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1 Introduction

There was a great relief when the news of the newly discovered COVID-19 vaccine finally came out. Özlem TÜreci and Uğur Şahin, a scientist couple located in Germany, were largely involved in the discovery. Since the announcement, they have been all over the news. However, news coverage was not only about the vaccine, but also about their non-German roots.

TÜreci and Şahin both have Turkish migration backgrounds. Şahin migrated to Germany when he was four years old. He and his mother joined Şahin's father, who was working as a "guest worker" at Ford. At the same age, TÜreci's parents brought her to Germany, where her father was working as a doctor.

In the media, TÜreci and Şahin are described as "good role models"¹ and are praised as examples of successful integration.² As author Samira El Ouassil points out, the narrative behind such attributions equals migrants' high socioeconomic status with successful assimilation.³ The narrative thus conveys a simplified picture in which higher-status migrants leave their cultural heritage behind and manage to adapt, while their lower-status counterparts do not.

However, even though successful and having grown up in Germany, TÜreci and Şahin deviate from this ideal-typical narrative. TÜreci once described herself as "Prussian Turk,"⁴ and Şahin's attachment to his origin is expressed in his faith. TÜreci and Şahin are not the only exception. For example, German state secretary Şerap Güler once pronounced how important her Turkish roots are to her.⁵ She considered them as part of her identity, just as her homeland Germany. The same applies to Naika Foroutan, a Professor for Integration Research and Social Policy at the Humboldt University in Berlin. In an interview, she attached high importance to both her birth country Germany and to her Iranian background.⁶

How come some higher-status individuals with migration background consider their origin as the essential part of their ethnic identity, while others emphasise only their German allegiance or stress their emotional bond to both their origin and to Germany? And how, if at all, does the ethnic identity of these individuals differ from those of lower status? Exploring the link between status and ethnic identity and addressing these questions is the main interest of this book.

1.1 The notion of ethnic identity

Throughout this book, the term "minority identity" refers to migrants' emotional identification with their family's group of origin, which often represents a minority group in receiving

¹ Broadcast of "ZDF Heute" from March 10, 2021, 7 pm on the German tv channel ZDF.

² E.g. https://rp-online.de/panorama/coronavirus/biontech-gruender-ugur-sahin-vom-gastarbeiterkind-zum-retter-der-menschheit_aid-54532197, accessed on March 13, 2021; <https://plus.tagesspiegel.de/gesellschaft/von-einwandererkindern-zu-multi-milliardaeren-das-ist-das-paar-hinter-dem-corona-impfstoff-66836.html>, accessed on March 13, 2021; https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/impfstoffforscher-eine-migrantisches-erfolgsgeschichte.1005.de.html?dram:article_id=487428, accessed on March 13, 2021.

³ <https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/impfstoff-forscherpaar-ugur-sahin-und-oezlem-tuereci-die-super-migranten-kolumne-a-156c445e-1515-4dc5-8252-3573048d9501>, accessed on March 13, 2021.

⁴ <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/oezlem-tuereci-eine-preussische-tuerkin-1.5160120>, accessed on March 13, 2021.

⁵ <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/inland/serap-gueler-meine-heimat-ist-deutschland-15118853.html>, accessed on March 13, 2021.

⁶ https://www.deutschlandfunkkultur.de/naika-foroutan-ueber-die-postmigrantisches-gesellschaft-wo.974.de.html?dram:article_id=478980, accessed on March 13, 2021.

societies. The term “majority identity” refers to migrants’ emotional identification with the majority group in their receiving society. Emotional identification reflects the affective dimension of identity (Brubaker 2006: 2; Esser 2001; Leszczensky/Gräbs Santiago 2015). According to many scholars, the affective dimension depicts the key identity dimension, with feelings of belonging and attachment comprising its central aspects (Ashmore et al. 2004; Ellemers et al. 1999; Jackson 2002; Phinney/Ong 2007).

