every kind of behavior that might endanger the good reputation of female family members must be avoided or otherwise be severely punished. Female sexuality is not controlled via an internalization of norms and pressures, but by a strict segregation of the sexes. The concept of honor gives men the right and the duty to sanction transgressions. This means that the husband, as head of the family and thus responsible for the representation of the family in public, has the duty to protect the honor of the family and to safeguard the moral integrity of the female family members.

Of course, we must ask whether these structures and norms still play a role in modern Turkey and if they have any importance for Turkish immigrants in Western countries. In Turkey we must assume that different orientations and lifestyles exist alongside one another or even conflict with each other. There is no continuous trend of Westernization but, on the other hand, tendencies to revert to traditions are also not generally accepted. These tensions and ambivalences can also be seen in the sphere of women and sport in Turkey. On the one hand, there are large groups of women who have no connection with sport at all; on the other hand, girls and young women in Turkey can play soccer or lift weights.

While these theoretical approaches can be helpful in describing the situation of women’s sport within Turkish culture, Bourdieu’s concept can be used as a background for the situation of Turkish immigrants in Germany. According to Bourdieu, the position of an
individual in the social sphere is determined by the combination of cultural, economic, and social capital. Different social groups use means of social distinction in order to differentiate themselves from groups below and to adapt themselves to groups above. Immigrants can be regarded as social groups with specific patterns of capital and with the related specific “taste.” On the other hand, Bourdieu defines habitus as the interface between individual and society. Habitus develops out of socialization and conditions of life; it signifies the totality of dispositions, thoughts, perceptions and actions and it produces cultural practices. Therefore habitus and taste, which is connected with it, are typical for each social class or group. The body plays a central role in this concept because cultural practices and gender order are engraved in the body. The body also has an important symbolic function: it expresses group- and gender-specific values and forms the basis for social distinctions. The body is part of the cultural capital. On the other hand, the body habitus, the socially structured system of traits and dispositions, determines people’s attitudes towards and the way they deal with the body. In everyday life as well as in sport, ethnic-cultural body ideals and practices are realized. These practices are at the same time what Lorber calls “doing gender;” they mirror and they produce gender differences. Bourdieu’s considerations regarding cultural capital, habitus and taste, and processes of social distinction and integration can contribute to our understanding of the challenges and difficulties of participating in sport for persons of different ethnic origins. Minorities can use body and movement culture for purposes of identification with the ethnic group and for social distinction. Turkish sport clubs offer these possibilities for males. In the context of upward mobility among Turkish immigrants, body ideals and practices can also be used as a means of adapting to the mainstream society or as cultural capital for social advancement; this holds true at any rate for Turkish men, but for girls and women sport is still contested terrain.

In general we must assume that gender as an institution and the individual “doing gender” determine social structures, everyday life and, as a whole, the way people think of and interpret the world. Whereas gender-segregated labor and thinking in patterns of gender duality exist in both Germany and Turkey, huge differences exist in legitimization of the gender order and its effects on the lives of the people. As far as the gender relations of the Turkish population in Germany are concerned, we can assume that traditional patterns of social relations and traditional structures of the family exist alongside Western influence. However, traditional norms and ideals and their appropriation by individual girls and women lead to a situation in which sport and femininity are incompatible from a Turkish cultural perspective. Judith Lorber assumes that “the social reproduction of gender in individuals reproduces the gendered societal structures; as individuals act out gender norms and expectations in face-to-face-interaction, they are constructing gendered systems of dominance and power.” The processes of individual appropriation of gender and gendered sporting activities can be described using the theoretical concept of socialization. Lorber’s approach focuses on conflicts of identity, which are frequently reported in the literature by Turkish girls and women, but also considers the possibility of constructing and presenting different patterns of identity and new blends of images, body images as well as self concepts. Many young “German Turks” develop and present neither Turkish nor German forms and habits; they “embody” the cultural blending of Turk-
ish and German elements. This search for an identity which is neither German nor Turkish is reflected in the growing popularity of “German-Turkish” fashion and music. Yvonne Mørck describes the mixture of Danish and Turkish cultural elements, behavior patterns and identities as hybridization or creolization.84

