

REPRESENTATION OF TURKS IN GERMAN MEDIA: A SOCIOLOGICAL
ANALYSIS OF ANTI-TURKISH EXCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION IN
GERMANY’S FAR-RIGHT MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

REPRESENTATION OF TURKS IN GERMAN MEDIA: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF ANTI-TURKISH EXCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION IN GERMANY’S FAR-RIGHT MEDIA

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This study aims to analyze the discriminatory and exclusionary representation of Turkish migrants living in Germany in German far-right media outlets. Data in the study were collected through qualitative content analysis from a sample of four far-right media outlets, namely *Compact-Magazin*, *PI News*, *Junge Freiheit* and *Deutsche Stimme*, by utilizing case study as the research design. The data were interpreted through the analysis of six main themes: securitization and criminalization, boundary making and symbolic exclusion, ethnonational belonging, opportunity hoarding, cultural neo-racism and incompatibility, and contested citizenship. The findings reveal that far-right media do not merely reflect existing social prejudices but actively produce and amplify them through sophisticated discursive strategies; this process transforms Turkish migrants from a social group into a securitized threat and an incompatible “other.” It allows construct racial and ethnic hierarchies, come up against multiculturalism, and justify exclusionary policies.

Keywords: Turkish Migrants, Germany, Far-right Media, Media Representation

ÖZ

ALMAN MEDYASINDA TÜRKLERİN TEMSİLİ: ALMANYA’DAKİ AŞIRI SAĞ MEDYADA TÜRK KARŞITI DIŞLANMA VE AYRIMCILIĞIN SOSYOLOJİK BİR ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışma, Almanya’daki Türk göçmenlerin Alman aşırı sağ medya organlarındaki ayrımcı ve dışlayıcı temsilinin sosyolojik analizini amaçlar. Veriler, araştırma dizaynı olarak vaka çalışmasından yararlanılarak *Compact-Magazin*, *PI News*, *Junge Freiheit* ve *Deutsche Stimme* olmak üzere dört aşırı sağ medya organından nitel içerik analizi yoluyla toplanmıştır. Veriler; güvenlikleştirme/kriminalleştirme, sınır inşası/sembolik dışlama, etno-ulusal aidiyet, fırsat istifçiliği, kültürel neo-ırkçılık/uyumsuzluk ve tartışmalı vatandaşlık olmak üzere altı ana temanın analizi üzerinden yorumlanmıştır. Bulgular, aşırı sağ medyanın mevcut toplumsal önyargıları yalnızca yansıtmakla kalmayıp belirli söylem stratejileriyle aktif olarak ürettiğini ve güçlendirdiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu süreç, Türk göçmenleri bir toplumsal gruptan güvenlikleştirilmiş bir tehdide ve uyumsuz bir “öteki”ye dönüştürmektedir. Aşırı sağ medya ırksal ve etnik hiyerarşiler inşa etmekte, çok kültürlülüğe karşı çıkmakta ve dışlayıcı politikaları meşrulaştırmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk Göçmenler, Almanya, Aşırı Sağ Medya, Medya Temsili



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EP	European Parliament
EPP	European People's Party
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists
EFDD	Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy
ENF	Europe and Nations and Freedom
EU	European Union
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
DVU	Deutsche Volksunion
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union
AfD	Alternative für Deutschland
REP	Republikaner
NPD	Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer +
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
PEGIDA	Patriotische Europäer Gegen Islamisierung Des Abendlandes
FPÖ	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
PVV	Partij voor de Vrijheid
SRP	Sozialistische Reichspartei Deutschlands
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutsch

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Migration is as much a social and cultural phenomenon as an economic and demographic one. Media representations of migrants play an important role in the formation of public perceptions on them and coexistence practices. In this sense, the migrant representation used by the far-right media can be regarded as a promoter for its political agenda. With the rise of the far-right parties across Europe in recent years, it would be well-grounded to emphasize the increased visibility of anti-migrant discourses. In line with the ability of media to socially shape perceptions about the migrant communities, it would also be important to investigate and discuss the social and political dynamics of creating these representations.

Germany is one of the European countries that hosts the highest density of Turkish migrants. Turkish migrants have long been one of the key positions in terms of population dynamics in Germany. For many years, they have always been the target of racist and discriminatory discourses. In this sense, by researching the discourses developed by far-right media outlets on Turkish migrants with the rise of the visibility and influence of the far-right parties with rising vote rates, it would be possible to make an important contribution to both academic literature and sociological debates. In this regard, this master's thesis aims to understand how broadcastings of far-right media outlets in Germany represent Turkish migrants, one of Germany's most sedentary, rooted and densely large migrant groups, and to sociologically analyze the underlying discriminatory and anti-migrant practices.

The introduction part of the study is organized in a way that it first briefly gives the historical background of the migration process of the Turkish labor force to Germany in order to provide a basis for understanding how all these dynamics are shaped in a

historical line and in a social context, of the rise of the far-right in Europe and Germany together with the reasons behind this increase trend, and then an attempt to deliver the research question and the objective of the study. In the final section of this chapter, there will be a glance at the conceptualization of the themes which will be operationalized in the evaluation of the findings later on.

1.1. Historical Background of Labor Migration from Turkey to Germany

Nocera (2018) tells that when the calendars were showing September 24, 1961, the first train carrying the Turkish workers to West Germany left the Sirkeci Station in İstanbul. A month after the train service to German lands began, Turkish and German governments of the day sat together to negotiate and agree upon the conditions, regulations, and extent of the flow of labor migration. So, Turkey had joined the list of Mediterranean countries like first Italy and Spain, then Yugoslavia, Morocco and Tunisia, who had been provided labor force to Germany as to fulfill the needs of its labor deficit with the intention to restore its economic structure after the World War II, which is commonly known as *Wirtschaftswunder*. This intermittent labor migration period starting from 1955 and ending in 1973 is commonly known as *Gastarbeiterperiode* (guest worker period). In fact, by the end of 1973, at the peak of the debate on the social consequences of migration with the impact of the Oil Crisis that occurred in the same year, the migrant workers who were arriving in Germany's labor market had already reached the number of 2.3 million people (Nocera, 2018). On the other hand, Nocera (2018) devotes to the comparison of Berlin and other cities by saying that after the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, the labor shortage issue in West Berlin compared to the other cities in West Germany came up for discussion. The existence of the wall ruled out thousands of east German workers coming to work from East to West Berlin, making a space not pleasant for West Germans to move in and get involved with the job. The Berlin Senate made various offers to encourage West Germans to move to this part of the city and fill in the labor shortage in the meaning of *Westdeutsche Arbeitnehmer* (West German employee) concept, such as relocation and rent subsidies, easier phone use service, and a fixed bonus to the monthly salary they were already taking, but they failed to create demand in the ongoing labor shortage. For a long time, the idea of taking in the

migrant workers was strongly opposed because it was believed that these people would bring with them the so-called “danger of communism.” However, the insufficient demand of the West Germans in comparison to the number of labor shortage in supply, the Berlin Senate was forced to give up its politically skeptical view on migrant workers and the migration flow coming in.

On the other hand, Mortan and Sarfati (2011) also make a proper introduction to the explanation of labor migration to Germany, without leaving out the impact of the establishing Berlin Wall on the social relations changing with the migration. As mentioned above, before the wall construction, there was a group of population crossing from East Germany to the West on a daily basis and joining the labor force to work in the West. The labor shortage, which already existed country-wide after World War II, increased even more on Berlin scale with the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. The labor agreement signed between Turkey and Germany is chronologically answered after the 2 months of the wall building. Mortan and Sarfati (2011) emphasize a point that Nocera (2018) has not considered, which is that this migration flow not only helped to fill the labor deficit of Germany and reconstruct its economic structure after the war but also turned into a development goal and policy to lower Turkey’s unemployment rates. In that manner, there was a fast influx of *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers), the people coming to Germany from all over Turkey to start working in various cities in Germany. The beginning of this guest worker migration in Germany was so obligatory and important for Germany that a clause was added to the countries’ agreement which forced Turkish government to take back every worker it had sent to the Federal Republic of Germany at any time and without formalities. But this state of temporariness and sojourning was no way what Germany expected as even the economic crisis happened in the years 1966-1967 which had left almost 70,000 Turkish workers jobless was not enough for them to leave Germany and return to their home country. Migration from Turkey to Germany did not stop even Germany officially announced in 1973 to end its labor force recruitment, people this time on tourist visas decided to stay in Germany as illegal workers, which is no coincidence that 5-year prison sentence decision was made for the employers who employed illegal workers in 1975. As another important point to understand this everlasting migration movement from Turkey to Germany, Mortan

and Sarfati (2011) refer to the aftermaths of the demolishment of the Berlin Wall in 1989, shortly followed by the disintegration of the socialist bloc and pointing out that it had led to the increase of working-age population in Germany after the reunion of the East and the West, and this surplus labor in the employment market has caused hostility on the grounds of racism and xenophobia, which is going to be part of the main research scope of this master's thesis.

As Akgündüz (1998) explains, the demographic movement based on the labor migration mentioned above starting in the 1960s was not Turkey's first participation in the international migration. He starts his explanatory process from the last quarter of 18th century and argues that before signing the labor agreement in 1961, the geography that Turkey has been living on have gone through and been a part of mass migration and emigration many times. In terms of the features of the Turkish labor migration, Akgündüz (1998) is on the same page with the previously mentioned authors Nocera (2018) and Mortan & Sarfati (2011). The important point that he has added, which is due to the short time duration of the agreements, Turkey never took any legal and political responsibilities within the context of the migration policies in the favor of the Turkish migrants who were living in the foreign countries. As a result of the short-term clause in the agreements being so binding on the one hand, neither the host countries gave the workers a permanent legal stay, on the other hand, Turkey didn't put into practice any kind of long-term migration policy regarding the laborers' status in the host countries after they have been taken back to their home country (Akgündüz, 1998).

Abadan-Unat (2006) explains the abovementioned decades of migration as the phases of emigration of the Turks as follows: The first migrations of Turkish people to Germany began mainly in the 1950s, but in contrast with the labor migrations, this type of migration did not take place *en masse* but through individual and single means and initiatives and actually started with the demand of Germany on the interns and trainees to come and work in various sectors. By the 60s, this wave of migration had become a mass migration of people based on rotation principles, was shaped around the bilateral agreements and later was called "guest worker period." The 1970s, in the shadow of Oil Crisis that had hit the whole world, were marked by the

economic recession, and Germany had become one of the countries suffering from the outcomes of crisis and announced that it was going to stop the labor force importation from other countries. On top of this development, a family reunification visa amnesty was made by the German government to legalize the illegal workers together with the “*Visum für Familienzusammenführung*” (family unification visa), which made the legally employed migrant workers to get a permission to bring their families to Germany. I would like to add here that Akgündüz (1993) analytically sees the migration wave in the 1970s more complicated than the labor migration which had taken place in the 1960s. I think this point of view can be interpreted as the visibility of the new social groups with the migrant status, like women and children (both Turkey-born but Germany-raised and/or Germany born-and-raised in a migrant family), has got this social phenomenon a new dimension and layers which should be analyzed and revealed in a sociological aspect.

Abadan-Unat (2006) goes on to say that the 1980s, on the other hand, brought new social problems for the migrants with the legal opportunity that family reunification visa has made possible. The frequently discussed issues during this time were the problems of Turkish migrant children in education, their integration problems, the increasing number of the requests on political asylum because of the *coup d'état* that took place in Turkey in 1980, and the failure of the German government to lower the numbers of the migrants despite the policies pushing the migrants to return to their home country. The 1990s, as stated above, have come with a rise of anti-migrant and discrimination-based social movements based on identity politics with the demolishment of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the USSR shortly afterwards. Although Abadan-Unat (2006) states that the debates shaping around identity issues in the 2000s were replaced by new waves of migration that reshaped it as a social phenomenon and that the current debates are now formed around the idea of integration and multiculturalism, I think the speed of the rise of far-right parties across Europe including Germany clearly show that the debates on migration and migrants have again been shifted to a focus on identity discussions and cultural conflicts where discriminatory and anti-migrant discourses are utilized as a political tool as I will discuss in detail in the following sections.

1.2. Dynamics of Far-Right, Anti-Migration and Discrimination

In the EP, right-wing political actors use discriminatory rhetoric and discourses of control over public discourse in order to direct and redirect public opinion. They are trying to construct an “anti-migration Europe” by turning migration into a security, economic and cultural threat. In this discursive process, while the political actors define Europe or their own country in a manner of positive discourses, the others (especially asylum seekers, refugees, or migrants) are characterized negatively, with preconceptions and names; for instance, migrants are depicted as “potential terrorists,” or “refugee crisis” language is used to securitize migration. In terms of economic threat, migrants are defined as “fake refugees” that is those who will abuse the migration and asylum system, and “economic migrants” that is those who want to benefit from Europe’s welfare structure and claim a right to it; in the cultural threat context, most migrants, especially coming from Muslim majority countries, are associated with “fundamentalist Islam” and labelled as “the enemy of Europe and Christianity.” These discourses are constructed at different levels by different countries and political parties. For example, among the right-wing groups in the EP, EPP uses moderate language while ECR, EFDD and especially ENF use the more explicit and violent anti-migration rhetoric (Güler, 2019).

Alessandro Dal Lago and Sandro Mezzadra’s analysis argues that Europe’s borders have multiplied and diversified, fragmenting the concept of political Europe. It points out that while globalization has removed borders for goods and capital, barriers to human movement and the “right to flight” have been erected in a paradoxical situation. European discourses, which are based on identity and security, construct refugees and migrant workers as security threats and internal political enemies. Migrants are brought to the “inferior population” status and subjected to police controls in this respect (Balibar & Collins, 2003). In this context, Balibar and Collins (2003) suggests the “rampant apartheid” model instead of the “war model” to explain the socio-political discrimination in Europe. They argue that security measures turn existing citizenship of migrants invalid with the stigma created even for the national population related to migrants. The author points out that

neocolonialism continues in this way and Europe's colonial past plays a determining role in this regard (Balibar & Collins, 2003).

In the context of the electoral success of the extreme right in Germany, it can be said that the success of these parties at the state level is closely related to the exceptional salience of migration-related issues. In cases where the mainstream parties bring migration issues to the agenda, a significant part of the voters turn to the extreme right. In other words, the impact of the campaigns and debates about migration issues on voters is very strong. The successes of the extreme right in states such as Baden-Württemberg and Schleswig-Holstein are directly linked to the anti-migration campaigns. On the other hand, in Hesse, the far right could not make significant gains because the mainstream parties did not keep this issue on their agenda. For example, the success of DVU in Saxony-Anhalt in 1998 was attributed to the intensive advertising campaigns in which slogans such as "Out with the foreign bandits," "Jobs for Germans first" were used and to focusing on the issues indirectly linked to migration, such as crime (Karapınar, 1998).

Migration is the source of political dissatisfaction and frustration in several ways in Western democracies. The governments seem to be in positions where they cannot control the migration process. Migration programs were launched, often with little consultation, inadequate or non-existent explanation, and without having any influence on the results of these measures. The inability of these measures to control the borders and system to meet the needs of the established communities have caused a loss of confidence. The persistence of these policies in the face of widespread, poorly organized migration policy opposition is one of the most important sources of this dissatisfaction. The mass indifference to the migration laws could create general contempt for the law and the state. The emergence of far-right parties is one of the most important indicators of how migration-related conflicts have been spilled over to Western politics (Freeman, 1997). The rise in the frequency of racially motivated violent acts in Britain, France, Germany, and Scandinavia is another symptom of the dissatisfaction with migration. For Kitschelt (1995, as cited in Freeman, 1997), economic crisis and migration cannot explain the rise of the far right alone; they play a catalyst role in a situation in which anti-foreigner senses are linked to broader

authoritarian right-wing messages. Social processes, such as globalization and post-industrial transformation, create “losers” for society and have negative effects on some components of opportunity structure, such as unemployment, job insecurity, and low wages. Migration, although it is a symptom, seems as a result of these undesirable trends and plays a facilitator role that mobilizes anger and resentment (Freeman, 1997).

Racism in Europe in the 2010s has become more militant, aggressive, and outspoken. This racism is seen at the demonstrations and the electoral victories of the far-right forces who mix a ferocious way of nationalism, welfare chauvinism, and especially, a camouflaged racism against Muslim migrants and refugees. The European “refugee crisis” in 2015-2016 was used by far-right populists to call for a more restrictive refugee policy of the EU. The revival of the existing racism in these new forms is a reaction to the emergence of “post-migrant societies” which are multicultural and ethnically diverse with certain social, cultural, and political gains in Western Europe and the mainstream liberal wing’s takeover of the positive discourse and attitude to migration. Some argue that this revival is to protect the material privileges of the white European individuals and communities, including the privileged access to the jobs, housing, and social services. In this regard, modern racism is inseparable from a kind of nationalism, which is anti-EU and eager to welfare chauvinism. It has also been shaped by the “neoliberal racism” that rose from the attempts of the capital to exploit and dominate migrant labor. On the other hand, the idea of the “national-social state,” i.e. the European welfare state, had already made a bridge between the national identity and the social policy, and limited the structure of social rights based on citizenship, which means the whole structure was based on the hierarchical exclusion of non-citizens. It may be said racism is closely related to colonialism and imperialism, including justifying exploitation by subordinating people to colonial hierarchies (Georgi, 2019).

Concerning Germany, it is possible to say that this was the European country that received the most Turkish workers from the 1960s onward for two main reasons: to heal the economic wounds that World War II had left open and its rapidly growing economy. In contrast to the official statements, according to which Germany is not a

migration country (*“Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland,”* Brubaker, 1992, p. 174, as cited in Küçükcan, 2002, p. 98), the overwhelming majority of Turkish laborers had, in practice, been transformed from temporary guest workers into long-term settlers. By the end of 1997, there were 7.32 million foreigners in Germany, making up 9% of the entire population. The biggest foreign group was Turkish with 2.11 million members. The fact that migrants had the tendency to stay in Germany has led to authorities’ efforts to focus on social and cultural dimensions of migration rather than its economic aspects (Küçükcan, 2002).

Germany’s citizenship laws, based on the principle of blood tie (*jus sanguinis*), are the reason why ethnic minorities remain excluded from political life and forced to live in a marginalized place. This is based on the assumption that the country is a culturally homogenous *Volksnation* (people nation). The very terms that are used to refer to migrants to Germany, “*Gastarbeiter*” (guest workers), “*ausländische Arbeitnehmer*” (foreign workers), and “*Ausländer*” (foreigners), all highlight their foreign and temporary character. Some politicians, in particular from the Christian Democrats (“*die Union*,” or shortly CDU/CSU), emphasized that Turks were culturally and mentally different from Germans and that Germany needed to protect its cultural identity against Islamic culture, setting cultural borders (Küçükcan, 2002). The “culturalist” discourse also stated that the migrants could not integrate and simply masked the real problems of inequality and exclusion. The fact that far-right parties like REP, DVU, and NPD have often succeeded at the state level in Germany is also due to the above-average visibility of migration-related issues. The fact that the mainstream parties have made this an issue has also resulted in voters tending to the far right (Karapın, 1998). Socioeconomic factors such as unemployment, lack of job security, low wages, and the creation of “losers” by modernization processes provide little support in explaining the far right’s success but have a catalytic effect when xenophobic slogans are added to a broader authoritarian right-wing message. In contrast, far-right voters are, on the other hand, young, male, working-class, low-income, and low-educated (Betz; 1990; Freeman, 1997; Karapın, 1998).

It is not historically accurate to say that extreme right-wing ideology only came to the fore in Germany with *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD). In this sense, it can also

be said that neo-Nazi parties were also established, and attempts were made to become a political actor on the democratic stage immediately after the end of World War II. However, parties such as REP and DVU, which are among the parties representing right-wing radicalism in Germany, came out of the shadows from the end of the 1980s and onwards, and gained significance in particular with the migration issue coming to the national agenda with the asylum issue (Betz, 1990; Karapın, 1998). For example, the DVU's 12.9% result in the elections in Saxony-Anhalt in 1998 has been attributed to the party's intensive advertising campaigns featuring slogans such as "Out with the foreign bandits" and "Jobs for Germans first" as well as to the focus on issues that are not directly related to migration but are indirectly related to migration just like crime, as discussed before (see pp. 7–8). The AfD's rising, on the other hand, was originally with the Euro crisis in 2013 and a fusion of Euro-skepticism in an anti-EU framework with liberal economic policy and a conservative social agenda. Most of the founders of the party are politicians who left their former party after the mainstream Christian democratic and liberal parties such as CDU/CSU and FDP moved towards the center. The 2015 Refugee Crisis, on the other hand, turned out to be a gift from the heavens for AfD as the party representing the people worried about uncontrolled migrant flows achieved historical results in state elections (e.g. 24.2% in Saxony-Anhalt) (Decker, 2016).

Going into more detail, one can say that AfD was founded as a far-right Eurosceptic and neoliberal party in 2013 by three former Christian democrats, namely that Konrad Adam, Alexander Gauland, and Bernd Lucke founded the party under the project *Wahlalternative 2013* (Election Alternative 2013) (Arzheimer, 2015; Kemper, 2015; Aknur, 2020). The party originally advocated Germany's exit from the Eurozone and the end of EU's pressure on Germany to adjust its economic policies (Aknur, 2020). It was accepted to participate in the 2013 federal elections after the election committee agreed to recognize the required 2000 signatures of elected representatives as a basis, although they were collected in only two of the 16 federal states, and it received 4.7% of the vote in 2013 but not enough to enter parliament. In the 2014 EP elections, AfD received 7.1% of the votes and gained 7 seats. However, it was a breakthrough in the 2017 federal elections with 12.6% and 91 seats. As a result, the party was the first radical right-wing party to take a seat in

the *Bundestag* after World War II (Arzheimer, 2015). In the 2019 EP elections, it reached 10.97% and in 2024, it was the second-strongest force in Germany with 15.9% (Frymark, 2019; Arzheimer, 2024; Pew Research Center, 2024).

The root causes of AfD's rise can be argued to be complex phenomena. However, it can also be said that they include income inequality and associated discontent with neoliberal policy, too. In particular, resentment and fear over the EU's interference with national sovereignty is another factor. Furthermore, it can also be stated that the increase in the number of refugees in 2015 due to the Syrian civil war and the simultaneous rise in terrorist attacks, xenophobia, and Islamophobia played their part (Galston, 2018). After Chancellor Merkel's government had decided to welcome about 1.5 million asylum seekers in 2015 and the EU suspended the Dublin Treaty regulations on the distribution of refugees for Syrians, the AfD was able to shift its focus from an anti-Euro party to an anti-migration, anti-refugee, and anti-Islam party in the beginning of 2015 (Galston, 2018; Aknur, 2020). The German mainstream parties pursue a *cordon sanitaire* policy against the AfD, except for a few exceptions in the new federal states (Aknur, 2020), such as during the 2020 Thuringian election. The refugee situation and the discourse on the same also had sociopolitical consequences. One such consequence is a far-right violence explosion, e.g. violence against foreigners rising from 18 in 2011 to 580 by June 2015 (Kemper, 2015).

In conclusion, I can say that far-right groups are in the process of constructing an "anti-migration Europe." They do so by presenting migration as a threat to security, economy, and culture. As a result, the migrants are either portrayed as "potential terrorists" or are securitized through the use of "refugee crisis" talk (Güler, 2019). The term "refugee crisis" is mostly combined with other derogatory terms such as "illegal migration," "economic migrants," "fake refugees," etc. (Güler, 2019). Migrants are further described as a "burden" and associated with the exploitation of social security system, labor market, housing market, etc. (Decker, 2016; Güler, 2019). Muslim migrants, in particular, are also linked to "fundamentalist Islam" and the supposed enemy of the European-self and Christianity. The situation is further intensified by "fears" such as "dilution of identity" and "multiculturalism" (Betz, 1990; Güler, 2019). These are the dimensions of the economic and cultural threat of

the anti-migration stance. Pre-existing xenophobic attitudes were further deepened with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent East and West Germany reunification. Attacks against migrants increased in frequency as a result. Slogans such as “Foreigners out” and “Germany belongs to the Germans” were used. The Moln and Solingen arson attacks, which were some of the most brutal racist attacks, can serve as an example of the degree of racist violence brutality (Küçükcan, 2002). Racism in the present is explained through the reaction to the emergence of “post-migrant societies” and liberal mainstream sector’s positive position on migration. Racism, in contrast to the mainstream liberal wing, is offered as an alternative because it provides material privileges for white Europeans, e.g. priority in terms of the access to work, housing, and social services, and thus lives on (Georgi, 2019).

1.3. Research Question and Objective

Based on the context given above, it can be said that this master’s thesis aims to analyze the discriminatory discourses in the contents talking about Turkish migrant community on far-right media outlets in Germany. In this regard, the main research question can be formulized as “How do far-right media outlets represent Turkish migrants living in Germany?” followed by sub-questions given below:

- What recurring themes, narratives and stereotypes are used in far-right media portrayals of Turkish migrants?
- How do these representations construct Turkish migrants as cultural, religious or political “others”?
- How do these representations intersect with broader debates about national identity, integration, and social cohesion in Germany?
- How do these portrayals contribute to the symbolic and social marginalization of Turkish migrants within Germany public discourse?

I try to employ a theoretical background for the sake of a comprehensive understanding of the construction of differences and discrimination in terms of identity, belonging, and symbolic exclusion through some discussions on the concept of identity, the relationship between belonging and citizenship, and the social process

of othering as a result of exclusion, aligning with the discriminatory categorizations operationalized by the contents of far-right media outlets.

1.4. Introduction to the Themes

1.4.1. Securitization and Criminalization

The securitization and criminalization of migrants have become one of the most discussed topics in various disciplines, including international relations, political science, sociology, and security studies, in the post-Cold War period and in recent years with the increase in irregular and illegal migration (Çıtak, 2020; Rosina, 2024). Securitization of migration is a term that is defined as the social construction of migration as a security issue. Securitization includes the linking of migration to an ever-expanding range of security threats (crime, terrorism, economic threats, health risks) and the depiction of the migrant as an “existential threat” to the very existence of society (Rosina, 2024).

Migration has become an important social phenomenon after the end of the Cold War in the context of new security threats that focus on societal security, rather than territorial one (Ünal Eriş & Öner, 2021). In other words, while migrants were previously promoted for the development of national economies, they are now associated with various security issues and presented as a threat in terms of discourse. With the 1990s, migration was intensively integrated into the political and then the security framework; so, the security debates have become more significant in the field of migration studies when the flow of migrants has intensified and become undesirable (Çıtak, 2020).

Ole Wæver’s securitization approach, which focuses on how the boundaries of the security domain are constructed and which different issues are drawn into this domain, is a useful framework for this analysis. According to Wæver, securitization is a social process that constructs a “thing” as a security threat. The “speech act” is a tool that enables an issue to be drawn into the security domain. Securitizing actors, such as the state, the political parties, or the political elites, make a security threat

through the speech act, and as long as this is accepted by society, all security measures can be justified. The reference object (the element that is threatened and must continue to exist, such as the continuity of the nation states' border security, or its ethnic homogenization), the securitizing actor (who brings the issue forward as a security threat because it threatens the reference object), and the functional actors (who can determine the dynamics of the securitization process, such as media) are the three important elements in the securitization process (Çıtak, 2020).

In this context, migrants are considered a threat to identity, culture, the national economy, and the labor market (Çıtak, 2020). The fact that culturally different migrant communities are breaking the norms is taken as a threat to fundamental values, such as the cultural contrast of the Muslim migrants to the Christianity values, and thus as a security threat in Europe. Internal security (internal market and free movement), cultural identity, and the welfare state can be used as reference objects in the securitization of migration. In other words, citizens of the host country do not want to share the social and economic rights of the welfare state with migrants and see them as a threat due to "welfare chauvinism" (Ünal Eriş & Öner, 2021).

In this process, policymakers and populist and radical right-wing parties gain voter support by presenting migration as a security threat. Especially at the EU and member state levels, it can be said that a security-oriented approach has become dominant in migration policy since 9/11. Populist radical right-wing parties have increased the perception of migration in society by placing migration at the center of the political agenda, in a securitizing sense. For example, parties such as the National Rally in France, the League in Italy, and Alternative for Germany have become more popular by casting migration as a threat to national identity and security (Ünal Eriş & Öner, 2021). The media, as a facilitator and functional actor according to the Copenhagen School's understanding, reinforces the securitization perception by connecting migrants to crime and negative stereotypes. In other words, the media contribute to the securitization by framing migration in the form of a "crisis," reinforcing the state of emergency logic.

The criminalization and securitization of migration, in other words, "crimmigration," create a mutually reinforcing "vicious cycle" (Rosina, 2024). "Crimmigration" is

defined as “the use of administrative law as a tool to pursue criminal law goals in the crime prevention and deterrence area (migrant detention) and, conversely, the use of criminal law by states as a tool for migration enforcement.” Although migration law is a subfield of administrative law, it is pursuing criminal law objectives in the context of migration policy and can be said to have become blurred and ambiguous as it is (Celoria & Gionco, 2024). The restrictive and exceptional measures increase public expectations about the government’s ability to control unauthorized movements (Rosina, 2024).

The association of the migrants with the crime and stigmatization of irregular migration increases the perceived threat of migration through securitization. However, when these measures are ineffective in stopping the flow, people’s feelings of insecurity increase and even calls for stricter measures emerge. Restrictive measures force migrants into underground life, leading to irregularity in terms of entry, stay and work permits. This situation also increases the number of criminal organizations which operate underground, making migrants more vulnerable to socio-economic exploitation in order to gain profit, and making the chance of finding a job in the informal economy a pull factor that will further encourage migration (Rosina, 2024).

1.4.2. Boundary Making and Symbolic Exclusion

It is possible to say that the “us-them dichotomy” is at the heart of the problem; it is especially true of populism which constructs a fierce opposition between a homogenous collective “us” and a perceived threatening “them” group. There are two kinds of oppositions; a vertical one between the “people” (pure and virtuous people) and the “elite” (corrupt and deceiver) and a horizontal opposition between “insiders” (people like “us” who share “our” values) and “outsiders” (people who threaten “our” way of life) (Brubaker, 2017). For the opposition between migrants and natives, this dilemma is also a key structuring element of national and cultural identity (Bloemraad et al., 2008).

In sociology, the concept of “boundary making” distinguishes between symbolic boundaries and social boundaries. Symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions

made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. These are the tools with which they struggle and agree on the definition of social reality. Symbolic boundaries separate people into groups and create a feeling of belonging to a group. Social boundaries, on the other hand, are more objective forms of social differentiation that are manifested in the form of unequal access to and distribution of resources and social opportunities. When symbolic boundaries are widely shared, they can take on a formative quality in social interaction and then take on the form of social boundaries, such as exclusion and discrimination (Lamont & Molnár, 2002). In the us-them dichotomy between migrants and natives, symbolic boundaries are constructed through the discourses, cultural references, and values used to define the “us” identity and distinguish themselves from “them” (Brubaker, 2017; Kaya & Tecmen, 2019).

Populist discourses consolidate the us-them dichotomy by symbolically framing migration and migrants, especially the Muslim ones, as a “threat,” an “invasion” or a “cultural problem” for native European culture and civilization (Brubaker, 2017; Kaya & Tecmen, 2019). In other words, socio-economic issues are articulated in cultural terms, which means the competition for economic resources is associated with a supposedly “innate” cultural conflict (Kaya & Tecmen, 2019). National populist discourses, especially in Northern and Western Europe, articulate this opposition not in narrow national terms but in broader civilizational terms (Brubaker, 2017). The trigger for this shift was the perception of a civilizational threat from Islam. Islam is constructed both as an internal and external threat; from this point of view, an obsession with the “Islamization” of Europe comes about. In European populism, this Islamization is seen as a threat to the very existence of European civilization. Migrants, especially Muslims, are defined as representatives of a backward and underdeveloped culture (Brubaker, 2017; Kaya & Tecmen, 2019). It is stated that Islam is illiberal and promotes values such as gender inequality, homophobia and antisemitism (Brubaker, 2017). The opposition to these attributed values of Islam is also fueled by security concerns associating them with crime, disease, and terrorism. In particular, in East Central Europe, Muslims are very often constructed as “invasive” or “border-crossing” threats. Migrants, especially Muslims, are considered “cultural outsiders” who pose a threat to the values and way of life of

the local culture. For example, Marine Le Pen has compared Friday prayers and halal food to “occupation” and suggested banning headscarves, kippahs, and large crosses in the public space in France (Brubaker, 2017; Kaya & Tecmen, 2019). In this sense, there is also an increasing fear of demographic displacement in Western Europe, that Muslims could form a demographic majority (Kaya & Tecmen, 2019).

I can therefore say that, in the context of the definition of “us,” populist discourses in Northern and Western Europe mobilize Christianity, not as a religion but as a civilizational identity to oppose Islam. This is not necessarily a question of faith; this is a question of belonging. These populist actors may also have a secular position in order to minimize the public visibility of Muslim symbols and practices. Secularism is defended as a value of Western civilization (Brubaker, 2017; Kaya & Tecmen, 2019). The actors who construct these discourses of dichotomy instrumentally appropriate liberal values such as gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, freedom of expression, and philo-Semitism in the definition of their own lifestyle, which means that they adopt a selective liberalism in the face of Islam’s illiberalism. For example, the Netherlander politician Pim Fortuyn known by his xenophobic discourses combined liberal positions on gender equality, drugs policy, euthanasia, and above all gay rights in a mixture with his anti-Islamic civilizational rhetoric. In this context, even if they are Euroskeptics, European populists remain culturally European and one of their main criticisms of the European Union is that it has failed to keep Europe “European” (Brubaker, 2017).

The efforts of the populist right to reconcile Christianity, secularism and liberalism on this point are perceived by some thinkers as a contradiction. For example, while defending the principles of gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights in the name of their opposition to Islamic values, they may adopt a position of support for the “traditional family” and traditional gender roles in the domestic political field. These contradictions are partly explained by the fact that populism is not characterized by a fixed ideological or programmatic set of thought, but rather by an instrumentalization of the issues that can be used at any given moment (Brubaker, 2017).

The boundary between migrants and natives, based on the “us-them” dichotomy, has severe consequences for social cohesion and equality. The focus on the

“problematic” integration of Muslim communities can lead to the construction of an equation between criteria for “Europeanization” and “good citizenship” and to the creation of an expectation of assimilation which requires Muslims to give up their identity markers (Bloemraad et al., 2008). This in turn can deepen social inequalities by relativizing socio-economic issues by cultural difference (Bloemraad et al., 2008; Kaya & Tecmen, 2019).

To sum up, it can be said that populist movements are particularly focused on the cultural and civilizational dimensions of social differences and conflicts. They symbolically frame migrants (especially Muslims) as “them” and construct their own “us” identity through Christianity, secularism, and a selective liberalism.

1.4.3. Ethnonational Belonging

Ethnic identity is defined as a manifestation of “us” for the community based on the experience of a common origin or cultural identity and delimitation of that community from the outside (Barth, 1969; Habermas, 1998). It is possible to say that the conceptual genesis and theoretical development of this concept is tortuous. The classical use of the term “nation” (*natio*) by the Romans included geographically and culturally integrated communities with common ancestry, language, traditions, and customs, but not the politically integrated community that is an integral part of the organizational structure of the state, in contrast to “*civitas*” or citizenship).

Habermas (1998) dates the emergence of the nation-state to the crisis of legitimacy and integration that occurred at the end of the old European feudal order. The nation-state, in a matter of speaking, saved the situation by using democratic constitutional procedures to justify authoritarian political institutions and forge bonds of mutual solidarity among former foreigners. However, although the idea of the “nation” has historically had an important place in the history of the formation of democratic societies, Habermas (1998) believes that it has outlived its usefulness as a traditional concept. In the tradition of the distinction between *ethnos* and *demos*, Habermas (1998) criticizes the thesis that for the good functioning of a constitutional democracy, a culturally or ethnically homogeneous population is required. In his

opinion, modern consciousness is formed not only from membership in pre-political communities defined by common ancestry, but also from the use of citizen status in the context of the political community. Habermas' (1998) emphasis on the importance of legal structures in the formation of national identity allowed him to adequately rebut the reproaches aimed at supranational regimes such as the European Union (Habermas, 1998).

On the other hand, Barth's (1969) approach is that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification, members of which define themselves and are defined by others as a distinctive category. A specific point here is the focus on the boundaries of the ethnic group, while the group itself is maintained by how these boundaries are maintained, and not on the content of the group. According to Barth, ethnic differences do not depend on the existence of social interaction and acceptance between group members; in fact, such differences often form the basis of inclusive social systems (Barth, 1969).

It is possible to say that there is an internal tension between republicanism and nationalism within the nation-state (Hall, 1997; Habermas, 1998). Nationalism generally uses ascribed criteria, referring to the characteristics such as ethnicity, a common language or history, while republicanism is voluntary and in accordance with the ideals of universal human rights. Habermas (1998) does not see a priori reason for a constitutional democracy to be negatively affected by ethnic and cultural pluralism and also defends the proposed distinction between *ethnos* and *demos*. However, there are voices that Habermas' (1998) argument, while apparently valid, actually underestimates the importance of the role played by cultural identities.

Ethnonational categories of thought often lead to discriminatory and exclusionary practices against migrants and minorities. Traditional nationalism is primarily based on an ethnically or culturally homogeneous population, which creates stereotypical thinking that manifests itself in the exclusion of other nations, ethnic or religious minorities outside of the boundaries of "us" (Hall, 1997; Habermas, 1998). In the German case, since the adoption of the "guest worker" agreement, Turks have had

the status of “culturally distant enemies, physically close friends.” In Germany, the slogan of “Turks out!” has been a long tradition of the far right (Özvatan, 2020).

According to Habermas (1998), it could be possible to expect migrants to have two levels of assimilation, an external and an internal one. External assimilation is the adaptation to the level of legal and political, such as the acceptance of citizenship rights and obedience to the law, while internal assimilation is adaptation to the cultural level, for example, getting used to the lifestyle, habits, and traditions of culture of the host society. However, he goes on to say that democratic and constitutional states should only demand the first level of socialization from migrants, referring to the political socialization aligning with the external characteristics of assimilation; because migrants, in this point of view, could have the desire to participate in the political culture of the host society without having to give up their own cultural background.

In the described context, since identity is formed by way of the construction in relation to difference, this situation has the potential for “othering” (Hall, 1997; Rumelili, 2004). “Othering” is defined as the perception and representation of the other as a threat to one’s own identity. Factors such as the inclusive or exclusive nature of identity, the other’s reaction, and social distance also influence whether an “othering” relationship will be formed or not. For example, the EU’s interactions with Turkey form a complex “othering” dynamic, due to Turkey’s “borderline” position where it is characterized by both ascribed and acquired difference (Rumelili, 2004).

Habermas’s (1998) approach to multiculturalism shows the benefits of a differentiated approach to moral, legal, and political issues. Habermas (1998) opposed the thesis that for a constitutional democracy to function effectively, it must be culturally or ethnically homogeneous. He attaches particular importance to the role of legal institutions in the formation of national identities, considers individual autonomy as a result of socialization processes, and for this reason, needs to preserve the interactive contexts in which an individual forms their identity. Habermas’s (1998) program in the field of moral and legal theory is a universalism highly

sensitive to difference. Equal respect for all is not limited to “those who are like us,” it must also be extended to the person within the “otherness” of the other, which is a form of “embracing the other with their otherness.” He goes on to say that in pluralistic societies, although there should be a political culture which mirrors the shared traditions and historical experiences of the political community, this should not be equated to the culture of the majority. It is necessary to distinguish the level of common political culture from the level of subcultures and their pre-political identities. Political integration only concerns the agreement on constitutional principles and procedures, and not about specific ways of life (Habermas, 1998). For Habermas (1998), the content of legal norms already contains not only moral, but also pragmatic and ethical considerations. Citizens of each political unit interpret the constitutional principles of universal human rights in the context of their own history and cultural values when they create norms for themselves. A legal system is one of the most important means through which people express who they are and who they want to be through their unique cultural identity.

On the other hand, ethnic identity is not fixed and immutable but can be manipulated by playing with the appropriate symbols. That is, in certain situations, depending on the social, economic, and political benefit, a person may either exaggerate or devalue their ethnicity.

The emergence of ethnic groups is often linked to state formation. A new ethnic identity appears when the state conquers or subjugates previously independent groups. States may attempt to solidify cultural differences between groups as a way of maintaining control. An ethnic group can maintain its existence as long as it preserves its ethnic characteristics. If the group is unable to maintain kinship relations or a common language, it may be split into several smaller groups (Barth, 1969).