In this book, migrants are referred to as members of the first and second generation. Migrants of both generations vary in their extent of identification with the minority and the majority group. I subsume the different combinations of these various degrees of minority and majority identification under the term “ethnic identity.” In the literature, ethnic identity often solely refers to migrants’ emotional identification with the minority group. This one-sided use of the term neglects the fact that majority groups in receiving societies are mostly defined along ethnic boundaries as well, making them another ethnic group to identify with, like Germans in Germany or Austrians in Austria.⁷

Accordingly, I adhere to Max Weber’s (1978) notion of ethnic groups, defining them as people with a subjective belief in a shared community. This belief is based on presumed shared characteristics such as origin, ancestry, visual traits, value orientations, language, and religion. Depending on the subjective importance of these characteristics, identification with an ethnic group may be based on one or more characteristics and differ between individuals who also identify with this ethnic group. For example, being born in Germany may be crucial for some Germans’ identification with other Germans.⁸ However, for first-generation migrants living in Germany, being born in Germany is not a characteristic they share with Germans. Nevertheless, first-generation migrants in Germany may emotionally identify with Germans. This may be the case if they largely feel accepted and if they cherish values and norms upheld by Germans.

A well-established approach to describe migrants’ ethnic identity is the fourfold acculturation typology by John Berry (1997, 1980). Originally, the acculturation typology results out of cross tabulating two issues in situations of interethnic contact: The first issue addresses migrants’ wish to be part of their families’ ethnic group of origin and their willingness to maintain contact to it and its members. The second issue is about migrants’ wish to be part of the majority group in the receiving society and the readiness to engage with majority members (Sam/Berry 2010: 476). Applying the approach to migrants’ emotional identification with the majority group and the minority group, a typology of their ethnic identity can be created. Figure 1-1 below depicts this typology, reflecting the diversity of migrants’ emotional identification. Accordingly, migrants lack or show comparably weak ethnic identity if they hardly identify with the minority and the majority group. Separated identity refers to a comparably strong emotional identification with the minority group and a comparably weak identification with the majority group. Migrants show assimilated identity if they identify comparably strong with the majority group and comparably weak with the minority group. The last type depicts dual identity, describing a comparably strong emotional identification with both groups.

⁷ A more complex case in point would be the USA with its ethnically diverse population. There, the status “native” belongs to indigenous groups who represent ethnic minority groups in the USA. The majority group, in turn, refers to White Americans who are in fact mostly descendants of immigrants from Europe.

⁸ Note that in some societies, the majority group can be further divided into smaller ethnic groups, like for instance in Belgium or Switzerland. Taking the latter country as an example, majority members (“the Swiss”) comprise four different ethno-linguistic groups that may all be native to Switzerland but primarily distinguish themselves from each other by means of their first language, Romansh, Italian, French and Swiss-German. It is reasonable to assume that migrants may also identify with smaller ethnic groups. Emotional identification with smaller ethnic groups is, however, not addressed in this book.

more comprehensive picture of the social climate within societies than when investigated individually.

Considering migrants, scholars often relate ethnic identity to well-being. Minority identity and majority identity have both been associated with subjective well-being and with reduced stress and other mental health issues (e.g. Berry et al. 2006; Bobowik et al. 2017; Bratt 2015). Importantly, benefits and detriments related to migrants' minority and majority identity are each considered to accumulate (Benet-Martínez/Haritato 2005; Berry 2005; Tadmor/Tetlock 2006). From this perspective, migrants who strongly identify with both groups are considered to be the "happiest" migrants with the smallest amount of acculturative stress, while migrants who weakly identify with both groups are those with the lowest well-being and highest stress level. Correspondingly, scholars also highlight the substitutive character of ethnic identity. That is, benefits related to one identity and detriments related to the other can compensate each other. This places migrants with assimilated and separated identity somewhere in-between those migrants with comparably weak and dual identity. Therefore, it is crucial to consider minority and majority identity combined to gain a more comprehensive picture of migrants' condition.