The Prophet and Women’s Sport

In considering how sporting activities in general and girls’ and women’s participation in sport in particular are influenced by Islam, it must be stated first of all that there is no general prohibition of sport (in a broad sense) in Islam, and this includes girls’ and women’s sport.85 Islamic scholars emphasize that health and fitness are equally important for both sexes and must be maintained by regular physical activity. It is frequently pointed out in this connection that Mohammed himself recommended horseback-riding, swimming, and archery. Leila Sfeir and others infer from this that Islam originally showed a favorable attitude towards women’s physical activities. Sfeir noted:

Islamic religion in no way tries to depreciate, much less deny sport for women. On the contrary, it attributes great significance and function to physical strength and sporting activities. Islam is a constant concern with one’s body, cleanliness, purification and force, with segregation of the sexes. But certain religious elements, such as Islamic fatalism and Hindu mysticism, have been dominant factors in controlling general access to sport.86

After studying Islamic sources and authorities Shahiza Daiman further concluded that physical activities ought to be obligatory for women for reasons of health.87 Nevertheless, in several countries women’s sport (in a broad sense) is regarded as incompatible with the values and the concept of femininity prevailing in Islam, which forces women into subordination, dependence, and restriction of their roles to the house and family.88 Elnashar commented: “As Islamic nations struggle between inclusion and exclusion in a shrinking global community, it is to be expected that sport will take on the reflection of society which in most Islamic nations is value dominated by those empowered to interpret the words of the Koran.”89 In sport and physical education, moreover, girls and women must observe the precepts of Islam and maintain the honor of their families, which means above all that they must keep their bodies covered and not come into contact with other men.90 Girls and women are even allowed to compete if they observe strictly the Islamic laws.

When examining the extent to which Islam has influenced the ideas and behavior of immigrants in Germany, one must also recall that religious precepts frequently take effect indirectly, through the control of the social environment. In interviews, for example, parents have often stated that they themselves are liberal, but that they must guard their daughters from slanderous rumors and protect their good reputation.91 In the survey carried out by Abel, a high percentage of the Muslims interviewed reported that sporting activities, especially among girls and women, might cause conflicts with religious rules. Sport itself was regarded as “dangerous ground.”92

In addition, one must consider that immigrants living in foreign countries frequently experience conflicts of identity and, in the attempt to form an identity, often adhere to traditional values much more strictly than they would have done in their home country.93 Finally, one must also point to the barriers erected by fundamentalism, as demanded by
Agkün, who states that growing pressure from the Muslim community influences other Turkish groups so much “that not all fathers dare to allow their daughters to participate in organized sport.” Generally, however, it is not just concern about being censured by the environment, but also concern for the safety, the freedom from harm, and the honor of girls and women in an environment thought to be dangerous that leads Turkish men to restrict the freedom of movement of female family members.

Opportunities and Problems

These norms, values, structures, and practices influence the everyday lives, the leisure, and the participation in sport of girls and women: these are, in short, the importance of the family, the division of labor according to sex, the social and cultural superiority of men, the concept of honor and the regulation of sexuality (or, more precisely, the importance of virginity for girls) and the strict prohibition of sexuality outside marriage. One can thus infer that it is the concern for the moral integrity of the women and above all the virginity of the girls which influences their participation in sport.

Virginity is absolutely required of Turkish girls, even in families which do not otherwise follow Islamic laws strictly. In the middle of the 1980s more than 80% of Turkish parents in Germany were convinced that virginity was more important for their daughter than a good education. Of the Turkish women interviewed in a pilot study (these were women who trained in a fitness studio), 75% reported that they had to be a virgin when they married. Numerous rules and regulations are intended to guarantee that girls do not lose their virginity. This explains why many parents do not allow their daughters to have contacts outside the family after puberty or visit youth centers and sport clubs. The widespread notion that physical exercise might damage the hymen is a further reason for many parents not to allow their daughters to join a sport club or to take up a sport.