Cultural sociologists point out that culture (practice, tendency, orientation) also contributes to the formation of relations. Symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions made between objects, people, and practices. Symbolic boundaries are also the construction of a collective identity by distinguishing ourselves from others

and creating a sense of belonging on the basis of criteria such as shared characteristics and experiences. Cultural repertoires are sets of ideas, stories, discourses, frameworks and beliefs that people use to create a course of action (Hall & Lamont, 2013; Özvatan, 2020).

1.4.4. Opportunity Hoarding

“Opportunity hoarding” is a term coined and extensively used by Charles Tilly (Rury & Saatcioglu, 2015). It is a form of social inequality mechanism that is in effect when a categorically limited network of persons (group) get access to a resource that is at once valuable, renewable, monopolizable, conducive to network maintenance and produced by the mode of operation peculiar to the network (Tilly, 2000; Hogan, 2001; Rury & Saatcioglu, 2015). The resource might be a professional title or some other title of use to the group, a neighborhood of residence or school district, an educational certificate or a socially recognized lifestyle classification or some other category providing discrimination and so exclusion of other groups. Tilly (2000) makes a distinction between the term opportunity hoarding and the related concept of “exploitation.” The “exploitation” that Tilly (2000) talks of is the command by powerful and connected persons of resources to produce value using other persons’ labor but without admitting those persons to the value their labor creates. In contrast to that, opportunity hoarding, on the other hand, is when the members of a categorically limited network curtail the access of others to a value-creating resource to their own internally delimited group (Tilly, 2000; Hogan, 2001). Tilly (2000, as cited in Rury & Saatcioglu, 2015) places the concept of opportunity hoarding in a “benign” category of inequality forms that are used to exclude outsiders without exploiting their labor. He, for instance, cites the use of strong and established diaspora networks to control access to certain entrepreneurial activities like shopkeeping and trading by migrant groups as non-exploitative forms of exclusion (Rury & Saatcioglu, 2015). On the other hand, scholars like Anderson (2010, as cited in Rury & Saatcioglu, 2015) provide a far more negative assessment of the effects of opportunity hoarding than Tilly (2000) does. While talking about discrimination against African Americans, Anderson laments that whites’ hoarding of opportunities, severely limits blacks’ access to schools, jobs, and other chances for social

mobility. In a vicious circle, whites' opportunity hoarding contributes to the deteriorating living standards that black people face. In a similar explanation, Hogan (2001) talks about how the lines between individuals and groups in different social categories get to become the barriers that make it possible to practice opportunity hoarding.

Opportunity hoarding in some instances can be ethnic markers used in reproducing inequalities in the labor market by, for instance, assigning migrants to specific niche occupations. In other instances, ethnic origin can be used as a basis by migrants to self-identify themselves as members of a particular group with a view to get access to the positions they desire. This, however, can function as an opportunity hoarding mechanism through what is called migrants' own ethnicization. Ukrainian male migrants referring to their ethnic origin as a means to get access to agricultural work in Germany and women, on the other hand, using ethnic networks for the same purpose as a way to work in the care sector are both examples of this (Faist, 2010).

Transnationalism as a new diversity form coming out of migrants' transnational lifestyles. It can also interact with other more established diversity features like gender, religion, language, and social class. For example, the geographical mobility and transnational networks of migrants of the highly paid and highly educated categories get to be associated with upward mobility. Multinational and export-oriented companies, for instance, cite language skills and "multicultural" skills in general as "assets" and look for employees with such skills. In stark contrast, transnationalism of the categories of people with low professional qualifications such as labor migrants gets associated with downward mobility and failure to integrate. The transnational ties and transnational activities of refugees and other irregular migrants get to be perceived as one of the factors contributing to the integration process (Faist, 2010).

In conclusion, opportunity hoarding and exploitation itself are the social inequality mechanisms in the backdrop against which the discrimination and inequalities migrants face manifest. They in fact get entangled with many other factors such as the migrants' ethnic identities, transnational lifestyles, legal statuses, and integration

processes. Although in practice diversity handling within organizations using this or that form of approach might utilize cultural differences as a resource, there is a glaring lack of sensitivity to structural inequalities or even their reinforcement.

1.4.5. Cultural Neo-Racism and Incompatibility

Cultural neo-racism is a type of racism, the motor force of which is not the pseudo-biological notion of race but that of the innate hierarchy among different cultures. In this respect, neo-racism is a new kind of racism in that it focuses less on the alleged superiority of certain groups or peoples over others than on the harmfulness of boundarylessness and the incompatibility of lifestyles and traditions. This is a type of racism that P. A. Taguieff calls “differentiating racism” (Balibar, 1991; Anık, 2021).

Neo-racism is a pure ideological construction like classical racism, but it is unlike classical racism in that it is based on the incompatibility of cultural differences, not of skin color or physical characteristics. In this sense, the main sources of motivation behind neo-racism are intolerance of cultural and religious difference, nationalism, and the fear of foreigners. It was stated in the 1995 meeting of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe that neo-racism was on the rise and that member states should take more serious measures to prevent it. However, according to European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) reports, neo-racism is a new phenomenon on the rise in European societies (Anık, 2021).

Neo-racism revolves around the notion of “raceless racism.” It admits that there are no such things as biological races and that the “behavior” or the “abilities” of individuals can be accounted for not by the blood or the genes they carry but by the historical “culture” to which they belong. On the other hand, it instrumentalizes the concept of culture, which can then be made to work like nature, locking individuals and groups into an unalterable and inviolable filiation from birth. The theme of hierarchy is, thus, repressed by neo-racist doctrine, but reproduced in practice. For example, when one demands of “Blacks” in England or “Beurs” in France that they assimilate, one is talking about progress, about liberation or the recognition of rights. This situation shows that the idea that humanity’s historical cultures can be

roughly divided into two great families is still far from dead. The first is universalist and progressive; the second irreparably particularist and primitive. The main theme of cultural neo-racism is, as the name suggests, the incommensurability of cultural differences and the incompatibility of lifestyles and traditions. It is precisely through this that the principal ideological substratum of traditional anti-racism is attenuated and even its defenses turned against anti-racism itself (Balibar, 1991).

The differentiating racism claims that the “mixing of cultures” or the annihilation of “cultural distances” would be the intellectual death of humanity and might even put biological survival control mechanisms at risk is linked with the “spontaneous” tendency of human groups (practically of national groups) to conserve their traditions and therefore their identities. If the “natural environment” of human communities is to consist in the reality of insurmountable cultural differences, the disappearance of these differences would immediately generate “defensive reactions,” “inter-ethnic conflicts” and an escalation in general aggression. But while these reactions would be “natural,” they would also be represented as dangerous. And it is from this position that one will move on to the production of differentiating doctrines which are presented as analyses aimed at explaining and fighting racism (Balibar, 1991).

Populist politics are also a major factor of neo-racism in Europe as populist politicians lead negative discourses about migrants. During the periods of social, political, and economic crisis, European societies are in need of someone to blame as the main culprit of this negativity. Migrants are quickly stigmatized as the primary contributors to these social, political, and economic problems. However, the migrants are often from non-Western countries, especially from Muslim countries. As an escape from the accusations of policy failure, anti-migrant populism is defended by populist politicians to cover up their policy failure and legitimize xenophobia. The rise of technology and media communication has led to more spread of populist politics, to the extent having the era of populism. The way ethnic, racial or religious minority groups are often portrayed negatively or stereotypically in the media as problems to the local citizens plays an important role in the reproduction of ethnic prejudices and neo-racism. In particular, negative social constructs are often attached

to the Muslim migrant identity in the light of concepts such as crime, violence, terrorism, sexism, polygamy, and incompatibility with Western values (Anık, 2021).

Migrants who come to Europe to settle permanently and make demands related to cultural identity receive negative responses. Assimilationist policies implemented in the first period, on the other hand, expect migrants to “leave their culture behind and adopt the culture of the countries they go to.” Migrants who are exposed to assimilationist policies generally prefer to live in the same social environment as those with the same or similar cultural and religious characteristics to maintain their identity and avoid being negatively affected by the policy. This situation is presented in populist rhetoric as “parallel lives” or “ethnic segregation and ghettos” and is taken as a sign of migrants’ desire to fit into mainstream society. The fact that migrants have lower average incomes than the local citizens also force them to live in particularly cheaper neighborhoods (Anık, 2021).

Neo-cultural racist practices are also often shaped by the migrant being a Muslim. The fear of Islam, which has spread since the 9/11 attacks, was that the Muslims are a “Trojan horse,” and the message transmitted to the society is that the enemy that the West has taken in will now take over Europe. As a result, feelings of being excluded increase by marginalizing all Muslims as if they were a homogeneous society in the statements of Western governments (Evkuran, 2014). Muslim migrants in particular face serious problems in Europe and are the target of discrimination, exclusion, and neo-racism. The depiction of Muslims in Western media following the 9/11 attacks has revived racial prejudices. However, it is also pointed out that Muslim migrants were already the subject of discrimination before the 9/11 and were the group most affected by anti-migrant prejudices. In neo-racist and populist rhetoric, Muslims are identified as the “elements that undermine national unity and integrity” and “threaten Europe’s future.” In the Danish Parliament, the veil was defined as the Nazi symbol, the swastika and Islam were compared to a plague that must be fought and eradicated, just like Nazism; Muslims were also compared to “tumors that require radiation” (Anık, 2021).

Restrictions on migration can negatively affect the cultural assimilation of second-generation migrants. In a situation where the borders are tightened, migrants (those

with stronger “home ties”) are also more likely to settle down. This results in first-generation migrants who are more strongly attached to their native culture preferring permanent settlement. Such migrants make it more difficult for the second generation to assimilate by transmitting their own cultural features to their grandchildren. Germany’s 1973 *Anwerbestopp* (employment ban) is an important example supporting this thesis. This policy, which prohibited the employment of workers from outside the EEC, resulted in an increase in family reunification and a preference for permanent migration. Studies have shown that the employment ban negatively affected the cultural assimilation of second-generation migrants and that this group reported higher levels of discrimination. This situation shows that efforts to preserve national identity have created an unexpected effect, which is to increase the permanence of foreign cultures in host countries (Galli & Russo, 2019).

In summary, cultural neo-racism is a mechanism of inequality and discrimination targeting migrants and understanding cultural differences in terms of incompatibility. Populist rhetoric and the media play a key role in spreading and normalizing this understanding. Migration restrictions can paradoxically lead to unexpected outcomes that delay integration by making migrants more permanent and sticking to their own cultures more strongly. In order to get out of this situation, inclusive policies must be adopted and an approach based on respect for cultural diversity and mutual trust must be developed.

1.4.6. Contested Citizenship

Citizenship is defined as a membership in a specific territorial and political community and is continuously contested due to the scope and diversity of contemporary international migration. It allows us to examine how migrants and their descendants have been incorporated into their new societies. Citizenship has four dimensions: legal status, rights, participation, and belonging. These dimensions may either reinforce or overlap with each other in tension. The growth and diversification of international migration in recent years have challenged citizenship in all its senses. It is possible to find arguments about whether national notions of belonging are civil (for example, *jus soli*, based on the place of birth) or ethnic (for

example, *jus sanguinis*, based on blood tie) within nation-state borders, affecting the legal status, rights, and participation of migrants. Germany is an example of ethnic nationalism with its *jus sanguinis*-based citizenship law before the Citizenship Reform in 2000, while France is an example of civil nationalism based on *jus soli* principle. Citizenship discussions within the borders of the nation-state can be discussed from multiculturalism and assimilation perspectives. The debates over whether rights to citizenship should be granted to individuals or to culturally distinct groups are the central issue of multiculturalism (Bloemraad et al., 2008). Multiculturalism is believed to have contributed to social fragmentation, increased attention to socioeconomic disparities, and, in the worst cases, has been cited as the root cause of international terrorism (Modood & Meer, 2013). Some claim multiculturalism has a variety of disadvantages, such as reinforcing cultural division, strengthening arbitrary racial and ethnic divisions, enabling the oppression of women, and obstructing the understanding of structural power inequalities (racism, sexism, etc.) (Bloemraad et al., 2008). Since 2010, the mainstream political discourse of European leaders, such as Angela Merkel, David Cameron, and Nicolas Sarkozy, has declared multiculturalism has “completely failed” or “died” (Modood & Meer, 2013; O’Brien, 2016).

On the other hand, there are also those who theorize that multicultural citizenship leads to more loyalty to the state and participation. Additionally, some academics have also argued multiculturalism will lead to higher social spending and will strengthen redistribution efforts. The participation of migrants in their host societies is also disputed. This includes not only the formal status of citizenship but also integration indicators such as economic and educational success and cultural acceptance. Traditionally, assimilation was viewed as migrants discarding their past languages, identities, and cultural practices in an effort to become like the ethnic citizens of their new countries. However, more recently, assimilation (or integration) has been characterized as a convergence of migrants and natives in certain social life areas (for example, participation in the labor force) while allowing for differences to remain in other cultural areas (Bloemraad et al., 2008). Dual citizenship approach values the presence of and potential preference for multiple memberships within the current state sovereignty system. It also means the “extra-territorial” citizenship that

emerges from migrants maintaining associations, business investments, religious ties, political relations, and other contacts with their countries of origin. Dual citizenship is the juridical form of these multiple memberships (Bloemraad et al., 2008). Dual citizenship has been legalized or, at the very least, increasingly tolerated by many European countries in recent years (O'Brien, 2016). However, dual citizenship also raises issues about competing loyalties and responsibilities (Bloemraad et al., 2008). Citizenship processes and integration of migrants are usually the result of discrimination. For example, the cultural racialization of culture is one of them. "Foreign" symbols, such as migrants speaking their native languages, are used to demonstrate that migrants are not worthy of citizenship (Sheridan, 2003). As a result, national identity (or what is defined as ethnicity) acquires racial characteristics, which is referred to as "racialization of culture" (Sheridan, 2003; Clarke et al., 2014; O'Brien, 2016). This is called "cultural racism" (Sheridan, 2003). For example, the existence of a particular Muslim migrant's religious practice or style of clothing may be evidence of their incompatibility with national values and, as a result, be excluded from national membership (Bloemraad et al., 2008; O'Brien, 2016). Also, some studies suggest that Muslim migrants in Europe experience higher unemployment, poverty, school drop-out, and incarceration rates than other local residents. Additionally, it is argued that Muslim migrants are more likely to face a higher level of exclusionary discrimination in their citizenship or visa applications than other migrants (O'Brien, 2016). The situation has sparked a discourse that is fixated on the "problematic integration" of Muslim communities (Bloemraad et al., 2008).

States form civil society by acting exclusionary. The state, in short, draws the line of inclusion or exclusion and delimits it by defining the rules of citizenship. Exclusionary policies, whether wittingly or unwittingly, provide a rallying point for mobilization for the excluded and for a struggle for "inclusion in the political community." Racial exclusion crystallizes and consolidates national identity and leads to a struggle for inclusion on terms defined by citizenship conditions. The South African example graphically illustrates how black racial identity was forged and strengthened as a direct reaction to the official state discrimination. The contrast with Brazil is striking, where, in the absence of official racial discrimination, the

solidification of racial identity and mobilization, and mass protest is still to come (Marx, 1995). On citizenship rights and the continuity of discrimination, citizenship in Europe is made up of a set of legal and political statuses; it confers rights on some and not on others. Even when citizenship rights are extended, informal discrimination against some stigmatized categories of residents such as Muslim migrants may remain in many areas of life even after naturalization. In addition, the state sees in migrants the possibility of reinforcing the local economy. The logic is to attract highly skilled migrants with special programs like the “blue card” or “green card.” This, however, may constitute pressure on citizens’ jobs by employing qualified foreigners. In addition, undocumented migrants are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. The state is itself an actor in the “regularization of illegality” by constituting the figure of “illegal” migrants, by putting them in the condition of putting themselves on the labor market and by exposing them to the threat of police and administrative deportations, thus, by making them highly vulnerable to exploitation by others (O’Brien, 2016).

In many European countries, a kind of backlash against multiculturalism or a “retreat” can be observed. The reaction is one of the major elements that underpin anti-migration policies. Radical right-wing parties have been, by and large, the main providers and the principal beneficiaries of this “reaction against diversity.” These policies discriminate against migrants on the basis that they do not form part of the nation (O’Brien, 2016).

Exclusion logically and temporally precedes the construction of identity and comes before the social movement dynamics defined by deprivation. At this stage, citizenship provides a “framework” for the mobilization of excluded groups. These groups will carry out political activities to escape from exclusion and to acquire civil, political and economic rights (Marx, 1995).

Citizenship is reimagined and disputed at scales beyond the nation-state level. Migrants are designing and practicing citizenship models that stretch across and beyond national borders and include supranational entities like international human rights courts (Clarke et al., 2014). Cities and metropolitan areas are emerging as

significant arenas for the inclusion and citizenship processes of migrants (Bloemraad et al., 2008). Public political action may also take the form of taking possession of public space, revealing a citizenship practice not cut off from everyday life. Localism can offer an important anchorage for citizenship claims in its entanglement with feelings of belonging and ownership (Clarke et al., 2014).

In conclusion, citizenship is being contested, and migrants are discriminated against as a result of complex interplay between international migration, state policy, cultural difference, and legal production. All these factors act upon the identities of the migrants, while they themselves are caught up in a struggle for their full inclusion and for equal rights.



CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study provides the basis of theoretical work and literature review on media representation of Turkish migrants in far-right media in Germany. It can be summarized with the problem of analytical perspective in which the far-right media construct and sustain symbolic exclusion, which involves justifying difference on the basis of Turkish migrants. The major problem of this study remains in the fact that the so-called non-essentialist perspective is especially needed, in which far-right discourses do not merely reflect existing social realities but actively producing them. Before proceeding to the argument with which far-right discourses in media can be framed as a strategy of boundary-making, this chapter is motivated by the assumption of providing the theoretical basis for the production of difference within the frame of symbolic exclusion and essentialism. Thus, it will first be focused on theoretical premises and findings that foreground social construction of difference in order to introduce three principal concepts of ethno-national boundary-making, imagining the national, and cultural neo-racism as possible ways to approach the framework of symbolic exclusion in far-right media.

2.1. Constructing Difference: Identity, Belonging, and Symbolic Exclusion

The conceptual aim of this study is predicated upon the observation that far-right political actors and media institutions frequently invoke rigid notions of cultural or ethno-national belonging to depict who is considered a legitimate member of the national community. These exclusionary framings are not only the reflections of social reality forming around anti-migration sentiments, but they are also a part of an active process of boundary-making, in which identity categories are mobilized to draw distinctions between “insiders” and “outsiders” or “us” and “them.” In order to

understand the social dynamics lying under the discrimination by means of the reinforcement of socio-cultural differences, Brubaker (2015) points to a multidimensional and constructivist framework for understanding how different aspects of identity such as ethnicity and religion are constituted, politicized, and interpreted meaningfully in contemporary societies. The center of his argument is based on the idea that categories such as ethnicity, race, nationality, and religion are not static, fundamental, congenital, and biologically grounded attributes of individuals or groups; rather, they are socially constructed, relational, and context-dependent that emerge through discursive practices, institutional logics, and political struggles. He emphasizes that these categories operate both as a framework for self-understanding and as the tools of classification and governance.

In the case of Turkish migrants in Germany, many of whom are second- or third-generation residents, these distinctions are continually reinforced through media narratives that position them as culturally incompatible, economically burdensome, or politically threatening. The far-right media outlets often portray Turkishness not as one identity among others, but as a totalizing marker of foreignness who are incompatible with ethnic Germanness and resistant to integration. In this regard, I argue that this situation aligns with Brubaker's (2015) observation that media and political discourse often get into the act as "technologies of classification" by referring to the institutional, discursive, and material mechanisms used to categorize and differentiate individuals and groups based on attributes like race, ethnicity, citizenship, and religion; these technologies are central to the politics of difference, because they shape how inequalities and identities are institutionalized and contested. He highlights how advancements in genetics and biometric surveillance reify racial and ethnic categories. These tools naturalize differences by framing them as biologically rooted, despite their socially constructed origins; for example, genetic ancestry tests reinforce racial boundaries by linking identity to the biological heritage, even as they paradoxically reveal human hybridity. Citizenship regimes and border controls can be regarded as the key technologies of classification as well. States use citizenship laws to exclude non-citizens by creating "forced immobility" (systematic restriction of movement imposed by states through citizenship and border regimes that traps vulnerable groups like migrants and refugees in legal limbo

or physical confinement) and legitimizing inequality through legal categories. Technologies like passports and visa systems segment populations hierarchically by often targeting marginalized groups. He also examines the role of religious and nationalist discourses among these tools by pointing out how religious and nationalist movements employ classificatory schemas to demarcate belonging. For instance, nationalist ideologies often conflate religious identity with national identity (e.g., Christian majoritarianism in Europe) and use these categories to justify exclusionary policies (Brubaker, 2015).

Brubaker (2015) draws attention to how identity categories are shaped not only by discursive representations but also by broader structural and institutional arrangements. In this regard, it is possible to say that the German citizenship regime, which is historically grounded in *jus sanguinis* (blood tie) and ethnocultural definitions of belonging, can be considered among those arrangements because it provides a formal apparatus through which exclusion is carried out and legitimized. While legal reforms have expanded the possibility for naturalization of foreigners, Brubaker (2015) reminds that formal inclusion does not necessarily turn into symbolic or social inclusion. The persistence of exclusionary narratives, just like far-right media discourse in this case, goes on to show that ethno-national frames of belonging continue to inform public understanding of citizenship and national identity.

He extends his analysis to the intersection of identity, inequality, and discrimination by arguing that ethnic and religious differences often become instruments for material and symbolic marginalization. He stresses that the form of inequality coming into existence based on differentiation within ethnicity and religion are not restricted to the access to economic resources, but they are embedded in cultural hierarchies and symbolic orders, which determine whose identities will be recognized, validated, prioritized or stigmatized in public discourse. In these premises, the framing of Turkish migrants as a security risk, a demographic threat, or an incompatible cultural camp reflects precisely such symbolic hierarchies, where ethno-religious identity of foreigners, migrants, or minorities becomes a manifestation of unfitness or undesirability. He also identifies the role of

globalization and transnational mobility in intensifying these dynamics, as migration discomposes previously taken-for-granted national categories and forces states and societies to renegotiate the boundaries of inclusion (Brubaker, 2015). The thing of it is that globalization and transnational mobility act as a catalyzer for destabilizing the naturalized categories of nationhood – particularly citizenship, ethnicity, and territorial belonging – that the states historically relied upon to define political community. As migrants and diasporas establish plural attachments by maintaining homeland ties while integrating into host societies, they expose the “constructedness” of national boundaries that renders those naturalized categories taken for granted incoherent (Brubaker, 2015, p. 63).

This discrepancy forces the states into contested processes of categorical renegotiation, which they must redefine the terms of inclusion during the competing pressures. On the one hand, states often retreat toward essentialist strategies which can revive biological and cultural criteria, just like language tests or ancestry-based citizenship, to exclude perceived outsiders (Brubaker, 2015, p. 120); on the other, they face irreducible pragmatic demands (e.g., aging population requiring migrant labor) to accommodate diversity through pluralistic policies (e.g., multiculturalism), even while resisting through symbolic exclusionary gestures. Critically, Brubaker (2015) frames this negotiation not merely as an ideological conflict but as a mechanism of “opportunity hoarding,” where dominant groups mobilize categorical distinctions (e.g., “native” vs. “migrant”) to monopolize resources like jobs, welfare, and political power under the guise of preserving cultural integrity, denoting how the states weaponize nostalgia for an unchanging national culture to justify migrant exclusion by concealing their actual goal of monopolizing resources and political power (Brubaker, 2015, pp. 89–92). Thus, while migration unsettles national categories, the states frequently readjust differences along new hierarchical lines, paradoxically revitalizing inequality within ostensibly inclusive frameworks. Here, I argue that the responses of the far-right media to Turkish migrants can be read as a part of this renegotiation; in other words, it can be said that reasserting ethnocultural boundaries becomes a way of resolving anxieties about national cohesion and identity under the political conditions of pluralism and multiculturalism.

Another key dimension of Brubaker's (2015) framework is his attention to the intersections of identity categories, which provide a more nuanced understanding of how exclusionary mechanisms operate along multiple axes of identity. For example, a Turkish migrant woman may be subject to intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination – based on her ethnicity, religion, gender, and social class – none of which can be reduced to a single identity marker and evaluated within only one framework of identity. Brubaker (2015) argues that identity categories must be understood as both socially constructed and instrumentalized by political and institutional actors, including the state, international organizations, and the media; besides, he goes on to say that these actors define, manage, and manipulate different identity categories for various purposes, such as to allocate rights and recognition, to justify exclusionary policies, or to maintain social hierarchies. In the context of far-right media, the repeated framing of Turkish migrants through essentialized and one-dimensional narratives contributes to the ideological work of national boundary maintenance, in which social differences are not merely described but actively produced and politicized. As Brubaker (2015) makes clear, identity categories are not passive descriptors but power-laden constructs that shape lived experiences and conditions access to rights, resources, and recognition.

Ultimately, Brubaker's (2015) contribution offers a powerful theoretical lens for analyzing how Turkish migrants are positioned within German public discourse as not simply as a minority population but as a symbolically contested presence whose very belonging is subject to negotiation and denial. His work calls for sustained attention to urge researchers to move beyond essentialist accounts and instead examine the social processes that produce groupness, marginalization, and inequality in terms of mechanisms through which social differences are framed, institutionalized, and weaponized. In this light, it is possible to say that this study tries to theoretically focus on the productive and active role of media as an institutionalized instrument to construct discriminatory frameworks; in other words, I argue that far-right media discourses are not merely symptoms of prejudice, but they constitute active sites of ethnic boundary-making, where the national-self is defined in opposition to the ethnically marked other. Thus, Brubaker's (2015) sociological approach provides an indispensable foundation for understanding the nested and

intertwined state of identity and exclusion through media representation in contemporary Germany.

2.1.1. Identity as Category, not Entity

Brubaker's (2002) analysis of "groupism" problematizes the reification of ethnic, racial and national categories into static and essentialized groups. He makes a distinction between identity – as a flexible and contextual aspect of social life, and groupness – as the variable and politically mediated process through which these categories (e.g., "Turkish migrants") are transformed into perceived collectivities able to mobilize for collective action. While identity can exist as a discursive or cultural marker, "groupness" only emerges under particular conditions, and it refers to the instances when categories are institutionalized, mobilized or otherwise made salient by social actors in the same way media or political movements do. This relational approach precludes essentialist or foundationalist explanations of ethnic conflict or contestation and draws attention to how group boundaries are discursively and institutionally constructed. In this regard, Brubaker's (2002) framework informs the analysis of far-right media narratives which may strategically reinforce "groupness" by essentializing "Turkish migrants" as a homogenous and culturally incompatible category, and by naturalizing exclusionary understandings of national belonging.

Brubaker (2002) also clarifies the use of the "group" in social science, noting that while it is a concept apparently as indispensable for the study of social life as the state, the society or the market, it is a concept whose idea has not often been examined (Brubaker, 2002). The term "groupism" he refers to while defining it as the essentialization of or treatment of ethnic, racial and national groups as real, coherent, and bounded entities acting with a common will. Groupism is criticized by him, as he notes that by simplifying the attributes of a group, the problems can be ignored, or that "groupism" tends to oppose the groups against each other. He suggests that while dominant social theories would have rejected the idea of "groupism" that still informs today's perceptions of ethnicity and conflicts based on it. The majority of such discussions, in his observation, approach social conflicts as a

conflict of groups, which is a fallacy that can be deceiving. Overall, he is not opposed to the relevance of group-oriented perspectives but wants to advance a more nuanced understanding of social identity and social conflicts beyond simplified group identities. So, he also introduces the concept of “category,” showing that though the conflict might be framed in ethnic terms, it does not have to mean that the contesting parties are a group defined by that characteristic. His other main point in the essay is a focus on the naturalized, conventional approach to the issues of ethnicity, race and nationality in the analyses, in particular, and social life in general. He calls this conventional approach to social issues, “folk sociologies” (Hirschfeld, 1996 as cited in Brubaker, 2002), the commonsense, or public understanding of them, criticizing the idea of ethnic conflict as a conflict of two groups. The author advances a dynamic and relational perspective on ethnicity, race and nationality, by which they are not seen as fixed groups but as a category to which social and political processes, and in particular cultural and political contexts can give different meaning, highlighting the constructed and context-specific nature of ethnicity. Finally, Brubaker (2002) calls for a shift from an analysis of groups as essentialized to the analysis of socio-political processes of “groupness” as a product of group-making, which is located in culture, power and institutions, in relations between people and, as in any other area of social life, is variable, contingent, mutable and sometimes quite fragile (Brubaker, 2002). By the term “groupness” in the social and political context, in particular, in relation to ethnicity, race and national identity, Brubaker (2002) means that it should not be treated as a constant or fixed, because it varies and may change in time. In other words, the scholar can use the concept of groupness to explain when and how group members are able to act collectively, as a homogenous group. In particular, this concept can also be used when explaining the opposite scenarios, when a group does not appear despite the efforts to make it. This can be seen as he implied that not all ethnic or social categories develop into cohesive groups. For instance, as for Turkish migrant groups in Germany, their group identity can be now much more fractionalized than before. This means that while certain part of it, for example, pro-Erdogan diaspora groups, can strongly identify with “Turkish” identity, other subcategories of the group can have hybrid identities such as “German Turk” or “European Muslim.” The third and fourth generations are now developing more fluid and hyphenated identities, for instance,

“Deutschtürke,” by adapting and blending characteristics of both cultures rather than belonging to one category only. In this way, it can be seen that groupness is not stable but is contingent and contextual, for example, on generational, political, or social differences. At this stage, he also explains the difference between the two concepts, “groups” and “categories.”

A group, according to Brubaker (2002), is defined by interaction, communication, shared identity and a possibility to act as a collective group, while category, on the contrary, is a potential basis for group formation. It is important to be able to see the difference to be able to do a clear analysis of how the categories are used and gain meaning and effect through such social and political processes as, for example, clarification of mechanisms of mobilization, socio-political processes, power and institutional relations, or understanding fluctuations of salience, as well as, in the opposite way, how the people who fall under that category use it, modify it or reject it. For this, the third point, he also points to the importance of studying group-making as a project of social, political and institutional processes that transform a category into a group, including processes of its recognition, utilization or even rejection by those who fall under the category, as well as broader processes of its institutionalization. By focusing on the non-fixity of groupness and its relation to categories, the author does not reject the existence of ethnic, racial and national categories or communities, but aims to understand them without resorting to stereotypes and overly simplistic accounts of ethnic conflict (Brubaker, 2002).

The theory helps to contribute to this research by allowing one to focus on how the ethnic groups are not naturally given and fixed entities. In particular, Brubaker’s (2002) critique of “groupism” and framework for understanding ethnic group identities and boundaries can be used as a theoretical foundation for the empirical analysis. Rather than approaching ethnic groups as fixed entities with shared culture, nationality and other immutable characteristics, it is essential to take the perspective that Brubaker (2002) explains, and to analyze the selected news texts. In particular, this would mean that rather than considering ethnic and national groups as fixed, the analysis would focus on how those discursively constructed through the use of naturalized metaphors and assumed group characteristics. This way, by

understanding that ethnic conflict and contestation do not have to take the form of intergroup conflict or opposition, a perspective that would point to seeing ethnic groups as contingent and relational rather than fixed, one can show how far-right media text construct and reinforce a strong “groupness” of Turkish migrant groups in Germany.

2.1.2. Citizenship As a Constructed Belonging

Brubaker (2015) criticizes the concept of citizenship that defines it simply as a set of legal rights and responsibilities bestowed on an individual by the state. The legal dimension is important, but, by itself, it is not sufficient to understand the role of citizenship in the social world. He suggests that it is possible to think of citizenship as a fundamentally relational and processual social phenomenon, which is a social process whereby the meaning, value, and boundaries of citizenship are continually negotiated, contested, enacted, and experienced by social actors. There are three important social processes by which citizenship is produced according to Brubaker (2015) which need to be clarified; boundary making, claim making, and enactment and performance. First of all, citizenship is a relational category that, at its core, involves boundary making between insiders and outsiders, members and non-members (foreigners, migrants, aliens, etc.), and these boundaries do not have to be only legal; on the contrary, they are socially constructed, maintained, challenged, and enforced in everyday social life through social practices, discourses, and interactions, by differentiating “us” and “them” to make clear who legitimately belongs and who does not; by making claims of national priority and by marking degrees of membership (e.g., “true” citizen vs. “marginal” citizen, etc.). Second, citizenship is a site of social struggle, by which different groups in society (social movements, minority groups, excluded groups, etc.) make different kinds of claims based on or related to citizenship, or to expand its meaning and scope, for instance, by making demands, asserting rights, challenging exclusion, demanding equal treatment, or redefining the terms of membership, and these claims are what give citizenship its social substance and lived reality. Third, citizenship is performed and enacted in social life, through social practices, behaviors, and identities by which an individual or a social group assert their citizenship and belonging, demonstrate their

membership or has their citizenship challenged by others, for example, through social interaction, language use, cultural expressions, or civic participation. The ways in which people act, or are expected to act, as “citizens,” or how they are perceived to act, in social situations, either reinforce the existing social meaning of citizenship or challenge them. The point that Brubaker (2015) is trying to make is that citizenship is not something static or settled; rather, it is an ongoing field of struggle, where the very definition, the boundaries, and the content of what it means to belong to a political community is negotiated through the above-mentioned social processes.

Similarly, in a comparative study of France and Germany, Brubaker (1992) shows how German citizenship, in particular, has been traditionally constructed by a logic of ethnocultural nationhood that privileges blood tie-based citizenship (*jus sanguinis*) over birth-righted citizenship (*jus soli*). This citizenship model was thus organized by drawing the boundaries of political community along the lines of ethnic and cultural belonging which, in practice, systematically excluded many migrants, in particular second-generation non-German-born residents, from full membership in the civic community. It is argued that this exclusion is not only and simply a matter of demographic calculations or economic pragmatism, but it was also a matter of an ideological and symbolic commitment to an ideal of the national identity, to which the state committed itself by defining its legitimacy in terms of the preservation of cultural and ethnic cohesion. In other words, the German state in this context has historically been structured by a membership organization logic, where inclusion and exclusion were conditioned not only by formal legal criteria but also by cultural and bureaucratic practices (e.g., documentations, procedures, tests, permits, etc.). According to Brubaker (1992), the case of Turkish migrants in Germany is exemplary for the process by which citizenship regimes can be designed and managed to institutionalize the outsider status even across generations, by equating the sense of belonging not with the social integration but with ethnic lineage. Therefore, it is emphasized that the mechanisms of exclusion and othering are profoundly built into the self-understanding of the state, which operates not only through the law but through the whole symbolic and organizational structure of the nation-state.

Very similar to the way Brubaker (2015) does, Yuval-Davis (2011) conceives citizenship not as a formal and uniform legal status uniformly given and guaranteed by the nation-state, but as a deeply relational, constructed, and stratified site of belonging as well, which is constantly being produced and reproduced by securitization (the framing of social issues through a security logic; i.e. securitization discourses and policies that divide the society into “us” vs. the “threatening other” dichotomic segments), neoliberal restructuring (the transformation from a social welfare state to a market-based governance; i.e., the weakening of the social role of the state and the growing influence of market logic in all realms which erode the social component of citizenship and make it dependent on economic power and market performance), and multi-dimensional governance (the involvement of local, national, and supranational actors; i.e., the spreading of power away from the nation-state towards local, supranational, and non-state actors which complicates the sources, levels, and scope in which citizenship rights can be claimed). Against this backdrop, dual or multiple citizenship are especially salient sites of analysis in which these deep tensions and power struggles over belonging are played out.

On the one hand, it may be true that dual citizenship, in a formal sense, may be seen as the expansion of individual rights and cross-border mobility. On the other hand, paradoxically, it has often been the primary site of contested loyalty, heightened state suspicion, and differentiated treatment. Simply having the legal status from multiple jurisdictions does not guarantee equal recognition or protection (Yuval-Davis 2011; Brubaker, 2015); instead, concerns about divided loyalties and foreign influence, especially during geopolitical crises or perceived security threats, are actively produced and mobilized by the state and its apparatus, and can be materialized concretely by the discriminatory state practices (e.g., differential evacuation policies that deprioritize some dual nationals, pervasive security profiling based on nationality affiliations, and unequal or inconsistent consular protection). Crucially, for dual citizens with legal affiliations to states that are racialized or politicized as security risks (often through the frame of the “war on terror” or geopolitical rivalries), this ambiguity and insecurity can have especially acute consequences, since they are the ones who often face actual exclusion or being framed as potential security threats. For example, during emergency repatriation, dual nationals with a

link to “suspect” geographies may be systematically placed in lower priority, constructed as insufficiently loyal, or even preemptively assumed as risks. In this case, the particular construction of belonging is not settled by a legal document, but is actively produced through power-laden practices in which formal status can be made meaningless through the sovereign power (i.e., a legal tool that gives states the power to suspend, restrict, or differentiate the status and the rights of citizenship which can make the rights of dual citizenship in particular uncertain and insecure in the ways that serve the political interests of the states) and discriminatory logics (Yuval-Davis, 2011).

Yuval-Davis (2011) further stresses that, while the nation-state may still be the central site of production and allocation of rights and entitlements, its response to globalization and security anxieties is precisely to reify its boundaries. It happens not only physically but through diffuse technologies of control (e.g., intensified border regimes, pervasive biometric surveillance, and ubiquitous technologies of identification) which, she calls, a state of “borders everywhere” (see also “technologies of classification” in Brubaker, 2015). A securitized citizenship, therefore, cannot be separated from a host of other societal processes, insofar as it is intimately tied to the racialized logics of a perpetual “war on terror,” systematic criminalization of “illegal” migration as well as “a crisis mode in migration governance” (see Sahin-Mencutek et al., 2022), and exclusionary logic of ethno-nationalist populisms. Each of these social forces is in significant ways contributing to the erosion of rights, not only against non-citizens, but also against full citizens whose social markers, such as race, religion, migration background, or assumed Muslimness, make them permanently suspect in the national imagination. Citizenship is therefore much less a binary legal condition and much more a gradational state existing on a subject–citizen continuum, on which marginalized populations, including, but not limited to, Muslim citizens, migrants of color, or people with a complex or precarious legal status are increasingly placed as subjects to be controlled, managed, and surveilled, rather than as political actors (i.e., “citizens”) with agency and equal standing, while surveillance, policing, and conditionality displaces universality and equality as the organizing principles. According to Yuval-Davis (2011), this condition is inherently gendered and

racialized, and it ultimately undoes the promise of the abstract, universal citizen by demonstrating the inescapably situated, political nature of access to and lived experience of citizenship as a social status.

Alba (2005) depicts the boundaries of citizenship for Turkish migrants in the German context, especially second-generation Turkish migrants, as “bright,” which refers to the sharpness of the dividing line between citizens and non-citizens, or natives and migrants, and the social salience of this boundary. By bright, Alba does not simply mean the legal separation, for example, in the cases of Germany, by a historically restrictive *jus sanguinis* based citizenship law (despite its significant liberalization since the early 2000s), but rather the cultural and institutional *ethos* that produces such social perceptions of national membership as sharply defined and enduring. These bright boundaries thus refer to the symbolic as much as the legal dimensions of citizenship, where someone of Turkish descent, for instance, may be legally recognized but not symbolically treated as a full member of the community, and where the boundary is produced not only by citizenship policy *per se*, but by cultural institutions, public discourses, and media, that reiterate difference between the ethnic majority and migrant minorities. For instance, it is easy to witness the traces of brightness of the boundaries through the framings of Turkish migrants as incompatible with German cultural values, thus fundamentally incapable of integration in the far-right media outlets in Germany, which exacerbates the situation for this population.