1.3 The role of status

We now know why studying ethnic identity matters. The different outcomes tell us something about social climate, interethnic dialogue, and migrants' individual condition. Investigating migrants' emotional identification one-dimensionally in the sense of either their minority or majority identity would only provide an incomplete picture of their situation. What is the role of status in this? As the example of Türeci and Şahin has illustrated, status often conveys this incomplete picture because the link between status and ethnic identity is prevalently viewed from an assimilation perspective.

1.3.1 *One-dimensionality and dichotomisation: The case of classical assimilation theory*

In migration research, classical assimilation theory belongs to the most enduring and most popular theoretical perspectives on migrants' incorporation, not least because it is often the dominant outcome in the majority of the migrant population from an intergenerational perspective. The core assumption of classical assimilation theory is that sooner or later, ethnic distinctiveness between migrants and majority members become smaller and migrants become more integrated into the mainstream society—that is: they become less oriented towards the minority group and assimilate to majority members and their culture (Alba 2008; Gordon 1964; Warner/Srole 1945). Thereby, migrants are also considered to develop assimilated identity (e.g. Alba/Nee 1997; Esser 2006; Gordon 1964; Nauck 2001a). This implies that classical assimilation theory assumes minority and majority identity to be mutually exclusive.

Apart from time, classical assimilation theory conceives status to be of "paramount significance" for migrants' assimilation (Alba/Nee 1997: 835). In the present context, status can be defined as migrants' socioeconomic position in the receiving society. It is usually measured by indicators such as level of education, occupational position, and income. According to assimilation theorists, the major reason of the high importance of status for

migrants' assimilation grounds in the prospect of status achievement (Alba 2008; Gans 2007). Status-related benefits are considered to strongly increase migrants' motivation for assimilation as high status positions can only be reached with abilities, skills and knowledge that are deemed valuable in the receiving society. Educational certificates and previous occupations are thereby very important as they signal the availability of the aforementioned resources (Arrow 1986). By highlighting the motivational character of status for migrants' assimilation, scholars consider migrants' status position as strong and reliable indicator for their level of assimilation.

Given the dominance of classical assimilation theory and the popular perspective on the role of status within the theory's framework, the incomplete picture about the link between status and ethnic identity provided so far surprises less. From the bottom to the top of the social hierarchy, classical assimilation theory assumes a switch from separated to assimilated identity. That is, while lower-status migrants are expected to show separated identity, higher-status migrants are expected to show assimilated identity. This dichotomised and mutually exclusive understanding of how status relates to migrants' emotional identification is too simplistic. The relationship between status and migrants' emotional identification with ethnic groups is arguably more diverse.

For example, higher-status migrants with greater cognitive capacities could be better prepared for the challenges associated with interethnic contact, allowing them to combine the best of two cultural worlds, eventually resulting in a dual identity. On the other hand, migrants may feel treated unequally compared to majority members despite similar resources and same status positions. In this regard, migrants perceive that their life chances are worse and that they are shown less respect by majority members, although they equally contribute to society. Such perceptions likely weaken migrants' emotional identification with the majority group. At higher status levels, such perceptions could empower migrants to advocate for minority group interests. But the same perceptions could also evoke the fear of losing hard earned privileges, promoting migrants to avoid being associated with their group of origin.

However, parity in life chances and equal treatment by majority members could also matter less. Migrants do not necessarily compare themselves to majority members in the first place, but to non-migrated relatives who still live in the society of origin. In this context, migrants on low or intermediate status positions could very well have positive attitudes towards majority members, facilitating majority identification (Diehl et al. 2016a). For some migrants, in turn, felt and self-imposed pressure to succeed may be so high that failure results in humiliation, disappointment, and shame, causing emotional withdrawal even from the minority group. These latter issues also raise questions about intergenerational differences in how status is linked to ethnic identity.