Moral integrity means, among other things, following Islamic rules governing clothing and covering the body, including the hair. However, considerable differences occur among Turkish families living in Germany as well as in Turkey. Even though many, even religious girls and women, do not accept the law of covering the body and the hair, they widely reject “immoral” clothes. Sibel Bozdogan, who has analyzed the situation of Turkish girls and women of the second generation, observes that

the dilemma of Turkish girls is that their parents teach them the culture of their home country with the importance of religion, the patriarchal structures of the family and the concepts of honor. At the same time, outside their homes and especially at school, they learn about German culture with its freedom and equality. Obsession with virginity leads to severe restrictions of personal freedom and personal development compared with the situation of German girls and it binds girls closely to the home and family.

These norms, values, attitudes and behavior patterns influence, even determine, not only the leisure but especially the physical culture of many Turkish girls and women: the law on covering the body and the demand for the segregation of the sexes makes it difficult or even impossible for girls and women coming from orthodox Muslim families to train or practice sport with boys or men. But even getting changed or showering with other girls may be a problem for Turkish girls.
Apart from the obstacles facing immigrant girls and women in their practice of sport which result from religion, there are other barriers (among others, lack of leisure and social situation) which make it difficult or even impossible for them to take up sports or leisure activities in general. In spite of the controversy over definitions and theories of leisure, social scientists unanimously agree that leisure, as a domain quite separate from work, is a phenomenon typical of highly industrialized societies. Therefore, in Turkey, especially in the countryside, leisure is not experienced in the same way and does not have the same significance as in Germany. Leisure in the Turkish language means “empty time” and has no great value. In Turkey free time is traditionally spent in sex-segregated groups. Traces of this attitude towards leisure can also be seen in the immigrant communities in Germany.

Various empirical studies have shown that Turkish girls and women in Germany also spend the greater part of their spare time at home. A 1990 survey carried out by Ursula Mehrländer revealed that almost 90% of the Turkish women interviewed normally spent their leisure hours either at home or visiting relatives. The pilot study undertaken by Petra Pfänder and Fügen Turhan showed, further, that Turkish girls have very little leisure time, since they are often burdened with a large part of the housework and since learning is given high priority. (As mentioned above, very many Turkish parents believe in the importance of a good education.) This leaves little time and energy for sport activities. Social control increases after puberty. “Even my younger sister could stay out longer than I could all of a sudden,” one young woman remembered in Silke Riesner’s survey. In the late 1980s it was impossible even for adult women to live alone and, in some families, this is still the case today. Social contacts are confined either to other Turkish girls or to relatives—for one thing because they feel understood by them and for another because their parents perceive friendships with German girls as a menace. They are afraid that their daughters are infected by aims, ideas and behavior which they interpret as immoral and that they drift away from their Turkish family and from the Turkish culture.

In discussing why Turkish girls do not take part in sport, we must also take into account their social situation. We should not forget that, relatively speaking, only a small number of German girls and women from the lower social classes participate in organized physical activity.

Is an athletic appearance really a fervent wish of Turkish girls and women? As mentioned in connection with Bourdieu’s theory, adaptation to German ideals of the body and physical culture means not only changing behavior patterns but also breaking with deeply anchored cultural norms and values. An athletic lifestyle or a muscual body is not compatible with Turkish ideals of femininity and Turkish “taste.” In a pilot study on women and sport in Turkey I discovered that, although muscles are frowned upon, slimmess combined with “feminine curves” is an ideal whose acceptance is growing, which explains why many women from the middle and upper classes visit fitness studios. Even young girls reported in interviews that they keep a diet and that they do exercises in order to become (or stay) slim.
Several pilot studies have investigated the life circumstances and the leisure activities of Turkish girls. The findings of these studies also provide further pieces of the puzzle that help explain why Turkish immigrant girls and women abstain from sport and, in addition, shed light on similarities and differences between various groups of girls. Essentially, four typical life patterns can be identified which are to be found in a similar form in all generations of immigrant women. According to the religious and cultural orientations of their families and the way in which the girls handle the expectations of their surroundings, one can distinguish among girls with traditional values, bicultural girls, so-called “breakaways,” and girls with a fundamentalist orientation.