The representational logic of far-right media that is described above is heavily contingent on and related to this institutionalization of ethnic boundaries. Structural features of the context, such as the exclusion of Islamic holidays from public calendars (Kern, 2017) or the pervasive securitization of Muslims in public discourse and media, which casts them as integration or security risks (Junge Freiheit, 2025), all play into a system in which Turkish migrants are by definition positioned outside the symbolic boundaries of Germanness. Bright boundaries exist, then, at the legal, cultural, and perceptual levels; they influence not only material outcomes, such as employment or education opportunities, but also the terms on which identity is lived and recognized in the public sphere. In this way, it can be argued that far-right media

representations do not just passively reproduce these boundaries, they actively reinforce them and help to constitute it, for example, by framing integration both as a cultural impossibility and a civilizational threat. The brightness of citizenship boundaries, then, is not a static state of affairs, but an ideologically maintained and narratively regenerated social structure, in which symbolic exclusion is normalized through discursive strategies of cultural incompatibility, demographic alarmism, and nationalist nostalgia. Alba's (2005) framework, therefore, is particularly useful for this study as it demonstrates how citizenship as a status is neither objective nor uniform, rather is a deeply symbolic indicator of national inclusion and exclusion, both produced by historically specific policies and perpetuated through daily practices of classification and categorization, which include also the ones that are being put into practice through media. For the Turkish-origin population in Germany, the brightness of this boundary makes integration both institutionally more difficult and discursively more delegitimized.

2.1.3. Symbolic Exclusion and Othering

Anderson's (1983) theory of imagined community, a powerful analytical tool to explain the construction and the enduring emotional power of national identities, claims that the imagined community of the nation all relying upon has no objective reality outside the symbolic mechanisms of social construction. The imagined nature of the nation as a social construct can help to understand the logic of symbolic exclusion of migrants by Turkish origins in the far-right media in Germany. It is essential to keep in mind the distinction between the nation as an idea and the state as an institutional structure. While the former refers to a subjective and constructed identity based on cultural, historical, and political belonging, the latter implies the legal, administrative, and coercive organization of power within a certain territory.

As such, I argue that this analytical perspective is appropriate for the current research topic as it can shed light on how the far-right media in Germany produce the national "we" by discursively bounding Germanness to religion, language, and customs, and by doing so, create otherness of Turkish migrants with regard to the imagined, moral, historical, and symbolic core of the ethnic German identity and belonging. Even

when this otherness is cohabiting with the Germans by law as citizens or residents or by fact as natives born in Germany, the imagined boundaries of the ethnic nation are ultimately defined by the symbolic structure of nationalism, which is both constituted and reified not only and not always by legal mechanisms but also through symbolic means, making them appear natural, timeless, and coherent. This is how far-right media in Germany, including newspapers, magazines, and online platforms, mobilize against Turkish migrants by essentializing, othering, and degrading their identities through narratives that represent Turkishness as the cultural other to the “true” Germanness by rendering it incompatible with the core values of the German nation by employing the discriminatory cultural, civilizational, and geopolitical categorizations, the so-called cultural racist tropes (Westerhagen, 2024), cultural illiteracy and primitivism (PI News, 2025), and collective disloyalty (Deutschland Kurier, 2023).

Hence, it is not simply a matter of social construction, but a discursive construction in which narratives, images, metaphors, language, and modes of representation are part of the process by which far-right media produce the boundaries and essentialized identity of the national community through repetition, misrepresentation, and omission. Anderson’s (1983) contribution is key for understanding how print capitalism works aligning with nationalism. The point that his work makes is that when people from a given population started to use their language in print to address each other, this created a sense of shared identity and belonging. In other words, the nation began to appear as a natural community since their vernacular print created a national field. The mechanism is at work in German far-right media as well: it is about using and creating a unifying in-group identity, partly by the construction of an external “Other” and the polarization between “insiders” and “outsiders” to reinforce the dualist vision of ethnic Germans. By representing Turkish migrants as culturally alien, economically parasitic, and politically subversive, far-right media outlets become symbolic agents of national cohesion.

Anderson (1983) points to the strong emotional ties that people can feel towards the imagined community of the nation and which, in turn, can drive them to make the ultimate sacrifice for its defense, and in this regard, it is possible to claim that far-

right media mobilize against Turkish migrants by evoking moral panic and generating nostalgia for the lost (imagined) homogeneity of the nation. In other words, Turkish migrants are often depicted as the source of this disturbance or threat to the moral integrity and the symbolic continuity of the nation. Furthermore, moral panic becomes an emotive and existential imperative to defend the national community against external or internal enemies. It is thus that even seemingly technical policy issues (migration numbers, Islamic symbols in the public space) can become a threat to the very survival of the German nation (Deutsche Stimme, 2023; PI News, 2024).

I should argue that Anderson (1983) provides important conceptual tools for this study. They are about symbolic borders of belonging and, more specifically, about how exclusionary practices work. Turkish migrants have the German passport and the German language but are often denied the membership in the imagined community of Germanness by far-right media who, in an Andersonian way, define the national “we” by the symbolic process of setting its boundaries and who, in this particular case, fall short of them. They are not members of this symbolic in-group, and they do not belong to those in-group dynamics. Belonging is about sharing language, memory, and narrative, not holding an identity card. It is in this light that Anderson’s (1983) ideas are important for understanding symbolic exclusion as it is about more than legal disenfranchisement. It is about the discursive architecture, which defines them as permanent strangers even when they are *de jure* insiders.

Yuval-Davis (2011) approaches nationalism as the dominant modern political project of belonging based on constructing, legitimizing, and policing it with the help of imagination of the spatial, social, and symbolic limits of the “we.” It aspires to the nation-state ideological chimera, and as such, it means perfect overlap between ethnic/cultural limits (“the nation”) and the sovereign state borders (“the state”), as in Gellner’s (1983, as cited in Yuval-Davis, 2011) once inspiring formulation for nationalism as a “theory of political legitimacy which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones” (p. 81). However, it is also possible to mention that Yuval-Davis (2011) carefully unpacks this idea to demonstrate the persistent historical tension between citizenship as a legal status and belonging as a subjective

sense of cultural/ethnic collectivity coming from one's national identity. She also critically underlines the "missing term" in English and other Western languages (Shanin, 1986, as cited in Yuval-Davis, 2011) which is one who shows that the nation-state discourses have been deliberately conflating legal and cultural affiliations with each other to create a conceptual confusion in the discussions of political belonging which was historically often the case, some states have been non-national (city states, religious empires, Cohen, 1999, as cited in Yuval-Davis, 2011) and some nations often precede or exist independently of the situation of statehood (e.g., Jews prior to the State of Israel). It is in this way that Yuval-Davis (2011) makes an important point by building on Anderson's (1983) idea that the nation itself is not primordial but "imagined community" which is a discursively constructed collective whose members, though unlikely knowing most of their fellows, can and do imagine them as part of a shared community and, ultimately, base their subjectivity on a myth of community. This imagination, in turn, must be sustained and made to appear natural which is the role of the banal nationalism practices, which require that "a whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices must also be reproduced. Moreover, this complex must be reproduced in a banally mundane way, for the world of nations is the everyday world, the familiar terrain of contemporary times" (Billig, 1995, as cited in Yuval-Davis, 2011, p. 92) or, in the language of Brubaker's (2015) "categories of practice," how everyday interactions, and institutional routines (population census, school curricula) can performatively reproduce the classifications and essentialize identities. It can be referred to as the multitude of often unconscious, frequently unquestioned displays of nationhood through state rituals like national holidays and anthems, legal frameworks like migration/citizenship regimes, educational curricula like celebrating specific heroes/events, and cultural signifiers like language or landscape. They all can be understood as the "symbolic border guards," which means that they all are connected with the "whole field of cultural practices, including religion, language, gender relations and more" (Armstrong, 1982, as cited in Yuval-Davis, 2011, p. 93) and which, in turn, reinforce the boundaries of belonging by selectively remembering or inventing traditions and myths (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, as cited in Yuval-Davis, 2011).

Yuval-Davis (2011) suggests that the question of who belongs to these symbolic limits is, by definition, contested and reflecting the various political projects. In other words, there are the different ways of becoming part of something because there are the different political projects and their logics: genealogical, based on ancestry/blood; cultural, based on shared language/values; affective or civic, based on emotional identification/loyalty; and now, under the pressure of multiculturalism in the era of globalization, autochthonic based on temporal-territorial precedence fostering zero-sum exclusionary politics. Globalization is an important factor here: as it weakens the state in terms of its monopolization of belonging, triggers defensive ethnocization and autochthonic exclusion during insecurity, empowers effective diasporic networks among migrants, and facilitates the shift in the self-determination claims towards the language of collective human rights. All in all, nationalism, rather than being extincted, is perpetually contested and constantly reconfiguring as part of the multi-dimensional politics of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2011).

Symbolic exclusion as it operates in the contemporary Europe is largely about the crisis of the post-war social contract and an emergent departure from old-fashioned biological racism towards new racism (i.e., cultural racism, differential racism), which is the form of racial discrimination that justifies exclusion and inequality on the basis of cultural differences rather than biological superiority and represents the marginalized groups as threats to the mainstream national values of social cohesion (Barker, 1981 as cited in Wieviorka, 1993). It operates via the horizontal transformation of identity conflict (supplanting vertical superiority/inferiority hierarchy), in which migrants, once constituted as the national resource of labor power, are redefined as cultural threats to the national identity. The unraveling of the tripartite unity of society, state, and nation, which was accelerating from the 1970s due to deindustrialization, retrenchment of the welfare state, and the triumph of economic liberalism, provided a symbolic terrain for violence. In other words, it is there that the anxieties of globalization, downward social mobility, and loss of cultural sovereignty are translated into the symbolic exclusion of migrants, which, for dominant groups, works as a mechanism of social cohesion for re-equilibrating the anti-modernities such as loss of social integrity, cultural protectionism, and frustrations towards the betrayed modernity with nationalism's revival by erasing the

minorities' belonging from the national imagination. Therefore, it is possible to say that racism is being reconfigured as a cultural project to re-equilibrate the modernity in crisis by using the exclusionary myths of Otherness to redefine who is in and who is out (Wieviorka, 1993).

2.2. Migrant Representation in German Media

Media representations of minorities usually have accents of difference and threat. Foreigners are commonly being described as obstacles in the economy, culture and public order. The media act as a gatekeeper and an agenda-setter by constructing binaries and dichotomies like “us vs. them” or “citizen vs. foreigner.” In a certain way, it is possible to briefly mention three features of the media influence discourses on migration: providing information, shaping representations and being a platform for the voices of minorities. The media representation of migration as a crisis often reinforces the negative narrative and political reactions, and accordingly, European newspapers focus on security and economic threat narratives about migrants. As for Germany, the German media have long portrayed minorities and migrants, especially asylum seekers and foreign workers, negatively and associated them with crime, threat and cultural disruption. Studies also show that media coverage also perpetuates stereotypes by rarely giving minorities a voice or explaining the structural causes of migration. For example, the trends in media representation in the 1970s and 1980s tended to be linking foreign workers to crime which had increased a fear among society through labelling such as “Turk problem,” “asylum problem” while being described through catastrophic metaphors like “flood” or “avalanche,” and they were usually portrayed as a threat to jobs, culture and public safety. In order to be positively portrayed, foreigners should have been successful athletes or artists rather than asylum seekers or workers. It can be also said that nothing much has changed today because recent analyses show asylum seekers represented as anonymous masses or linked to crime and administrative issues stemming from ungovernable wave of migration and asylum seeking. Positive aspects of multiculturalism and individual refugee stories are neglected rather than fostering fears and defensive attitudes. This trend shows how the media can play a

role in perpetuating stereotypes, shaping public opinion and societal attitudes toward minorities and migrants (Schmidbaur, 2016).

Whereas there are many opinions argue that German media has moved away from constructing a “Turk problem” to an asylum/refugee crisis, there are some other ones which highlight that constructed distinction and difference over Turk and German identities is still on the agenda. By constructing a strong distinction between German and Turkish, the political, media and artistic narratives often reinforced the idea of two relatively pure and separate Turks and Germans. On the one hand, this clearly stems from European anxieties over the need to close rank and defend a unified European identity with Muslims seen to threaten that. On the other hand, Germans fear that this cultural diversity undermines the *Hochkultur* (high culture). This constructed division can have negative implications, such as marking Turkish Germans as “Turkish” which may lead them to fight back and assert themselves. Schiffauer (1999, as cited in Dronyak, 2012) even suggested that these struggles are likely to make some second-generation Turkish German youth turn to radical Islamist groups. On the other hand, this polarization results in discrimination, alienation and marginalization based on cultural differences. Marking “difference,” as Hall (1997, as cited in Dronyak, 2012) suggests, often leads to attempts to stigmatize, punish and exclude those deemed impure or abnormal. For example, in his book *Germany Abolishes Itself*, German politician Thilo Sarrazin attributes the educational failures of Turkish minorities to their “nature” which close to get educated in a way he means by it their cultural closeness to the Islamic world. This argument as he continues with this also not only marks as problematic the individual migrants and refugees but his culture as well. Ultimately, the suggested binary ends up implying that assimilation, in a way of rejecting Turkish identity and traditions, is the only way for Turkish migrants to be socially accepted in Germany. This binary way of thinking has been at the forefront of many of German social attitudes for a long time. In a sense, some discourses have been made to bridge these cultural divides, however even their discourses are intrinsically not free of this binary thinking. It would take an identification of what unites rather than divides us to provide a solution to this problem (Dronyak, 2012).

As a comprehensive and comparative study in terms of national images of Greeks and Turks, Reynolds (2013) conducts multidimensional research addressing the main questions in reference to the ways Turkey and Turks have been seen in the West German media, especially from the years 1950 to 1975, and is making a contribution to the public debates on Turkey's identity as a European country. By measuring representations over a 25-year period and by comparing them with the depictions about Greece, he reveals that a "discursive battleground" over the place of Turkey in Europe. While a clear sense of cultural exclusion underpinned many people's perceptions of Turkey at the time, most texts were quite fair and objective. For example, in *Frankfurter Rundschau*, the representation of Turkish guest workers was objective and non-sensational. While some of the texts did stereotype Turks as violent or hard to integrate, these were usually being described as other people's views, which were not directly criticized and therefore left a room for negative interpretations. It could be said that even though some of these texts contained orientalist undertones, it was possible to see enduring cultural exclusions; there was no outright disassociation of Turks from Europe or of other guest workers' nationalities. In general, he argues that the coverage of the newspaper remained similar from the 1960s to the 1970s and it was full of an empathetic tone which reflected the newspaper's overall editorial principles of championing for the rights and equality for minorities. On the other hand, the findings on *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung's* coverage showed a reserved attitude toward Turkish guest workers, and it occasionally depicted them as irritable or hard to integrate. In addition to this, culturally exclusionary representations described Turks as markedly different from and not really European with many of these texts tapping into old stereotypes, for example the "Ottoman invader" or the Islamic threat, to define Turkey in a negative way, particularly during events such as the Cyprus crisis in 1974. However, these stereotypes were not unique to Turkish guest workers but had existed in coverage of Turkey before Turkish guest workers arrived in large numbers, and that the coverage of Turkish guest workers did not appear to have negatively affected coverage of Turkey and Turks on the news. *Süddeutsche Zeitung's* texts also often included culturally exclusionary descriptions. However, unlike in the previous texts, these descriptions applied as much to multiple other guest worker nationalities as they did to Turks specifically. He suggested that this

might be because the liberal values of the outlet have led to it having a relatively balanced view of Turkish and Greek guest workers while being more critical in its view of Turkey itself. In this coverage, negative representations of Turkish guest workers were linked to how the rural customs they were seen to have were holding them back and restraining modernization, rather than it being an outright cultural rejection. The presence of Turkish guest workers in West Germany did not lead to a fall-off in the coverage of Turkey, as can be seen from how the newspaper criticized people with negative attitudes to Turkish guest workers. Lastly, he investigates the findings from *BILD-Zeitung* and argues that it contained very few references to Turkish guest workers, and these were little material of analytical significance. While some of the texts did stereotype guest workers, for example by linking them to criminality, Turks were not singled out as the primary targets. The general lack of attention to issues of integration and cultural exclusion seems to reflect a generalized approach to talking about guest workers, and he suggested that he could find no evidence of a specific negative image developing in relation to Turkish nationals (Reynolds, 2013).

However, there are many studies confirming the negative representations of Turkish migrants in the German media. The saying of American actor Will Rogers which is “All I know is just what I read in the newspapers” suggests that the media influences what people know to a great extent (McCombs, 2004, as cited in Uysal, 2011). It is possible to put this forward that as the world has changed through time, people become more dependent on others’ experiences in mediated contexts to understand the world they live in and the media do not only simply reflect the “truth” but organize and interpret it, acting as an active meaning-creation and communication mechanism through visual and verbal forms of representation. In this line, some opinions suggest that since most Germans lack direct contact with Turkish migrants, they gain their ideas from the media about how to perceive the image of a foreigner; the media has a key role in constructing an image of “the other” by reinforcing public stereotypes and biases. It could be said that stereotypes, which are deep-rooted through social media and other sources of media, form a public image of foreigners by being stuck in a person’s mind because of overuse and repeated media exposures; as such a claim could be put forward that German media generally gives more space

to negative stories about migrants by framing migrants as threat figures while giving little space for the voice of migrants and reinforcing a “positive us” versus “a negative them” dichotomy. In this line, media representations of migrants often use visual clichés by sticking to certain simplistic and stereotypical images; for example, images of women in headscarves or men with gold chains, the visual signifiers of religious symbols such as minarets to demarcate cultural differences, and migrants as victims or perpetrators to perpetuate Eurocentric biases or reducing these people to passive and anonymous figures by preferring to talk about them rather than to them. The study conducted by Delgado (1972, as cited in Uysal, 2011), which systematically examines over 3000 newspaper articles, finds that migrants are often associated with crime and social problems. Merten et al. (1986, as cited in Uysal 2011) points out a similar pattern in another study which reveals that Turkish migrants are also usually described as a threat as well and suggests that migrants would remain underrepresented while being demonstrated in a stereotypical or negative way.

As for Richter & Paasch-Colberg (2023), it is also possible to talk about the portrayal of Islam in eight German newspapers over three different time periods given in 2014, 2019, and 2021. These results emphasize that how Muslims and Islam are usually described in conflict-related contexts which means 37% of Islam-related articles have linked Islam to terrorism, war or political unrest. News mainly focuses on Western nations and their relationships with conflict-affected Muslim-majority nations like Syria and Iraq and provides little insight into these societies beyond their crises. It is also found from this analysis that Muslims are rarely quoted and are typically being portrayed as a monolithic and one-dimensional group. Muslims are not being framed in such topic areas like education, science, art, sport and success stories rather it is commonly to focus on the coverages of social issues which centers stereotypical themes such as fundamental rights or attires of Muslim women. This persistent framing of Islam in a picture of terrorism, war and security threat marginalizes Muslims from everyday life and it is assumed to promote prejudice against them. The major current problem is not about how to relate to Muslims as a whole or how to interpret Islam but how to relate to individuals when the collective “knowledge” of Islam is overwhelmingly defined by this picture. This kind of

portrayal is based on the post-9/11 narrative and attempts to perpetuate the image of Muslims as the “other” or even the rival of the West. Moreover, there are also other studies confirming the media coverage reinforces these stereotypes by emphasizing both international and domestic conflicts and Muslim migrants are often depicted within an “un-assimilability discourse” which reinforces the division between an internal and external Muslim “other.”

In addition to Richter & Paasch-Colberg’s (2023) study, Eberl et al. (2018) also found as well that migrants are often underrepresented and usually negatively portrayed in the contents of media, they are often being framed as delinquents, economic burden or threats to security and Western cultural values. Although media framing differs based on the migrant group and context, the media coverage of migration is usually focused on conflict and risks. These kinds of portrayals may shape public attitudes, reinforce stereotypes and influence political preferences. The negative framing of migration as a threat to economy, culture or security of the host country, in particular, has been found to have particularly strong effects like solidifying already existing biases and even shaping voting behavior. Stereotypical representations of migrants take up so much space in the media that the attention to the social problems faced by migrants to a certain extent were left behind in the media agenda. For example, violence against refugees in Germany is increasing, however, it can find a place itself in very few of a major German newspaper and television news. Instead, the media coverage is continually keeping them portraying foreigners as suspects in criminal activities, as it has been supported by many studies, and to add to this, foreign suspects receive much more attention than foreign victims of violence, as Eberl et al. (2018) go on to say. Over the years, there has been an observable increase in the coverage of the foreign origin of suspects while the concept of multiculturalism is notably absent from reporting and the concept “integration” is mentioned as challenging with some rare exceptions of success stories. For the discussion of integration, migrants, refugees and NGOs are often not given a voice and the coverage of this issue is dominated by political parties and police. The media framing usually portrays migrants as threat figures while reinforcing a sharp divide between “native” and “foreigners.” Religious differences, especially the assumed incompatibility of Islam and Western values are often

dominating the discourse for the sake of stigmatization of migrants (Hestermann, 2018). For example, honor killings were being covered extensively to fuel the sense of an “us-them” dichotomy by transnational Western media organs as if concepts such as gender equality, human rights and freedom are monopolized by Western values (Grewal, 2013).

2.3. A Broad Review of Theoretical Background

To analyze the portrayal of Turkish migrants in far-right German media, the concept of symbolic exclusion can be employed, which draws on various intersecting theories. First, building on Brubaker’s (2002; 2015) critique of essentialized ethnic and national identities, it is possible to see how identities are socially constructed and performative, and how they are constituted through processes of institutional power and discourse. The far-right media, by essentializing and stereotyping Turkish migrants, is in fact constructing a singular and homogeneous identity that would promote a sense of “groupness” for political instrumentalization (Brubaker, 2002). Second, regarding the citizenship regime, it can be posited that the German society has been quite reluctant to accept Turkish migrants as part of the national community, despite them often having the legal status of citizenship. This, as Anderson’s (1983) concept of imagined communities would suggest, can be understood as a form of print-capitalism that is constructing these national identities and providing cultural racism, moral panic, and nostalgia as frames for it. Third, both Brubaker’s (2015) and Yuval-Davis’s (2011) citizenship regime approach can be used to support this argument, as they show how contemporary citizenship is no longer monolithic but a relational concept with “bright boundaries” in the German context (Alba, 2005). In the German case, Germany’s *jus sanguinis* citizenship tradition and neoliberal securitization form its citizenship regime that still views Turkish migrants as foreigners in their own country of residence.

Turning to the specific content and tactics of the far-right media, several patterns can be observed. Turkish migrants are dehumanized and stereotyped with metaphors of “flooding,” criminalized by such labels as “Turk problem,” and portrayed as culturally incompatible with debates over headscarves and honor killings. The

narratives have remained largely consistent over time, from the guest worker construction of the 1970s to the securitization and the process of othering in the post-9/11 years. A recent study showed that 37% of Islam-related articles still equate Muslims and terrorism (Richter & Paasch-Colberg, 2023). The consequences of these representations range from shaping public opinion to affecting the lived experiences of migrants and their families, including the electoral successes of far-right parties, the legitimization of exclusionary policies, and, in Schiffauer's (1999, as cited in Dronyak, 2012) terms, radicalization of Turkish-German youth for the purpose of social recognition. It is also important to note that the media's role is not one of merely reflecting the world but of actively (re)constructing it. Selective reporting, such as the overrepresentation of migrant criminals, visual stereotyping of headscarves as a marker of otherness, or the exclusion of migrant voices, all can operate as what Brubaker (2015) calls a "technologies of classification" to not only maintain but exacerbate the symbolic exclusion of Turkish migrants, solidifying their identities as incompatible with the German national community in the media discourse, regardless of their actual legal status.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will account for the methodological choices and approaches which underpin the current study. As the nature of the research is primarily qualitative, the first section of this chapter is dedicated to the general discussion of qualitative research, its features, and its reflections of the main methodological traditions as an attempt to provide an epistemological context for the study. The aim of the chapter is to create a foundation that would allow a reader to understand how empirical insights concerning the topic of the study were obtained and how these insights were interpreted.

The next section is intended to provide a more specific discussion of content analysis. It is, thus, expected that this part of the chapter will explain the nature of content analysis and will also provide a theoretical account of the application of this method in social research by highlighting its key features. I will briefly discuss the examples of the use of this method in the analysis of media content in order to demonstrate its relevance and adaptability for the study.

After that, the chapter will move to an explanation of the overall design of the research through a clarification of the methodological framework which shapes the structure and the progress of the study. This section will describe how the method of content analysis was employed in the research and will also offer a rationale for the choice of this approach. The section will also reflect on the internal coherence of the study, including the coherence of the research question and data sources and the clarity and consistency of the study.

Then, the focus will be placed on the empirical aspects of the study, including a clear statement of the research question and objectives, which is followed by the

clarification of the material selection process, explaining which media sources have been chosen in what time frame and why these media outlets are considered analytically significant for the topic of the study.

The following section is dedicated to the description of the process of data collection and data analysis that will provide a transparent picture of how the dataset was organized and interpreted. Finally, the last section of the chapter will reflect on the limitations of the research and positionality of the researcher by recognizing the limits of the scope of the research and the impact of the researcher's perspective on the interpretation process.

3.1. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research can be defined as an approach to acquiring and enhancing knowledge, as well as finding new understandings about social issues or human-related problems (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It focuses on the quality of social phenomena and pays attention to people's perceptions and experiences (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993). In other words, it is mostly concerned with the answers to the questions about social settings and people or social groups who position themselves within the context of these settings. Qualitative researchers' particular attention is paid to the ways people organize themselves and their surroundings and how people who make up these surroundings make sense of their everyday lives through symbols, rituals, social structures, and social roles (Lune & Berg, 2017). Contrary to the emphasis of quantitative research, qualitative research is more favorable to analyze processes instead of products and its aim is to provide explanations, interpretations, and clarifications (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993). It seeks depth of things rather than breadth, and, therefore, the answers that lie under the questions of how and why do people or societies behave, think, and make sense (Ambert et al., 1995).

According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), the main difference between the quantitative and the qualitative research is related to philosophical assumptions that the researchers bring to the study, the type of research strategies that are used, and the specific methods employed to carry out the strategies. Quantitative researchers

have a goal to test objective theories, while qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning and experience. Questions and procedures that are predetermined are usually fixed throughout the study in the quantitative research, while in the qualitative research, questions and procedures can emerge and be changed. Qualitative research is often an inductive approach that focuses on developing a theory from data, while in quantitative research, the deductive method is most common because it is more favorable for the testing of the pre-formulated theories (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993). The final feature of difference can be referred to the idea of generalizability. It is possible to say that while quantitative research intends to generalize the findings to the wider population, this feature of qualitative research is most often in detailed descriptions and themes within a specific context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Qualitative research is based on a series of basic assumptions about the nature of social reality. Reality is understood as a complex, interwoven, and contextual whole and it is thought to be relative to a particular knower, including the researchers (Bradley, 1993). These assumptions support the existence of multiple realities of empirical reality, and the researcher's relationship with the people, the groups, the communities or any kind of case in qualitative research often has ongoing and evolving characteristics (Lune & Berg, 2017). The qualitative researchers' particular attention is paid to subjective perceptions and experiences (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

It is not possible or desirable to define a prototypical model of qualitative method and one particular way of doing it, as these vary a lot. There are such practices as participant observation, naturalistic inquiry, grounded theory, hermeneutic approaches to interpret the texts and actions, qualitative evaluation and the methodological literature generically called "qualitative research" (Bradley, 1993).

There are a number of different traditions, designs, and methods in the qualitative research, and the researcher usually decides what he or she is going to use according to the nature of the study, the questions included in it, his or her personal experiences, and maybe for the target audience (Bradley, 1993; Heyink & Tymstra,

1993; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). These strategies or research designs can be specific qualitative ones like narrative research, which is to focus on examining the life experience of individuals through stories, phenomenology, which aims to understand “essence” of the phenomenon, as experienced by the participants, grounded theory, which is a method of developing a theory or general model inductively from the data, ethnography, which is meant to describe and interpret the common patterns of behavior, beliefs and language of a group of people sharing a culture, and case study, which is an in-depth analysis of one or more cases or events and can be extended up to four or five. Case study is particularly a useful research design in order to explore the complexity of the social factors in a specific context and will be described in detail later as it is used in this study (Bradley, 1993; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Ambert et al., 1995; Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

To sum up, it can be said that qualitative research can be considered a flexible and diverse field for a researcher, as it involves a whole range of approaches, designs, and methods that can be adjusted to fit the question and nature of the study (Bradley, 1993; Ambert et al. 1995).

3.1.1. Content Analysis

Content analysis is the method for a systematic description, analysis and interpretation of the meanings, patterns, and themes that are embedded in the different materials made by people (Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). It is a primary step in data collecting procedures and a main part of a process on the one hand of making the information obtained in data collection understandable and on another of processing the data for answering the research question (Bradley, 1993; Lune & Berg, 2017).

Content analysis may serve both as a primary research method, as in the case of the study, or as the background for other types of qualitative analysis. It can be applied to any material produced by people, such as text, picture, video, audio recordings, graphics, symbols and so on. It is a systematic and process-oriented approach (Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). It involves the cyclical relationship between two steps,

data processing (coding, categorization) and its interpretation, specifically in inductive approaches (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993). The main focus of content analysis is to extract the manifest (explicit) and latent (implicit) meanings of the text or content under investigation (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023). The meaning of the text or other content for understanding is always close to the context from which the information is taken; in other words, it requires the analysis of social and cultural contexts of the phenomena under study (Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). It reduces large volumes of data to a more comprehensible level and preserves significant information through the transformation of information into analyzable data in the form of encoding, which involves identification of patterns, themes and concepts in the data which then are further defined and organized by identification of their repeated patterns (Bradley, 1993; Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). Coding of data segments is a key part of content analysis in order to develop meaningful categories or themes (Lune & Berg, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The data is organized and interpreted through coding, which, as already mentioned, is also the key for qualitative content analysis, as well as to some extent for the quantitative one, but it will be based on subjective interpretations, the researcher deriving meaningful inferences from the data. In other words, the researcher's point of view plays an important role in interpretation (Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023).

It can be said that content analysis has a lot of important contributions for the researcher. First of all, it should be noted that its most fundamental importance lies in its aim to make visible the meanings that are often more or less hidden and embedded in the text and other materials used for investigation. It differs from the quantitative analysis which looks for a manifest content, which is visible. Content analysis helps to organize and interpret the data by identifying patterns, themes, assumptions, and meanings in the material used for the analysis (Atkinson, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023). It gives special significance to the context in which the information used for analysis is taken since it is the context that gives meaning to the data. It also aims at the analysis of contexts in which text or other meaningful materials are used in order to make repeatable and valid inferences. In other words, content analysis also makes it possible to understand the discourse by analyzing

social and cultural contexts (Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). It helps to understand empirical reality, which is complex, interconnected and best understood as a whole and in a contextual way, and which aims at understanding the social reality subjectively, but in a scientific way (Bradley, 1993; Roller, 2023). It also helps to reduce large amounts of qualitative data to a more manageable size and to make it comprehensible, but at the same time preserving the essential content. It also provides a tool for coding, categorization, organization, indexing and extracting data. Content analysis can also be used to generate inductive theories or theories related explanations from data (Lune & Berg, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Reisner, 2023). The inductive patterns and themes that have emerged can then be used to support or reject existing hypotheses or to create new ones (Roller, 2023). In addition, content analysis is particularly well suited to the analysis of processes and their “why” question (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993). It also makes the coded data ready for use in the context of research questions. One important note is that the categories are related to the research question regarding the method of content analysis. As much as anything else, it is also a relatively inexpensive method if existing material is analyzed (Lune & Berg, 2017).

Content analysis is neither quantitative nor qualitative in essence, and it can be both at the same time (Lune & Berg, 2017). The difference between quantitative and qualitative content analysis is usually considered in the context of its focus on testing (deduction) rather than induction (theory development) and search for the latent (hidden) meaning of text rather than its manifest (visible) or surface reading (Reisner, 2023). In other words, quantitative content analysis focuses on manifest (overt) content of the text. It also focuses on what everyone can see and is based on counting the frequency of themes or words in the text. Qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, is directed at the latent or underlying meaning of text (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023). It focuses on fundamental meanings that cannot be found by counting alone and which are also based on subjective interpretations, paying attention to the context and nuances to draw meaningful inferences from the data (Atkinson, 2017; Roller, 2023). The focus and the ways of doing qualitative and quantitative content analysis also determine the relationship with theory. While quantitative content analysis is mainly used for

testing existing theories, the qualitative one is usually associated with the process of theory development from data (induction). Categories and themes may appear through data analysis and then be used to build theory (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023). The purpose of quantitative content analysis is to provide an objective, systematic, and quantitative definition of explicit content. It can be used to test a pre-established hypothesis or theory (deductive approach) or to get descriptive statistics. The purpose of qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, is to uncover, interpret and understand the meaning of the text, and it typically aims to grasp the fundamental meaning carried by the text. It usually also seeks to generate theories or theoretically linked explanations (inductive approach) (Bradley, 1993; Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). It is also usually oriented toward explanation, interpretation and, to some extent, even justification (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Regarding process and flexibility, while the predefined coding schemes and rules are also usually employed by quantitative content analysis. The process is usually less flexible for a quantitative analyst who is likely to make only small or no changes in the course of the data collection phase to the coding scheme (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Lune & Berg, 2017). The analysis is also typically done separately by a computer. In contrast to quantitative one, it can be said that qualitative content analysis has a more flexible and less rigid approach. The analysis process is also iterative. The researcher defines many elements of research design at the start but expects to be able to change the plans as new insights come. Coding schemes and categories may also emerge and/or be reshaped as the data are being analyzed. Analytical activities also usually continue actively during fieldwork. Iterative procedure is the essence of a qualitative method (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). In quantitative content analysis, the main objective is to make objective and repeatable inferences (Roller, 2023) and to minimize subjectivity, and also to provide a precise definition of what to count is important (Lune & Berg, 2017). At the same time, qualitative content analysis embraces subjectivity and is not afraid to admit the researcher's interpretation. It is also here where the researcher draws meaningful interpretations or inferences from the data (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). However, to do it, a

systematic and careful approach is needed in order not to fall into a trap of introducing non-substantive subjectivity into the analysis. Interpretation cannot be separated from the researcher's own background, history and prior knowledge. At the same time, both approaches also involve a data reduction process. However, while quantitative content analysis is reduced usually by converting it into a numerical form, qualitative content analysis is reduced to a manageable level, but at the same time, preserves its critical content. Data are also broken down into smaller units and then recombined to highlight patterns, themes and concepts (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023).

In brief, it can be said that quantitative content analysis is interested primarily in counting surface-level (explicit) content and identifying statistical patterns, while qualitative content analysis is interested in the interpretation of the underlying (implicit) meaning of the texts and the understanding of context and it also often involves theory development. The quantitative approach is more structured and inductive while the qualitative approach is more flexible, iterative and also, more often than not, inductive. Both can be used to provide complementary insights into the same data from different perspectives (Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023).

Content analysis is a systematic and process-oriented method (Roller, 2023). In content analysis, the typical steps include coding and category development. In different approaches and processes, content analysis also provides a tool for categorizing, organizing, indexing and data retrieval. For example, the categories may be allowed to emerge inductively from the data (similar to grounded theory), the deductive framework, which is already derived from an existing theory, can be used, or a combination of the two (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017). In an inductive approach, the researcher immerses herself in the data and tries to identify meaningful dimensions or themes. In a deductive approach, the researcher starts with the categorical scheme already derived from the theoretical perspective (Lune & Berg, 2017). On the other hand, the analysis can also extend to both manifest and latent analysis. The former attempts to define the visible content or text while the latter analysis attempts to understand the subtext or the symbols underlying and beyond the

visible content. In most cases, both are taken into consideration (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023).

As Hsieh and Shannon (2005, as cited in Roller, 2023) have suggested, there are three principal approaches to qualitative content analysis including conventional, directed and summative. These three approaches are also primarily different in terms of the role of inductive reasoning and the extent to which existing theoretical frameworks are applied in interpreting the data. First of all, in a conventional approach, the coding categories are developed inductively which also means that they directly emerge from the raw data and without any connection to a pre-existing theory. It is a method that is also highly consistent with grounded theory as the researcher also seeks to generate conceptual insights from the lived experiences of the participants or from the contextual meaning that is embedded in the data. For example, according to this approach, the far-right media texts will also be analyzed without using any predefine categories or theoretical assumptions. The themes will be allowed to emerge inductively from the data itself. In other words, newspaper articles will be examined and the repeating patterns in the ways Turkish migrants are represented, such as in references to “cultural difference,” “criminality” or “economic burden” will be identified based on what can be found in the texts without being guided by a priori theoretical frameworks or relevant scholarly literature. The second approach also adopts a deductive orientation when both codes and categories are also informed by existing theories or prior research. The researcher also begins with the theoretical lens but is open to new patterns or categories also emerging from the data. This hybrid method also allows for the confirmation, extension and even refinement of established theoretical frameworks by the analysis of the empirical material. In this approach, for example, the analysis will be also guided by theoretical frameworks which are already available with relation to media representation, xenophobia and nationalism. The concepts such as “othering,” “cultural threat narratives” and “symbolic exclusion,” as they have been defined in critical discourse theory and migration studies literature, are used as initial analytical categories. The media content is then also examined with specific attention paid to these constructions. But at the same time, this analysis remains open to the identification of the new themes which may inductively also emerge from the data

beyond the pre-existing framework. Thirdly, beyond the conventional and directed approaches, there is also the summative approach to content analysis which also begins with the identification of specific words or phrases in the raw text material that is being also analyzed. After this initial quantitative step, the analysis further expands to the more qualitative exploration of the underlying or latent meaning, as well as of the themes that are also embedded in the content. In other words, according to this summative approach, specific words or expressions, for example, “integration,” “Islam,” “crime” or “parallel society” are also first identified and quantified in the far-right media content which is specific for the Turkish migrants in Germany. After this first step, the contextual use of these terms and their underlying meaning are then interpreted. Through this process, the way the language is used to also construct larger narratives about identity, exclusion or social tension is also examined. As a result of this, surface-level linguistic patterns and deeper ideological structures are also revealed. This also then allows for a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which the discourse is used for the public perception of the situation and the actors to be shaped (Lune & Berg, 2017).

The widespread applicability of qualitative content analysis may be said, as it can be used for pre-existing materials in written or printed forms from text-based materials such as newspapers and magazine articles historical documents and literature to online contents and other kinds of written materials such as stereotypes in textbooks, tone in advertisements, and speaking styles of the politicians, visual materials like television contents, films, artworks, photographs taken by the researcher or participants (e.g., in photo-response methods which collects the comments of the participants on visual materials such as photographs and analyzes them through content analysis), audio materials like music lyrics, speeches, and even social artifacts and found objects produced by people but not intended for research; additionally, it can be used in a wide variety of fields such as sociology, criminology, psychology, education, journalism, art, political science, health services, information science, mass communication, and marketing (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023). For instance, as Lune & Berg (2017) note, the focus on the text-based material is the most common application of content analysis and it may include transcripts of recorded verbal communication as well as written

documents. Amy Binder, for instance, analyzed the contents of the news article on how “danger” in the context of the spreading influence of the heavy metal and rap music was constructed between 1985 and 1990 (Lune & Berg, 2017), Denny (2011, as cited in Roller, 2023) detailed how gender biases were conveyed in the reading materials of girl and boy scouts’ handbooks, Lemish (2000, as cited in Roller, 2023) studied the media representation of female migrants in Israel, Pharr and Lough (2012, as cited in Roller, 2023) analyzed the websites of the professional sports leagues on how they targeted their social outreach services to the communities, and Morris (1994, as cited in Roller, 2023) interpret the messages that the organizational stakeholders are given in the corporate mission statements. On the other hand, Kaphingst et al. (2004, as cited in Roller, 2023) and Altheide (1987, as cited in Roller, 2023) focused on the materials other than text based as the content analysis subject in their studies; while the former was concentrating on the commercial materials, the latter’s focus had been on the television news coverage. On the other hand, Egberg-Thyme et al. (2013, as cited in Roller, 2023) utilized content analysis in the scribbles of the patients produced during the art psychotherapy sessions, while Beeman (2007, as cited in Roller, 2023) in the representation of racism and interracial relationships in U.S. films. In terms of the online content, Nordfeldt et al. (2012, as cited in Roller, 2023) made use of the method to content analyze the essays written by diabetes health-care professionals on their experience with the patient-centered web portal. As a whole, Herring (2010, as cited in Roller, 2023) and Parker et al. (2011, as cited in Roller, 2023) argued that because of the dynamic nature of the digital platform and its interactive process, a new way of conducting qualitative content analysis needs to be developed to better take into account the dynamics structure of the social media and the interactive richness of its content.