1.3.2 Empirical evidence raises questions

Previous empirical findings for first- and second-generation migrants hint on a story that is more complex than the assumptions of dichotomisation and mutual exclusiveness. If we review the findings of studies that either investigated migrants' minority or majority identity, we see that overall, the relationship between status and migrants' emotional identification is not that clear.

There are studies that report a positive relationship between status and majority identity. This is the case in the study on first-generation migrant parents of Casey and Dustmann (2010). They conducted random effects analyses using information from 22 waves of the German *Socio-Economic Panel* (SOEP) and years of education as indicator for status. Fleischmann and Phalet (2016) also find a positive relationship in their study on second-

generation Muslim minorities across five European countries, using a dummy variable for tertiary education. A positive relationship between status and majority identity has also been found in studies across migrant generations. In their study on first-, second- and third-generation migrants in Baden-Württemberg, Germany, Hochman et al. (2018) find a positive relationship between high socio-economic status and majority identification. De Vroome et al. (2014b) also report a positive relationship across first- and second-generation migrants from Turkey and Morocco living in the Netherlands. They drew on the *Netherlands Longitudinal Lifecourse Study* (NELLS) and used the educational certificate that is formally required for migrants' current job position as indicator for status.

There are also studies that provide hardly any evidence for a relationship between status and majority identity. This is the case in the cross-sectional study on first-generation migrants in Germany by Zimmermann et al. (2006). They used SOEP data from the years 2000, 2001 and 2002 and migrants' level of education, documenting inconsistent and largely statistically non-significant relationships between status and majority identity. In another approach, Diehl and Schnell (2006) investigated whether Turkish migrants in Germany, who are known to be structurally more disadvantaged than migrants from former Yugoslavia and the EU identify less with Germans. The authors drew on data from the "foreigner's sample" of the SOEP and investigated the time between 1984 and 2001 cross-sectionally by reporting the means of German identification for each observed year. The comparison revealed small and decreasing differences over the years between Turkish migrants and those from the EU and former Yugoslavia regarding the share of those who totally feel German. They concluded that lower-status Turks identify no less with Germans than other, higher-status migrants.

Some studies also report status and majority identity to be negatively related. A random effects analysis by Esser (2009) based on 24 SOEP-waves finds a weak but significantly negative effect of migrants' level of education on first-generation migrants' identification with Germans. Importantly, this effect is prevalent when controlling for parents' education, which likely lowers the explanatory power of their children's education. In another German study on recently immigrated Poles and Turks, Diehl et al. (2016b) also find a negative effect of status on majority identification. Using data from the international survey project *Socio-cultural Integration Processes among New Immigrants in Europe* (SCIP) they report that tertiary educated migrants from both groups identify significantly less with Germans than their lower educated counterparts. A negative relationship between status and majority identity has further been found among German emigrants. Based on data from the *German Emigration and Remigration Panel Study*, Décieux and Murdock (2021) provide evidence that recently emigrated Germans with comparably higher education identify less with their receiving society and its majority group than their lower-educated counterparts.

Regarding the relationship between status and minority identity, empirical evidence is scarcer but conveys a similar picture. The already mentioned studies by Zimmermann et al. (2006), Diehl and Schnell (2006) and Hochman et al. (2018) report no empirical evidence for an effect of first- respectively second-generation migrants' status on the minority identification. The random effects analysis by Casey and Dustmann (2010), in turn, finds that more years of education negatively affect first-generation parents' minority identification.

Concluding ad interim, empirical research studying ethnic identity one-dimensionally suggests variation in the way how status relates to migrants' emotional identification. Variation is thereby found across and within migrant generations. At least, the latter is the case for first-generation migrants since empirical evidence for second-generation migrants alone is comparably scarce. However, owed to their one-dimensional approach, the studies do not shed light on how first- and second-generation migrants' status is linked to their minority identity in tandem with their majority identity. But by assuming status to be one-dimensionally related to migrants' emotional identification, we risk of conveying the