Many girls accept the norms, the prohibitions, and the rules based on Islam and family honor—for example, wearing a headscarf in public. Since they accept the rules of their religion, they report that they are satisfied with their situation and that they do not have any conflicts with their parents. They take the view that it is a good thing to cover the body because the headscarf protects them from the gaze of men. These girls also report that they are not interested in sport and that they do not like physical education at school. Wearing a headscarf in physical education lessons does not bother them, and they would rather stop taking part in gym lessons than give up the scarf. Hartmut Griese suspects that these girls “gradually interiorize the limitations and controls that they experience, repress their original youthful needs and wishes, and subsequently restrict themselves in such a way that their behavior appears to conform to their needs.”

A second group of girls describe themselves as “bicultural.” They regard themselves as Turkish but have a detached view of Islam. Bicultural girls have greater freedom than girls of the first group, particularly in dress codes, but less than their German peers. For instance, they spend their leisure hours outside the home and visit their female friends, but even liberal parents control their daughters to a certain degree. Going out in the evenings is often not allowed, and parents want to know where, how, and with whom their daughters spend their spare time. However, the situation of bicultural girls differs considerably, depending on the norms and values of their parents. Some parents are relatively “liberal” but conform to the norms of the Turkish community. Others are religious and give in only under pressure from their German surroundings. Bicultural girls have many contacts with young Germans and wish to live in both cultures. They feel both Turkish and German, and they develop “emancipated” ideas for the future which are often ambivalent, dreaming of having a family with several children but wanting at the same time a good career. Merck emphasizes using the Danish example of the mixture of the different cultural streams as “creolisation” and the commuting between the different cultural settings of the home and the Danish environment. Girls from liberal families can take advantage of sports that are provided in the neighborhood, especially when they practice their sports in all-girl groups.

Bicultural girls from religious families have, or acquire for themselves, certain freedoms, but feel restricted and controlled nevertheless. Especially comparisons with German girls of the same age often lead to discontentment and conflicts in the family. They would like to engage in some mixed gender activities, to go to the discotheque or the
swimming baths, and they complain that they are not allowed to practice sport outside school. They would also like to do sport more often, and dance and play games. In time they lose their enthusiasm and adapt to the norms of their parents and the environment. They are often unhappy, but they can do nothing about it.

The third group of girls, the “breakaways,” have sometimes broken completely with their families, dramatically and traumatically. This leads not only to serious conflicts with family members, above all with fathers and brothers, but also to major crises of identity. We do have a number of biographies which show how extremely difficult it is for Turkish girls to leave their families. Sport and the social network in sport can help these girls to build lives of their own. Finally, it must also be remembered that there are girls and women who—either voluntarily or of necessity—have become alienated from Turkish culture or who have redefined their cultural requirements to suit their own needs. The sporting activities of these women will no doubt scarcely differ from those of women belonging to the mainstream of German society.

In recent years, in contrast to tendencies towards secularization, a growing number of girls and women have started to discover religion for themselves and to interpret Islam according to their own needs. There are quite a few young women who have grown up in Germany and enjoyed a good education and who wear a headscarf without regarding it as a symbol of oppression; their orientation could be characterized as more or less “fundamentalist.” They try to reconcile Islam with modern thinking, and religious rules with modern life. This leads to conflicts with German mainstream society, as has been seen in the controversies over the teacher who wished to teach wearing a headscarf or the girls who refused to take part in mixed gym lessons. After many discussions with female “neo-Muslims,” Sigrid Nökel concluded that Islamization is not just a process of symbolically conveyed class struggles in Bourdieu’s sense, but also an instrument of individual identity politics. These women believe that sporting activities are acceptable if they do not violate the religious rules. They negotiate the boundaries of their diverse worlds and they claim an active role in their own lives.

Participation in Sport and Cultural Conflicts—A Summary

As noted out above, the socialization of girls in Turkish families puts more or less large obstacles in their way, making it difficult or even impossible to take part in leisure and sporting activities. They are prepared for their future roles as wives and mothers, being entrusted at an early age with household tasks and, especially after puberty, supervised and guarded so that they do not endanger the honor of their parents. Even today, many Turkish parents reject the attitudes and behavior, but above all the “freedoms” which German girls enjoy. Sociologists thus note in Turkish women’s biographies a “missing phase of youth,” and, consequently, often the opportunity of discovering sporting activities and developing an interest in or an affinity to sport.