In a nutshell, it can be said that qualitative content analysis can be employed in the analysis of vast amount of pre-existing material from text-based materials such as newspapers and magazine articles historical documents and literature to online contents and other kinds of written materials such as stereotypes in textbooks, tone in advertisements, and speaking styles of the politicians, visual materials like television contents, films, artworks, photographs taken by the researcher or participants (e.g., in photo-response methods which collects the comments of the participants on visual

materials such as photographs and analyzes them through content analysis), audio materials like music lyrics, speeches, and even social artifacts and found objects produced by people but not intended for research; additionally, it can be used in a wide variety of fields such as sociology, criminology, psychology, education, journalism, art, political science, health services, information science, mass communication, and marketing (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023).

3.1.2. Case Study

A case study is a type of research design within the framework of qualitative research. Essentially, it involves an in-depth analysis of one or more cases. A “case” can be individuals, events, processes, groups or communities. Cases are typically limited in time and activity. The primary purpose of a case study is to effectively understand how the subject being studied works or functions. Case studies tend to grasp a holistic understanding or explanation (Creswell, 2007; Lune & Berg, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data collection in case study design is conducted over a long period of time by using various data collection procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Multiple methods and data sources, such as observations, interviews, official or personal documents, environments, and visual materials can be used (Creswell, 2007; Lune & Berg, 2017). The aim of the case study is to reveal manifest interactions or latent elements that other approaches of research design may overlook. It can be powerful to provide context, historical background and meaning (Lune & Berg, 2017). Besides, the researcher’s own experiences, background, and culture may shape the interpretation process in the case study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Case studies are classified in different ways in the literature, for example, by number of cases, by purpose, by design type and by embeddedness. Single case studies, as befits the name, is the examination process of a single case while the multiple case studies, which are considered to be “more convincing” or “more robust,” focus on more than one cases (Creswell, 2007; Lune & Berg, 2017). On the other hand, Stake

(1994, 1995) draws a typology for the purpose of the case study design. Firstly, intrinsic case study is conducted to better understand a specific unique or ordinary case itself; it is not done to generalize theory, but it can generate ideas. Secondly, instrumental case study is used to provide insight into an issue or topic or to improve a theoretical explanation. The case is used to visualize the issue or theory, and it is secondary to the issue or theory. In other words, the case is used instrumentally to concrete and understand the theoretical explanation or problem that is the main subject of research. The case itself plays a secondary role; the main purpose is to shed light on a broader theoretical issue or problem. Thirdly, collective case study is an intensive examination of multiple instrumental cases to understand or theorize a broader context, and it is also known as comparative case study and used to identify similarities and patterns between cases (Creswell, 2007; Lune & Berg, 2017). According to Yin's typology of design type (1994, 2003a, as cited in Lune & Berg, 2017), a case study could be exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. In exploratory design, fieldwork can be conducted before defining the research question; it is useful as a pilot study and may be used to respond quickly to unexpected events or to design follow-up research. On the other hand, explanatory design is used for causal or inferential research questions, and it aims to create a causal explanation by examining multiple factors and conditions while useful for developing, testing, or expanding theory. Contrary to this, descriptive design presents a pre-existing descriptive theory and focuses on the uniqueness of the case rather than inferential models. Jensen and Rodgers (2001, as cited in Lune & Berg, 2017) propose an alternative classification of case studies. They suggest differentiating between "snapshot" case studies that span a defined time period, and "pre- or post-event" case studies. Additionally, they highlight comparative case studies which emphasize key differences between two or more otherwise similar cases. Importantly, their temporal typology allows case studies to incorporate multiple types simultaneously, which means that categorizing a study does not require strict adherence to a single format. In terms of the embeddedness of the case study approach, it can be said that it enables researchers to explore the complexities of social phenomena by examining multiple interconnected layers within a single case. Rather than only focusing on the macro-level structure, it allows for the analysis of micro- and meso-level dynamics that operate within. This kind of layered

design captures the relational and structural dimensions that shape collective outcomes (Lune & Berg, 2017). Case studies can vary in their use of theory as well. They may be guided by a pre-existing theory (theory-based) or used to generate theory as a result of the study (grounded theory case study) and contribute to theory by providing “thick description” enabling a deep understanding of phenomena, events, people, or organizations (Ambert et al., 1995; Lune & Berg, 2017).

Sample sizes in qualitative research are typically small. In case studies, sample size depends on the type of question being asked, the complexity and the purpose of the study, and the availability of the data. When the aim is to generalize theory, the sample size may be small, and researchers may stop collecting new data when categories or themes reach saturation and no longer provide new insights. In the design of case study, purposeful sampling based on criteria related to the research question is used. Approximately four to five cases are recommended for a typical case study (Bradley, 1993; Ambert et al., 1995; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Case study can be a powerful tool for understanding many topics and events through intensive and in-depth work, to crown it all, it provides context, history, and meaning while focusing on the uniqueness of each case. However, it may fail due to subjectivity in interpreting meaning. It can easily become merely descriptive and bury important relationships in too much information (Lune & Berg, 2017).

3.2. The Study

3.2.1. Research Question and Objective

The principal aim of this study is to critically analyze the representation of Turkish migrants in far-right media outlets in Germany with a particular focus on how these representations contribute to the processes of stigmatization and social exclusion. Situated within the broader context of European far-right populism, this research seeks to explore how national identity, cultural belonging, and perceived societal threats are constructed through the extreme nationalist way of media portrayals of migrants in the case of German far-right media. The central research question of the study is “How do far-right media outlets represent Turkish migrants

living in Germany?” in order to reveal broader processes of stigmatization and exclusion in contemporary far-right discourses by addressing the following sub-questions:

- What recurring themes, narratives and stereotypes are used in far-right media portrayals of Turkish migrants?
- How do these representations construct Turkish migrants as cultural, religious or political “others”?
- How do these representations intersect with broader debates about national identity, integration, and social cohesion in Germany?
- How do these portrayals contribute to the symbolic and social marginalization of Turkish migrants within Germany public discourse?

Through these questions, the study aims to engage critically with the theoretical literature on exclusion, anti-migration, and nationalist-populist discourse by examining the recurring themes, narratives, and stereotypes that characterize far-right portrayals of Turkish migrants. It problematizes how these portrayals construct Turkish migrants as cultural, religious, or political “others” by reinforcing symbolic boundaries that distinguish them from the imagined national community. Furthermore, the study investigates how such representations intersect with ongoing debates about national identity, integration, and social cohesion in Germany by revealing the extent to which media narratives contribute to the symbolic and social marginalization of Turkish migrants within public discourse.

3.2.2. Material Selection Process and Rationale

This study works with the method of content analysis and aims to analyze how Turkish migrants are represented by far-right media in Germany and to what extent such representations have stigmatization, otherization, and symbolic exclusion effects based on an analysis of far-right media reporting on Turkish migrants in Germany in the inter-election period between October 2021 and February 2025. This timeframe was selected not merely for its electoral significance, referring to the inter-election period in Germany, but because it provides an analytically rich context in which far-right media operate with relative continuity and without the immediate

shifts in tone or strategy that are often accompanied by pre-election campaigns. Unlike mainstream media, far-right outlets do not calibrate their discourse based on centrist alliances or public consensus. In this regard, the inter-election period allows for the sustained reproduction of stigmatizing portrayals of Turkish migrants who are depicted not as absent or under-represented, but as highly visible figures associated with cultural threat, religious difference, or political disloyalty. The period serves as a fertile ground for understanding how exclusionary representations become normalized over time beyond the emphasized visibility of election cycles, but no less politically consequential, and enables the study to identify recurring stereotypes, themes, and narrative strategies used by far-right media to construct Turkish migrants as “others.” It also facilitates tracing how these portrayals intersect with ongoing debates about national identity, integration, and social cohesion.

To make sure that the study draws upon diverse yet ideologically aligned far-right content, four media sources were carefully selected. The selection was based on the established link to the far-right and its potential for influencing public discourse via nationalism and anti-migration positions:

- *Compact-Magazin* is published monthly and can be described as nationalist-populist with existing ties to *Patriotische Europäer Gegen Islamisierung Des Abendlandes* (PEGIDA), a Germany-based nationalist movement, and the AfD and a particular tendency for framing Turkish migrants through Islamization and criminality discourses. Its openly “pro-sovereignty” position is presented as a patriotic defense of Germans and their history via providing particularly negative and aggressive coverage of migration and migrants.
- *Junge Freiheit* is released in weekly volumes and presents a “more intellectualized” and “educated” kind of far-right discourse. It does not directly use inflammatory language but rather frames Turkish migrants as culturally incompatible and politically unfaithful by evoking an association with Erdogan’s influence in the community and questioning its integration within Germany.
- *PI News* website has an online-only presence and is an aggressive, openly anti-Islam publication. Its key frame is the threat to Germany and a way of

existence as it directly associates Turkish migrants with “Islamization” and, therefore, danger to society. Its major legitimization strategy is being an “alternative” to the “liar” mainstream media.

- *Deutsche Stimme* newspaper is directly linked to the party “*Die Heimat*” (previously NDP) and has a similarly promoting and ethnonationalist, explicitly xenophobic positions as *Compact-Magazin*. It positions itself against the mainstream and pro-migrant coverage, presenting itself as the last bastion of “truthful” journalism and the protector of German ethnicity.

The four selected sources all show some specific features, but at the same time they each represent similar core ideological value sets that are built upon extreme nationalism and exclusionary populism. However, in a closer look, they show some variation in tone, degree of formality and aggressiveness of anti-migrant frames. For example, *Compact-Magazin* and *PI News* are more straightforward and aggressive in the style they use, while *Junge Freiheit* is more nuanced and intelligent in their choice of vocabulary. In contrast, *Deutsche Stimme* appears different in terms of its articulation of party-driven propaganda and to some extent its dedication to specific political parties. For example, although *Compact-Magazin* is clearly associated with AfD and *Deutsche Stimme* with *Die Heimat*, the content they provide is not always in lockstep with the political party, even if it often mirrors it.

I believe that far-right media content represents an important source of understanding of how public narratives about migration are constructed, legitimized and circulated. The discourses both reflect the political meanings but are also a means of creating them and, in particular, shaping how migrants are perceived and how their presence is framed in the context of policy debates. The main difference to other studies on the role of media in presenting and shaping migrant visibility, such as the overwhelming focus on underrepresentation (Uysal, 2011; Reynolds, 2013; Schmidbaur, 2016; Eberl et al., 2018; Hestermann, 2018; Richter, 2023), is in the type of material examined. As for this study, the right-wing publications are therefore assumed to present themselves as an alternative to other media and to provide truthful telling of what is otherwise kept under the carpet. The analyzed media sources tend to overrepresent the Turkish migrants by discussing them

primarily through the discriminatory and stigmatizing frames. Analyzing this type of media, in my opinion, fills the existing gap in the literature by showing how migrant presence can also be utilized to a discursive purpose that is more exclusionary and harmful for migrant communities.

Media content is one of the possible sources of information used in qualitative research and, in particular, in case studies (Bradley, 1993; Lune & Berg, 2017; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023). It is seen as a cultural artifact that was purposefully produced with certain social or political intentions and can, therefore, provide a window into the context and meaning-making processes of a particular case that is being studied (Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023). In particular, it can help to uncover both the manifest and latent meanings and social representations, and reveal information about certain values, norms, and symbolic borders that are characteristic of a given society (Atkinson, 2017; Lune & Berg, 2017; Reisner, 2023; Roller, 2023). It can also be used to trace the historical shifts in discourse and analyze how the meaning-makers' positions and understandings shape the construction of social reality (Lune & Berg, 2017). This potential and its importance notwithstanding, some limitations of media content as a data source have been noted. In particular, the most common one is the lack of direct information about the audience's perception of the content (Reisner, 2023). This is due to the lack of interactivity in most media formats, such as social media, video content, and news articles. However, despite the limitations, media content remains an important data source for qualitative inquiry as it provides an insight into how certain groups are framed and positioned within public discourses.

3.2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

In order to understand how Turkish migrants are framed in the far-right discourse, news content from five far-right media outlets previously mentioned in Germany was collected between October 2021 and February 2025. Relevant news items were found through a focused keyword search. "*Türken*" (Turks), "*Deutsch-Türken*" (German Turks), "*türkische Gemeinschaft*" (Turkish community) and "*türkische Migranten*" (Turkish migrants) were keywords utilized for the search within the

websites of the abovementioned media outlets. These words were used in order to filter out the news items that were directly or indirectly mentioning Turkish migrants.

Once the relevant content was obtained, manual screening and categorization were performed. Articles containing discriminatory or stigmatizing language were read through and then manually assigned to the recurring thematic categories. These categories represent the main frames of exclusion and are the following:

- Securitization and criminalization
- Boundary making and symbolic exclusion
- Ethnonational belonging
- Cultural neo-racism and incompatibility
- Opportunity hoarding
- Contested citizenship

The articles were manually tagged in accordance with these categories in terms of whether they contained references to any of the frames mentioned above. This process yielded a basic quantitative distribution of themes and frequencies, which helped us to understand which discursive strategies are more common in which media outlet. After categorizing the articles, a qualitative content analysis was performed to interpret latent meanings that lie under the texts. The articles were selected to be analyzed by reading through carefully and paying attention to rhetorical devices such as metaphors, exaggeration, and generalizations. This type of interpretive work made it possible to not only capture how Turkish migrants were explicitly described but also how certain ideological ideas, such as national identity, cultural purity, and security, were implicitly backed through these descriptions.

The whole process has been done manually without the help of any coding software. The decision to do so has been made based on the need for flexibility and context sensitivity in spotting patterns and symbolic associations that may have been missed by automated coding. The combination of thematic categorization and qualitative interpretation provides a rich and holistic understanding of how Turkish

migrants are constructed as visible yet stigmatized subjects within far-right discourse.

3.2.4. Limitations, Reflexivity, Positionality

The study has two main limitations, one theoretical and one methodological. The theoretical limitation of the study is that it only covers how Turkish migrants are represented in far-right media outlets. The analysis does not also incorporate information about how those representations are received and what responses they get either from the intended audience or from the migrant communities that are being talked about. In other words, while the analysis was focused on the ways Turkish migrants are framed as cultural, political, and religious “others,” the work does not look at how those portrayals are made sense of, perceived, challenged, or internalized in everyday life of the consumers of these contents. The other methodological limitation of the study is its focus on a certain migrant group and not on migrant’s experiences of exclusion or othering in a more general sense. This means that the research does not pay attention to whether or not other migrants, be it from different national, cultural, or religious contexts, face similar patterns of stigmatization as Turkish people.

Another limitation of the study is directly related to the choice to do all the analysis manually. By this, I mean that all steps, from identifying relevant articles to their thematic categorization and interpretation, were performed without the help of special software or coding programs. While this decision was made based on the wish to do as much context-sensitive work as possible, all this process has remained subjective by its nature. The other limitation of the study is related to its rather narrow empirical scope. Although these four far-right media outlets have been chosen carefully for their ideological commitments and the potential to influence the public discourse, they are not all representative of far-right discourse in Germany. What I would like to mean here is that, more precisely, some media organizations, such as *Tichys Einblick*, *Deutschland Kurier*, and some other media outlets, such as *Ein Prozent*, broadcasting on alternative social media platforms like Telegram, Gab or BitChute was not part of this sampling. In Germany, far-right media can be

monitored by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*, shortly “BfV”), or they may be banned if it can be proved that the media in question have affiliations to a terrorist organization that carried out violent attacks. Furthermore, certain individual pieces of content could have been blocked under German hate speech laws. For this reason, it is not possible to claim that all media organizations and online platforms that produce news and other content that align with far-right ideology in Germany are included in the scope of this study.

In terms of reflexivity and positionality, it is possible to say that the way of interpretation of the findings in this study has been defined by my critical stance to the exclusionary and ethnocentric meaning-making of nationalism and far-right populism. This perspective is informed by the awareness of certain structurally embedded inequalities that migrant communities are subjected to and an examination of the social repercussions of such media-driven stigmatization. While every effort has been made to be as systematic and consistent as possible in approaching the data, the process of identifying and interpreting the discriminatory themes has also been, to a certain extent, influenced by my own positional lens as a researcher whose interests are defined by regarding power asymmetries and exclusionary discourses. It can be said that this kind of subjectivity is not necessarily a shortcoming of the study but rather an inherent feature of qualitative research that prioritizes depth of inquiry, interpretation and context sensitivity.

Overall, the study, despite the limitations in terms of empirical inclusivity and generalizability, makes a contribution to the literature by providing a focused and critical account of how Turkish migrants are positioned as visible yet stigmatized subjects within far-right media narratives in Germany today.

CHAPTER 4

FAR-RIGHT MEDIA IN GERMANY

This chapter will take a closer look at the interrelations of ideology, media, and politics by mapping far-right media in Germany in terms of their ideological stance, media strategies, and societal impact. It starts with a brief conceptual delineation of far-right media with the focus on the deeper meaning of the terms “far-right” and the characteristics of far-right media outlets broadcasting in Germany in terms of their positioning themselves as “alternative.” Then it follows up by analyzing far-right media’s repudiation of democratic pluralism, ethnonationalist, authoritarian, and exclusionary populist principles. The chapter continues by retracing the historical development of the New Right in Germany by highlighting its metapolitical strategy to mold social thoughts and political opinion through media production and an intellectualized style of public discourse. In this regard, it subsequently introduces four of the largest far-right media platforms, that are *Junge Freiheit*, *PI News*, *Compact-Magazin*, and *Deutsche Stimme*, each as a case study that collectively reveals how the far-right ideology informs the genre of journalism. Further, by way of analysis, it explores the far-right media mechanisms by way of antagonism against the mainstream media, provocation, populist mass mobilization, and discursive mainstreaming. It also turns its attention to the emergence of a new mainstream consisting of the increasingly symbiotic relationship between the mainstream and alternative media and its subsequent normalization of far-right debate. Lastly, it examines how migrants are framed in far-right media by unmasking how far-right media in Germany rely on various journalistic strategies to underpin far-right agendas. In particular, it is shown that far-right media relies on framing, sensationalism, and ideological agenda-setting to buttress its exclusionary narratives. In sum, it is revealed that far-right media in Germany not only circulate extremist content but also change political debate and democratic culture.

4.1. Conceptualization of “Far-Right” and “Alternative Media”

Far-right media in Germany is an interconnected network of media actors and alternative media outlets that oppose the mainstream media and the established political system, presenting their news stories and public affairs with alternative news framing. These alternative media tend to reject specific social and political issues in Germany’s context, such as migration, globalization, gender diversity, political correctness, and so on. They are also known for building their own ideological infrastructures and distinguishing themselves from the mainstream media through deliberate misinformation, misinterpretation, fabrication of facts or myths, and taking the contents of news out of context (Klawier et al., 2022; Klawier, 2023). Rone (2022) argues that in order to properly understand and examine how far-right news, channels, and outlets operationalize their exclusionary and derogatory principles and mechanisms, it is essential to first clarify the terms “far-right” and “alternative media.”

4.1.1. What Is “Far-Right”?

Firstly, it is offered that “far-right” is used as a broad category and an umbrella term to include two different subgroups: the extreme right and the radical right (Halikiopoulou, 2018; Mudde, 2010, as cited in Rone, 2022). The extreme right typically rejects procedural democracy and is frequently linked to vigilante organizations and political parties that have fascist affiliations, often display overt racism, and make use of violent methods (Halikiopoulou, 2018, as cited in Rone, 2022); by contrast, the radical right generally upholds procedural democracy but usually shares the extreme right’s focus on nativism and authoritarianism (Mudde, 2007, as cited in Rone, 2022). In other words, far-right ideology is not monolithic but rather one that exists along a continuum of subgroups, ranging from radical-right groups openly rejecting democratic rules to more “mainstreamed” ones who opportunistically exploit liberal institutions to pursue illiberal agendas. In this way, the latter parties often are referred to as the “radical far right,” tend to accept electoral democracy, but can still oppose pluralism and minority rights, which ideological flexibility allows far-right movements to appeal to a wide range of

audiences while at the same time maintaining their exclusionary foundations (Mudde, 2007, as cited in Forchtner, 2020). In this sense, the activation of crisis mode of the asylum and migration-related policies in a political sense, to a certain extent, has catalyzed a recent rise in far-right social movements of both a radical and extreme type (Mudde, 2017, as cited in Rone, 2022) and has, thus, prompted scholars to pay more attention to the far-right reactions of social groups by examining the dynamic relations between far-right politics, activism, and subcultures (Rone, 2022).

The far-right ideology represents a complex and multifaceted political phenomenon, having at its core a number of central principles. At its core, far-right ideology is built around ethnonationalism that ties national identity to an imagined biological, racial, or cultural heritage, by which means members of the national community are identified as the “rightful owners” of the country (Forchtner, 2020). This often takes the form of “nativism,” a xenophobic form of nationalism that calls for the political and cultural hegemony of the “native” population while positioning migrants and ethnic minorities as threats to national identity and, therefore, portraying them as a target of exclusion and prejudice (Mudde, 2004, as cited in Maurer et al., 2022).

Another characteristic that is closely associated with ethnonationalism is authoritarianism, which elevates the importance of strict social hierarchy, obedience to traditional authority figures, and harsh punishments for those who resist or deviate from these norms (Bonikowski, 2017, as cited in Forchtner, 2020). As such, far-right movements are often anti-pluralist and tend to oppose any internal social diversity, instead, promoting a unified, ethnically homogenous vision of the Volk (people) (Bonikowski, 2017, as cited in Forchtner, 2020). This exclusionary logic may also extend to the belief in “welfare chauvinism,” which advocates that social benefits are to be reserved only for members of the dominant ethnic group and works to reinforce the dividing line between the “deserving, hardworking citizens” and the “undeserving, lazy outsiders” (Wodak, 2020).

A defining feature of contemporary far-right movements is their embrace of populist rhetoric, which appeals to the people and constructs a binary divide between the “pure people” and the “corrupt elite” (Mudde, 2007, as cited in Fochtner, 2020).

Although populism as such is a “thin-centered ideology,” which is able to mix with and attach to different political projects (Mudde, 2004, as cited in Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022), right-wing populism in particular fuses anti-elitism with nationalist and nativist ideologies (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012, as cited in Wodak, 2020). This can, in turn, allow far-right actors to frame their exclusionary and authoritarian policies as the authentic expression of the people’s will, often legitimized through a crisis narrative and the manufacturing of collective fear (Wodak, 2021, as cited in Müller & Freudenthaler 2022).

The far right is also characterized by historical revisionism, the glorification of a mythologized past, and the downplaying or denial of historical atrocities committed by the nation (Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022). In Germany, for example, this has involved Holocaust denial and euphemizing Nazi crimes (Holzer, 1994; Salzborn, 2014, as cited in Wodak, 2020). Such narratives often emphasize the national community’s collective victimhood or heroism, painting it as either the rightful victors or innocent victims of external conspiracies, which, in turn, justifies contemporary xenophobic policies and discrimination (Wodak, 2020).

Finally, the rise of far-right has been accompanied by the growth of alternative media ecosystems that amplify its messages through anti-establishment and counter-hegemonic framing, conspiracy theories, normalization of extremist discourse, and some other adaptive discursive strategies (Kaiser et al. 2020, as cited in Müller & Freudenthaler 2022). At the same time, they use a range of discursive practices such as scapegoating, fear mongering, and the construction of existential threats to mobilize and radicalize their audience and legitimize authoritarian policies (Wodak, 2021, as cited in Müller & Freudenthaler 2022).

In summary, the far-right ideology can be defined by its commitment to ethnonationalism, authoritarianism, and exclusionary populism, all of which are buttressed through the mechanisms of historical revisionism, welfare chauvinism, and some other adaptive discursive strategies. This discursive adaptability, in particular, ensures its ability to evolve and make use of contemporary issues, which, in turn, can secure its continued relevance in the global political arena.

4.1.2. Understanding “Alternative Media”

The conceptualization of “alternative media” has expanded far beyond its traditional roots in progressive left-wing counter-hegemonic activism (Atton, 2002, as cited in Rone, 2022). It is proposed to offer a broader definition that conceptualizes alternative media as a set of platforms that position themselves as providing the correctives to the dominant mainstream discourse, effectively challenging the established mainstream media’s ideological and editorial bias (Holt et al., 2019, as cited in Rone, 2022). While, in the past, scholarship often idealized alternative media as democratizing forces that pushed back against bourgeois hegemony (Atton, 2002, as cited in Rone, 2022), more recent work has focused on its use by far-right actors who instrumentalize it as a tool to critique and oppose mainstream journalism and advance exclusionary ideologies (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2018). This is to say that, far-right media, in particular, function not just as partisan news sources but as integrated mobilization tools which fuse activism and journalism into one, using its resources to stage political campaigns, orchestrate protests, and launch petitions (Rone, 2022).

Operationally, far-right media stand out from their mainstream counterparts by their rejection of journalistic norms and practices, such as objectivity and neutrality, instead becoming what Rone (2022) calls “indignation mobilization mechanisms.” This is to say that, far-right media do not just report on the news but actively orchestrate outrage and coordinate collective action. In practice, these outlets distinguish themselves from mainstream journalism by an explicit partisanship, selective framing, and close personal ties with far-right political figures, reinforcing ideological echo chambers while also silencing and marginalizing dissenting views (Cammaerts, 2015, as cited in Rone, 2022). At the same time, their business models, which can vary from ad-dependent operations to more ideologically and financially insulated projects, influence their editorial choices, with some tending to moderate rhetoric in the name of retaining advertisers, while others remain more focused on radical mobilization (Braun et al., 2019, as cited in Rone, 2022).

This dual function as a news provider and activist network blurs the conceptual lines between media, propaganda, and social movements (Rone, 2022). Its growth has also

been greatly facilitated by digital platforms, which allowed it to sidestep traditional gatekeepers and build dedicated and, in many cases, increasingly radicalized audiences (Bennett & Pfetsch, 2018, as cited in Klawier et al., 2022; Faris et al., 2017, as cited in Klawier, 2023). As such, contemporary conceptualizations of alternative media must take its ideological diversity, functional hybridity, and manipulative capacities into account, whether it be in progressive forms of critique or far-right backlash (Holt et al., 2019, as cited in Rone, 2022).

4.1.3. Discussion of the Concept “New Right”

The conceptual and operational definition of the “New Right” has remained disputed and variegated in research, but several salient features could be distinguished that set the concept apart from the far right in its previous or historical guises, the so-called “old right.” First, the “New Right” is marked by the intellectualization of right-wing extremism and a project of cultural or metapolitical hegemony – that is, rather than attaining power through the ballot box or political infiltration, the New Right aspires to “metapolitical” influence and infiltration of dominant institutions and debates. Second, while the New Right is used as a denomination in various ways (temporally, to refer to post-war changes in the far right and distinguish it from its pre-war fascist manifestation; phenomenologically, as a label or brand name used by actors who identify themselves as the New Right and signal a new phase or modernization of the far right; and analytically, as an umbrella term to refer to a distinct intellectual current within right-wing extremism as a particular, distinctive intellectual and political movement in the contemporary far right), in all its uses it usually signifies a distancing from the explicitly fascist and neo-Nazi traditions of the first half of the 20th century (Salzborn, 2016).

A historically more specific sense of the New Right emerged in Germany in the 1970s with the founding of *Aktion Neue Rechte* (a breakaway of the NPD, active between 1972-1974, and self-referentially understood as the “beginning” of the New Right in Germany) drawing inspiration from the French *Nouvelle Droite*, a movement and think tank headed by Alain de Benoist and from the concepts of ethno-differentialism and ethnopluralism that eschewed biological racism in favor of

a segregationist, culturally isolationist position that was couched in the ostensibly benign language of protecting diversity (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, as cited in Forchtner, 2020; see also Rueda, 2021). This is a strategic as much as ideological move that has been understood as a cultural or neo-racism in which ostensibly biologically fixed and geographically fixed cultural identities underpin exclusionary politics but without attracting the stigma of biological racism (Taguieff, 1990; Balibar, 1991, as cited in Forchtner, 2020). In its ideological roots, the New Right draws on the Weimar Republic's so-called "conservative revolution" of Carl Schmitt, Oswald Spengler, and Ernst Jünger, whose intellectuals and theories were on hand to undergird National Socialism in a more palatable guise (Salzborn, 2016).

Operationally, the New Right is noted for a politics of mimicry, copying and repurposing leftist strategy and discourse, and in this particular way adapting concepts like the Gramscian cultural hegemony to its own ends of stealthy infiltration (Salzborn, 2016). In practice, this has entailed the creation of think tanks like *Institut für Staatspolitik* (a private association which does ideological and educational work in the spirit of the New Right and was founded in 2000 by people with connections to the new right-wing weekly newspaper *Junge Freiheit*) and cultural platforms like neo-folk concerts and online forums for young people (Simpson & Druxes, 2015). In this way, the New Right established what were called "pre-political" spaces in which far-right ideas were popularized and masked under civil garbs in an attempt to re-organize social values and blur the lines between conservatism and extremism (Lang, 2016). Political manifestations of New Right ideas today include groups like PEGIDA and parties like the AfD, though this has been seen to vulgarize and oversimplify these intellectual claims in some ways by its populist bent (Salzborn, 2016; Forchtner, 2020). Briefly, the New Right can be operationally defined then as an intellectual and strategic project that seeks to establish far-right cultural hegemony through metapolitics, ideological mimicry, and the civil reframing of exclusionary and ethnonationalist ideas.

4.2. Far-Right Media Outlets Selected for This Study

The first one, *Junge Freiheit*, was selected because of its far-right and, more specifically, New Right ideas. The weekly newspaper has played an important role in

the German far-right since the 1990s and has helped shape far-right discourse and structure debates while bridging various far-right milieus. Although it experienced a setback during the years, its circulation began to grow again in the early 2000s after it re-established itself as a leading media outlet in the right-wing sphere – from about 15.000 weekly copies in 2008 to over 25.000 in 2015. Despite a brief time when it was under surveillance by the domestic security services for extremist content, it has somewhat moderated in its extreme völkisch rhetoric since then but continues to display völkisch themes and ideologies. The weekly newspaper has also been closely associated with the AfD and even described as the party’s “unofficial party newspaper” (Gebhardt, 2018, p. 115, as cited in Forchtner & Özvatan, 2020). Its articles, including the climate-related ones, share similar themes to other far-right outlets and attempts to blend nationalist and patriotic narratives with selective engagement with environmentalist issues. While the Junge Freiheit might have shifted within conservatism and came under increased attention from both scholars and law enforcement agencies, it has remained an important outlet for the New Right and has bridged divides between the established New Right intellectuals and the AfD-supported populist radical right (Salzborn, 2016; Forchtner & Özvatan, 2020; Klawier et al., 2022). On its website, the following is written: “Junge Freiheit was founded in 1986 as a student and university newspaper. It quickly became known in high schools and universities throughout Germany. In 1994, a small and idealistic group of writers had the courage to launch JF as a new conservative weekly newspaper without the financial support of a major publishing house, a development department or a planning team. Despite the difficult circumstances, the newspaper has overcome many severe challenges since its inception and has continued to grow every year. Junge Freiheit has survived for more than 35 years, proving that idealism, entrepreneurial courage and confidence in the value of its product have paid off. In the context of a newspaper market that is being reshaped in many ways, the independence and distinctive character of a publication are more than ever in demand by newspaper buyers and readers.”

The second one, *PI News*, was also selected for its far-right and New Right content. Founded in the early 2000s, the German blog *PI News* adopted the slogan “News against the mainstream, pro-American, pro-Israeli, against the Islamization of

Europe, for the constitution and human rights.” It has over time often featured content from the anti-Islam movement Pax Europa and far-right groups and movements like PEGIDA and the Identitarians, as well as populist radical-right and far-right parties like the AfD and the FPÖ. By 2016, the website has had 56 local satellites or affiliates to support networking, outreach and localizing its coverage and messaging. It is funded by an online shop selling far-right merchandise, a Patreon account taking donations from supporters, and advertising – though most of these ads themselves promote niche far-right literature. The website and its editorial leadership are anonymous, including the servers being based in the U.S. What started as a commentary blog over time became involved in far-right activism and affiliated with far-right political groups and grassroots activism more broadly (Rone, 2022). The blog describes its approach and content as follows: “Freedom of expression is a cherished value of our society, and it is our focus. We take up current issues and illuminate them from perspectives that are increasingly taboo and deliberately held back in the established media world. In our view, the deliberate distortion of daily events is tantamount to interfering in people’s decision-making processes, which is neither the right of politics nor the media. In this way, a huge information gap is created, and *PI News* tries to fill it every day. We are committed only to the truth and provide our readers with information they cannot find anywhere else.”

The third one, *Compact-Magazin*, is the most prominent publication in Germany’s far-right and populist media environment and, in research, was consistently classified as an openly far-right outlet with the most pronounced populist features (Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022). Like *PI News* or *Junge Freiheit*, it published contents that heavily featured far-right topics (critiques of migration, critiques of gender politics, appeals to an ethnocentric understanding of “the people” etc.) that are central to the core of right-wing ideology and the populist repertoire (Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022; Klawier, 2023). *Compact-Magazin* also could be classified as belonging to the “core right-wing populist” subset of media outlets with about 45-50% of all the contents engaging with right-wing ideology and populism in some way – which can be seen in the way right-wing ideology was expressed in most of its reports in a more ideologically rigid and populist vein and framing of news in a way that blurred this line between news and ideology and set up a clash of “the pure people” vs. “the

corrupt elite.” The following is written on its website: “*Compact* does not define a specific political line but takes a stance: A magazine for sovereignty. This is a firm stand, a spirit of freedom and pride in our history. The pro-sovereignty knows: Positive changes are only possible from, for and through the people. Patriotism is not an ideology for us, but a matter of the heart. We are Germans and we want to remain so. When we meet in *Unter den Linden*, there is room for everyone’s individuality and peculiarities.”

The last one, *Deutsche Stimme*, was selected because it was a less academic outlet that also represented far-right and populist ideas. *Deutsche Stimme* is the official monthly newspaper of the NPD and serves as a mouthpiece for the extremist and *völkisch* nationalist party, including historical revisionism. To the right of the populist radical-right AfD, the NPD and its newspaper are openly ethnonationalist – for example, articulating environmental protection as a goal of a “healthy nation” rather than an ecologically sound planet in universalistic terms (Forchtner & Özvatan, 2020). In addition to this, it also reinforces traditional gender roles, which is also reflected in its website in which it exhorts women to serve the “survival of Germany” as mothers rebelling against a “brutalized consumer society” (Simpson, 2015). Disseminating extremist propaganda and establishing a sense of ideological comradeship, *Deutsche Stimme* represents an overlap of far-right extremism and populist rhetoric through the common blending of anti-establishmentarianism with xenophobic and historical revisionist narratives. This is how it expresses its own views: “In a time when the established mass media are daily making politics against their own people with disinformation, half-truths and one-sided opinion-making, one thing is more important than ever: a voice must be raised that puts the national interest first and sticks to the truth. *Deutsche Stimme* is committed to this.”

4.3. Strategies Used by Far-Right Media

4.3.1. Attacking the Mainstream Media

Far-right media often attack mainstream media by calling them untrustworthy and framing them as agents of propaganda. For example, Norwegian far-right media

outlets such as “The Popular Movement against Immigration” and “Stop the Islamization of Norway” label the mainstream media as “lying media,” “PC media,” and “enemies of the Norwegian state” while claiming that the media are trying to silence them. At the same time, more extreme right-wing blogs such as Frieord has labelled traditional journalism “dinosaur media” as a reference to how it will soon be replaced (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2018). The same type of hostility toward mainstream media is present among the participants of the German PEGIDA movement, which regularly chants *Lügenpresse*, which means “lying press” and represents a form of suspicion that the media are working with the political elites to falsify information (Lang, 2016; Salzborn, 2016). As such, the term is used as a license to attack journalists, such as when a PEGIDA demonstrator attacked journalist Jaafar Abdul Karim at one of their rallies and told him that he was lying to people (Lang, 2016). In summary, alternative media outlets and far-right movements attack and delegitimize the mainstream media by creating a culture of hostility toward the press, which can potentially lead to acts of violence.

4.3.2. Cultural Hegemony and Metapolitics

Salzborn (2016) argues that the New Right in Germany has pursued cultural hegemony and metapolitics by disseminating its ideas in a way that influences cultural values and shapes public discourse rather than to directly acquire political power. It can be argued that the strategy of the New Right began to develop after the failure of the neo-Nazi party NPD to gain any seats in the Bundestag in 1969 because the defeat highlighted the limitations of using electoral politics to pursue far-right goals in the post-war German context. As a result, the far-right politics split into two main factions, with the latter one rejecting paramilitary activities and embracing a program of intellectual renewal and greater emphasis on a “battle for minds” (Salzborn, 2016). In doing so, the New Right sought to distance itself from the neo-Nazis while naturalizing far-right ideas and making them mainstream by using strategies that originated in leftist thought. To be more precise, in line with the Gramscian notion of cultural hegemony, the New Right adopted the left’s methods of working in the ideological superstructure to form a metapolitical project designed to frame societal discussions around themes of national identity, ethnonationalism, and

the decline of civilization (Salzborn, 2016). The projects of intellectualization can be seen in such efforts by the New Right as establishing a physical space for conservative, right-wing, and libertarian literature (Library of Conservatism is a library located in Berlin and also a think tank specializing in non-fiction books by conservative, right-wing, and libertarian authors from the 18th century to the beginning of the 21st century) and publishing journals and magazines such as *Sezession* or *Compact-Magazin*, which can be used as a metapolitical framework to ideologically ground conservative and politically right-wing positions.

The New Right has used far-right media in order to reframe the discourse on migration, national identity, and liberal democracy, where, for example, it has used the term “political correctness,” which was popularized by the weekly *Junge Freiheit* in the 1990s to criticize alleged restrictions on freedom of speech and the “political correctness” culture to push far-right issues in a more mainstream public debate (Salzborn, 2016). The idea was to shift the focus to a topic that the far-right movements and the New Right could use as a lever to their own benefit. Therefore, the increasing popularity of this type of anti-migration, anti-liberal sentiment can serve as a demonstration of the long-term success of the New Right’s cultural and ideological interventions. The New Right strategy eventually led to the rise of the AfD, which, unlike the neo-Nazi NPD, has combined many of the key ideas of the New Right while maintaining its participation in the parliamentary politics. For example, the AfD has mainstreamed several of the NPD’s positions while exaggerating and making it more obvious, such as calling for the restoration of the Nazi-era term *Volksgemeinschaft* or threatening violence against refugees (Salzborn, 2016). The latter is a political move designed to cause outrage that would still keep their message in the public view. In other words, the AfD and the far-right media are currently in the business of desensitizing the public about such controversial topics by refusing to unstate or apologize for them and instead trying to relativize such statements. In this way, the New Right strategy for achieving cultural hegemony can be seen as one which aims to redefine the parameters of democratic discourse. In this regard, the constant testing of the boundaries of public debate can be used as a way to expand the limits of acceptable speech and to create space in public discourse for the far-right positions, which would have previously been considered unacceptable

or taboo. Therefore, the interaction between the New-Right's metapolitics of intellectualization and the culture of provocation created by the far-right media can be seen as a new far-right strategy, which is not directly aimed at power but at an indirect influence by reconfiguring the cultural and ideological context within which political sense-making takes place in Germany (Salzborn, 2016).

4.3.3. Deliberate Provocation

A significant role in shaping coverage and normalizing the far-right political spectrum plays a communication tactic known as “deliberate provocation.” It refers to the orchestrated provocations and transgressions of socio-political norms, like the use of xenophobic, Islamophobic, or historical revisionist language that far-right parties and alternative media use to gain media attention and influence public discourse. A conscious strategy of “carefully planned provocations” to “make sure we are in the media” and “accept that we have to live with negative headlines and articles” (Maurer et al., 2022, p. 298) was revealed in the leaked AfD document. A range of far-right leaders and figures employed this strategy in the past. For example, Austrian politician Jörg Haider's declaration that the Waffen-SS included “decent people” (Wodak, 2014, as cited in Maurer et al., 2022) or Dutch populist Geert Wilders' describing the Quran as a “fascist book” (Cammaerts, 2018, as cited in Maurer et al., 2022) were deliberate attempts to provoke and push the boundaries of acceptable discourse while receiving maximum media coverage.

The success of this strategy is based on the media structural problem, which is a binary choice that journalists face between amplifying far-right positions (reporting on outrage) and ignoring them at the risk of creating the image of partiality (Wodak, 2015; Cammaerts, 2018, as cited in Maurer et al., 2022). Research studies confirm that the AfD's scandals, including its anti-migrant rhetoric, have been reported in media disproportionately to the content's volume, resulting in additional public visibility for the party despite the generally negative framing (Maurer et al., 2022; Hentschel, 2025). This may fit the overall media logic of mediatization, which includes co-opting media by providing the sensationalist far-right content on crime, terror, and migration to influence public debate (Esser et al., 2017; Lochocki, 2017,

as cited in Hentschel, 2025). Maurer et al. (2022) argue that provocations targeting vulnerable minorities (e.g., migrants, Jews) are more likely to receive coverage than those attacking political elites, reinforcing the far-right's identity-politics-based approach.