Finally, it should be borne in mind that participation in sport may also depend on the provision of sport by sport organizations and their attractiveness to potential participants. Do sport clubs really make a great effort to recruit women immigrants as members? There are currently no empirical studies available about discrimination against Turkish citizens in sport clubs. There are several indications that foreign football players are insulted by
fanatic fans of other teams and of Turkish teams feeling unfairly treated by the referee. These incidents are mentioned in newspaper reports, as well as the research project conducted by Klein and Kathy.\textsuperscript{119} Even if discrimination and formal barriers in the practice of sport or becoming a member of a sport club may not exist, it is not easy for people from ethnic minorities to join a club. For one thing, sport clubs are often closed circles of insiders. It can be assumed that the social networks in sport clubs, the solidarity among the members, and their social commitment are created by the exclusion of the “other.” The cultural capital gained by sporting activities could be used—in Bourdieu’s sense—as a means of distinguishing themselves from the immigrant group. There is not a great deal of empirical evidence to support this hypothesis. However, club leaders and officials interviewed in a study showed little concern for outsiders.\textsuperscript{120} And in their rules on how to treat others, the whole atmosphere of sport clubs reveals the orientation towards the “taste” of the mainstream society. It is for this reason that foreigners, especially girls and women, feel like outsiders in German clubs, no less because their needs and wishes are not taken into consideration, for example in their thresholds of modesty and embarrassment.

\textbf{Case Studies}

In this discussion, I now present examples of the different sport biographies of Turkish girls in Germany in order to show the opportunities, challenges, and difficulties but also the positive effects of physical activities.

"At home there are strict rules." Sazyie is fifteen years old and attends ninth grade at a \textit{Hauptschule}. Her father is an industrial worker, her mother is a housewife, and she has eight brothers and sisters. She is engaged and is soon to marry a man whom she does not know very well. At school her marks are below average; outside school she has no contacts at all. In her leisure time she stays at home or visits her married brothers and sisters. Her father does not allow her to join a club or a hobby group. Sazyie is lonely, isolated, and often sad. However, she accepts the situation, because she does not see any way of solving her problems. Sport does not and cannot play any role in her life.\textsuperscript{121}

"I am a Turkish woman and I box—so what?" Fikriye Selen has chosen a very untypical sport for a woman. At the age of thirteen she took up judo, and also did gymnastics on apparatus, karate (she has the black belt), and kick-boxing before she discovered boxing. She is fascinated by the fighting and by the feeling she has after a victory. She trains five times a week with men who take her seriously because of her discipline and her ability. Her parents do not object to her sporting activity. Fikriye is religious and insists on wearing proper clothes, by which she means a T-shirt and not a small top. She studies economics and last year she turned professional. She is very self-confident and thinks that she does not fit into any pigeon-holes: “I am Turkish, I box, I look nice and I am quite intelligent.”\textsuperscript{122}

\textit{Empowerment through sport.} Ayse came to Germany when she was eight years old. It was a long and difficult road to the university. When she was between twelve and seventeen, she had to fight for everything “that other young people of my age, especially Ger-
man girls, took for granted.” One way of escaping the control of her father was to take up sport. Under her brother’s supervision she was allowed to attend a sport school where she learned tae kwon do. Sporting success—she was German champion five times—and the support of her sport group made it possible to develop new perspectives. When she was eighteen she had a serious row with her father. He forbade her to practice her sport or meet her German friends. After this she left home—secretly, because she was so afraid of her father. She hid in the homes of friends and it took some time before she had control over her life again. “You don’t have to follow the traditions if you don’t want to,” she said. “Have courage and live your life as you please.”

Turkish girls and football. In Berlin there is a football team composed of Turkish girls. The team belongs to Agrisport, a Turkish football club with very successful male teams that also offers Turkish girls the opportunity of playing the game. The girls’ team is also successful, and it appears that the female football players are accepted by the Turkish community—at least up to a certain age. The contradiction between being a woman and being a football player becomes more problematic the older the girls get. In interviews with the players it became clear that on getting married at the least they had to have other priorities—cooking, housework, and so on. In these interviews the players talked about the conflicts some of them experienced with their families. Some of the girls had to use a false name so that their parents did not know about their activities. Many parents believed that one’s value as a woman was diminished by taking part in such an “unfeminine” activity: “who will marry you if you play soccer and everybody has seen your legs?” complained one of the mothers. But there were also fathers who were proud of their daughters. And, above all, the players were proud of themselves: not only had they conquered “male” space and a “male” domain but they had also shown that they could play as well or even better than German girls’ teams.

Perspectives

Pilot studies and case studies have clearly illustrated the barriers that hinder or prevent the participation of immigrant girls and women in sport. They have also shown, however, that immigrant girls and women can overcome these obstacles.

I would like to reemphasize that it is very important to actively support the participation of ethnic minority girls and women in sport, because physical activity and sport can have numerous positive effects in the physical, psychological, and social spheres, and can help girls and women to develop self confidence, create identities, and overcome conflicts and difficult situations.

What possibilities do we have, then, to support the participation of girls and women in physical activities? It must be stressed again that Turkish girls—like German girls—come from a wide variety of backgrounds and have a wide variety of needs. Sport—its conditions, its contents and its aims—must be oriented to the needs of these different groups of girls. Experiences of socialization, life circumstances, and girls’ experience of sport and what they expect from it must all be considered. Concepts and programs should follow the principles of equal rights, equal status and equal opportunities as well as acceptance and tolerance.
Turkish girls and women with a traditional background can be encouraged to participate in sport if:

- only girls and women participate in these activities;
- the course leaders are female;
- boys and men have no access to the facilities when used by females;
- clothing that covers the body is accepted;
- separate changing and showering facilities are available;
- the sports facilities are within easy reach of their homes;
- the sports courses take place in the afternoon or early evening;
- girls and women can bring their younger siblings or their children; and
- the goals and contents of the activities are oriented towards health.

It is not sufficient, however, just to provide sports courses or opportunities of taking part in sporting activities. Girls and women must be won over to a life with sport and encouraged to participate in physical activities—to be informed and motivated as well as supported in their activities. In all projects, concepts and initiatives it is vital to involve immigrant girls and women and give them the possibility as well as the responsibility of developing a physical culture oriented towards the needs of the various immigrant groups. They need to detect and to realize their own ideas and needs; they have to find their own way to sport and health. One promising example of this is the project “Sport with Migrant Women” being carried out in North Rhine-Westphalia by the regional sport federation and the regional government, using the infrastructure of the sport clubs which already exists. Not only are special courses provided for girls and women of immigrant families, but there is also a “girls’ bus” with sport apparatus which travels to schools and sport centers and encourages girls to take part in its activities. One of the aims of the project is to recruit women immigrants as coaches. Generally, however, the project aims to sharpen sport clubs’ awareness of the problems that exist, win over women as “multipliers,” and in general arouse the interest of foreign girls and women in sport. It is to be hoped that this example spreads so as to increase the participation of girls and women in physical activities, and thus to improve their well being and their standard of life.

1. It is difficult to find the right terms and definitions for the different groups of people who are not of German origin. In Germany, initiatives to attract foreigners to sport clubs started in the 1970s. Since then, many actions and projects have aimed at furthering sporting activities especially for children and youth; see Berliner Sportjugend (ed.), Zwischen Integration und Isolation (Berlin: Landessportbund, 1998). The focus on Turkish immigrants was chosen for two reasons: first, Turkish people make up the largest group of foreigners in Germany; second, Turkish women face significant conflicts when they take up sport because of their culture.


3. For example, see the bibliography in Ursula Boos-Nünning, ed., Die türkische Migration in deutschsprachigen Büchern, 1961-1984 (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1990). I only take into consideration here the literature which has appeared in Germany.


12. On intentions of returning and migration fluxes, see, for example, Ursula Mehrländer, “Rückkehrabsichten der Türken im Verlauf der Migrationsprozesse,” in *Zukunft in der Bundesrepublik oder Zukunft in der Türkei?*, ed. W. Meys and F. Sen (Frankfurt: Dabyeli Verlag, 1986), 53-73.