It is possible to say that calculated outrage creates a self-perpetuating feedback loop, which is as extreme statements are, the more media backlash the party will get; and the more media attention the party gets, the higher the party's visibility becomes. The fact that journalists often frame far-right ideology as toxic and illegitimate is not a threat to this feedback loop. This is because, when reported, it is likely to normalize the presence of the AfD in the political field through the sheer amount of coverage, despite the lack of a positive image (Hentschel, 2025). It is fair to conclude that, by intentionally provoking outrage from other actors, AfD paradoxically weaponizes criticism by transforming negative media attention into visibility in mainstream discourse.

4.3.4. Mobilization

Alternative media, particularly from the far-right spectrum, can be used as a mobilization mechanism by taking the formats and methods from progressive social movements to convert outrage into activism. As one of the case studies by Rone (2022) shows, *PI News* in Germany, *Il Primato Nazionale* in Italy, the UK branch of *Breitbart*, and the transnational *Voice of Europe* have surpassed the role of media by becoming the “coordination hub” that organized offline demonstrations (promoting petitions, social media calls to participate, inviting reporters on the ground), directly influencing the public actions against the UN Global Compact for Migration (GCM). It is critical that these media outlets “situate themselves at the crossroads of reportage and agitation” by using the repertoire of fact-reporting, outrage-magnifying, disinformation-promoting to direct public indignation into specific offline political action. This can be achieved by sending journalists to protests (e.g., Michael Stürzenberger from *PI News*), writing directly about protest activities (times, locations, speakers), and using cross-media promotion techniques that include links to YouTube videos and Facebook ads to increase the resonance of media

actions (Rone, 2022). The mobilization strategy in this case study mimics left-wing forms of social protest but is directed at the far-right political goals, and can be described as “indignation mobilization mechanisms” that involve both top-down and bottom-up agenda-setting and means for turning the grassroots anger into sustainable activism.

PI News, for example, can be described not only as a news provider that covered the anti-GCM rallies (including AfD’s office’s demonstration in Berlin and PEGIDA co-founder’s speaking in Dresden rally), but also as a co-producer of the event by pre-promoting the rally and positioning the counter-demonstrators as antagonists to the cause. The two cases analyzed by Rone (2022) also show a specific pattern of synergy and overlap between far-right media and far-right movement organizations, such as PEGIDA or Identitarians, such that the media coverage and protests become virtually indistinguishable. It challenges the narratives that view far-right media as only purveyors of “fake news” but as a politically engaged part of mobilization networks who have the organizational capacity to convert discursive outrage into street-level lobbying through direct action (e.g., petitions, demonstrations, rallies, agitation) (Rone, 2022). Therefore, far-right media outlets should not only be analyzed in terms of the disinformation that they produce but also that structural roles that they play in movement-building and their ability to turn passive supporters into active constituencies.

4.3.5. Mainstreaming of Language

Far-right media have normalized extremist language through the shift from overt to culturally coded rhetoric to gain acceptability in mainstream political discourse. This process of repackaging xenophobic content as “concerns about the defense of Judeo-Christian cultural heritage” and obscuring racist intent is called “mainstreaming” (Druxes, 2015; Schneider, 2022). For instance, German far-right media figures such as politician and writer Thilo Sarrazin and former TV anchorwoman and writer Eva Herman have long expressed their anti-migrant and xenophobic views in pseudo-intellectual terms by using their access to conservative mainstream media, such as *Frankfurter Allgemeine* and *Zeitung*, to legitimize their position (Druxes, 2015). In a

similar way, AfD's surge to prominence was a result of its ability to hijack media frames to position itself as a populist challenger that voices "reasonable" positions in response to "law and order" or "cultural threat" issues, compared to establishment parties that had taken those issues off the table (Krzyzanowski & Ekström, 2022, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). This reframing was also supported by the pseudo-scientific online platforms (e.g., Lifegen.de) and reports (e.g., Der Fall Sarrazin), which emulated the academic style to attribute credibility to far-right claims while skirting hate-speech laws (Druxes, 2015). Most importantly, these mainstreaming processes often precede formal far-right electoral breakthroughs. In the case of Germany, far-right positions on migration and national identity were first taken up by media and political elites before the AfD's rise, which shows how extremists have been able to indirectly benefit from the acceptance of their frameworks by others (Schneider, 2022). AfD's growing public presence then helped normalize its positions, as journalists found it challenging to fact-check the party's stances live in public debates (Hentschel, 2025). This dynamic is consistent with the wider trends in the ways in which far-right parties and actors exploit media logic by feeding them with spectacular content on crime, terrorism, and migration to shape public opinion, co-opting media, while at the same time dissociating themselves from overt extremism, i.e., reframing "racial purity" as "cultural coherence" (Druxes, 2015; Wodak, 2021, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). The overall strategy is not only about expanding far-right's appeal but also about the discursive appropriation of democratic norms through the normalization of anti-pluralist ideas, a process Schneider (2022) describes as "theft of enjoyment," which is when the mainstream actors appropriate the far-right positions by making the distance between "extreme" and "acceptable" discourse disappear.

4.4. Relationship Between Mainstream and Alternative Media

In contrast to Austria, where the far-right party FPÖ could build on a media landscape that presented and thus normalized the political actor Jörg Haider (Ellinas, 2010), Germany's far-right has until recently found itself in what Schneider (2022) terms a "*media cordon sanitaire*," that is, an institutionalized exclusion from media rooted in the anti-fascist consensus in Germany after World War II. This exclusion is

the result of several interlinked developments. On the one hand, established newspapers like *Der Spiegel* or *FAZ* deliberately denied coverage to far-right parties or exclusively depicted them in connection with violence and extremism (Ellinas, 2010). On television, the distribution of speaking time during election campaigns 1990 and 1994, and thus access to voters, was limited to a maximum of 0,9 % for far-right parties (Ellinas, 2010). Journalists have also seen themselves as “gatekeepers of democracy” with an explicit mandate to combat extremism, with a 1996 survey finding over 90% in favor of active resistance to extremist parties (Müller, 1996, as cited in Ellinas, 2010). An editor from the *Tagesspiegel* put it succinctly, and even where the paper went against the right, it no longer did so “because bad publicity is good for them” (Schneider, 2022). According to Art (2006, as cited in Schneider, 2022), this has resulted in a “silent consensus” to the effect that far-right actors are to be excluded from the media discourse.

The media blockade has been complemented by political mechanisms. The nationalist tone taken by the Christian Democrats on asylum and migration politics had already occupied a political space for far-right parties, which scholars such as Ellinas (2010) have described as an “unfavorable opportunity structure” for these parties. The NPD, for example, received 0,2% of the vote when it tried to cash in on the asylum debate in the 1980s – during an almost complete media boycott (Ellinas, 2010). REP’s Schönhuber was no less disappointed with the far-right media: against the “Chinese wall” that his statements found in journalistic resistance, Spiegel only published two articles about his party between 1983 and 1987 (Ellinas, 2010). The AfD now marks a radical departure from this pattern. Schneider (2022) convincingly demonstrates that the party, in contrast to its predecessors, was quickly and successfully integrated into the “talk show elite.” The new party was allowed to present itself as a party to millions of viewers in weekly prime time from the beginning. This media normalization takes place despite a significant ideological continuity with the previously marginalized parties, which at the same time makes a collapse of the classic journalistic “gatekeeping function” likely. While far-right movements previously needed decades to make little impact, the AfD was able to break through the traditional barriers via “constant repetition” of its worldview in the (social) mainstream media (Schneider, 2022).

The commercialization and pluralization of the media landscape, however, also make it possible to classify this development within a broader and now transnational trend of “media populism.” This is a style of journalism with strong anti-establishment rhetoric, emotional sensationalism and thus in many ways reminiscent of the communication strategies of populist actors (Mazzoleni, 2003; Plasser & Ulram, 2003; Krämer, 2014, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018). This can be seen in two interrelated effects, with “populism by media” and “populism through media.” The former (Krämer, 2014; Esser et al., 2017, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018) describes a type of media that appropriates and adopts the style of communication by portraying themselves as the “fourth estate” in an opposition to political elites. “Populism through media” (Albertazzi, 2007; Bos et al., 2013, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018), on the other hand, refers to commercial journalistic incentives which lead them to employ a strategic logic of dramatization and personalization, but which tend to amplify far-right messaging. It is estimated that around a quarter of news coverage in Europe uses a so-called “game frame” that portrays politics as a game of conflict and personalities – a figure which increases during elections, and which has a structurally disproportionate effect on the far right (de Vreese et al., 2017, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018).

It is well known that certain tabloids in Austria such as *Krönen Zeitung* (Plasser & Ulram, 2003, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018) or in the Netherlands such as the *De Telegraaf* (Van Holsteyn, 2014, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018) have a symbiotic relationship with the Austrian far-right party FPÖ or the PVV (Schneider, 2022). The personalization and emotionalization of news in general thus systematically lower the entry barrier for populists. In addition, the internet allows far-right actors to circumvent these media gatekeepers completely in order to directly reach their supporters and thus strengthen in-group and out-group dichotomies (Engesser et al., 2017; Esser et al., 2017, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018). The relationship between populism and media is thus self-reinforcing: by competing with each other through emotionalized content, they amplify anti-elite rhetoric and simplified solutions which is precisely the core of far-right ideology (Mazzoleni et al., 2003; Golder, 2016, as cited in Schneider, 2022), while at the same time creating a perception of greater acceptance among the population for far-right movements than it really exists

(Schneider, 2022). The media environment thus not only lowers the threshold for far-right messages but rewards the most extreme and reductive variants.

4.5. Historical Context of Development of Far-Right Media

Germany's long-standing reputation as an "exceptional case" in terms of far-right visibility (Art, 2018; Arzheimer, 2019, as cited in Schneider, 2022) in which postwar democratic institutions and norms effectively repressed extremist politics amidst long-standing xenophobic attitudes in the wider population (Art, 2018; Arzheimer, 2019, as cited in Schneider, 2022) was eventually overcome by a process of discursive normalization, which created the necessary preconditions for the AfD's eventual breakthrough. This process, which Schneider (2022) meticulously reconstructs, was a unique development that did not follow the path of other Western democracies in which far-right parties had already first entered the political scene and subsequently influenced the mainstream political and media discourse. For decades, the German collective will and institutionalized self-denial of political institutions, media, and civil society in order to not provide a platform for far-right extremist parties, depended on an effective media "cordon sanitaire" (Art, 2006, as cited in Schneider, 2022) that successfully excluded and ostracized parties such as *Sozialistische Reichspartei Deutschlands* (SRP) and NPD from legitimate public discourse to disallow them to overcome their extremist image, even at a time of pronounced anti-migrant backlash in the 1980s and 1990s (Ellinas, 2010). This carefully guarded wall was slowly dismantled through two interrelated mechanisms: on the one hand, the assimilation of far-right framing by mainstream political and media elites; on the other, the media coverage of key events that functioned as discursive turning points.

The publication of Thilo Sarrazin's , in 2010, which remained on *Spiegel's* bestseller list for 21 weeks and 1,5 million copies were sold, is a prime example of how the framing of criminalization and cultural incompatibility of migrants previously reserved for marginalized and underrepresented discourses suddenly received an unprecedented level of legitimacy (Schneider, 2022). This event was further built on by the media hype on sexual assaults on New Year's Eve in Cologne in 2015 (BBC

Türkçe, 2016). In this instance, major newspapers such as *FAZ* and *Der Spiegel* did not only reinforce the framing of “Terror of Cologne” (Boulila and Carri 2017, as cited in Schneider, 2022) through over-reporting but also mainstream politicians like Andreas Scheuer from CSU attacked public broadcasters to establish a “cartel of silence” and effectively supported the Lügenpresse accusations of the far-right (Schellenberg, 2016, as cited in Schneider, 2022). In this sense, these episodes revealed the mechanisms and limitations of the traditional crime reporting framework of the German media that contextualizes crimes committed by ethnic Germans but disproportionately over-reports crimes when the perpetrators are migrants (Müller, 2005, as cited in Schneider, 2022), and they are open to weaponization in order to legitimate the far-right worldview.

The normalization process was accelerated in particular by televised political talk shows, which Schneider (2022) identifies as an understudied but central mechanism. While similar to what was previously the case with other far-right figures, the latter were systematically denied access to these prime-time stages (Tenscher, 2002, as cited in Schneider, 2022), AfD representatives were soon invited to the rotation of the “talk show elite” which was mainly on the topics of migration, security, and cultural identity. According to Schneider (2022), this selective pattern of invitations, in which the AfD featured in 10% of episodes but was by far the most frequently heard guest on their core topics of migration, cultural threat, and security, created a distorted representation of their actual political relevance while at the same time avoiding primary engagement with their policy positions. In this sense, the fall of the German media exclusion regime followed a unique trajectory, which is not by external pressure from an electorally successful far-right party as in France or Austria (Mondon and Winter, 2020, as cited in Schneider, 2022) but through the internal collapse of journalistic norms and commercial logic of sensationalism. By the time of the AfD’s electoral breakthrough in the 2017 German parliamentary election when they entered the Bundestag with 12,6% of the vote, the discursive groundwork was already laid through years of amplification of what had been previously considered extremist positions in the mainstream media, and this shows how media normalization could reshape political possibilities even in such historically resistant contexts.

4.6. Impact of Far-Right Media

The far-right's criticism and media strategies have a profound impact on the emergence of cynicism, distrust, and polarization in public discourse. The ubiquitous *Lügenpresse*, with historical roots in Nazi-era propaganda and revived in recent years by anti-Muslim protest movements like PEGIDA, has legitimized both verbal and physical attacks on journalists while reinforcing broader media distrust (Lang, 2016). In this process, a problematic cycle emerges in which the mainstream media's coverage of far-right provocations, even if critical, amplifies their visibility and agenda-setting power, as exemplified by the AfD's success in "carefully planned provocations" to dominate news cycles (Maurer et al., 2022). In these cases, journalists who cover controversial far-right statements without contextualizing them as, for example, overtly racist by merely framing them as "anti-establishment" actually risk normalizing extremist positions (Ekström & Patrona, 2024, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). As a result, the far-right's cynical media criticism is a weaponized tool to amplify conflict and polarization with the aim of discrediting journalists (Lang, 2016). To thrive on digital platforms, "us vs. them" framings are easy to weaponize as they draw on simplified in-group and out-group dynamics of extreme right-wing ideology (Klinger & Svensson, 2015, as cited in Doroshenko, 2018). On the other hand, there are both positive and negative consequences of the rise of far-right media. While some see it as a necessary source of diversity in public debate, far-right media's reliance on conspiracy theories, xenophobia, and anti-elite rhetoric is problematic as it deepens societal polarization (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2018). The far-right movements and alternative media ecosystems engage in a symbiotic relationship in which distrust of mainstream journalism often merges with radical agendas, which is visible through the rapid electoral rise of the AfD from 3% to 12,6% amid an intensified anti-migrant media framing (Arzheimer & Berning, 2019; as cited in Maurer et al., 2022). As attacks on journalists have escalated from PEGIDA rallies to online harassment, the far-right media criticism has also become a destabilizing force against the core values of free press (Lang, 2016). It is urgent to analyze and understand the strategies that far-right actors employ in order to manipulate media environments and to exploit the conflict-driven approach of

traditional media outlets and algorithmic incentives of digital platforms to mainstream what had previously been on the political margins as extremism.

4.7. Representation of Migrants in German Far-Right Media

Far-right media outlets are essential in shaping public perceptions about migrants through bias framing, exaggeration, and setting the ideological agenda. In contrast to traditional media outlets, far-right media serve as mobilization hubs for far-right actors by employing a strong editorial perspective and comments that reinforce nativist and exclusionary worldviews (Mourão & Robertson, 2019, as cited in Rone, 2020). An analysis of coverage on migration found that far-right media focused 14–20% of their content on the topics of Islam, migration, and criminalization of migrants, which was significantly higher than that of mainstream or politically diverse outlets (Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022). This strategic representation of migrants as a threat often links them to crime, cultural erosion, and social instability. The role of media framing is central to the normalization of far-right rhetoric by structuring recurring discursive patterns of communication (Entman, 1993, Hentschel, 2025). Far-right media outlets often decontextualize inflammatory statements regarding migration by framing them as “controversial” rather than overtly racist or xenophobic, effectively legitimizing extremist positions (Ekström & Patrona, 2024, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). Anti-establishment frame has become a salient example in this regard which tend to legitimize the far-right by depicting political elites as part of the problem by supporting uncontrolled migration (Ekström & Patrona, 2024, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). The framing choices made by the far-right media can not only amplify far-right discourse but can also increase its electoral appeal by making xenophobic policies and political stances appear as pragmatic solutions rather than ideologically driven (Katsourides & Pachita, 2021, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). Far-right actors effectively exploit the media logic of conflict and drama to frame the political agenda. By making provocative statements about migrants and migration, for example, making the connection between foreigners and violence or migrants and crime, far-right actors tend to shape agenda-setting in order to ensure that media coverage is dominated by their preferred and predetermined topics (Lochocki, 2017, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). As a result of the over-

representation of migrant criminality in the discourse of political elite and media, the connection between migration and threat eventually becomes naturalized, even among moderate audiences (Schneider, 2022). In this case, the frequent use of crisis narratives, such as the rhetoric of “invasion” or the accusation of “welfare abuse,” could further strengthen welfare chauvinism and nativist policies as commonsense solutions (Wodak, 2020; Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022). Strategically, far-right media tend to couple populism with ethnonationalism through defining “the people” as the predominant ethnicity in an exclusionary sense (Wirth et al., 2016, as cited in Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022). In this way, far-right media are able to frame anti-migrant stances as defenders of the national identity and marginalize counterviews as the “elite betrayal” (Wirth et al., 2016, as cited in Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022). This mechanism leads to an echo chamber effect in far-right media in which ideological polarization is reinforced as audiences are systematically exposed to one-sided, alarmist portrayals of migration (Kaiser et al., 2020, as cited in Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022). In summary, far-right media construct migrants as outsiders through selective topic emphasis, decontextualized framing, and alarmism through an alarmist lens. Not only does this process of normalization normalize xenophobic discourse but it also actively reshapes public opinion by utilizing media dynamics and making far-right ideology integral to mainstream political debates (Ekström et al., 2020, as cited in Hentschel, 2025). It is possible to say that this situation might have some serious consequences such as the legitimization of previously marginalized narratives, the spread of exclusionary policies by increasing visibility and, finally, the erosion of democratic pluralism.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides a content analysis of how far-right media in Germany, namely *Compact-Magazin*, *Deutsche Stimme*, *Junge Freiheit*, and *PI News* frame Turkish and Muslim migrants. The analysis of the contents shows that through six themes (securitization and criminalization, boundary making and symbolic exclusion, cultural neo-racism and incompatibility, ethno-national belonging, opportunity hoarding, and contested citizenship), these media outlets construct a discourse about Turkish and Muslim migrants that consistently conducts an othering process and ties them to crime and violence, and put these people in a position represented as incompatible with German society.

Turkish migrants' individual crimes are frequently generalized through their ethnic identity and framed in the media as either a "threat to the ethnic German population" or a "cultural pathology." Turkish migrant community is said to be disloyal to German values and therefore represented as "foreigners within us," with their culture and cultural practices, such as wedding convoys, football celebrations, etc. described as a security threat. Turkish identity is presented as being "barbaric" or "backward" constantly, the notion of the incompatibility of Islam with democracy is introduced, the Turks are demonized in the history as in the Siege of Vienna.

Turks are being depicted as that they unfairly hoard the resources "actually" deserved by ethnic German citizens, furthermore, the citizenship rights of the outstaying Turkish migrants are portrayed as an "abuse" or "demographic threat" in terms of opportunity hoarding and contested citizenship. Turkish migrants are described as "permanent foreigners" who are not part of the ethno-cultural elements of German national identity. In total, in the alternative and right-wing media in

Germany, a certain discourse is being built about Turkish and Muslim migrants, which justifies a discriminatory policy towards them as “non-German.” The image of Turkish and Muslim migrants being constructed polarizes social relations and normalizes their exclusion from the public sphere. Figure 1 below represents the frequency with which the previously mentioned six themes are found in each media outlet.

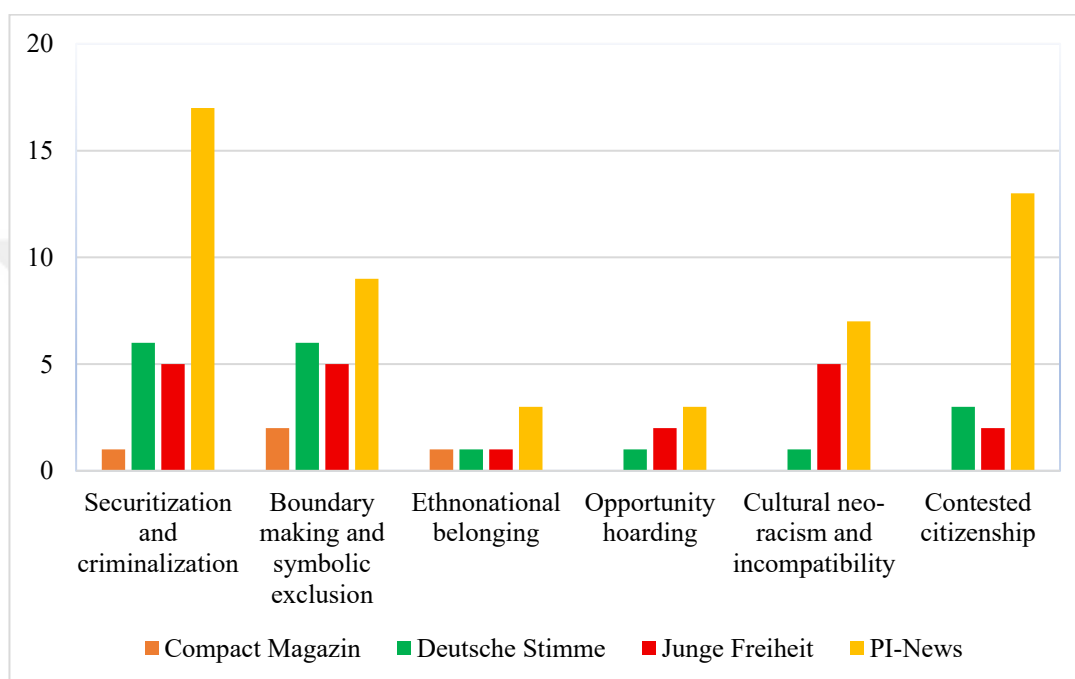


Figure 1. Frequencies of the themes

5.1. Evaluation of Findings

5.1.1. Compact-Magazin

The frequencies of the theme mentioned in *Compact-Magazin* can be seen in Figure 2. The theme of “securitization and criminalization” was observed only once in the examined media outlet *Compact-Magazin* during the determined time periods. From this content, it can be stated that the theme of “securitization and criminalization” try to put forward a discourse about migrants as a threat to social order.

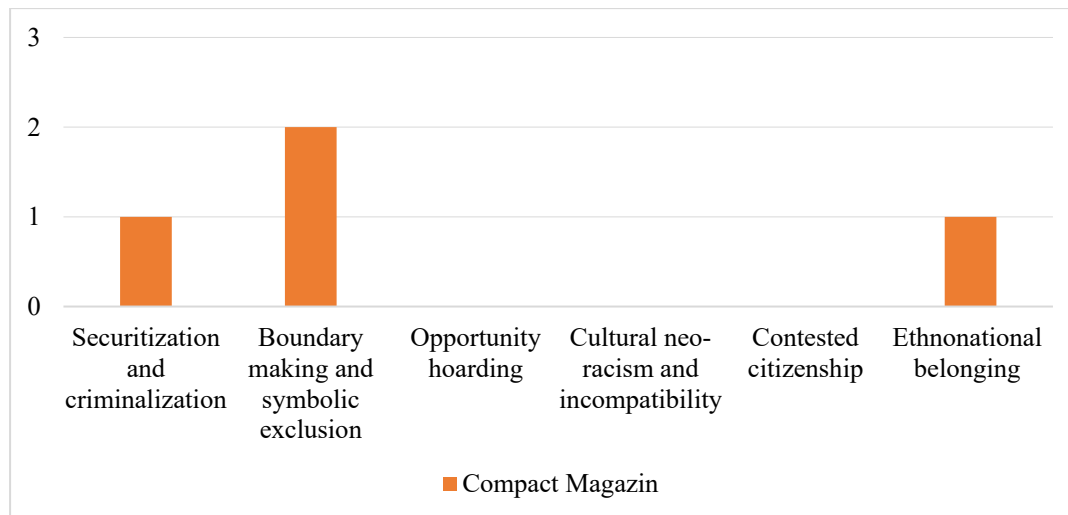


Figure 2. Theme frequencies in Compact-Magazin

It is emphasized that the perpetrators who raped a German woman in Mallorca were of Turkish origin, connecting the perpetrators' ethnic identity to the crime. It is stated that the migrants create insecurity for German women. The news article translated from German into English is given below.

An 18-year-old girl was raped by a group of young men during her holiday in Mallorca. The lying press says the perpetrators were Germans, but the perpetrators are of Turkish origin. Enough is enough! We finally need a "politics from the right" - that is the title of the new book by lawyer and AfD leader Maximilian Krah. ... While the victim was being treated and examined in a hospital, the Spanish police arrested the suspected perpetrators after a short time. Shortly afterwards, the suspects were brought before a judge. One of the men is now said to be free again. While local newspapers persistently speak of 'Germans' or give no information at all about their origins, the Spanish newspaper *Ultima Hora* confirmed that the suspected perpetrators have a Turkish migrant background. (17/07/2023)

This news content can be taken as an attempt to give legitimacy to the exclusion of certain migrant groups by associating them collectively with violence and sexual crimes, by not following the principle of individual criminal responsibility. Such discourses can transform crime from an individual phenomenon into an ethnic and cultural problem. As a result, this can lead to the strengthening of anti-migration politics and give it a legitimate basis. Selective language use and a tendency to generalize events by the media lead migrants to be labeled as "potential criminals" and to deepen the polarization in the society. In this example of content, it is also

possible to notice references to “*Lügenpresse*” (lying press), which was discussed in the previous chapter to the news sources that name the perpetrators as Germans by saying that “*The lying press says the perpetrators were Germans, but the perpetrators are of Turkish origin.*” and “*While local newspapers insist on calling them “Germans” or not providing any information about their origins...*”

The second theme examined in *Compact-Magazin* is “ethnonational belonging,” which was identified once in the collected news articles by *Compact-Magazin* for the determined time frame. This news article constructs collective European identity within the “ethnonational belonging” theme by representing 1683 Siege of Vienna as an ethno-religious conflict. The Ottomans are dehumanized with some terms such as “greedy, looter, and barbaric,” while the Germans and the Poles are glorified with “defenders of the Christian West,” and the siege of Vienna is portrayed as “*the conquest of Vienna, the key fortress of the Christian West.*” and the expression “*Exactly 154 years after their first attack on Vienna, the Ottomans tried again, committing terrible atrocities. Germans and Poles defended the West together.*” can be cited to highlight the glorification part. It tries to feed today’s nationalist sense of belonging through the historical event; it can also be cited as an example of “Janus-faced nationalism,” referring to Nairn’s famous conceptualization used to define the characteristic of nationalism as one side of its face look to the future while the other always points out the past (Özkırımlı, 2020, p. 104). Dehumanizing term like “*Renner und Brenner*” (used to refer to the term “*Akıncı*”) is a historical German term meaning “looter and arsonist,” thus linking Turkish/Muslim identity with violence and moral decay historically, while the description about the Christian side “*Everything was arranged in such an impressive battle formation that the world will hardly have ever seen anything more orderly and impressive.*” constructs ethno-religious superiority narrative and rewrites the past to fit into today’s identity politics by creating a discourse of belonging that shapes the definition of European identity in the opposite of Turks. This news is read from German into English as follows:

The population of Lower Austria was once again badly maltreated by the attackers as they advanced. Their hordes, known as ‘Renner and Brenner,’ plundered, murdered, set fire to houses, farms, and churches, and abducted

thousands to Anatolia as slaves. All the towns around Vienna, such as Hainburg, Schwechat, Pellendorf, and Laa, were burned down. (24/04/2023)

It can be said that in the context of the theme of “boundary making and symbolic exclusion,” the two contents construct symbolic boundaries with othering by using the exclusionary rhetoric about the Turkish community in Germany. On the one hand, the first news story emphasizes that the majority of Turks in Germany vote for Erdoğan to underline their lack of loyalty and integration to Germany by also suggesting that they, Turkish migrant community in Germany, support an authoritarian leader in their country of origin despite living in prosperity in their host country. It also highlights their voting for left-wing parties in Germany as political inconsistency, thereby reinforcing the prejudices about Turkish identity being “inconsistent” and “hypocritical.” The text continues like this:

In fact, almost two-thirds of Turks living in Germany re-elected Erdogan. The Turkish president owes around 500,000 of his two-million-vote lead to the Turks in Germany - people who live here in prosperity and security and enjoy the benefits of democracy and freedom of expression. ... Even if it sounds crazy at first: The same Turks who mostly vote for the autocrat Erdogan and his Islamic-conservative AKP, regularly vote 90 percent for left-wing parties in federal elections, provided they also have German citizenship. (30/05/2023)

The second report associates Turkish football fans’ celebrations with “*Allahu Akbar*” chants, traffic violations, and violent incidents, which creates a sense of cultural threat and alienation. The “horrific accident” news published in *BILD*, a mainstream media outlet, is meant to give the impression that the Turks’ enthusiasm is out of control and has life-threatening consequences. It is published in *Compact-Magazin* to distinguish this group as someone who does not follow German social norms: “*Horror accident in Berlin! While Turkish fans were celebrating the victory over the Czech Republic (2:1) in the Berlin district of Neukölln on Wednesday evening, a man (67) was hit by a car. He died.*” The rest of the news goes as follows:

Wherever the Turkish team plays, trouble on our streets is inevitable. ... Tracer bullets, fireworks, significant interference with road traffic, thousands of shouts of ‘Allahu Akbar’ - what the Turks repeatedly do around their team’s European Championship football matches may be southern

enthusiasm - but they are certainly not signs of particularly successful integration, which has cost so many billions of taxpayers' money in the past. The many flying beer mugs during games with Turkish participation, the booing of the opposing anthems or the tossing of a coin at an Austrian player are also not exactly elegant. (06/07/2024)

Such representations in the media can be pointed as an example of reinforcing the mechanisms of symbolic exclusion and deepening identity-based polarization by positioning Turks as “foreigners within ethnic Germans.” In addition to all previously mentioned news, no news content that fits with the themes of “cultural neo-racism and incompatibility,” “opportunity hoarding,” and “contested citizenship” could be found in *Compact Magazin* for the given time periods.

5.1.2. Deutsche Stimme

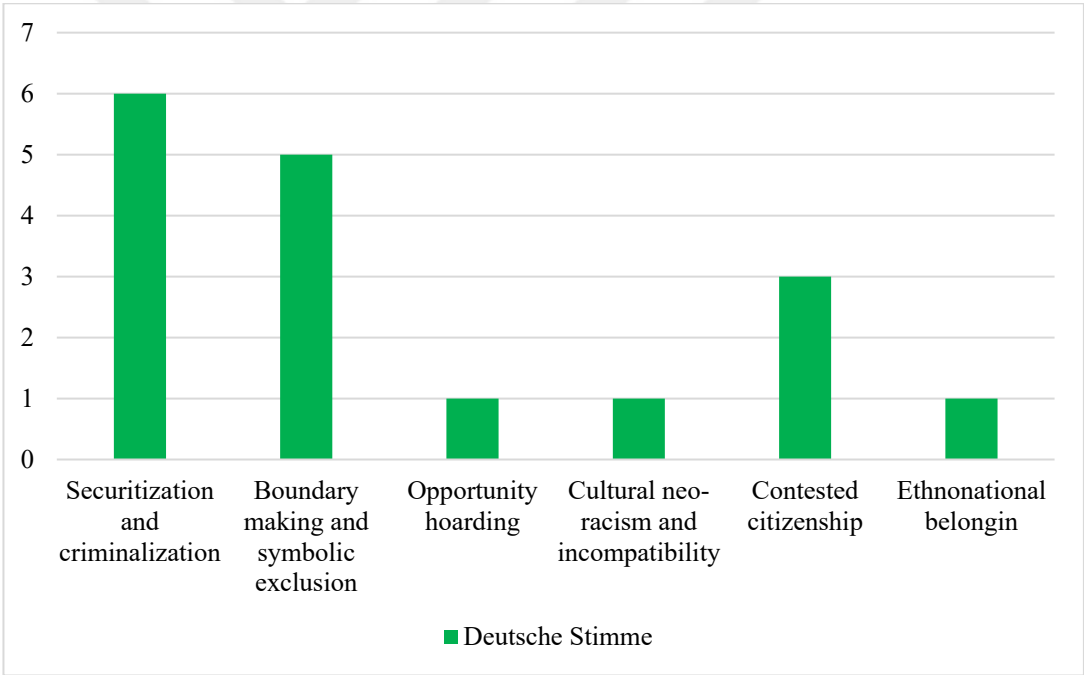


Figure 3. Theme frequencies in Deutsche Stimme

Articles within all the themes listed in *Deutsche Stimme* can be found in Figure 3. As it can be seen in this figure, the frequency of theme “securitization and criminalization” is 6, “boundary making and symbolic exclusion” is 5, the frequency of the theme “contested citizenship” is 3, and the frequency of the themes “cultural

neo-racism and incompatibility narratives,” “opportunity hoarding,” and “ethnonational belonging” is 1.

In this context, it is noteworthy that, unlike other media outlets, *Deutsche Stimme* shares some of the police reports involving crimes committed by migrants and foreigners living in Germany and includes them in the news content. For this reason, police reports involving crimes committed by Turks have also been included in the theme of “securitization and criminalization” in this study.

The theme of “securitization and criminalization” racializes Turkish migrants by associating them with crime. Crimes such as murder, robbery, sexual harassment and violence, armed assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking involving Turks are emphasized in the examples, creating the perception that this group has a collective criminal profile and these crime patterns can frequently be found among this ethnic group. For instance, as seen in the quote, “*Disputes in the local drug scene... the two Turks,*” (01/08/2022) Turks are being positioned as a structural element of crime with an emphasis on drug networks and with word choices while delivering a human trafficking crime news such as “*Drivers were third-country nationals (... Syrians and Turks) living in Germany.*” (11/11/2021). In addition, reporting the sentence “*The 56-year-old Turk... attacked his wife with a knife, expressing an intention to kill*” with a crime news title (14/04/2022) is reporting structural social problems such as domestic violence and violence against women as cultural pathology. Grewal (2013) argues that the extensive coverage of honor killings is a way for transnational Western media organs to deepen the sense of an “us-them” dichotomy as if gender equality, human rights and freedom concepts are the monopoly of Western values. Naming the ethnicity of the perpetrators, e.g., “*a 51-year-old man (Turkish)*” (01/11/2022), or “*a German Turk*” (11/11/2021) in the news links the crime to ethnicity and further reproduces the media’s counter-narrative of the principle of individual criminal responsibility. The selective presentation of police reports such as “*4 perpetrators: Three of the young people have a Turkish appearance.*” (01/11/2022) creates a perception of crime which is purely based on cultural and ethnic identity.

In terms of associating ethnicity with crime, the sentence “*The two German citizens born in Turkey...*” underlines the fact that the perpetrators are German citizens, however born in Turkey, and can be given as an example of associating crime with ethnic identity, and citizenship acquired later is not an adequate parameter *to live or to behave like a German*. Stereotypes are also reinforced even in the descriptions of victims, as seen with the word “Turkish-looking” in the sentence “*Three of the young people have a Turkish appearance.*” In the sentence “*The group pushed and hit the 17-year-old... was kicked several times by the people,*” the emphasis is put on the word “group,” implying the suggestion that Turkish youths are predisposed to violence and with warnings such as “*The 51-year-old man (Turkish)... may still be armed*” the perception of Turkish migrants as violent is further reinforced, thus collectivizing violence and crime. These quotes include a discourse that explains the crime as a result of ethnic and/or religious identity, not individual behavior and constructs Turkish migrants as a systemic security threat. Reporting of police reports this way by this media outlet is a mechanism that deepens the “us vs. them” polarization.

Deutsche Stimme constructs a discourse within the framework of the theme “boundary making and symbolic exclusion,” which places migrants (especially the Turkish and Muslim population) outside German society. The example sentences for this theme include news of migrant riots in France being described as “multi-ethnic no-entry and restricted areas” and construct a similarity with the ghettos and no-go zones in Germany because of the migrant population density (03/07/2023), or Turks making citizenship demands in Germany with an “Ottoman slap in the face: Erdogan calls on Turks to occupy citizenship!” (01/12/2022) and Erdoğan calling on Turks in Europe to be loyal to Turkey rather than their “host countries” reinforce the symbolic exclusion of migrants. The following quote is illustrative of how Turkish citizens living in Germany are being encouraged to increase their demographic superiority by taking German citizenship and increasing the number of children in their households in line with Erdoğan’s orders and directives:

Erdogan is concerned with much more than just the presidential and parliamentary elections taking place on June 24th, as these are supposed to be ‘a decision for the next century of our country,’ Erdogan said. ‘Are you ready

to demonstrate the strength of the European Turks to the whole world?' Erdogan urged his foot soldiers in Europe. ... 'Make sure you take on the citizenship of the countries you live in,' said Erdogan, who regularly calls for people to have many children in order to achieve demographic dominance. 'I ask you to take an active role in the political parties in the countries you live in. You should be part of these parliaments, not the ones who betray your country,' Erdogan added of his European campaign. Betraying your host countries through disloyalty apparently plays no role in the ethical understanding of the Islamic Sultan of the Bosphorus when it comes to his imperial desires. (01/12/2022)

The term "Nafri riots" used in the headline of the news report covering the migrant riots in France and which is a reference to migrants as "foreign bodies" emphasizes that the conflict between "ethnic Germans" and "Turks/Kurds" or "Sunnis/Shiites" is given (03/07/2023), and it naturalizes the social division among migrant communities.

In France, migrants from the former colonies of the 'great nation' are currently rioting. But this is nothing new: multi-ethnic no-entry and restricted areas outside the reach of the state are the norm. In Germany, too, these migrant ulcers are bursting open more and more frequently. The people who make up this society have no answers - and there is no need for any, because the riots are exactly the crisis that the elites are waiting for. ... War against Germans? - But migrants are not a homogenous group - there are Kurds, Turks, Lebanese, Syrians and so on. There are Shiites, Sunnis or whatever. This heterogeneous mass of migrants can unite against ethnic Germans at certain points. But once they are no longer an issue, the issue is other conflicts, such as Turks against Kurds or Shiites against Sunnis. You can always find something. For a very long time, Germany and Europe will be characterized by an ethnically and culturally fragmented society in which conditions are sometimes similar to civil war. Beirut, after all. In this group, ethnic Germans or ethnic French are one group among many and not necessarily the target of attacks. It just depends on the issue. (03/07/2023)

Examples of cultural exclusion include the claim that imposing the concept of "*Zeitgeist Germans*" referring to the Germans who live in the harmonization with the necessities of the time and according to the Western values with the emphasis that the Koran rejects gender equality, and therefore, Muslim migrants such as Turks and Syrians can never align with these cultural values. The mentioned news is exactly delivered as "*By the way, the amateurish attempt to turn the majority of Turks and Syrians here into Zeitgeist Germans in the sense of the 'community of Western*

values' is somehow also disguised racism. Why else should I, as a German, explain to a Turk living here that - contrary to what the Koran says - women have the same weight in court as men?" (18/02/2022). This way of delivering can be regarded as a direct indicator of boundary making and symbolic exclusion, because "*Zeitgeist*" can be translated as "spirit of the time." It is a euphemism for the liberal Western values and norms (i.e. gender equality, secularism) that Germany attempts to force migrants to assimilate to. It is an ironic, taunting reference to migrants who have ostensibly conformed to these values and norms but are still "foreign" in an ethnic and cultural sense. The use of this term is specific to mockery of multiculturalism as a way of making the argument that it is both hypocritical and futile to force migrants to become Westernized. It also buttresses the far-right idea that "true Germanness" is an ethnic category and that regardless of their efforts to assimilate, migrants will never be able to truly be German. By belittling assimilated migrants as "*Zeitgeist Germans*," the far-right discourse can rhetorically exclude them from the national community, and mark them as "foreigners within us," and they can make the argument that the "Quran rejects gender equality" to portray Islam as irreconcilably anti-Western. In addition to this, historical othering is supported by the quote from *Spiegel* dated as "*A new offer from Pakistan to send several thousand guest workers to West Germany has met with little interest in Bonn. The main reason for the Federal Government's aversion is the fear of a 'foreign proletariat' in West Germany's affluent society. According to previous experience, workers from non-European countries often choose the path to the 'lower regions' because they find it difficult to adapt socially and form a foreign body in the workforce.*" in order to refer Turkey by saying that "lower regions" and Turkish migrants who could not adapt the German norms (02/09/2024). As a result of this, these texts reinforce the "us (Germans) vs. them (migrants)" dichotomy, thus legitimizing the symbolic exclusion of migrants and questioning their political and cultural belonging. "*Germany should be the country of Germans*" (01/12/2022) is an example of a statement that can be given as a clear example of this exclusionary discourse.