16. Most immigrants of Turkish origin have not acquired German citizenship because, among other things, this would mean forfeiting their Turkish citizenship. Young immigrants between 18 and 23 years of age who have lived in Germany for eight years and have attended a school for six years can choose either German or Turkish citizenship, but not both. Berliner Sportjugend, *Zwischen Integration und Isolation*, 18. The impossibility of dual nationality presents a huge barrier to the integration of immigrants. This also makes tracking ethnic origin more difficult, as once an immigrant obtains a German passport she is classified as German. On the politics of the federal government, see Bundesministerium des Inneren [Interior Ministry], *Aufzeichnung zur Ausländerpolitik und zum Ausländerrecht in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn: Senatsverwaltung, 1993). On the situation of immigrants and on ethnic and cultural conflicts see several contributions in Klein and Kothy, *Ethnisch-kulturelle Konflikte.*


24. See, among others, Silke Riesner, Junge türkische Frauen der zweiten Generation in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 2d ed. (Frankfurt: Verlag für interkulturelle Kommunikation, 1991); Eryilmaz and Jamin, Fremde Heimat; Ursula Spuler-Stegemann, Muslime in Deutschland (Freiburg: Herder, 1998).
25. Compare the chronological account in Eryilmaz and Jamin, Fremde Heimat, 391 ff.
28. The term “Alevi” means “adherent of Ali,” the son-in-law of Mohammed. Alevi women have more rights than in other Islamic faiths. In many respects they have the same rights and duties as men. Spuler-Stegemann, Muslime in Deutschland, 53.
29. Ibid., 46.
31. Wilhelm Heitmeyer, Helmut Schröder and Joachim Müller, “Desintegration und islamischer Fundamentalismus,” Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte (1997): 7-8, 17-3 1; Spuler-Stegemann, Muslime in Deutschland, 94.
32. See, for example, Boos-Nünning, “Die schulische Situation.”
37. Rosen and Stüwe, Ausländische Mädchen, 32; Özkara, Zwischen Lernen.
41. Nauck, “Dreifach diskriminiert.”
42. See Ertekin Özcan, Türkische Immigrantenorganisationen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Berlin: Hitit, 1989), 61.
45. See, for example, Hartmut Griese, Sozialisationsprobleme ausländischer Mädchen,” Deutsche Jugend 29: 157-66 (1981); Rosen and Stüwe, Ausländische Mädchen; Riesner, Türkische Frauen.
46. We must take care to distinguish between immigrants from large cities and those from rural areas. Nauck, “Dreifach diskriminiert,” reports of a study on the self-images of and the stereotypes about Turkish and German women. He was able to demonstrate that the self-concepts of German and Turkish women were quite similar, but that the stereotypical images differed decisively from the self-images.
49. Abel, Ausländer und Sport, 36.


54. For the functions of Turkish sport clubs and their role in integration and desintegration processes, see Klein and Kothy, *Ethnisch-kulturelle Konflikte*.

55. Abel, *Australänd und Sport*.

56. Schwarz, “Ethnische Vereine im Berliner Sport.”


62. A list of literature about immigrants and sport can be found in Jütting and Lichtenauer, *Ausländer im Sport*.

63. Mehrländer, *Türkische Jugendliche*, 151. In a 1995 study, more than 50% of the Turkish youth interviewed reported that sport is among their most important leisure activities. The authors mention that there are gender specific differences, but they do not provide statistical data on this question. Heitmeyer, Schröder and Müller, “Desintegration und islamischer Fundamentalismus.”


65. There are differences between the age groups and between the male and the female population, as 64% of boys and 47% of girls between 7 and 14 years are members of a sport club. Deutscher Sportbund, *Bestandsbericht*, 1997 (Frankfurt: DSB, 1997). These figures give only tendencies because double membership and passive members are included. The number of persons active in sports clubs is lower.


68. Laurien, “Türkische Mädchen.” In Hessen in 1981, there were 88 sport clubs founded by immigrants with 5,768 members, only 446 of whom were females. Reiner Merkel, “Ausländer im Sport—Bedürfnisse und Nachfrage,” in *Führungs- und Verwaltungsakademie des DSB, Integration der ausländischen Mitbürger im Sport* (Berlin: DSB, 1985), 17.