News stories that can be evaluated within the framework of the theme "contested citizenship" reveal the political and social struggles over citizenship policies. In the first content, visa plans for earthquake victims are being criticized as encouraging

migrants to bring their problems to the country and it is stated that citizenship and permanent residence rights could be abused. Interior Minister Nancy Faeser's statements are being framed within the rhetoric of uncontrolled migration with concerns that three-month visas could become permanent, and a symbolic line is drawn between "us" (Germans) and "them" (migrants) by targeting the resources of tax-paying German citizens, as it can be seen in the quote given below.

Aren't there other solutions? The citizens who commented on this tweet are also asking themselves this question. There is talk of new 'pull effects' and whether we shouldn't think first about those who are required to leave the country. The planned restriction to those really affected is being questioned, as are the planned guarantees from Turks and Syrians living here for their relatives. It would not be the first time that the taxpayer has ultimately had to step in. ... It should also not be forgotten that Turkey currently hosts 3.6 million Syrians and approximately 322,000 people of other ethnicities, mainly from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, as 'refugees.' According to the EU Commission, the EU has 'mobilized EUR 9.5 billion for refugees and host communities in Turkey' since 2015. In December 2022, the EU increased aid for refugees and border management in Turkey to a further EUR 1.2 billion. Nevertheless, the question remains whether all this will be enough to prevent a new mass migration. No, the answer should not be: 'We can do it!' (12/02/2023)

The second content of the news criticizes the Turkish community's support for easing the transition to German citizenship as a double standard, claims that citizenship should be limited to the ethnic affiliation. The article titled "*German passports must not be junk!*" continues with the following sentences: "*It almost goes without saying that the Turkish community welcomes the planned reform (the facilitation of transition to German citizenship). However, they would almost certainly reject a similar development in Turkey.*" (26/11/2022). The third article caricatures the rights granted to migrants in Germany as unlimited and unregulated through the fictional country of "*Neuland*" (Newland), implying that German citizenship is being devalued through elements such as no language learning requirement, abuse of family reunification and the proliferation of official languages.

Come to Neuland. It's very good here. You don't need any papers. You don't need any money. You don't have to give your real name. And nobody in Neuland is interested in your old country either. Because Neuland makes everything new. ... Here in Neuland, you get a new passport, a new house,

money in your new account every month and you can also bring the rest of your relatives here to “rebuild” Neuland, just like the Turks did from 1962 onwards after the economic miracle. ... In Neuland, everything is possible, absolutely everything. You don’t have to be able to read or write to simply get money for your family and transfer it to your cousins in the village. You don’t have to learn Neuland, you can just keep your language or choose one of the many futures official languages that will be spoken here. Want to hear a sample? Just go to Lidl, DM, Frankfurt, Mannheim or Stuttgart train station and listen to the many languages spoken by the Neulanders. You will also find many new friends there who can explain to you how everything works here in Neuland. (18/04/2024)

What these reports have in common is that they emphasize how citizenship rights have become a battleground over who is considered a “true German” and how migrants are portrayed as “system abusers.” In particular, the “*Neuland*” allegory reflects the far-right narrative that migrants refuse to integrate into society by remaining “foreign” and try to change the national, social and cultural fabric of Germany by making it a completely transformed place. As a result, these texts frame migrant rights as a threat to national identity from a perspective that argues citizenship should be limited to ethnic and cultural belonging.

Within the framework of the theme of “opportunity hoarding,” it is being presented a discourse that legitimizes efforts to protect the privileges of the local population by framing migrants’ access to economic resources as a threat. The author is presenting Eastern European migrants as “ambitious, unscrupulous competitors” and is arguing that people in her own professional group (upper-middle-class women) have withdrawn in the face of this competition, thus implying that migrants have gained undeserved economic advantages. The claim that the dream of home ownership as a retirement plan is being hampered by Polish, Romanian, Czech and Georgian migrants is positioning migrants as unfair monopolizers of resources, while the phrase “Turks and Arabs who buy up entire streets” is targeting these groups with the rhetoric of foreign invasion. The accusation that Germans are selling to foreigners instead of their own citizens out of “sick resentment” is constructing a narrative of victimization, suggesting that the local population is betraying itself rather than protecting its resources. This discourse reinforces a “us vs. them” dichotomy that advocates for the ethnic-based distribution of resources, presenting the economic success of migrants as unfair competition and the disadvantage of the local

population as unfair exclusion. The subtext of the news suggests that the presence of migrants in the market is not just a matter of unequal opportunity but rather a fear of losing the privileges of the local population.

Many self-employed people, like me, had the plan to buy one or more apartments with rental income as a retirement plan. This plan was ruined by migrants from Poland, Romania, the Czech Republic and even Georgia, who bought the cheap housing as “investors.” We don’t even need to talk about the Turks and Arabs who buy up entire streets. The Germans, with their typically sick resentment, always preferred to sell to foreigners rather than to their own countrymen. (06/05/2022)

In the last news content that I will quote from *Deutsche Stimme*, I believe that the themes of “ethnonational belonging” and “cultural neo-racism and incompatibility” are represented together, and that within this framework, a discourse rejecting the integration of migrants and Muslims into German society is represented. The statements of Wolfgang Schäuble, former politician from CDU/CSU, suggesting that *“Isolation is what would destroy us, what would cause us to degenerate into inbreeding. For us, Muslims in Germany enrich our openness and our diversity”* are being criticized by the author as a call for “racial mixing,” emphasizing the need to preserve ethnic German identity.

He doesn’t really like the Germans either and recommends them in the best rabbit breeder manner: ‘Isolation is what would destroy us, what would cause us to degenerate into inbreeding. For us, Muslims in Germany enrich our openness and our diversity. Just look at the third generation of Turks, especially the women! That is an enormous innovative potential!’ (18/11/2021)

It is possible to say that the reproduction of this discourse defines German identity in terms of ethnic-religious purity while coding multiculturalism as a threat of degeneration. In addition, the praise of the innovative potential of third-generation Turkish women is transformed into a narrative of cultural incompatibility in a mocking tone, and Schäuble’s call for “foreign blood” is presented as a neo-version of biological racism by demonstrating a cultural bias against interracial marriages and relationships: *“Oh yes: Sexual intercourse between ethnic Germans is already inbreeding. Wolfgang Schäuble with his call for racial mixing in DIE ZEIT (No. 25/2016), because he believes that Germans urgently need foreign blood.”*

5.1.3. Junge Freiheit

News articles that cover all the themes included in *Junge Freiheit* are available. As shown in Figure 4, the frequency of the themes “securitization and criminalization,” “boundary making and symbolic exclusion,” and “cultural neo-racism and incompatibility” is 5, the frequency of “opportunity hoarding” is 3, and the frequencies of the theme “ethnonational belonging” and “contested citizenship” is 1.

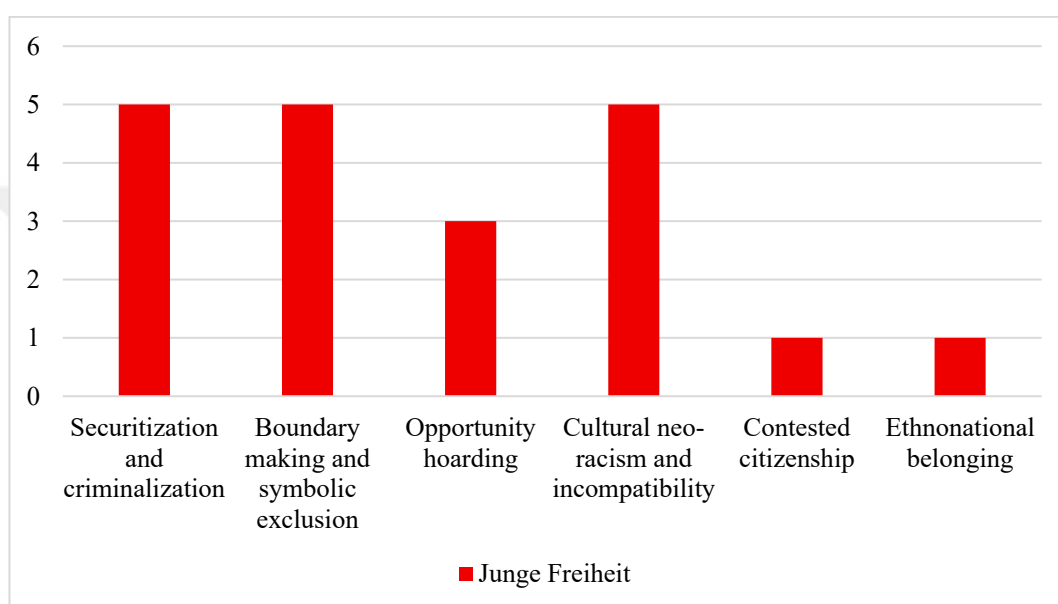


Figure 4. Theme frequencies in Junge Freiheit

In the news contents selected for the theme of “securitization and criminalization,” Turkish migrants are systematically portrayed as both a security risk and a criminal element, which construct an exclusionary media discourse in which ethnic identity is directly associated with potential criminality and social incompatibility. The claim that a 17-year-old Turkish youth planned to attack a Christmas market with a truck is presented by establishing a connection with past attacks motivated by Islamism.

A 17-year-old Turk has been arrested by security authorities in Elmshorn, Schleswig-Holstein. He is said to have planned to deliberately run over visitors to a Christmas market with a truck, reported Bild. The tip-off is said to have come from a US intelligence service. ... German investigators then listened in on conversations and followed the teenager’s messenger

communications. The authorities assume that the planned attack was motivated by Islamism. (11/11/2024)

On the other hand, the incident in which Turkish-speaking youths tortured a child and filmed it is presented by focusing on the perpetrator's language and ethnic identity, constructing a community-based crime narrative. This narrative can be seen below:

In Uetersen, Schleswig-Holstein, a group of Turkish-speaking students brutally abused and humiliated a child and filmed the acts. Pictures and videos published by the Bild newspaper show how one of the perpetrators repeatedly hit the terrified victim, pulled her hair and made her beg for forgiveness. The child had to kneel before her tormentors. According to the paper, the shocking footage was taken in February. The perpetrator and his friends repeatedly spoke to each other in Turkish, calling out to their twelve-year-old victim in the foreign language, "Fuck off!" after the ordeal was over. Since the main perpetrator is also a minor, all investigations were immediately stopped. (11/03/2024)

The murder of a Ukrainian youth by a perpetrator of Turkish origin (12/02/2024) and the stabbing death of a 5-year-old child by a 19-year-old "German Turk" (22/02/2023) are examples that emphasize the age factor to show that the age of criminality among Turkish migrant community is very low and highlight the perpetrator's ethnic identity. The sentence "*Since the main perpetrator is also a minor, all investigations were immediately stopped,*" (11/03/2024) can also be considered an example that reproduces this meaning with a veiled implication which offers that lowering the age of criminal responsibility would not be entirely unreasonable.

Two 'strongly suspected young people' initially fled the scene but were arrested by the police in the early hours of Sunday morning. They are a 15-year-old German Turk and a 14-year-old German Greek, both of whom had previously attracted "significant criminal attention" - in other words, are considered repeat offenders. While the suspicion against the 15-year-old was confirmed, the 14-year-old was handed over to the care of his parents. (12/02/2024)

In addition, while the police raid on a Turkish restaurant in Berlin was shown as the representation of appeasement of administrative authorities in terms of prevention of

the migrant criminality, it was presented as a “slap in the face” to a local politician who had criticized anti-migrant political rhetoric coding migrant businesses as inherently criminal areas and reinforcing criminalization on a spatial level.

Neukölln’s city councilor Sarah Nagel (Left Party) does not want raids on shisha bars, Spätis and the like because this would allegedly ‘stigmatize’ the mostly migrant owners. Nevertheless, the police searched for an oriental restaurant in Berlin - and found something. ... Nagel did not give the green light for the search of the ‘New Marin,’ which is run by a Turkish operator. Police and customs decided to carry out a major raid without the public order office. During the operation, they arrested, among other things, a man who did not have valid residence papers. The officers also discovered several violations of the Asylum Procedure Act and the ID requirement. (12/12/2022)

In terms of boundary making and symbolic exclusion, it can be said that Turkish migrant community is systematically excluded and marginalized from the German social fabric, even with a very mundane and daily practices. For instance, a homework assigned by a teacher in a high school in Siegburg in February 2022, which involved an imaginary scenario of Turkish families forcing their daughters into marriage, and it was later withdrawn because it reproduced a racist stereotype. It cannot be said that *Junge Freiheit*’s journalistic standards have found this decision appropriate. This is a process in which the Turkish migrant community in Germany is culturally defined as inferior and marginalized on the grounds that there is no equivalent example in German culture.

Forced marriages and arranged marriages are a sad reality in Turkish society, including in Germany. But it is better not to discuss this in school lessons. Otherwise, accusations of racism will not be long in coming. ... In ethics class, the students were given the following task: ‘A Turkish father in Germany marries his daughter to his deceased brother’s son without her consent in order to secure his residence permit for Germany and thus a livelihood.’ They were asked to discuss the situation with their table neighbors and discuss what conflicts might arise as a result. (14/02/2022)

In the news dated in May 2023, strong support for Erdoğan among Turks in Germany was presented by the media and politicians as an implication of failure of integration.

Almost two thirds of Turks living in Germany have voted for Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in the current presidential election. Around 65.4 percent voted for

the AKP politician, while his social democratic rival Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu only received 32.61 percent in Germany, as the broadcaster CNN Türk reported after counting 97.97 percent of all votes cast in Germany. ... The AKP politician had already won the majority of his compatriots' votes in Germany in 2018. At that time, he received 64.8 percent in the Federal Republic. (15/05/2023)

Cem Özdemir's remarks about the "rejection of pluralistic democracy" by saying that *"On Twitter, Özdemir wrote about the street parties and honking convoys of vehicles: They are an unmistakable rejection of our pluralistic democracy and a testament to our failure among them. It is no longer possible to ignore them."* (30/05/2023) in order to reinforce the perceptions that even a Turkish-rooted politician did not approve this pattern of behavior and the knife fights in Stuttgart were used to portray Turkish celebrations as an action that could disrupt public order. This is clear in the following passages: *"Turks all over Germany are celebrating the victory of 'their president' with car convoys. There are also knife fights."* (30/05/2023). This symbolic process of exclusion by establishing it danger, security, or incompatibility and by reflecting it as a very common pattern operated through the creation of an implication that the political preferences of the Turkish community and the way of the reflections of glory and victory as a cultural practice were incompatible with German values.

In July 2024, the "wolf salute" and celebrations in the streets by Turkish fans at the European Championship were presented as Turkish nationalism being incompatible with European values to create a sense of that embracing Turkish community for years has reached to the level of political infiltration in order to legitimize the strict conditions of boundary making and the act of symbolic exclusion. At that time minister Nancy Faeser's call for UEFA sanctions can be seen as a statement that such behavior was unacceptable and reinforced the exclusion of Turkish identity from the public sphere. These reports deepened a process of othering through the construction of the Turkish fans as the most feared group.

The European Championship in Germany has its first scandalous match. During the round of 16 match between Turkey and Austria (2:1), several undignified scenes occurred. Cups and objects repeatedly flew onto the field during corner kicks. ... The Turkish fans have already attracted attention

several times because of their fanaticism. During the first match against Georgia, they booed the opponent's national anthem. They have now become the most feared fan group at the European Championships. ... In addition, the Turkish double goal scorer Merih Demiral, who plays for the Saudi club Al-Ahli, celebrated in the Leipzig stadium with the fascist wolf salute. The symbol of the Turkish 'Grey Wolves' is banned in Austria, but not in Germany. ... The supporters of the right-wing extremist 'Ülkücü movement' are called 'Grey Wolves,' which is monitored by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution in Germany and banned in Austria. (03/07/2024)

In another content dated in May 2023, support for Erdoğan among Turks in Germany was presented as an integration problem, further reinforcing an implication that the Turkish community is alien to German democratic values. In particular, Cem Özdemir's statements about the incompatibility of the Turkish community's political preferences and those of German society created a cultural boundary.

Turks all over Germany are celebrating the victory of "their president" with car convoys. There are also knife fights. The world is upside down: While the CSU does not want "any insults to voters," the Green Minister Özdemir is outraged. ... Following sharp criticism by Agriculture Minister Cem Özdemir (Greens) of the victory celebrations of German Turks following the re-election of Recep Tayyip Erdogan as Turkish president, a debate about integration has broken out. Criticism of Özdemir came from the CSU. The CDU, on the other hand, attested that Özdemir had a realistic view of the integration problems. ... On Twitter, Özdemir wrote about the street parties and honking convoys of vehicles: They are an unmistakable rejection of our pluralistic democracy and a testament to our failure among them. It is no longer possible to ignore them. (30/05/2023)

The voting choices of Turkish voters marginalized by Cem Özdemir give empirical support to Brubaker's (2002) claim that ethnicity as categories cannot be taken as groups as if they are already given entities by themselves, and treating ethnicity as groups is essentialist unless ethnic categories are animated by the form of mobilized collectivity. An ethnic identity as a category may contain the potential for groupness, but it remains potential unless collectively enacted. However, this does not mean that as it can be observed in the news article dated in 15/05/2023, the Turkish migrant community is being taken by an essentialist approach by the reference to the majority of Turks have voted for Erdoğan.

The outcome is that these reports reveal Turkish society has been excluded and marginalized from the German social fabric across a wide range of issues, from political preferences to cultural practices. The language used by the media and politicians constantly frames Turkish identity as “problematic” and “incompatible,” operating as a symbolic mechanism of exclusion. This situation makes it even more difficult for the Turkish community to express itself and gain acceptance in the German public sphere.

The systematic exclusion and marginalization mechanisms encountered by the Turkish community in German political and social life are clearly revealed within the framework of “cultural neo-racism and incompatibility” themes. The Vienna Green Party’s bid to expel Turkish-origin city council member Ömer Öztas for allegedly using “vote stuffing” under the pretext of filling their ranks with Turks in May 2023 suggests that the political mobilization of Turks is constructed as a threat from within. The far-right media’s exaggerated and disproportionate criticism of Öztas’ performance, *“In addition to the accusations of election manipulation, Öztas is also being criticized for his work as a local councilor. Despite a monthly gross salary of 8,231 Euros, he is said to be performing his duties inadequately. An insider reported that he once even arrived five hours late for a local council meeting because he overslept”* (23/02/2025) reinforces cultural biases against Turkish politicians. The Vienna Greens have initiated exclusion proceedings against 24-year-old city councilor Ömer Öztas. The politician is suspected of trying to secure his re-election by deliberately recruiting Turkish supporters. ... According to an anonymous party member, Öztas organized the membership of around 100 Turks and in some cases even paid the membership fees himself. (23/02/2025)

The Turkish community’s defense of university professor Bahar Aslan after she was dismissed from the police service in May 2023 for calling “brown filth” for the police force and her subsequent criticism in the German context is appropriated to nourish the neo-racist narrative that Turks lack adaptability to German institutions by downplaying the institutional dimension of racism and, instead of addressing structural issues in the police force, stigmatizes Turkish migrants who make such criticism and attempts to maintain the status quo by suggesting these kinds of

discourses only undermine the reliability of the security forces of Germany in the eyes of public.

Aslan lost her job as a lecturer at the North Rhine-Westphalia Police Academy because she had ranted about the 'brown filth' in the police on the Internet. She now has the support of the Turkish community and the Greens. ... The Turkish community in Germany has come to the defense of Bahar Aslan, a lecturer who was fired from the North Rhine-Westphalian Police and Public Administration University. 'Anyone who fires a lecturer who is doing the job she was hired for is part of the racism problem in Germany,' the lobby group representing Turks living in Germany said in a statement on Wednesday. ... After Aslan spoke on social media about 'brown filth' in the police authorities, she lost her job as a teacher at the police academy. The Turkish community in Germany and the Turkish Federation in North Rhine-Westphalia therefore demanded that the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia show solidarity with Aslan. 'It must be in the deep interest of all democrats to stand up against racism and right-wing extremism,' stressed the Turkish lobby group. ... Member of the Bundestag Nyke Slawik (Greens) was also outraged at the dismissal of the university professor. 'To criticize the police once and then be fired? That's outrageous,' the politician tweeted on Tuesday. Critical debate and the ability to learn are important for a democratic police force. ... Berlin SPD politician Sawsan Chebli also criticized the way Aslan was treated. 'It is so blatant that I cannot imagine that it will be carried out in the end,' the Social Democrat speculated. The incident is damaging trust in the German security authorities. (24/05/2023)

Justice Minister Buschmann's statement in November 2021, in which he issued a warning against "hate speech" from Turkey, was portrayed as Turkish politicians meddling in German domestic politics, and this kind of antagonism of political elites may facilitate paving the way for the perception of Turkish migrants living in Germany to be accused of dual loyalty by proliferating discussions on diaspora votes.

In a letter addressed to Interior Minister Nancy Faeser (SPD) and Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock (Greens), Justice Minister Marco Buschmann (FDP) warned against 'dehumanizing hate speech' by Turkish politicians in Germany. The fact that politicians from Ankara are threatening Kurdish parties in this country is 'completely unacceptable' and crosses the boundaries of freedom of expression, says the letter, which has been obtained by the Rheinische Post (RP). (13/04/2023)

On the other hand, the Turkish community's complaints that the contribution of guest workers is not recognized and Federal President Steinmeier's statement that

Germany is no longer conceivable without migrants indicate that *Junge Freiheit* acknowledges the economic contributions of Turkish migrants through labor migration into the consideration in a historical revisionist manner and conveys it with an italic emphasis. The charges of historical revisionism such as “Turkey initiated the guest worker agreement” normalizes the cultural exclusion that Turkish migrants have not been ever in a “guest” position and should never been in Germany from the very beginning.

He had previously highlighted their influence on Germany. They had changed the ‘face of our country,’ said Steinmeier on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the recruitment agreement between the Federal Republic and Turkey. The guest workers, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren are today’s Germany. ‘A Germany without them is simply no longer imaginable. The people from Turkey, Greece, Italy and Spain came to Germany 60 years ago because we invited them.’ ... Green Party leader Annalena Baerbock also praised the Turkish migration movement and described it as a ‘great German success story.’ The guest workers had ‘significantly shaped West German society economically, culturally, socially and politically’ at the time. (05/10/2021)

The news article published in *Junge Freiheit* highlight the contested position of Turkish and Syrian migrants in German citizenship and migration policies within the scope of the theme of “contested citizenship.” In May 2024, allegations of Turkish asylum seekers fraudulently exploiting repatriation assistance depicted migrants as system exploiting actors and fueled the perception that citizenship rights should be conditional.

Arrive, rip off, leave: Because Turkish asylum seekers are making massive use of returnee assistance, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees is alarmed. The Union is demanding consequences. ... The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) has received indications that Turkish asylum seekers are abusing support programs for voluntary returnees. Several federal states such as Bavaria, Berlin and Lower Saxony pointed to possible cases of fraud, reported *Welt am Sonntag*. In the latter federal state, the number of voluntary departures with a ‘very short’ stay of less than six months has increased significantly, especially since the second quarter of 2023. These predominantly include men aged 19 to 45. (27/05/2024)

News stories within the framework of the “opportunity hoarding” theme address debates over plans to bring Turkish workers to Germany, revealing efforts to protect

the local workforce's access to resources. In June 2022, the German government's plan to recruit Turkish workers for baggage handling at airports is presented by the CDU/CSU as a problem that should be solved with the local workforce, and it was stated that to bring in foreign workers is an ineffective solution. In particular, member of the parliament Andrea Lindholz's remark that there is also a labor shortage in foreign countries and the Federal Police Union's president's concerns that Turkish experts may not have sufficient training for aviation security present Turkish workers as unwanted competitors for economic resources.

The traffic light coalition wants to make it possible to bring foreign workers, especially from Turkey to Germany. They will be able to help out on a temporary basis with baggage handling and security checks at German airports. ... Union parliamentary group vice-chair Andrea Lindholz (CSU) also criticizes the plans. 'I do not think the announcement to recruiting foreign skilled workers is effective. It is activism and eyewash,' she told Handelsblatt. 'Firstly, there is also a shortage of workers abroad, and secondly, these workers must first be trained and recruited.' ... According to the chairman of the Federal Police Union, Heiko Teggatz, the chaos cannot be prevented in such a short time. He is also glad that Federal Labor Minister Hubertus Heil (SPD), who had suggested the plans, has nothing to do with internal security. So-called aviation security assistants require certification that meets the requirements of the EU directive, he told the newspaper with reference to Turkish specialists. Aviation security is about fighting terrorism. (28/06/2022)

On the other hand, other news articles focus on the unemployment rates of migrants who arrived in 2015 and 2016, mentioning the number of 1.6 million people came on Hartz IV, and indicate that even the current migrant population is inefficient in the labor market and make a claim that bringing in new Turkish workers will not solve the problem of labor deficit. This rhetoric positions migrants as "secondary and temporary" solutions in order to protect the employment opportunities of the local workforce and emphasizes that German resources belong first to German citizens.

The German government now wants to bring thousands of Turks to Germany so that they can help with baggage handling at airports. However, 1.6 million of the migrants who have come to the country since 2015 are still unemployed. ... Faeser added that, despite the speed, security concerns would also be taken into account. There would be 'no compromises' in this regard. Heil demanded that employers pay the Turks 'standard wages and provide decent accommodation for the limited period.' It is still unclear

exactly how many foreigners will be brought into the country. According to the newspaper, it will be ‘a four-digit number of skilled workers from Turkey.’ ... Meanwhile, 893.000 of the migrants who came to Germany as part of the 2015/16 refugee wave are still living on Hartz IV. 235,000 are unemployed, and another 437,000 are looking for work. In total, this amounts to around 1.6 million people. Even of the 460,000 who have found work, more than half are employed in underqualified jobs. The federal government recently admitted all of this in response to a query from AfD MP René Springer, which JUNGE FREIHEIT reported on exclusively. None of the three ministers said why some of these people could not be employed in baggage handling. (27/06/2022)

The representation of visa concessions for earthquake victims in February 2023 as the government opening the door to uncontrolled migration reveals that even an endeavor for humanitarian aid is perceived as an exploitable threat. In particular, the emphasis on the risk of millions of people arriving and concerns about the housing crisis have led to migrants’ demands for rights being represented as a burden. In conclusion, these reports show that resistance to bringing in migrant workers is shaped more by a preservation of opportunities reflex than by economic concerns, and that Turkish workers are being excluded by being labeled as unqualified.

The German government has announced that it will immediately issue visas to all those affected by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria who have relatives in Germany. ‘It’s about providing help in times of need. We want to make it possible for Turkish or Syrian families in Germany to bring their close relatives from the disaster region to them without any red tape, so that they can find shelter and receive medical treatment here,’ said Federal Minister of the Interior Nancy Faeser (SPD) to Bild. The costs will apparently be borne by the taxpayer. ... Since, according to UN figures, around 25 million people have been affected in some way by the earthquake, and millions of Turks and Syrians already live in Germany, hundreds of thousands could benefit from immediate entry permits. Who will take care of them and where will they stay in view of the dramatic housing shortage? How will a return be ensured and who is actually considered to be affected? It is completely unclear! (11/02/2023)

Finally, the only news item given within the framework of the theme of “ethnonational belonging” transforms a historical German folk song, i.e., *Heidschi Bumbeidschi*, into a tool for the construction of a historical “other” against Ottoman-Turkish identity. The news item links the origins of the song to the Ottoman conquests of the 15th-17th centuries, presenting the term “*Hadschi Bombaschi*” as a

symbol of Turkish military brutality. In particular, the one-sided portrayal of the *devşirme* system as the forced removal of Christian children frames the Ottomans as a power that destroyed cultural and religious identities, and the lament in the song is based on this narrative. The theme of a mother's child being taken by the Turks demonstrates that German/Austrian identity is defined through victimization in the face of the Turkish threat. The use of modern terms such as “brainwashing” and “forced Islamization” in the news article to describe historical events feeds a neo-racist discourse that irreversibly labels Turkish/Muslim identity as barbaric. Even linking a Christmas carol to fear of Turks reveals that Turks are coded as eternal enemies in German cultural memory. This narrative aims to legitimate the continued presence of Turkish-origin individuals in Germany as “foreigners within us” by establishing historical continuity with the anti-migrant discourse of the present day.

But they were not allowed to be too young, nor too old. They were gathered in an Ottoman center near Istanbul, where they were raised in the spirit of Islam using brute force and subjected to harsh military training, drills that are almost unimaginable today. This required what we would call brainwashing, which broke and erased their familial and cultural identity and character. This is how this famous, extremely cruel and therefore feared elite force was created. ... If you take a closer look at the text of the song, especially the fourth verse, it becomes clear that it is not a Christmas song but actually a lament: A mother whose son was apparently a victim of the Ottoman boy-harvest mourns with, ‘But *Heidschi Bumbeidschi* came and took my little boy with him. He took him from me and never brought him back, so I wish my little boy a very good night,’ according to the High German text (25/12/2024).

5.1.4. PI News

News articles can be found for all the six themes observed in *PI News*. Figure 5 given below shows the number of the content on the theme, as 17 times on the theme of “securitization and criminalization,” 13 on “contested citizenship,” 9 on “boundary making and symbolic exclusion,” 7 on “cultural neo-racism and incompatibility,” and 3 news articles on the themes of “opportunity hoarding” and “ethnonational belonging” respectively.

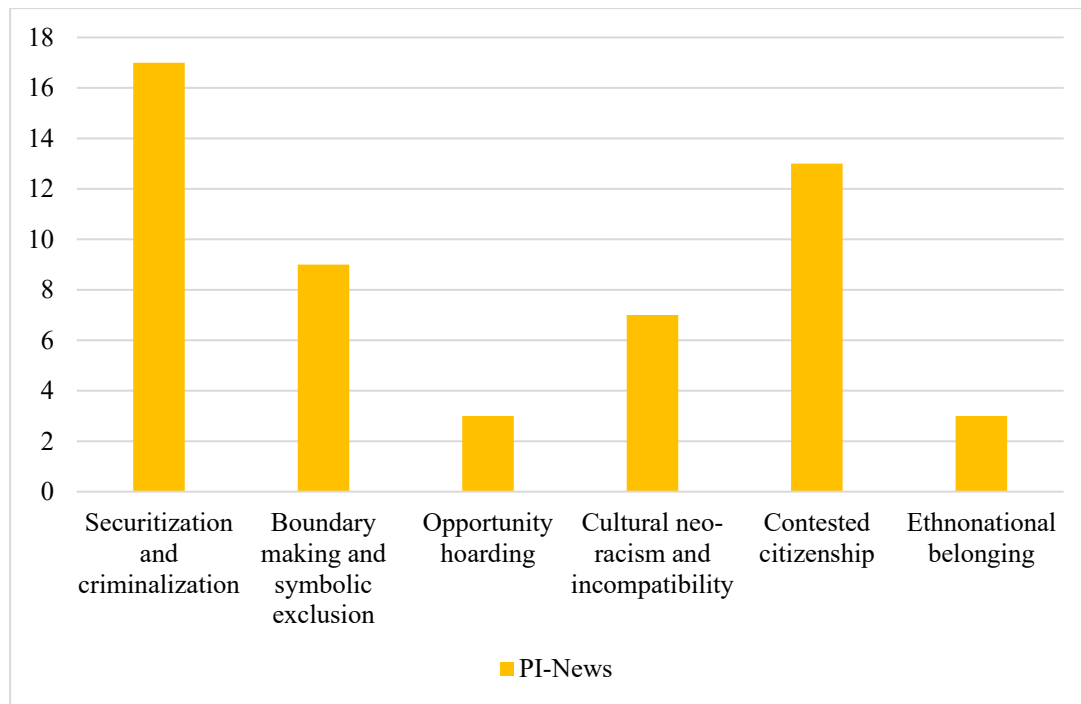


Figure 5. Theme frequencies in PI News

The news articles in *PI News* reproduce a systematic portrayal of Turkish and Muslim migrants as a threat to German society within the context of “securitization and criminalization” theme. In an article published with the title of “Does the future of Germany lie in segregation?” Turkish and Arab migrant neighborhoods were described as “*ghettos*” which were out of the control of the German state and have turned into “no-go zones.”

Have you ever asked yourself how the ghettos of Turkish-Arab migrants came about in German cities? The whole thing happened at a time when living space was not yet scarce in Germany. To put it simply, it started like this: a family from the aforementioned cultural group moves into an apartment building. The other apartments – let’s say there are five more - are occupied by ‘ethnic Germans.’ The cultural differences between the tenants are noticeable, but still bearable. Now it turns out that one of the ‘ethnic German’ families is moving out. The Arab tenant, let’s call him Hassan, informs his work colleague Ali, who is looking for a larger apartment due to an increase in the family. Hassan also speaks to the landlord. Since Hassan always pays his rent on time and doesn’t cause any trouble, the landlord agrees to rent the apartment to Ali. Now two families from this culture live in the house and they get on very well. The numerous children play noisily together, they visit each other often, listen to music and talk at the volume that is typical for this culture. And of course, they keep to themselves. The

other four 'ethnic German' tenants no longer find the quality of living as pleasant as before. ... After entire urban districts in metropolitan areas were Islamized in this way and there are now almost no 'ethnic Germans' living there, many migrants from the Turkish-Arab cultural circles now view these districts as their territory, in which the German state no longer has any say. Such areas are called 'no-go areas' in which the Federal Republic of Germany is increasingly losing its monopoly on violence. (02/02/2025)

In the article dated as January 2025, the case of the murder of a German man in Paderborn, the light sentence given to the Tunisian perpetrator is being represented as evidence that the murder of Germans by migrants is politically desirable because the penalties deemed appropriate for the migrants are not deterrent.

On May 1, 2024, Martin K. (30) was beaten to death by Merkel's guests in Paderborn. In December, the Tunisian main perpetrator, as expected, received only a mild sentence of one year and ten months in prison. As has been the case for decades, such ridiculously mild sentences will continue to encourage imitation and further killings of Germans. One therefore wonders: Is the killing of indigenous Germans in particular by Arabs, Afghans, Turks and other Orientals settled in Germany perhaps even politically desirable? (04/01/2025)

In December 2024, the rally of the PAX EUROPA movement that is opposed to political Islam was being instrumentalized to reify the incompatibility narrative with no certain implication that where the boundaries of performed Muslim identity start and not intertwine with political Islam; additionally, the legitimization of this situation by using the words and the testimony of a Kurdish Muslim to take a stance against "political Islam" and the rhetoric of "modern-looking Muslims" in the article was also noteworthy:

I also made constant distinctions in my remarks at the four-hour rally in Hamburg on October 8, 2020. I said to the leftists in the counter-demonstration: 'As I said, it's not about Muslims and certainly not about peaceful Muslims. In February we had our rally here, there were some Muslims, modern ones, who took our side. There was a Muslim of Turkish origin who said that everything we are saying here is correct. Yes, political Islam is dangerous. It's about political Islam. Yes, and that is something that affects you too, especially women, because women are the first victims of political Islam. Political Islam clearly puts women below men.' ... To the young, modern Kurdish man of Turkish origin, Serhan, whom I already knew from the BPE rally on February 15, 2020, in Hamburg, I said: 'You said that political Islam is something that you also criticize. No, I'm not referring to the

general public. I said that political Islam is everything that causes harm, everything that propagates violence, that propagates this jihad, that propagates the oppression of women, you are against that too. As a leftist, you are for equality between men and women, and you know that political Islam sees things very differently. You know that, and you can campaign for it, and it has nothing to do with, I don't know, the Islamic faith, you can all build mosques, believe in Allah and hope for paradise, that's fine. No problem. And the point is that no religion can determine laws. Our coexistence is decided in parliaments.' (11/12/2024)

In September 2024, the 25th anniversary of the murder of Thorsten Tragelehn was commemorated by *PI News* to reproduce the narrative of Germans killed by Turks and the insensitivity of the authorities when a native German was wronged by a foreigner or migrant, but the possibility of this kind of attitude could be taken due to the security concerns and the protection of fundamental legal rights of a perpetrator coming from a minority status or a disadvantageous social group has never been mentioned, rather the nationalist sentiments are narratively being exacerbated.

25 years ago today, on the night of September 3rd to 4th 1999, 20-year-old Thorsten Tragelehn was stabbed to death by a Turk in Lohfelden in northern Hesse. One of the many murders of indigenous Germans by so-called 'migrants,' but one of the few where we were able to learn the name of the murdered man. In Solingen, the names of the dead are currently being guarded like a state secret. We know this same pattern whenever the victims are Germans. We are not supposed to familiarize ourselves with these German victims, neither their names nor their lives, we are not supposed to feel any empathy for these people. We are supposed to bury them and forget them so that everything can go on as normal. ... But in the case of Thorsten Tragelehn, we have not forgotten the name. Nor have we forgotten the name of Daniel Siefert, also murdered by a Turk in Kirchweyhe in 2013. (03/09/2024)

In August 2024, the hierarchy between the Hanau victims killed in a hookah lounge, as a culturally distinct place for some migrants groups, in 2020 by an attacker who was a defender for far-right ideology and the case of "Daniel S." who was killed by a Turk in 2013 was being instrumentalized to make a claim that the media is giving more importance to migrant victims. The following two different news stories show how these narratives are presented as follows:

#SayTheirNames is the name of an initiative in Hanau promoted by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs and supported by numerous churches,

unions and associations. The aim is to commemorate by name the nine victims with foreign names who were killed by a mentally ill Hanau resident in February 2020 (the perpetrator's indigenous murder victim, his own mother, is not included among these names). ... But who remembers "Daniel S."? In 2013, the 26-year-old painter was beaten to death by a 'gang of thugs' in Kirchweyhe. The local media initially deliberately concealed the ethnicity of the victims. When it could no longer be kept under wraps that the thugs were foreigners, the growing outrage was nipped in the bud: only racists would exploit 'such things' (the main perpetrator at the time, Cihan A., has been free for many years now). (26/08/2024)

In February 2023, it was claimed that the ethnic origin of the perpetrator, an Armenian arms dealer in Hamburg claimed who possibly came to Germany as a refugee, was hidden by the mainstream media again by noting the detail that one of the fiercest crime gangs in Germany to be dominated by Turks and Arabs.

All media (except the Bild newspaper) conceal the fact that the accused is a foreigner and that he comes from Armenia (whether he once came to Germany as a 'refugee' remains unclear). ... Not a single newspaper reports that the Bandidos – after the Hells Angels – are now considered the most powerful and often extremely brutal biker gang in Germany, which is dominated by Turks and Arabs who are always prepared to use violence in the various chapters (districts) of the gang organization in several European countries. (08/02/2023)

In the content given below, it is possible to observe the same pattern. In a case involving a Turkish man who killed a German teacher in January 2023, it was claimed that the perpetrator's name was intentionally left out by the media because he was an migrant.

A 17-year-old college student murdered his 55-year-old German teacher Sabine K. in Ibbenbüren (North Rhine-Westphalia) after class on Tuesday with several knife stabs. ... However, all mainstream media are still keeping the ethnicity of the murderer secret - only the Bild newspaper mentions the name of the knife attacker: Sinan Y. The name is of Arabic origin, which is particularly common among Albanians and Turks. Literally translated, Sinan means 'the (iron) spearhead.' The name is often used as a surname in Muslim circles. (12/01/2023)

In December 2022, a traffic accident involving a Turkish man in Salzburg was presented in a way that upholds the stereotype of migrants as lacking social

awareness and causing damage to people around them under the influence of damaging substances in order to directly link the person to a crime activity.

The fact that in the end ‘only’ three people were injured is nothing short of a miracle. The Turk has now been sentenced to a total of 15 years in prison by the regional court in Salzburg for three counts of attempted murder. The verdict is not yet final. (01/12/2022)

While the murder of a German at a Turkish workplace in Nuremberg in November 2022 was being presented as a proof of integration failure which was directly delivered as *“For a few weeks now, reports of regular ‘isolated cases’ have been pouring in, and this piece of Turkish folklore on German soil should not go unmentioned. Our country is once again being made the scene of intra-cultural tensions and conflicts. The fact that all three people involved - one perpetrator and two victims - are Turkish again gives a deep insight into how badly integration has failed, while our cuddly justice system certainly has a warm place for such individuals too (07/11/2022),”* the case of a Turkish-born killer who was released in Berlin in September 2022 was being used to reiterate a claim of the leniency of the German justice system to migrants. This content also penetrates the boundaries of the themes “contested citizenship” by saying that *“The idea that a German passport does not always and truly make a Turk a German, but that someone who is expected to spend many years in prison could perhaps flee to his old homeland...”*

The Berlin judiciary has let the 28-year-old Turkish murderer Koray T. go free. In September 2016, he shot a taxi driver. The crime scene was the multicultural Kottbusser Tor, the reason was a banal argument in which the perpetrator suddenly pulled out a gun. Koray T. has German citizenship, emphasizes the BZ. ... The idea that a German passport does not always and truly make a Turk a German, but that someone who is expected to spend many years in prison could perhaps flee to his old homeland, apparently has not occurred to anyone in Berlin's political establishment or the judiciary. Koray T. can slap his thigh and laugh at the stupid German idiots. (07/09/2022)

In March 2022, a threat by a Turkish-born police officer to “slaughter the infidels” was used to reflect fears over Muslim identity being entrenched in the security forces with a generalizer perspective and critical tone toward multiculturalism in the German institutions with a sarcastic stress on being “colorful” and “diverse.”

The Berlin State Police is a colorful, diverse force. Of course, it also offers Turkish citizens career prospects. And these people – like everyone else – are entitled to freedom of opinion, art and religion. ... Tolga K. is also part of this colorful and diverse group. He is a police officer with the Central Property Protection Department. A ‘German’ police officer, mind you. Even if you don’t see it in his YouTube videos and publications on social networks: he prefers to salute the Turkish flag rather than the German one. ... On the one hand, he swore an oath to the Basic Law: "I swear that I will exercise my office faithfully to the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Constitution of Berlin, in accordance with the laws, for the benefit of the general public, and that I will conscientiously fulfil my official duties; so help me God." On the other hand, he leaves no doubt as to whose God he expects help from and how he interprets his freedom rights when he sets rap music to music with words like: ‘Those who obey the infidel will be slaughtered by the Turks. We give our lives for God, for every martyr there will be a reckoning.’ (07/03/2022)

In a news report from February 2022, which is given below, a Turkish migrant burned down his own shop to collect money from insurance. In the investigation, he alleged that his shop had been set on fire by the arsonists because of anti-migrant sentiment, and that Chemnitz was an area where the far right and racist ideology was already established located in the East Germany. *PI News* published a political statement that rejects this kind of biased judgment toward Chemnitz and the people of Chemnitz as being motivated by racist and xenophobic violence and reported this news. But in the journalistic manner of this media outlet, just as in all others, one cannot show a sensitivity that such generalizations are also wrong against the migrant population.

This Tuesday, the trial against the alleged arsonist Ali Tulasoglu began in Chemnitz. The court accuses the Turk of setting fire to his restaurant ‘Mangal’ in Chemnitz in 2018 in order to collect the insurance money. In doing so, he is said to have accepted the death of 15 residents. ... At the time, the defendant blamed ‘right-wing radicals’ for the crime and claimed that he wanted to leave Chemnitz for safety reasons. CDU Prime Minister Kretschmer then visited the burnt-out bar and reinforced the narrative of foreign victims and right-wing perpetrators. ... The Chemnitz AfD state parliament member, Dr. Volker Dringenberg, explains: ‘I expect the CDU Prime Minister to apologize to all Chemnitz residents. Kretschmer’s actions have reinforced the impression that Chemnitz is a right-wing radical and xenophobic city. This premature judgment has caused great damage to Chemnitz and all of Saxony.’ (08/02/2022)

In December 2021, the car convoys held at Turkish weddings were reported under the title “Turkish wedding folklore endangers human lives” and linked to traffic violations, which is another example of the incompatibility and marginalization of cultural practices to make more defined the insuperability of symbolic boundaries between these two cultures that can be seen in the comparative attitude of the text given below:

13 years ago, the then Federal Government Commissioner for Integration, Maria Böhmer (CDU), praised the Turks in Germany with the following words: "These people, with their diverse culture, their warmth and their zest for life, are an enrichment for us all." She may have been thinking of the excessive weddings, which are much more important to Turks than to Germans. That is something to be praised, that is correct. ... However, unlike Germans, this joie de vivre comes through in Turks even before the journey from the registry office to the place of celebration. While people of German descent drive through the town in their cars honking, perhaps with a few rattling cans of food under the bridal car, this is definitely not enough for the other group. Those who are more concerned with appearances need something bigger. (24/12/2021)

In November 2021, the praise of Turkish workers in the Bavarian parliament was contrasted with a high unemployment rate among Turkish migrant community and the claims of a high crime rate among the Turkish population. In using such a discourse, which is full of exclusionary nuances, this piece of news recognizes and defines a tolerable Turkish minority composed of “Kemalists, Alevis, Kurds and modern-oriented Muslims” as not problematic, on the one hand, and other hand, the Turkish community in its totality as politically authoritarian those who are supporting for Erdoğan and do not share the values of German democracy. It is possible to say that the disproportionate distribution of unemployment, social security dependency, and crime rates among migrant population do not attribute to the structural inequalities, but rather to an inherent and given group feature of the Turkish migrant community.

Of course, among the Turks living here there are democratically minded Kemalists, Alevis, Kurds and modern-oriented Muslims who do not cause any integration problems and often also contribute positively to the shaping of our free society. Some of them also warn against political Islam and its representatives in this country. But as a whole, we undoubtedly have a lot of

problems: in June 2018, 64.8% of Turks living in Germany with Turkish passports voted for the autocrat Erdogan, a religious and political hardliner who has opposition figures thrown into prison *en masse*. People of Turkish origin are also disproportionately unemployed. While only 4.4% of Germans are unemployed, the rate for Turks is 15%. The proportion of non-working people who do not have any official work is also very high among Turks in Germany at 48%. ... Not to forget the increasing clan crime: many of these clans have their roots in the province of Mardin in southeastern Turkey. From there they emigrated to Lebanon in the first half of the 20th century and from there to Germany in the late 1970s. Criminal biker gangs are also increasingly dominated by Turks. ... All of that was completely forgotten on November 15th in Munich, when a ceremony in the venerable Senate Hall of the Bavarian State Parliament commemorated ‘60 years of the recruitment agreement with Turkey.’ Uli Henkel was invited as a representative of the AfD parliamentary group and had to endure two hours of unbearable praise of Turkish migrants - almost without any critical undertones. He reports on this ordeal in the BPE studio. ... If one takes these statements by Joachim Herrmann and Wolfgang Heubisch (they praised the efforts of Turkish guestworkers in Germany to build up the economic miracle of the country at that time) at the ceremony in the midst of an invited audience of Turkish and Turkish-born officials seriously, then it is clear where the CSU is headed: a solidarity and blanket declaration of solidarity with the Turkish community while simultaneously declaring war on the AfD and other critics of political Islam and unrestricted migration. (27/11/2021)

All of these news contents systematically associate Turkish and Muslim identity with crime, violence, and social discord, framing the presence of migrants as a security threat. The media’s selective use of language, the generalization of cases based on ethnic representation, and the manipulative presentation of statistics deepen the “us vs. them dichotomy,” paving the way for exclusionary policies.

In the news articles published in *PI News*, a deep crisis of legitimacy regarding the position of Turkish migrants in German society is highlighted within the framework of “contested citizenship” theme. The claim of the “the historical lie of guest worker” in September 2024 argues that the state deliberately concealed the Turks’ intention to stay in Germany permanently.

However, the longest and most serious lie of our state was, as is well known, the story propagated from 1961 to 1999 that the Turks were ‘guest workers’ and therefore had to return to Turkey after their work was finished. Today we know that the proper remigration of Turkish guest workers, as promised to the Germans, was never really planned. The ‘guest worker lie’ is therefore rightly regarded as the original sin of the ‘Federal Republic.’ No other state in

2000 years of German history has lied to the Germans for longer and with more serious consequences than the 'Federal Republic.' (09/09/2024)

In another article published in June 2024, it was emphasized that Turkish asylum seekers were exploiting the system, criticizing Turkey for granting refugee status to its citizens despite being a NATO member. These reports serve as examples of both a nationalist reading of history and historical revisionism in evaluating the process of Turks joining the wave of migration that began in the 1960s with the aim of meeting Germany's post-war period labor needs and ensuring economic recovery, as well as the current distrust of the state's migration policies by the far-right political wing.

For years now, one of the largest groups of people applying for asylum in Germany each year has come from one of the most popular holiday destinations for Germans: Turkey. Remarkably, this fact plays hardly any role in the German political discussion about the right to asylum and its abuse. ... The first thing Turkish asylum seekers do as soon as they reach German soil is to dispose of their identity papers. Anyone who admits their Turkish origins clearly has no right to asylum in a European Union country whose accession candidates our NATO partner Turkey is still officially one of. Even without identity documents, every Turk has access to the full German asylum admission program, which not only includes legal advice, but often also toleration after the asylum application has been officially rejected. (21/06/2024)

In May 2024, Federal President Steinmeier's statement that Turks built up Germany's economic restructuring in the post-war period was again criticized through the lens of historical revisionism, while in April 2024, the same claim was refuted with the argument that the German economic miracle was achieved without Turkish workers.

During his current visit to Turkey, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier told the fairy tale of Germany being rebuilt by Turkish guest workers. In a speech at Sirkeci train station in Istanbul, from which Turkish guest workers set off for Germany, Steinmeier said: 'They built up our country, they made it strong, and they belong at the heart of our society.' ... The facts tell a completely different story. Contrary to what the legends claim, in 1961 (seven years after the peak of the economic miracle in 1955) there was no real labor market need for Germany to import additional workers, who at the time could only be employed in the low-wage sector due to their inadequate qualifications. The desire for an agreement clearly came from Turkey and only came about due to pressure from the USA, which

wanted to stabilize the country economically after Turkey's geostrategically motivated admission to NATO. (23/04/2024)

In January 2024, the increase in the number of migrants by stating that 63,000 Turkish citizens applying for asylum and recognition rates were presented with the following statements: *"Almost all mainstream media fail to mention that almost all Turks and almost all Kurds in this country are 'tolerated' in the long term with full social benefits"* (10/01/2024). These statements are presented as follows:

In total, more than 350,000 foreigners applied for refugee protection in Germany in 2023. Compared to the same period last year – when there were 217,774 initial applications – these figures represent an increase of 51.1 percent. ... This raises a serious question that most German media do not even mention: How can so many people "flee" from Turkey to come here? After all, Turkey is an official ally of the Federal Republic - in NATO. Although some mainstream newspapers report that the recognition rate for Turkish "refugees" is allegedly 81 percent, the SWR newspaper speaks of a very low recognition rate for Kurdish "refugees" from Turkey. Are most people "fleeing" for economic reasons only? And mostly for free? (10/01/2024)

In November 2023, while the failure of the readmission agreement between EU and Turkey was emphasized, the 101,000 Turkish citizens who applied for asylum in Germany were used to portray the permanent presence of Turks as a threat.

According to a new report by the EU Commission, the government of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has received exactly 9.88 billion euros since 2016 for taking back illegally entering migrants to Greece. But in fact, it is not doing so. In the almost seven years, Turkey has only allowed 2,140 'refugees' back into the country who illegally entered the Greek islands and thus the EU. Most of them then come to Germany. ... The 'funniest' thing is that since 2017, over 101,000 Turks have applied for asylum in Germany. ... Erdogan is not even prepared to take back his own countrymen. Nevertheless, at the current meeting between Chancellor Scholz and him, the possibility of extending the agreement was discussed. In return, Turks will be allowed to enter Germany more easily. (19/11/2023)

In October 2022, the 61st anniversary of the guest worker agreement, which was allegedly signed under pressure from Turkey and the US, is being turned into a narrative of a fiction by employing a historical revisionist perspective, pointing out how far-right ideology evaluates the social and historical dynamics lying behind this

example of social mobility in the content with the title “61st Anniversary: The Forced Recruitment of Turkish Guest Workers.” In addition to this, the sayings of the politician Ferda Ataman, who comes from a Turkish migrant family, “*Our self-perception as a migration-friendly and (too) tolerant society is wrong. Our parents are not guests; they helped build this country.*” can be evaluated as Turkish community in Germany sees itself as a natural and permanent part of the society and there could be no self-labelling through “foreigner within ethnic Germans.”

As a representative example, the current anti-discrimination commissioner Ferda Ataman should be mentioned here, who already made the following statement to the DGB educational institute in June 2019 in a commentary entitled “Migrants owe Germany nothing”: Migrants like my parents were brought in to do the dirty work. The word "guest" was actually just meant to make it clear: they're leaving again. ... The fact that I was born in Germany in 1979 as the child of Turkish guest workers was solely due to the economic interests of the federal government. At no time was it about doing something good for people from poorer countries. They were needed. ... Our self-perception as a migration-friendly and (too) tolerant society is wrong. Our parents are not guests, they helped build this country. ... The facts tell a completely different story. Contrary to what the legends claim, in 1961 Germany had no real labor market need to import additional workers, who at the time could only be employed in the low-wage sector due to their inadequate qualifications. The desire for an agreement clearly came from Turkey and only came about due to pressure from the USA, which wanted to stabilize Turkey economically after Turkey's geostrategic admission to NATO. When the agreement was concluded, NATO's foreign policy goals and Turkey's domestic and economic goals were the main focus. In particular, Turkey hoped for a reduction in the high Turkish unemployment figures, which were caused by population growth that was permanently higher than economic growth. (30/10/2022)

All these reports frame the citizenship rights of Turks as a historical mistake, a demographic threat, or a system abuse, opening up the social legitimacy of migrants to debate. The claim of that “the ethnic nature of the German population is being changed without the consent of Germans” reinforces the thesis that citizenship should be only limited to ethno-cultural affiliation.

Within the framework of the theme of “boundary making and symbolic exclusion,” it reveals how Turkish and Muslim migrants are systematically excluded from German

society. The February 2025 news article titled “Does the future of Germany lie in segregation?” describes the neighborhoods formed by Turkish and Arab migrants as “ghettos” and “no-go areas,” claiming that these areas are beyond the control of the German state. Brubaker (2015) depicts these kinds of socio-cultural spaces appeared in the form of “ghetto” as a deliberate confinement of migrants and minority groups to limit their daily interaction with more privileged native population. I would like to remind that this very content has been examined in the theme “securitization and criminalization” as well.

Have you ever asked yourself how the ghettos of Turkish-Arab migrants came about in German cities? The whole thing happened at a time when living space was not yet scarce in Germany. To put it simply, it started like this: a family from the aforementioned cultural group moves into an apartment building. The other apartments – let’s say there are five more - are occupied by ‘ethnic Germans.’ The cultural differences between the tenants are noticeable, but still bearable. Now it turns out that one of the ‘ethnic German’ families is moving out. The Arab tenant, let’s call him Hassan, informs his work colleague Ali, who is looking for a larger apartment due to an increase in the family. Hassan also speaks to the landlord. Since Hassan always pays his rent on time and doesn’t cause any trouble, the landlord agrees to rent the apartment to Ali. Now two families from this culture live in the house and they get on very well. The numerous children play noisily together, they visit each other often, listen to music and talk at the volume that is typical for this culture. And of course, they keep to themselves. The other four ‘ethnic German’ tenants no longer find the quality of living as pleasant as before. ... After entire urban districts in metropolitan areas were Islamized in this way and there are now almost no ‘ethnic Germans’ living there, many migrants from the Turkish-Arab cultural circles now view these districts as their territory, in which the German state no longer has any say. Such areas are called ‘no-go areas’ in which the Federal Republic of Germany is increasingly losing its monopoly on violence. (02/02/2025)

In November 2023, the content given below namely “Does the government always lie?” was used to reinforce the thesis that the presence of Turkish migrants is a deception, and “West German politicians” construct artificial facts to trick and deceive the German people, such they did it before in terms of exaggeration of the effects of climate change and the side effects of Corona vaccination. This narrative is being tied to the idea that Turks being integrated, or Islam with a peaceful nature to enrich the cultural fabric of the West are other constructions of the “evil” political elite to keep deceiving the “pure” German people. This kind of dichotomic

perspective in the perception of the relationship between state and society directly refers to the defining feature of contemporary far-right movements, that is their embrace of populist rhetoric, which appeals to the people and constructs a binary divide between the “pure people” and the “corrupt elite” (Mudde, 2007, as cited in Fochtner, 2020).

No German state has lied to the Germans for longer or with greater consequences than the Federal Republic. The lies began in Bonn times: the fairy tale of the "guest workers" was nothing but a lie, as we know today. They wanted to pull the wool over our eyes in order to bring as many Turks as possible into the country and then naturalize them: creating facts and buying the necessary time with lies, that was the only thing that mattered. A set-up by a deceitful clique of West German politicians. ... The whole climate story - why should we believe this saga from our lying state? Climate change is man-made, there are no natural influences - these are the fairy tales that politicians, teachers at school and headmasters on state television tell us. Aren't these the same people who told us that Islam is peace, that Turks are "integrating like the Poles" and that corona vaccinations have no side effects? If you lie once, no one will believe you! Why should we believe a single word from any state officials who have lied to us all time and time again? (16/11/2023)

The common thread in these reports is an attempt to legitimize the exclusion of Turkish and Muslim identity from German society by associating it with violence, cultural incompatibility, or systemic exploitation. The media's selective use of language and generalization of cases based on ethnic representation deepens the “us vs. them dichotomy,” by paving the way for exclusionary policies.

The analysis of the content of news stories published in *PI News*, an extreme right-wing German alternative media platform, in terms of themes that operationalize the social boundary-making process. The two themes of “boundary making and symbolic exclusion” and “cultural neo-racism and incompatibility” are systematically operationalized by placing Turkish and Arab migrants in the “non-German” category and therefore outside of the legitimate identity in German society. In other words, the publication aims to exclude migrants from Germany in both spatial and cultural-political-symbolic terms. In the text headlined “Does the future of Germany lie in segregation?” the authors code Turkish-Arab neighborhoods as

“no-go areas” and present the situation as completely cut off from the authority of the German state, as if it were an “occupied” area; this claim produces symbolic boundaries by cutting the socio-cultural presence of these migrants from its legitimacy.

The exodus of ‘ethnic Germans’ is now spreading to entire cities. ‘Ethnic German’ parents no longer want to send their children to schools where at least half of the students come from migrant families with Muslim backgrounds. They are leaving, sometimes to other federal states where the migrant quota is low and the AfD is doing well in the polls. (02/02/2025)

In a similar way, the text “Straight to Solingen: Reading Pirinçci and Sellner!” codes examples of violence committed by Turkish and Muslim youth against Germans as a common pattern of crime and frames the socio-cultural presence of migrants as an element that threatens the German national identity in addition to the safety of German population by offering a solution of remigration/repatriation.

There are no official figures on how many violent attacks by foreigners on Germans there have been in recent years. But: In Berlin alone, a whopping 384 (!) knife attacks were reported in 2023. 69 percent of the suspects had a foreign passport. The number of ‘naturalized’ citizens among the other 31 percent of knife-wielding suspects is, of course, unknown... ...Anyone who still looks for symptoms and wants to avoid political issues (“complex causes,” “toxic masculinity”) does not want to understand. Because there are known ways to make our cities livable and safe again: close the borders and repatriate millions of people! (26/08/2024)

In the news contents “Does the government always lie?” and “Civil War in France,” migrant groups in Germany and France are presented as disloyal masses to the state and a threat to public order. The implication that states unintentionally have no power on the control of irregular migration and migrants’ unregulated or they intentionally ignore this undesirable situation which is used frequently in these news stories makes the policies that allow the acceptance of migrants illegitimate by drawing a sharp and uncrossable line between the “real German people” and “outsider foreigners and migrants.”

... Aren’t these the same people who told us that Islam is peace, that Turks are ‘integrating like the Poles’ and that corona vaccinations have no side

effects? If you lie once, no one will believe you! Why should we believe a single word from any state officials who have lied to us all time and time again? (16/11/2023)

What the French have in their North Africans, the Germans have in our Turks and Arabs. We don't really know what will happen to them. And some people have a bad feeling. In France we are currently experiencing an escalation that could catch up with us in Germany at any time. Suddenly, as in pre-modern times, the law of the jungle prevails in public spaces. (30/06/2023)

The content "Why Erdogan? Why not Özdemir?" frames the preference of Turks in Germany for Erdoğan over German political figures as a failure of integration and therefore signals Turkish identity as a potential threat and evaluates political loyalty on the basis of nationality.

If Afghans or Syrians living in Germany had someone like the old and new Turkish presidents in Kabul or Damascus, their enthusiasm for these fictitious leaders would be no less great. The US vassals in Berlin, including Özdemir, are not suitable for identification, but are actually an obstacle to integration. This does not explain all of the Erdogan enthusiasm here, but more than is admitted in public opinion. (30/05/2023)

The content headlined "Berlin Muslim police officer threatens to 'slaughter' infidels" and dated as 07/03/2022, that was discussed previously, even presents migrant citizens working in state security institutions in Germany as suspicious and threatening and frames their socio-cultural presence in public spaces as dangerous by highlighting that Muslim infiltration to the German state institutions.

The Berlin State Police is a colorful, diverse force. Of course, it also offers Turkish citizens career prospects. And these people – like everyone else – are entitled to freedom of opinion, art and religion. ... What Jews can expect from *Tolga K. & Co.* is summed up by one of his comrades in the rap piece, which is designed as a duet: 'Muslim, do not leave al-Quds to the enemy.' Al-Quds, the Holy, refers to Jerusalem, which is to be taken away from the enemy. The enemy is the Jews. The tasks of the Berlin police's central security department include protecting not only diplomatic missions, but also synagogues. Everyone can judge for themselves how safe these are when Tolga K. is standing armed at the door. (07/03/2022)

In the news headlined "Turkish wedding folklore endangers human lives" and "Bavaria: praise in the state parliament for Turkish guest workers," Turkish cultural

practices (such as wedding convoys) or historical contributions are either ridiculed or criminalized, thereby culturally excluding migrants through their everyday practices.

... However, unlike Germans, this *joie de vivre* comes through in Turks even before the journey from the registry office to the place of celebration. While people of German descent drive through the town in their cars honking, perhaps with a few rattling cans of food under the bridal car, this is definitely not enough for the other group. Those who are more concerned with appearances need something bigger. (24/12/2021)

... All of that was completely forgotten on November 15th in Munich, when a ceremony in the venerable Senate Hall of the Bavarian State Parliament commemorated '60 years of the recruitment agreement with Turkey.' Uli Henkel was invited as a representative of the AfD parliamentary group and had to endure two hours of unbearable praise of Turkish migrants - almost without any critical undertones. (27/11/2021)

As can be seen in all these examples, the media discourse systematically places migrants outside of the "German" identity by constructing both physical and symbolic boundaries in order to legitimize their isolation and segregation from society.

The far-right German media outlet *PI News* operationalizes the theme of "cultural neo-racism and incompatibility" through discourses that claim that migrants, especially Turkish and Muslim groups, are incompatible with the cultural structure of Germany and even pose a threat to it. In this context, cultural differences are substituted for ethnic differences, and discrimination is legitimized on the basis of "lifestyle," "belief systems," and "values" rather than "biology." In the content headlined "In Cologne, the muezzin is now allowed to call to prayer indefinitely," Turkey's migration to Germany is related to an American conspiracy for the purpose of deterioration of Germany's demographic structure through naturalization of foreign population, and the presence of Turkish migrants is represented as the result of planned Islamization, institutions such as DİTİB and the construction of mosques are framed as symbols of cultural occupation.

Cologne was and is the capital of the Islamization of Germany. The wave of guest workers in the early 1960s brought mainly Greeks, Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese and 'Yugoslavs' to the country. In 1961, the German government under Adenauer was still reluctant to comply with the US wishes to accept

Turkish guest workers. There were initially no recruitment centers in Turkey. But the American Kennedy administration insisted, as in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 the Turks had been promised prosperity at Germany's expense in return for the American nuclear missiles being withdrawn from Turkey in accordance with the agreement with Khrushchev. ... Because the Germans initially resisted, the Ford factory in Cologne had to recruit Turkish guest workers on the instructions of the US government. Ford opened recruitment centers in Turkey. Work visas were only granted for two years, and family reunification was not desired. But that was not in line with the planned Islamization. Both of these things fell apart quite quickly, and Turkey became the largest sender of guest workers. The Ford factory preferred to hire Turkish guest workers and so Cologne became a hotspot for Islamization. (21/11/2024)

In the contents namely "75 Years of the Federal Republic, 75 Years of 'Hatred' of Germans?" and "75 Years of Semi-Democracy," the presence of migrants in Germany is defined with conspiratorial narratives such as repopulation (displacement of German population), and the process being presented as systematic erasure of the cultural and national identity of Germans. These narratives generate a social anxiety that Turkish and Arab migrants are actually transforming German democracy from within, and deceiver and liar political elite has enabled this plan for years.

The idea that a Germany populated by Turks and Arabs is a 'better' Germany, as the ruling class of the Federal Republic has claimed for decades, can only be the logical consequence of a world of ideas in which Germans naturally embody all the evil in the world: re-educating these genetically evil Germans alone is not enough to improve the world; Germany will only become 'good' when it is completely repopulated and the Germans as such have finally disappeared. (20/05/2024)

The unique historical feature of the Federal Republic is its policy of repopulation. This great political crime against the Germans should never have happened. If the Germans had ever been allowed to vote, they would never have agreed to the naturalization of Turks and Arabs in Germany. There was never and still is no majority among the Germans to repopulate Germany! The policy of repopulation of the Federal Republic was therefore only possible because the ruling elite of this state cheated the Germans of their constitutional right to a direct say for 75 years. (10/05/2024)

In the news content "Bremen: SPD Muslim Mustafa Güngör insults 'Alliance Germany'," Turkish origin politician Güngör's refusal to distance himself from Erdoğan is distorted to suggest that he is a "political Islam agent," and the democratic representation rights of migrant politicians are cast into doubt. At the

same time, discriminatory rhetoric continues to be directed at migrant politicians who have clearly distanced themselves from Erdoğan's brand of political Islam, such as Cem Özdemir (pp. 129, 131).

As long as Güngör does not make any clear statements against Erdogan and political Islam, he is highly suspected of being a submarine of precisely this ideology. The fact that he wants to deny legitimate committee posts to a right-wing conservative and Islam-critical democratic force elected by almost 10 percent of Bremen citizens, insults them and associates them with 'fascists,' makes him even more suspect. PI-NEWS will continue to keep a close eye on him. (03/07/2023)

In the article headlined "Repopulation: Pros and Cons," multicultural societies are exemplified by historical conflicts and disharmony in terms of cohabitation, and the Turks' controversial perspective on the Armenian genocide is presented as a potential threat to Germans in the future, reinforcing the claim of incompatibility through cultural memory.

First of all, the assumption that population replacement serves peace is doubted. The collapse of Yugoslavia or the genocide in Rwanda are repeatedly cited as examples of the not necessarily peaceful coexistence of people of different cultures, languages and religions, but also the current war in Ukraine, which also has its origins in political difficulties between the two main peoples in the country, Ukrainians and Russians. Reference is also made to the terrible fate of the indigenous Armenians in Asia Minor, especially since the millions of Turks who settled in Germany never showed any remorse in the face of this first major genocide in human history: From the point of view of the critics of population replacement, this lack of remorse is a bad omen for the future fate of the indigenous Germans. Historically, 'colorful republics' have always existed around the world, and only very few of these polyethnic systems have a truly peaceful history in the long term. (06/02/2023)

Finally, in the news article "83 of the members of the German Bundestag are migrants," the presence of politicians with migrant backgrounds in parliament is presented as a kind of ideological and political infiltration, the increase in the number of Turkish-origin representatives is framed not as democratic representation but as a cultural threat.

18 members of the Bundestag originally come from Turkey. In total, there have been 100 Bundestag candidates of Turkish origin. Turkish media are

now also proudly reporting this - such as the English-language newspaper *Daily Sabah*. The newspaper mentions that most of the ‘Turks’ belongs to the SPD faction. ... In 2020, a total of 21.9 million people, or 26.7 percent of the population in Germany, had a migration background. Many of the millions of ‘refugees’ who have arrived are not - yet - included in this figure. The Federal Statistical Office (*Destatis*) announced this recently. ... According to the report, of the approximately 22 million migrants, 7.9 million were eligible to vote in the federal election on September 26, 2021. This corresponds to about a third (36 percent) of all people with a migration history and 13 percent of all eligible voters in Germany. Based on these official figures, migrants are significantly overrepresented, particularly in the Left Party parliamentary group. (03/10/2021)

In all these news contents, Turkish and Muslim migrants are portrayed as fundamentally incompatible with Germany’s democratic, secular, and cultural norms, resistant to integration, and even as a threat that threatens to transform German identity. This is a neo-racist demarcation that turns cultural difference into a new tool for racial exclusion.

Three news articles on the theme of “opportunity hoarding” in *PI News* use a stereotypical and inverted image of Turks in Germany. According to this theme, migrants, particularly Turks, are represented as agents who take the social, economic, and political opportunities offered by the German state undeservedly, and even take advantage of them. In the news article dated in 24/11/2024, the mass naturalization of Turks is interpreted as a move to protect the electoral base of cartel parties, thus drawing into question the legitimacy of Turks’ right to the democratic process. The argument that Turks distance themselves from other migrant groups, such as Arabs or Africans, both sets up a hierarchy among migrants and suggests that the AfD as a “realistic” option for the solution of the issue of Germany’s uncontrolled and unregulated migration management creates an opportunity window for the firstcomer Turkish migrants in terms of keeping their position to reach the sources and privileges as a priority.

Most foreigners come to Germany because they hope for a higher quality of life for themselves and their children than in their own country. For the typical Turkish guest worker family of the 1970s, this expectation was actually fulfilled: as a Turk, you had better schools, a cleaner everyday environment, nicer cafes and a generally higher level of comfort in Cologne than in Istanbul. However, with the mass settlement of Arabs and black

Africans, this situation has changed fundamentally in the last ten years: Today, both the schools and the everyday living environment in Istanbul are of a much higher standard than in the foreign quarters of Cologne. Many foreigners in their residential areas therefore recognize the direct connection between mass migration and the conditions in schools, the garbage on the streets and the general neglect of public spaces much more clearly than the Germans, who continue to indulge in ideological dreams in the better residential areas. Since they understand this direct causal connection more quickly than the Germans with their ideological complexes, they do not want more foreigners in the foreigner quarters, especially from the point of view of many Turks, especially not more Afghans, Arabs and black Africans. And the only party that credibly represents this concern is the AfD. (24/11/2024)

The text dated in 18/10/2024, on the other hand, claims that Turks came to Germany for prosperity and not for asylum, and therefore took advantage of the asylum system illegally and ethically.

Many Africans have an image of Germany, an economic miracle country, through their media, which is also a social paradise and offers a higher level of security without work than one can achieve at home through hard work. Even the Turks, the largest migrant group until the Ukraine war, from safe Turkey, which we finance with billions in subsidies, do not expect greater protection in Germany, but above all a higher standard of living, which has nothing to do with asylum, and is therefore an abuse of asylum. (18/10/2024)

Finally, in a news report dated in 30/07/2024, the share of Turks in the prison population is mentioned, the idea is spread that Turks are both an economic burden on society and a security risk; again, this is an exclusionary framework questioning the legitimacy of access to opportunities.

According to the Senate's response, there were a total of 1.251 foreigners in Hamburg's correctional facilities in May 2024. This represents a foreigner share of 58.1 percent. In comparison, in 2022 the foreigner share in German prisons was still 54.9 percent. This means that the foreign share of prisoners is constantly increasing. Most of the foreigners come from Turkey (149). Some of them are asylum seekers. Although this country is a NATO ally of the Federal Republic, many Turks receive asylum in this country, or (this is usually the case) they are legally 'tolerated' in this country with full social benefits. In fact, this is almost always unlimited. (30/07/2024)

In all these texts, Turks are presented as a group that should not have the right to social resources, has taken privileges, and threatens the position of the indigenous

population; this instrumentalizes the theme of “opportunity hoarding” in the construction of an anti-migrant and discriminatory narrative.

The last theme we will discuss in the last media outlet we analyzed is that of “ethnonational belonging.” In these discourses, Germany’s social and national belonging framework is defined as one that only ethnic Germans can fit into, while Turks – along with other migrant groups – are cast outside of this belonging and coded as potential threats and foreign elements. In the news article dated in 26/08/2024, Akif Pirinçci’s extreme discourse is quoted as saying that Turks are the perpetrators of violence against Germans; this draws a national belonging boundary with both “German victim” and “Turkish perpetrator” frameworks. The fact that these extreme statements come from a Turkish migrant provides another basis for legitimizing the arguments (pp. 140, 150). At the same time, while racist attacks in Germany are downplayed, the collective stigmatization of Turks through individual crimes is legitimized. In a news article dated in 15/01/2024, the concept of “remigration” is presented as being in Germany’s national interest, placing emphasis on the claim that Turks should have been sent back from the country since the 1980s, denying their permanence, and representing them as foreign others that are incompatible with ethnic German identity.

Remigration is not a dirty word. Remigration means returning. Remigration is nothing new: Helmut Kohl (CDU) already wanted to halve the number of Turks in Germany in the early 1980s. ... Remigration is not forbidden or offensive, but in Germany’s national interest. Remigration means reversing the migration flows that are currently flowing unhindered towards Germany. The result: At the end of 2022, around 13.4 million foreigners lived in Germany, and in 2023, more than 350.000 initial applications for asylum were submitted in Germany. (15/01/2024)

The text dated in January 2024, by citing highly educated Turks returning to Turkey as examples, states that they have no sense of belonging to Germany and feel relieved when they return after all to their “home country” of Turkey, thus emphasizing that they do not belong to the German national community.

There are good reasons why it is mainly well-educated Turks with university degrees who are moving back to Turkey: Turkey has now caught up

economically and, especially in Istanbul and on the west coast, offers a more modern, cleaner and better organized living environment than today's run-down Germany. For managers and well-educated engineers, salaries in Turkish industry are at a comparable level, with significantly higher purchasing power. Even if some returnees initially have a German accent - which soon wears off - they still feel like they are in their 'own' country and are not mentally constantly sitting on packed suitcases. ... In addition, just as it is among Germans, the mass migration of Arabs and Africans promoted by Angela Merkel and Olaf Scholz is also a daily topic of conversation among many Turks in Germany. Ten years ago, Turks were in the majority in districts with a predominantly foreign population. Today, they are just one ethnic group among many others, especially others with whom they have historically not had a good relationship. ... Many Turks are known to have a pronounced racism towards blacks and a cultural arrogance towards Arabs, inherited from centuries of Turkish colonial history in North Africa and the Middle East. The more Arab and African the residential areas in Germany become, the more uncomfortable not only the Germans but also many Turks feel. Like the Germans, people then move away from these areas - but unlike the Germans, who can only flee back and forth within their small country, Turks have the privileged opportunity to turn their backs on Germany altogether. ... Even if migration from Turkey to Germany continues to increase, triggered by the most open national borders in the world, remigration is certainly an issue, especially for the educated Turkish middle class in Germany. The fact that our state and its elite are now acting as if remigration is not a fact, but a right-wing extremist fantasy shows once again how ideologically stubborn and unrealistic our establishment is. (13/01/2024)

In these texts, Turks are represented as not being part of the German nation, but as temporary, troublesome or repatriated foreigners, while the boundaries of ethno-national belonging are drawn by an ethnic-based regime of exclusion.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, theoretical frameworks of securitization and criminalization, boundary making and symbolic exclusion, ethnonational belonging, opportunity hoarding, cultural neo-racism, and contested citizenship can be used to analyze the far-right media's narrative about Turkish migrants in Germany. These concepts and theoretical frameworks help to understand how the far-right media construct, perpetuate and disseminate narratives that systematically stigmatize, marginalize and define Turkish migrant communities living in Germany, as well as shape public discourse on issues such as national identity, belonging and security. The key findings of the study can be linked to these theoretical frameworks and concepts, suggesting that the far-right media do not just reflect social prejudices but actively produce and amplify them through various strategies such as negative framing, historical revisionism and cultural essentialism.

To sum up, it is possible to say that securitization and criminalization can be used to analyze how the far-right media portray Turkish migrants as a threat to national security and social order. This is evident in the findings of the study that far-right media outlets such as *PI News*, *Junge Freiheit*, and the others consistently associate Turkish migrants with crime and disturbing the public order, particularly in the context of mass migration and impossibility of integration. By framing migration as a security issue rather than a social or economic phenomenon, these media outlets reinforce the narrative of Turkish migrants as a threat to German society. The process of boundary making and symbolic exclusion also underpins the exclusionary narratives employed by far-right media about Turkish migrants in Germany. The concept of ethnonational belonging can be used to understand how the far-right media construct a bounded and exclusive definition of "Germanness," which pushes

Turkish migrants outside of this definition even if they hold a citizenship status legally. Historical references to events such as the Siege of Vienna, which are used to depict Turks as eternal enemies, as well as the emphasis on cultural differences and incompatibilities in contemporary German society, are all ways in which the far-right media construct a symbolic boundary between Germans and Turkish migrants. The concept of opportunity hoarding can be used to analyze how the far-right media portray Turkish migrants as exploiting the German welfare system and stealing resources and opportunities from native Germans. The portrayal of Turkish migrants as a “burden” or “problem” also reflects the concept of contested citizenship, as it calls into question the legal and social status of Turkish migrants in Germany. The far-right media’s narrative about Turkish community is not only characterized by exclusionary and stigmatizing rhetoric, but also by the use of cultural neo-racism, which frames cultural differences as inherently problematic or threatening and multiculturalism is not a peaceful world order as it sounds. This can be linked to the concept of cultural neo-racism, which emphasizes the use of cultural markers to construct racial and ethnic hierarchies. By framing Islam and Turkish traditions as incompatible with Western values and portraying Turkish migrants as unwilling or unable to integrate to the German society, the far-right media engage in a form of cultural neo-racism that avoids explicit biological arguments to establish hierarchies among ethnicities but still marginalizes and stigmatizes Turkish and Muslim communities by attributing individual-based behaviors to these people’s culture with a generalized point of view and style of delivery. This also aligns with the contested citizenship framework, which highlights debates about multiculturalism and integration as central to the far-right media’s narrative about Turkish migrants. The rejection of dual citizenship and the call for assimilationist policies based on the argument that even second and third-generation Turks are still culturally foreign reflect this contested understanding of citizenship and belonging.

Collectively, it can be said that these discursive strategies serve for the creation of a sense of disbelonging, where certain groups are denied recognition as legitimate members of the national community. This sense of disbelonging has significant consequences not only for the symbolic exclusion of Turkish migrants from German society, but also for their material conditions of life. In other words, when media

representations consistently frame Turkish migrants as threats to national security and social order and increase the visibility of individual crimes as if they are collectively committed, it can create the cognitive and affective conditions for discriminatory policies and measures to be perceived as reasonable and necessary, rather than as violations of democratic and constitutional principles. Because I argue that the narratives of far-right media about Turkish migrants in Germany is not just about how migrants are perceived by the public, but also about what is going to be problematized and be imbedded in the consciousness of the society. This has important implications for how we understand the performative power of media discourse and its ability to actively produce social reality through repeated acts of representation and interpretation.