69. Deutsche Sportjugend, *Endbericht*. None of the Turkish sport clubs included in the research of the Deutsche Sportjugend (German Sport Youth) offered physical activities for girls and women.


73. See, for example, Ursula Mihciyazgan, “Türkische Mädchen im Sporunterricht,” in _Fremdheit und Rassimus im Sport: Tagung der DvS-Sektion Sportphilosophie vom 9.-10.9. 1994 in Berlin_, ed. B. Bröskamp and T. Alkemeyer (Sankt Augustin: Academia, 1996), 87-106. Description of the varieties of Islam and the different orientations is outside the scope of this article, but see, e.g., Spuler-Stegemann, _Muslime in Deutschland_.


75. See also, e.g., Carol Delaney, _The Seed and the Soil. Gender and Cosmology in Turkish Village Society_ (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

76. See the book published by the Turkish sports ministry about 10 years of sport development: _T.C. Basbakanlik genclik ve spor genel müdürlügü: Sporda 10 yil_ (Ankara, 1995). See also the interviews with Turkish experts in Pfister and Fasting, _Barriers_.

77. Bourdieu, _Die feinen Unterschiede_. This concept was used to explain the lifestyle and the sport engagement of Turkish immigrants in Bernd Bröskamp, _Körperliche Fremdheit: zum Problem der interkulturellen Begegnung im Sport_ (Sankt Augustin: Academia, 1994).

78. Bourdieu, _Die feinen Unterschiede_.

79. For gender as a social construction on the institutional and on the individual level and for “doing gender,” see Judith Lorber, _Paradoxes of Gender_ (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994).

80. Lorber, _Paradoxes of Gender_, 7.

81. Lorber, _Paradoxes of Gender_, 7.


83. Nearly all studies dealing with Turkish girls mention the contradictory expectations of the parents and the German environment and emphasize the problems arising out of this situation for the self concept and the personality development of the girls. See, e.g., Griese, “Sozialisationsprobleme ausländischer Mädchen;” Bründel and Hurrelmann, “Bewältigungsstrategien deutscher.”

84. Yvonne Morck, “Hyphenated Danes: Contested Fields of Gender, Generation and Ethnicity” (paper presented at the University of Bristol, September 16-19, 1999).


86. Sfeir, “Status of Muslim Women,” 300.


91. See, e.g., Özkara, *Zwischen Lernen*.


93. On the norms and rules which determine the lives of Turkish girls and women in Germany, too, see Spuler-Stegemann, *Muslime in Deutschland*; Berliner Sportjugend, *Zwischen Integration und Isolation*.


97. Studies show that at least traces of these ideas are still in the heads of Turkish boys and men, who, for example, insist to a large extent on the virginity of the woman they marry.


100. Indicators include the high priority placed by many Turkish parents on formal education and the obligation of Turkish girls to do housework. See, e.g., Leenen, Grosch, and Kreidt, “Bildungsverständnis, Plazierungsverhalten und Generationenkonflikt.”


102. Up to present all the empirically based information available about the leisure of Turkish girls is a study undertaken in Nordrhein-Westfalen in which 30 girls between 14-18 years of age and their families were interviewed; see Pfänder and Turhan, *Türkische Mädchen*. See also Suzan Özkan, “Mit meinem Vater kann ich darüber nicht reden,” *Hessische Blätter für Volks- und Kulturforschung* 29: 155-65 (1992), about the conflicts between parents and daughters, and the special issue of the journal *Ausländerkinder*, 1980, no. 4.


104. As already mentioned above, according to Kleindienst-Cachay, “Immigrantinnen,” only 23% of girls at *Hauptschulen* but more than 50% of girls at *Realschulen* were members of a sports club.

105. Pfister, “Frauen und Sport in der Türkei.”

106. See Pfister and Fasting, *Barriers*.


110. Riesner, *Türkische Frauen*.

111. Pfänder and Turhan, *Türkische Mädchen*.

112. Riesner, *Türkische Frauen*.

113. Merck, “Hyphenated Danes.”


121. Heidrun Bründel and Klaus Hurrelman, “Bewältigungsstrategien.”