The role of far-right media in shaping public discourse and attitudes towards migrants is also important to consider considering these findings. These outlets not only provide alternative narratives that challenge the mainstream media's habitual patterns of language, but also actively work to normalize extremist rhetoric, mobilize political support for far-right parties like the AfD, and undermine democratic pluralism. By capitalizing on commercial media logic through sensationalism, conflict, and personalization, far-right media amplify anti-migrant narratives, fostering polarization and distrust. The erosion of Germany's traditional media *cordon sanitaire* has allowed far-right voices to enter mainstream debates, as evidenced by the disproportionate coverage of the rhetoric of the AfD. This normalization process can have broader implications, such as deepening societal divisions and legitimizing exclusionary policies that target Turkish communities. The aggravation of social fragmentation makes integration increasingly difficult, as mutual distrust between native Germans and Turkish migrants is opilated by relentless negative portrayals.

In terms of the importance of this study, I believe that addressing the persistent anti-Turkish and anti-Muslim rhetoric in German far-right media and finding ways to effectively counter such narratives is an urgent task. Media literacy programs, greater representation of migrant voices in mainstream journalism, and political measures to combat hate speech are essential steps toward a more inclusive public sphere.

However, the persistence of these narratives also reflects deeper anxieties about identity and globalization that require not just debunking false narratives but a reimagining of national belonging that embraces diversity. The normalization of far-right rhetoric has tangible policy implications, from restrictive asylum laws to cultural policing, all of which shape the lived experience of Turkish migrants in Germany. The far-right media play a significant role in reinforcing negative stereotypes about Turkish communities, which has real-world consequences and are already existing, including discrimination in employment, housing, and public services. In addition to this, to simply challenge false and manipulated media narratives could not be enough; there could be also a need to actively promote more positive and inclusive representations of Turkish migrants, such as the societal contribution of this community. This includes highlighting their contributions to German society, as well as their shared struggles and aspirations with native Germans.

The broader significance of the findings of this research lies in their demonstration of how exclusionary narratives can gain traction through their embeddedness in larger historical, economic and political contexts. Far-right media discourse succeeds not because of its internal coherence but because it provides seemingly plausible explanations for real and valid social anxieties about economic security, cultural change, and national identity while directing those anxieties toward marginalized groups and attributing social problems that are structural and institutional to the existence of different ethnic communities. This suggests that effective counterstrategies must address not just the manifest content of these narratives but the underlying conditions that make them resonate.

Ultimately, this study tries to reveal media discourse as a key terrain where struggles over national identity and belonging are fought. The success of the far-right in terms of shaping public debate points to the failures in the ability of mainstream media while providing alternative narratives, and more fundamentally, to unresolved tensions in Germany's post-war political culture resulted in the unequal distribution of welfare and other resources. The persistence of these exclusionary narratives suggests that democratic inclusion of Turkish migrants remains an unfinished

project, which requires not just invalidating false claims but reimagining the very terms of national belonging in a more inclusive sense. The challenge for Germany could be to develop a pluralistic conception of identity that acknowledges historical particularities while embracing the reality of its diverse present. It requires moving beyond merely tolerating difference, and to fundamentally rethinking what it means to belong in contemporary Germany.



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APPENDICES

A. SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

GİRİŞ

Bu tez, Almanya'daki aşırı sağ medyanın, ülkenin en köklü göçmen gruplarından biri olan Türk göçmenleri nasıl temsil ettiğini sosyolojik olarak analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Aşırı sağ medyanın bu temsillerinin, kamuoyu algısı, ayrımcı pratikler ve sosyal dışlama mekanizmalarının oluşumundaki kritik rolünden hareketle ana araştırma sorusu "Almanya'daki aşırı sağ medya organları, Türk göçmenleri nasıl temsil ediyor?" şeklinde belirlenmiştir. Bu soru, temsillerde kullanılan temalar, "öteki" inşası, ulusal kimlik tartışmalarıyla kesişimi ve sembolik marjinalleştirmeye katkısı gibi alt sorularla desteklenmektedir.

Türklerin Almanya'ya göçünün tarihsel arka planı, mevcut temsilleri anlamak için temel teşkil etmektedir. Nocera (2018)'ya göre, ilk işçi treni 1961'de hareket etmiş ve Türkiye, Almanya'nın *Wirtschaftswunder* dönemindeki işgücü açığını kapatmak için anlaşma yapan diğer Akdeniz ülkelerinin arasına katılmıştır. Kitlel işgücü göçünün yaşandığı döneme tekabül eden 1955-1973 yılları arası *Gastarbeiterperiode* (misafir işçi dönemi) olarak da bilinir. Mortan ve Sarfati (2011), göçün aynı zamanda Türkiye için de bir kalkınma politikası olduğunu ve başlangıç planlarını geçici statü üzerinden yapılmasına rağmen zaman içerisinde kalıcılaştığını vurgular. 1989'da Berlin Duvarı'nın yıkılışı bu süreç için bir dönüm noktası olmuş ve göçmen işçilerin dikkate değer bir seviyede paya sahip olduğu işgücü piyasasında fazlalık yaratarak yabancı düşmanlığını artırmıştır (Mortan & Sarfati, 2011). Akgündüz (1998), Türkiye'den başka ülkelere yapılan göçleri tarihsel bir perspektiften inceleyerek işgücü göçlerinin Türkiye'nin ilk göç verme deneyimi olmamasına rağmen uzun vadeli bir politika izlenmediğini belirtir. Almanya'ya

göçün detaylı tarihsel anlatımını Abadan-Unat (2006)'ın çalışmasında görmek de mümkündür; yazar, 1960'larda kitlesel işçi alımı, 1970'lerde aile birleşimiyle kalıcı yerleşim, 1980-90'larda artış gösteren kimlik politikaları ve göçmen karşıtı hareketler, 2000'lerde ise tartışmaların küreselleşme ve çokkültürlülük odaklı hale geldiğini savunur.

Bu tarihsel çizgiden hareketle günümüz trendine bakıldığında söylenebilir ki aşırı sağ, göçü bir güvenlik ve kültürel tehdit olarak sunarak “göçmen karşıtı bir Avrupa” inşa etmeye çalışmaktadır (Güler, 2019). Balibar ve Collins (2003), Avrupa'daki ayrımcılık dinamiklerini kıta ülkelerinin sömürgeci geçmişin rolünü vurgulayarak açıklarken Karapın (1998)'e göre Almanya'da aşırı sağın seçim başarısı, göç konularının anaakım gündeme sık sık taşınmasıyla doğrudan ilişkilidir. Böylelikle Freeman (1997)'a göre göç, siyasi bir memnuniyetsizlik kaynağı oluşturmaktadır. Georgi (2019), 2010'larda ırkçılığın daha saldırgan hale geldiğini ve “mülteci krizi”nin aşırı sağ tarafından araçsallaştırıldığını savunur. Almanya özelinde, Küçükcan (2002), kan bağına dayalı (*jus sanguinis*) vatandaşlık yasalarının etnik azınlıkları dışladığını ve “misafir işçi” teriminin geçiciliği vurguladığını belirtir. Almanya'da AfD'nin 2015 Mülteci Krizi ile birlikte göç ve İslam karşıtı söylemleri anaakımlaştırmasına odaklanarak yükselişi (Decker, 2016; Galston, 2018; Aknur, 2020) ve bunun yabancı düşmanı milliyetçi hisleri ve şiddet eylemlerini tırmandırması (Kemper, 2015) tezin arka planını oluşturur.

Yukarıdaki bağlamda, bu tez, Almanya'daki aşırı sağ medyanın Türk göçmenler hakkındaki ayrımcı söylemlerini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tez, bulguları aşağıdaki temalar üzerinden analiz edecektir:

- Güvenlikleştirme ve Suçlulaştırma: Wæver'in Kopenhag Ekolü çerçevesi uyarınca aşırı sağ medya, göçmenleri varoluşsal bir tehdit olarak çerçeveleyerek göçü bir “kriz” olarak sunar ve güvenlikleştirme algısını güçlendirir (Çıtak, 2020; Ünal Eriş & Öner, 2021; Rosina, 2024).
- Sınır Çizme ve Sembolik Dışlama: Popülizm, homojen bir “biz” ile tehditkâr “onlar” arasında keskin bir karşıtlık inşa eder. Lamont & Molnár (2002)'a göre sembolik sınırlar, sosyal dışlamaya dönüşür. Göçmenler, medeniyet tehdidi olarak çerçevelenir (Brubaker, 2017; Kaya & Tecmen, 2019).

- Etno-millî Aidiyet: Almanya'nın geleneksel olarak kan bağına dayalı vatandaşlık anlayışı (Küçükcan, 2002), Türkleri etnik "öteki" konumuna sabitlemiştir. Buna karşın Habermas (1998), kültürel asimilasyon yerine yasal ve siyasi uyumun gerekli olduğunu savunur.
- Fırsat İstifçiliği: Tilly (2000)'nin kavramsallaştırması, belirli bir grubun kaynaklara erişimi kendi lehine sınırlandırmasını anlatmaktadır. Göçmenler, bu mekanizma yoluyla işgücü piyasasında ve kaynaklara erişimde dışlanır ya da misafir ülkenin etnik vatandaşları tarafından kendilerinin söz sahibi olması gerektiğine inandıkları kaynakları kendilerine ve göçmenlerden oluşan sosyal çevrelerine ayırmakla itham edilir (Rury & Saatcioglu, 2015; Georgi, 2019).
- Kültürel Neo-Irkçılık ve Uyumsuzluk: Balibar (1991) ve Anık (2021)'in işaret ettiği gibi, bu ırkçılık türü biyolojik değil, kültürel farklılıkların hiyerarşisi ve "uyumsuzluk" fikri üzerine kuruludur. Göçmenler, Batı değerleriyle bağdaşmazlıkla ilişkilendirilir.
- Tartışmalı Vatandaşlık: Vatandaşlık, göçle birlikte sorgulanan çok katmanlı bir kavramdır. Bloemraad vd. (2008) ve O'Brien (2016)'a göre, çokkültürlülüğün başarısızlığı söylemi ve kültürün ırklaştırılması, göçmenlerin eşit vatandaşlar olarak kabulünü engelleyen başlıca faktörlerdir.

KURAMSAL ÇERÇEVE

Bu çalışma, Almanya'daki aşırı sağ medyada Türk göçmenlerin temsilini, sembolik dışlama sorunsalı etrafında analiz etmek için bir kuramsal zemin inşa etmektedir. Temel argüman, aşırı sağ söylemlerin var olan toplumsal gerçeklikleri yansıtmakla kalmayıp aktif olarak ürettikleri ve bu sürecin bir sınır inşası oluşturma stratejisi olarak çerçevelenebileceğidir. Bu amaçla, farklılığın sosyal inşasını merkeze alan ve esensiyalist olmayan bir bakış açısı benimsenmektedir.

Çalışmanın temelini, Rogers Brubaker'ın kimlik, vatandaşlık ve sınıflandırma üzerine olan kuramları oluşturur. Brubaker (2015), etnisite, milliyet ve din gibi kategorilerin sabit, biyolojik özellikler olmadığını; aksine, söylemsel pratikler, kurumsal mantıklar ve siyasi mücadelelerle sosyal olarak inşa edilen, ilişkisel ve bağlama bağlı yapılar olduğunu savunur. Medya ve siyaset, bu kategorileri

“içeridekiler” ve “dışarıdakiler” arasında ayırım yapmak için seferber eden “sınıflandırma teknolojileri” (*technologies of classification*) olarak işlev görür. Buna ek olarak Brubaker (2002), “grupçuluk” (*groupism*) eleştirisiyle, etnik veya ulusal grupların sınırları belirli, homojen varlıklar olarak indirgemeci bir perspektifle ele alınmasına karşı çıkar. Ona göre, “Türk göçmenler” gibi bir kategori ile etkileşim ve ortak kimlikle tanımlanan bir grup arasında ayırım yapmak gerekir. Aşırı sağ medya, Türk göçmenleri homojen, tek boyutlu ve değişmez bir kategori olarak temsil ederek siyasi olarak araçsallaştırılabilecek bir gruplaşma (*groupness*) hissi yaratır. Brubaker (1992; 2015) vatandaşlığı, yalnızca hukuki bir statü olarak değil, sınır inşası (*boundary-making*), hak talep etme (*claim-making*) ve performans (*performance*) yoluyla sürekli müzakere edilen ilişkisel bir aidiyet alanı olarak kavramsallaştırır. Almanya’nın tarihsel olarak *jus sanguinis* (kan bağı) üzerine kurulu vatandaşlık rejimi, Türk göçmenlerin nesiller boyu sembolik olarak “yabancı” konumunda kalmalarını meşrulaştıran kurumsal bir düzendir.

Bu çalışmada, sembolik dışlama mekanizmalarını anlamak için ulus ve aidiyet algılarının nasıl inşa edildiğini irdeleyen kuramlara başvurulur. Benedict Anderson (1983), ulusların, üyelerinin çoğunu hiç tanışmamış olsalar da kendilerini ortak bir aidiyete sahip olarak hayal ettikleri “hayali cemaatler” olduğunu öne sürer. Aşırı sağ medya, dil, din ve gelenekler etrafında bir “Almanlık” tanımı inşa ederek Türk göçmenleri bu sembolik aidiyet sınırlarının dışında konumlandırır. Bu, hukuki vatandaşlıktan bağımsız, derin bir sembolik dışlama biçimidir. Richard Alba (2005), Almanya bağlamında vatandaşlık sınırlarının “parlak” (*bright*) olduğunu, yani yasal olandan ziyade kültürel ve kurumsal bir *ethos* ile keskin ve kalıcı bir şekilde çizildiğini savunur. Türk kökenli biri yasal olarak vatandaş olsa bile, bu parlak sınırlar onun “tam bir üye” olarak tanınmasını sembolik bir anlamda engeller. Aşırı sağ medya, bu sınırları yeniden üretime soktukları söylemler yoluyla aktif olarak parlatma işlevi görür. Wieviorka (1993)’nın işaret ettiği üzere, modern Avrupa’da eski biyolojik ırkçılık, kültürel farklılıklar ve uyumsuzluk temelinde meşrulaştırılan “kültürel ırkçılık” veya “yeni ırkçılık” ile yer değiştirmiştir. Türk göçmenlerin “Alman değerleriyle bağdaşmaz,” “demografik tehdit” veya “güvenlik riski” olarak çerçevelenmesi, bu kültürel ırkçı söylemin tipik örnekleridir.

Kuramsal çerçeve, Alman medyasında göçmen temsillerine dair ampirik bulgularla da desteklenmektedir. Literatürdeki bazı çalışmalar (Schmidbaur, 2016; Uysal, 2011), Alman medyasının on yıllardır göçmenleri ve özellikle Türkleri, suç, güvenlik tehdidi, kültürel uyumsuzluk ve ekonomik yük ile ilişkilendiren olumsuz kalıp yargıları sürdürdüğünü göstermektedir. “Türk sorunu” veya “sel” gibi felaket ve kriz hâli metaforlarıyla çerçevelenen bu temsiller, “biz” ve “onlar” ikiliğini pekiştirir. Güncel çalışmalar (Richter & Paasch-Colberg, 2023; Eberl vd., 2018), İslam ve Müslümanlarla ilgili haberlerin çok büyük bir oranda terör, savaş ve iç çatışma bağlamında ele alındığını ortaya koyar. Müslümanlar nadiren kendi sesleriyle temsil edilir ve monolitik, tek boyutlu bir grup olarak resmedilir. Bu, ötekileştirici bir söylem yaratır.

Medya, bu temsilleri üreterek toplumsal gerçekliği yalnızca yansıtmakla kalmaz, aktif olarak inşa eder. Göçmenlerin seslerine yer vermemek, başörtüsü gibi belirli görsel klişeleri kullanmak ve suç haberlerinde eğer suçlular göçmense etnik kökenlerini özellikle vurgulamak, Brubaker’ın tabiriyle “sınıflandırma teknolojileri” olarak işlev görür ve sembolik dışlamayı kurumsallaştırır.

Bu çalışma, yukarıdaki kuramları, aşırı sağ medyanın Türk göçmenlere yönelik söylemlerini analiz etmek için birleştirici bir çerçevede bir araya getirmektedir. Bu çerçeveye göre, aşırı sağ medya Brubaker’ın “sınıflandırma teknolojileri” ve “grupçuluk” eleştirisini kullanarak Türk göçmenleri homojen ve değişmez bir kategori haline getirir, Anderson’ın “hayali cemaatler” ve Alba’nın “parlak sınırlar” kavramları ışığında, onları Alman ulusal topluluğunun sembolik sınırlarının dışında konumlandırır, kültürel ırkçılık söylemleriyle bu dışlamayı, onları kültürel olarak uyumsuz, tehditkâr ve kalıcı bir “Öteki” olarak çerçeveleyerek meşrulaştırır, bu süreci tarihsel olarak olumsuz medya temsilleri ve İslam’ın güvenlikleştirilmesi üzerine kurulu bir bağlamda yürütür.

Dolayısıyla, bu çalışmanın kuramsal temeli, aşırı sağ medya söylemlerinin, Türk göçmenlerin kimliğini ve aidiyetini inşa eden ve sorgulanamaz kılan aktif bir etno-ulusal sınır çizme pratiği olduğu iddiasını desteklemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

METODOLOJİ

Bu bölüm, çalışmanın metodolojik tercihlerini ve yaklaşımlarını açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma nitel bir desene sahiptir ve bu nedenle öncelikle nitel araştırmanın genel özellikleri, felsefi temelleri ve ana gelenekleri (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Heyink & Tymstra, 1993; Lune & Berg, 2017 gibi referanslarla) tartışılarak epistemolojik bir bağlam oluşturulur. Nitel araştırma, sosyal olguların kalitesine, insanların deneyim ve algılarına odaklanır; nasıl ve neden sorularını sorar, derinlemesine anlamayı hedefler ve genellemeden çok bağlamsal temsiller ve temalar üretir (Ambert et al., 1995).

Çalışmanın temel yöntemi içerik analizidir. İçerik analizi, insanların ürettiği materyallerdeki (metin, görsel, ses vb.) gömülü anlamları, kalıpları ve temaları sistematik olarak betimlemeye, analiz etmeye ve yorumlamaya yarayan bir yöntemdir (Lune & Berg, 2017; Roller, 2023). Hem açık (*manifest*) hem de örtük (*latent*) anlamları ortaya çıkarmayı hedefler ve bağlamsal bir yaklaşımı benimser. Nicel ve nitel içerik analizi arasındaki temel fark, nicelin görünür içeriği saymaya ve mevcut teorileri test etmeye (tümdengelim), nitelin ise örtük anlamları yorumlamaya ve bağlamına odaklanarak teoriler geliştirmeye (tümevarım) eğilimli olmasıdır (Atkinson, 2017; Reisner, 2023). Metinde, Hsieh ve Shannon'dan (2005, akt. Roller, 2023) alıntılanan üç nitel içerik analizi yaklaşımına (geleneksel, yönlendirilmiş ve özetleyici) da yer verilmiştir. Yöntem, medya içerikleri de dâhil olmak üzere çok çeşitli materyallere ve disiplinlere uygulanabilir.

Araştırmanın tasarımı bir vaka çalışmasıdır (*case study*). Vaka çalışması, sınırları belirli bir olay, süreç veya grubun (bu çalışmada Alman aşırı sağ medyası) derinlemesine ve bütüncül bir şekilde analiz edilmesini sağlar (Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Çoklu veri kaynağı kullanımına olanak tanır ve bağlam, tarih ve anlam sağlama konusunda güçlü bir araçtır.

Çalışmanın temel amacı, Almanya'daki aşırı sağ medya organlarının Türk göçmenleri nasıl temsil ettiğini ve bu temsillerin damgalama (*stigmatization*) ve sosyal dışlama süreçlerine nasıl katkıda bulunduğunu eleştirel bir şekilde analiz

etmektedir. Ana araştırma sorusu şudur: “Almanya’daki aşırı sağ medya organları, Türk göçmenleri nasıl temsil etmektedir?” Bu ana soru, temalar, ötekileştirme süreçleri, ulusal kimlik tartışmalarıyla kesişimler ve marjinalleştirme etkileri gibi alt sorularla desteklenmektedir.

Analiz için, Almanya’da aşırı sağ ideolojiyle bağlantılı ve kamu söyleminde etkili olduğu düşünülen dört medya kaynağı seçilmiştir: *Compact-Magazin*, *Junge Freiheit*, *PI News* ve *Deutsche Stimme*. Bu kaynaklar, ton ve strateji açısından farklılık gösterse de aşırı milliyetçilik ve göçmen karşıtlığı gibi ortak ideolojik değerleri paylaşmaktadır. Analiz, seçim döngülerinin ani etkilerinden uzak, süreklilik arz eden bir söylem yakalayabilmek için Ekim 2021 – Şubat 2025 dönemini kapsamaktadır.

İlgili haber içerikleri, “Türken,” “Deutsch-Türken” gibi anahtar kelimeler kullanılarak manuel olarak toplanmış ve taranmıştır. Makaleler, önceden belirlenmiş altı ana tematik çerçeveye (güvenikleştirme/suçlulaştırma, sınır çizme/sembolik dışlama, etno-ulusal aidiyet, kültürel ırkçılık/uyumsuzluk, fırsat istifçiliği, tartışmalı vatandaşlık) göre kategorize edilmiştir. Ardından, metafor, abartma ve genelleme gibi retorik araçlara dikkat edilerek nitel bir içerik analizi yapılmış ve metinlerin altında yatan örtük anlamlar ve ideolojik çerçeveler yorumlanmıştır. Tüm süreç, bağlamsal hassasiyet sağlamak amacıyla herhangi bir yazılım kullanılmadan manuel olarak yürütülmüştür.

Çalışmanın bazı sınırlılıkları bulunmaktadır; örneğin, çalışma, medya temsillerine odaklanmakta ancak bu temsillerin hedef kitlede veya göçmen topluluklarda nasıl algılandığına (*reception*) ve tepki gördüğüne dair veri içermemektedir. Bununla birlikte, analiz yalnızca Türk göçmenlere odaklanmıştır; diğer göçmen grupların temsilleriyle karşılaştırma yapılmamıştır. Seçilen dört medya organı, Almanya’daki tüm aşırı sağ medya yelpazesini temsil etmemektedir; Telegram gibi alternatif platformlarda dolaşıma sokulan aşırı sağcı medya içerikleri ve diğer yayınlar çalışma kapsamına alınmamıştır. Tüm analiz sürecinin manuel olması ve yorumlamadaki rolü nedeniyle kaçınılmaz bir öznel yanlılık içermektedir. Son olarak söylenebilir ki bu çalışma, araştırmacının aşırı sağın dışlayıcı ve etnosentrik söylemlerine

yönelik eleştirel konumuyla şekillenmiştir. Bu durum, nitel araştırmanın doğasında bulunan ve derinlemesine yorumlara daha esnek bir alan tanıyan bir özellik olarak da kabul edilebilir.

Sonuç olarak bu çalışma – sınırlılıklarına rağmen – Almanya’daki aşırı sağ medya söyleminde Türk göçmenlerin nasıl “görünür” ancak aynı zamanda da “damgalanmış” özneler olarak inşa edildiğine dair odaklanmış ve eleştirel bir analiz sunarak literatüre katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

ALMANYA’DA AŞIRI SAĞ MEDYA

Bu bölüm, Almanya’daki aşırı sağ medyayı ideolojik duruş, medya stratejileri ve toplumsal etkileri açısından inceleyerek ideoloji, medya ve politika arasındaki ilişkileri analiz etmektedir.

“Aşırı sağ”ın kavramsallaştırılması bağlamında söylenebilir ki bu terim, “radikal sağ” ve “ekstrem sağ” olarak iki alt grubu kapsayan bir şemsiye kavramdır (Halikiopoulou, 2018; Mudde, 2010’dan akt. Rone, 2022). Ekstrem sağ, çoğulcu demokrasiyi reddederken ırkçılık ve milliyetçi şiddetle direkt olarak bağlantılıdır; bir diğer taraftan radikal sağ, seçim demokrasisini kabul eder ancak yerlilik (*nativism*) ve otoriterlik vurgusu yapar, çoğulculuğa ve azınlık haklarına karşı çıkar (Mudde, 2007’den akt. Forchtner, 2020). Aşırı sağın çekirdek ideolojisi ulusal kimliği biyolojik/ırksal/kültürel mirasa bağlama olarak tanımlanan etnomilliyetçilik, sıkı hiyerarşi ve geleneksel otoriteye itaat olarak tarif edilebilecek otoriterlik, “saf halk” vs. “yozlaşmış seçkinler” ayrımına işaret eden dışlayıcı popülizm, Nazi suçlarını hafifletme veya inkâr etme anlayışıyla yapılan tarihsel revizyonizm ve sosyal yardımların dominant etnik grup için saklanması anlamına gelen refah şovenizmi gibi kavramlar üzerine kuruludur (Forchtner, 2020; Mudde, 2004’ten akt. Maurer vd., 2022; Wodak, 2020; Salzborn, 2014’ten akt. Wodak, 2020). “Yeni sağ” kavramı ise, aşırı sağın entelektüelleştirilmiş, “metapolitik” bir strateji izleyen halidir. Doğrudan siyasi iktidar yerine, kültürel ve entelektüel hegemonya yoluyla toplumsal düşünceyi şekillendirmeyi amaçlar. Solun strateji ve söylemlerini (ör. Gramsci’nin kültürel hegemonya kavramı) taklit ederek ve *think tank*’ler ya da dergiler gibi

kültürel platformlar aracılığıyla aşırı sağ fikirleri popülerleştirir, muhafazakarlık ve aşırılık arasındaki çizgiyi bulanıklaştırır (Salzborn, 2016; Forchtner, 2020).

Alman aşırı sağ medyası, geleneksel anaakım medyaya ve yerleşik siyasal sisteme muhalefet eden, kendilerini “anaakımın alternatifi” olarak konumlandıran medya ağlarıdır. Objektiflik ve tarafsızlık gibi gazetecilik normlarını reddederler ve bilinçli yanlış bilgi, haberi bağlamından koparma ve mit üretimi gibi stratejiler kullanırlar (Klawier vd., 2022; Klawier, 2023). Sadece haber kaynağı değil, aynı zamanda “öfke seferberlik mekanizmaları” olarak da işlev görürler (Rone, 2022). Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmada dört önemli aşırı sağ medya platformu vaka çalışması olarak incelenmiştir:

- *Junge Freiheit*: “Yeni Sağ” düşüncesinin önemli bir haftalık yayınıdır. AfD ile yakın ilişkisi vardır.
- *PI News*: Anonim editör ekibi ve yazar kadrosuyla “anaakım karşıtı” ve İslamofobik görüşleriyle öne çıkan bir medya kuruluşudur. PEGIDA ve *Identitäre Bewegung* gibi aşırı sağcı hareketlerle bağlantılıdır ve söylemleriyle bu saflarda örgütlülüğe seferberlik işlevi görür.
- *Compact-Magazin*: En belirgin popülist özelliklere sahip, açıkça aşırı sağ bir medya kuruluşudur. Yayınlarında haber ile ideoloji arasındaki çizginin bulanık olduğu görülebilir.
- *Deutsche Stimme*: Almanya’nın aşırı sağ spektrumunda yer alan siyasi partilerden biri olan NPD’nin aylık yayın kuruluşudur. Açıkça etnomilliyetçi, aşırı sağcı, ekstremist ve tarihsel revizyonist bir çizgidedir.

Yukarıda bahsedilen basın kuruluşlarında da sık sık gözlemlenebileceği üzere aşırı sağcı medyanın yayın stratejileri anaakım medyayı “*Lügenpresse*” (yalan basını) olarak nitelendirerek güvenilirliğini aşındırma ve gazetecilere yönelik düşmanlık kültürü yaratma (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2018; Lang, 2016), Yeni Sağ’ın entelektüel dergiler, *think tank*’ler ve kültürel etkinliklerle uzun vadeli kültürel dönüşüm hedeflemesi (Salzborn, 2016), kabul edilebilir söylem sınırlarını zenofobik, İslamofobik veya tarihsel revizyonist açıklamalarla bilinçli olarak zorlayarak medyanın dikkatini çekme ve gündem belirleme (Maurer vd., 2022), haber yaymanın ötesine geçerek aşırı sağcı protestoları önceden duyurma, organize etme ve katılımı teşvik ederek “öfkeyi” sokak eylemlerine ve hatta şiddete dönüştürme (Rone, 2022),

bazen de açıkça ırkçı söylem yerine “kültürel mirası koruma” veya “politik doğruculuk” eleştirisi gibi kültürel olarak kodlanmış bir retoriğe geçiş yaparak aşırı fikirleri anaakım söyleme sızdırma (Druxes, 2015; Schneider, 2022) şeklinde özetlenebilir.

Almanya’da uzun süre işleyen etkili bir medya ablukası, aşırı sağ partilerin ve söylemlerin anaakım medyadan dışlanmasını sağlamıştır (Art, 2006’dan akt. Schneider, 2022; Ellinas, 2010). Ancak, AfD ile birlikte bu durum değişmiştir. AfD, anaakım medyanın tartışma programlarına ve röportajlarına sıkça davet edilerek normalleştirilmiş ve söylemleri medyanın ticari mantığı (sansasyon ve çatışma yaratma) ve anaakım siyasetteki göçmen karşıtı söylemlerin benimsenmesi sayesinde meşruiyet kazanmıştır (Schneider, 2022). Bu, medyanın “medya aracılığıyla popülizm” (*populism through media*) ve “medya tarafından popülizm” (*populism by media*) olarak adlandırılan süreçlerle aşırı sağ söylemleri yaymasıyla gerçekleşmiştir.

Almanya’nın aşırı sağa karşı tarihsel anlamda eksepsiyonist konumu, eski siyasetçi Thilo Sarrazin’in 2010’da yayınlanan kitabı ve 2015’in yılbaşında Köln’de yaşanan olaylar gibi anaakım medyada yoğun yer bulan olaylarla aşınmıştır. Bu olaylar, göçmenleri suç ve kültürel tehditle ilişkilendiren çerçevelmeleri meşrulaştırmıştır (Schneider, 2022).

Özetle, aşırı sağ medya, içeriklerinin önemli bir kısmını İslam’ın, göçün ve göçmenlerin suçlulaştırılmasına ayırarak (Müller & Freudenthaler, 2022), “istilâ” ya da “refah sistemi istismarı” gibi kriz anlatılarını kullanarak, göçmen suçluluğunu orantısız ve bağlamından kopuk bir şekilde vurgulayıp bu bağlantıyı doğallaştırarak ve aşırı söylemleri “tartışmaya açık” olarak sunarak meşrulaştırır, normalleştirir (Hentschel, 2025) ve bu yolla göçmenleri sistematik olarak bir tehdit olarak çerçevelerler. Alman aşırı sağ medyası aşırı içerikleri yalnızca dolaşıma sokmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda siyasi tartışmayı ve demokratik kültürü de değiştirir. Anaakım medyanın ticari mantığını ve dijital platformların algoritmik teşviklerini sömürerek kamuoyunda güvensizlik ve kutuplaşmayı derinleştirir, anaakım medyada çalışan gazetecilere yönelik sözel ve fiziksel saldırıları meşrulaştırır, daha önce marjinal

sayılan aşırı söylemleri normalleştirir ve anaakım siyasete entegre eder, demokratik çoğulculuğu aşındırarak dışlayıcı politikaların meşruiyet kazanmasına yol açar.

BULGULAR VE TARTIŞMA

Bu bölüm, Almanya'daki aşırı sağcı medya kuruluşlarının (*Compact-Magazin*, *Deutsche Stimme*, *Junge Freiheit* ve *PI News*) Türk ve Müslüman göçmenleri nasıl çerçevelediğine dair bir içerik analizi sunmaktadır.

Analiz, bu medya kuruluşlarının Türk ve Müslüman göçmenleri aşağıdaki altı ana tematik çerçeve kullanarak sistematik bir şekilde “öteki” olarak konumlandığını ortaya koymaktadır:

- Güvenikleştirme ve Suçlulaştırma: Türk göçmenler, bireysel suçlar genellenerek toplumsal düzen ve Alman halkı (özellikle kadınlar) için bir güvenlik tehdidi olarak sunulur. Suç, etnik kimlikle ilişkilendirilir ve bir “kültürel patoloji” olarak çerçevelenir.
- Sınır Çizme ve Sembolik Dışlama: Türk toplumu, Alman değerlerine sadakatsiz, uyum sağlayamayan ve “içimizdeki yabancılar” olarak temsil edilir. Günlük kültürel pratikler (düğün konvoyları, futbol kutlamaları vb.) bir güvenlik tehdidi veya toplumsal normlara uymama işareti olarak gösterilir.
- Kültürel Neo-İrkçılık ve Uyumsuzluk: Türk kimliği ve kültürel değerleri sürekli olarak “barbar,” “geri kafalı” veya “demokrasiyle bağdaşmaz” şeklinde tasvir edilir. İslam’ın demokrasiyle bağdaşmadığı fikri sık sık işlenir. Tarih (örneğin Viyana Kuşatması gibi tarihi olaylar) bugünün kimlik politikalarına uygun şekilde yeniden yazılarak Türk/Müslüman kimliği şeytanlaştırılır.
- Etnik-Ulusal Aidiyet: Alman ulusal kimliği etno-kültürel unsurlarla tanımlanır. Türk göçmenler, bu tanımın dışında bırakılarak “daimî yabancılar” olarak temsil edilir. Tarih, Türkleri “ebedi düşman” olarak kodlamak için kullanılır.
- Fırsat Yağmacılığı: Türk göçmenlerin, Almanya’nın iş, sosyal yardım, konut vb. kaynaklarını “haksızca ele geçirdiği” ve “gerçek” Alman vatandaşlarının

hakkını yediği iddia edilir. Göçmenlerin ekonomik başarıları, haksız rekabet olarak çerçeveselir.

- Tartışmalı Vatandaşlık: Türk göçmenlerin vatandaşlık hakları bir “istismar,” “demografik tehdit” veya tarihi bir hata olarak sunulur. Vatandaşlığın etno-kültürel aidiyetle sınırlı olması gerektiği savunulur.

Dört farklı medya kuruluşu bağlamında özetle söylenebilir ki *Compact-Magazin*’de çalışmada göz önüne alınan süre zarfında diğer medya kuruluşlarına kıyasla daha az içerik bulundu. Örnekleme dahil edilen haber içeriklerinde suçun etnik kimlikle ilişkilendirilmesi ve tarihi olayların bugünün milliyetçi aidiyet duygusunu beslemek için kullanılması dikkat çekti. *Deutsche Stimme* incelemesinde tüm temalara rastlanıldı. Polis raporlarını yayınlarak Türk göçmenleri suçla sistematik olarak ilişkilendirdikleri ve göçmenlerin Alman toplumunun dışında olduğunu vurgulayan, kaynakları “haksızca ele geçirdiklerini” iddia eden ve vatandaşlık haklarını bir tehdit olarak gösteren söylemler dikkat çekti. Yine tüm temalara denk geline *Junge Freiheit* adlı yayın kuruluşunda ise Türk göçmenler yine güvenlik riski ve suç unsuru olarak çerçeveselendi. Siyasi tercihlerinden (Türkiye seçimlerinde Erdoğan’ı desteklemek) konvoylar ve kutlamalar gibi günlük kültürel pratiklerine kadar birçok konu, Türk kimliğini “sorunlu” ve “Alman değerleriyle uyumsuz” göstermek için kullanıldı. Almanya’nın mevcut işgücü açığını kapatmak için Türkiye’den işçi getirme planları eleştirilerek kaynakların yerel işgücü için korunması gerektiği savunuldu. Son medya kuruluşu olarak *PI News* ise, en agresif ve kapsamlı örnekleri sundu ve Türk ve Müslüman göçmenleri en yoğun şekilde güvenlik tehdidi olarak çerçeveselleyen örneklem oldu. Göçmenlerin nüfus yoğunluğu olarak fazlaca bulunduğu bölgeleri “getto” ve “no-go area” (girilmesi tehlikeli bölge) söylemleriyle işaretleyerek mekânsal ve sembolik sınırlar çizdi. Göçmenlerin varlığını Alman ulusal kimliğini silmeye yönelik kasıtlı bir “nüfus değiştirme” planının parçası olarak gösteren komplocu anlatılarla birlikte Türklerin vatandaşlık haklarını bir “tarihi yalan” ve “sistem istismarı” olarak tanımladı.

Almanya’daki aşırı sağ medya, Türk ve Müslüman göçmenler hakkında onları suç, şiddet, kültürel uyumsuzluk ve sistem istismarıyla ilişkilendiren tutarlı ve dışlayıcı bir söylem inşa etmektedir. Bu söylem, “biz (Almanlar)” ve “onlar (göçmenler)”

ikiliğini derinleştirerek göçmenleri toplumsal ve sembolik olarak dışlamayı meşrulaştırmakta ve göçmenlere yönelik ayrımcı politikalar için zemin hazırlamaktadır. Medyanın seçici dil kullanımı, genellemeleri ve manipülatif sunumu, toplumsal polarizasyonu artırmakta ve göçmenlerin kamusal alandan dışlanmasını normalleştirmektedir.

SONUÇ

Bu çalışma, Almanya'daki aşırı sağ medyanın Türk kökenli göçmenler hakkındaki söylemlerini analiz etmek için çeşitli teorik çerçeveleri kullanmaktadır. Ana bulgular şu şekilde özetlenebilir:

Aşırı sağ medya, Türk göçmenleri ulusal güvenlik ve toplumsal düzen için bir tehdit olarak çerçeveleyerek, göçü bir güvenlik sorunu haline getirir ve onları suç ve entegrasyon sorunlarıyla ilişkilendirir. “Almanlık” tanımını dar ve dışlayıcı bir şekilde yeniden inşa ederek Türkleri bu sınırların dışında konumlandırır ve sembolik olarak dışlar. Türk göçmenlerin Alman refah sistemini sömürdüğü ve “yerli” Almanların kaynaklarını ve fırsatlarını çaldığına dair bir anlatıyı destekler. Açıkça biyolojik üstünlüğü savunan argümanlar kullanmak yerine, kültürel farklılıkları doğası gereği sorunlu veya tehditkâr olarak sunar ve çok kültürlülüğü reddeder. Türklerin Alman toplumuna entegre olamadıkları veya entegre olmak istemedikleri vurgusuyla genellemeler yaparak kültürel bir hiyerarşi kurar. Tüm bu anlatılar, Türk göçmenlerin yasal vatandaşlık statülerini bile sorgulayarak onların meşru toplum üyeleri olarak tanınmalarını engeller. Çifte vatandaşlığın reddi ve asimilasyoncu politikalar bu anlayışın yansımaları olarak kabul edilebilir.

Aşırı sağ medya, toplumsal önyargıları sadece yansıtmakla kalmaz, onları olumsuz çerçeveleme, tarihsel revizyonizm ve kültürel özcülük stratejileriyle aktif olarak üretir ve güçlendirir. Bu söylemler, Türk toplumunun Alman ulusal topluluğunun meşru bir parçası olmadığına dair bir “aidiyetsizlik” duygusu yaratır. Bu söylemler sadece sembolik dışlamaya değil, aynı zamanda iş, konut ve kamu hizmetlerinde ayrımcılık gibi somut sonuçlara ve dışlayıcı politikaların meşrulaştırılmasına yol açabilir. Aşırı sağ söylem, AfD gibi partilere destek sağlayarak toplumsal kutuplaşmayı derinleştirir ve demokratik çoğulculuğu zayıflatır.

Bu bağlamdan yola çıkarak söylemek mümkündür ki medya okuryazarlığı programları, nefret söylemiyle etkin ve aktif mücadele ve göçmen seslerinin anaakım medyada daha fazla temsili acil ihtiyaçlardır. Yanlış anlatıları çürütmek tek başına yeterli değildir; Türk göçmenlerin Alman toplumuna yaptığı tarihi ve güncel katkıları vurgulayan olumlu ve kapsayıcı temsiller teşvik edilmelidir. Dışlayıcı, ayrımcı ve ötekileştirici anlatıların başarısı, derinlerde yatan ekonomik güvensizlik, kültürel değişim ve kimlik kaygılarından beslenir. Etkili stratejiler, bu kaygıların altında yatan yapısal ve kurumsal nedenleri de ele almalıdır. Nihai hedef, farklılıkları sadece tolere eden değil, çeşitliliği kucaklayan ve Türk göçmenleri de içerecek şekilde “Almanlık” ve “aidiyet” kavramlarının kurgularını ve inşalarını yeniden düşünen, daha çoğulcu bir ulusal kimlik anlayışı geliştirmektir.



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