'Go Go Dog!' and German Turks' Demand for Pet Dogs
Ayse S. Caglar
Journal of Material Culture 1997; 2; 77
DOI: 10.1177/135918359700200104

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://mcu.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/2/1/77

Published by:
http://www.sagepublications.com

Additional services and information for Journal of Material Culture can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://mcu.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://mcu.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav

Citations http://mcu.sagepub.com/cgi/content/refs/2/1/77
'GO GO DOG!' AND GERMAN TURKS' DEMAND FOR PET DOGS

◆ AYSE S. CAGLAR

Free University, Berlin

Abstract
Pet dogs are strongly incorporated into social life in Germany, but until recently, they did not enjoy much popularity among German Turks. Although there is no significant change in the general demand for pet dogs in Germany, German Turks have now started acquiring pet dogs. This article focuses on the dynamics behind German Turks' emerging desire and demand for pet dogs in Berlin and argues that their consumption patterns, life styles and tastes, as a transnational collectivity, can only be explained in the context of German society. The commodity aspect of pets is demonstrated by the utilitarian relationship German Turks forge with their pets. This has serious setbacks for their aim of symbolic utility in a society where the commodity aspect of pets is highly suppressed.

Key Words ◆ collectivities ◆ consumption ◆ German-Turks ◆ migration ◆ pet dogs ◆ transnational

'GO GO DOG'
I heard about 'Go Go Dogs' for the first time in 1990. I was visiting a German Turkish family in Kreuzberg that I knew well from my fieldwork. During my visit, their 8-year-old daughter kept annoying her mother.1 She wanted a pet dog, but her parents did not want one and as a compromise she insisted that they buy her a 'Go Go Dog'. At that time I did not know what a 'Go Go Dog' was and her mother Sema explained it to me, saying: 'Actually, it is the best. It is ideal. You have everything. You have the pleasure of walking a dog and at the same time do not have
the trouble and the dirt of having a pet dog.' She was puzzled by the fact that I still did not understand what she was talking about and clarified it once more: 'It is like a real dog. You can take it out with you to the street. You just have to put batteries in it.'

Later, I was surprised to find out that 'Go Go Dog' really was a battery-operated dog about 50 cm in height that was sold in some big department stores within a price range of DM99 and DM139. It had a leash and would walk with you when you switched it on. Since then, I have only encountered two other instances of anyone walking with a 'Go Go Dog' on the streets, but in the meantime German Turks started walking their real pet dogs in Berlin. Pet dogs are currently enjoying increasing popularity among German Turks in Berlin.

In Germany, 42 per cent of households own at least one pet (Neue Zeit, 8 December 1992). In 1996, there were 5.9 million cats and 4.9 million pet dogs costing their owners an annual amount of DM4.3 billion annually (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 16 January 1996). Berlin enjoys the reputation of being Germany's pet dog capital. Today there are 160,000 officially registered dogs in Berlin. Together with the unregistered ones this figure is estimated to reach 250,000. Despite having the highest tax for dogs (DM180 annually) in Germany, Berlin has statistically the highest percentage of dogs (44 dogs for every 1000 inhabitants) compared to other cities in Germany (e.g. 26 dogs to every 1000 inhabitants in Munich) (Der Tagesspiegel, 28 January 1996).

Pet dogs are very present in daily life in Germany generally and in Berlin in particular. There are, for example, several associations organized around different breeds of dogs and the Landesverband Berlin und Brandenburg für deutsche Hundewesen has 25,000 members in 53 organizations. In addition to several journals specializing in dogs, there are numerous beauty parlours for dogs (there are 70 such shops in Berlin alone) and a considerable amount of consumption associated with pets and, particularly, dogs. Moreover, the freedom dogs enjoy in the streets, parks and lakes of Berlin and the daily 30 tonnes of dog excrement covering the streets and parks of Berlin make the presence of dogs particularly felt in the city.

Furthermore, these dogs are incorporated into social life in a particular way. They can have funerals (Der Tagesspiegel, 28 January 1996), they have their own graveyard in Lankwitz, there are diaries meticulously kept for them recording the exciting encounters of the dog from its perspective. Even their diet and health are incorporated into the discourse on health food and alternative medicine trends. There are acupuncture, animal massage, homoeopathic and psychological treatment services provided for dogs, as well as dog food (vegetable and soya meals) free from preservatives and colouring substances (Berliner Morgenpost, 10 September 1994; Der Tagesspiegel, 28 January 1996). The therapeutic
use and benefits of dogs for people, their importance in children's developments, in the recovery from sicknesses, for the elderly and heart patients are quite frequent topics on the media.

GERMAN TURKS AND PETS

Until the beginning of the 1990s, pets did not enjoy much popularity among German Turks, who have been living in Germany for over 30 years. In fact pet ownership, the attention and treatment pets receive in German society, as if they were human beings, were usually picked upon by German Turks to illustrate and criticize the 'inhumanity' of this society. In particular, pet dog ownership was made an index of the missing humanity in person-to-person relationships in German society. For the past five or six years, however, German Turks have started to buy pets. German Turks walking around with their pets, be it lap dogs or Kampfhunde (fighting dogs), have become more and more a part of everyday life, especially in particular districts of Berlin.

There are no statistics available that show the distribution of dog ownership according to owners' place of origin and/or nationality. For this reason, it is not possible to have exact figures on the number of German Turks who own pets. However, despite their invisibility in the statistics, German Turks' pet dogs became visible particularly in the public places where German Turks are present. For example, at the airports there is quite often at least one German Turk with a dog among those waiting to meet their relatives and/or friends arriving and/or returning from Turkey. This is definitely a new phenomenon. According to the employers and/or owners of major charter airline companies in Berlin that fly to Turkey, almost on every flight to Turkey there is at least one German Turkish passenger taking his/her pet dog with him/her to Turkey for the holidays during the summer. The price for such a return flight to Turkey for the pet is - provided that the customer brings the dog's travelling cage himself/herself and all the immunization papers of the dog are complete - between DM 50 and DM 80. To my question of whether this has always been the case, one employer from such an airline company answered:

Definitely not. This is new. I think, seeing Germans with their dogs for such a long time aroused a kind of love for dogs among our people. You know, we always liked them [dogs], but not like this. In Turkey, they wander around wild [yabani], not like here. Whether this is a fashion or not, I do not know, but an increasing number of our people now acquire pet dogs as a hobby. Even I have started to like them.

The pet clinics and veterinary surgeries in the areas densely populated by German Turks, such as Kreuzberg, Neukölln, Schöneberg and
Wedding, also confirm that there is an increase in the number of their German Turkish customers.

However, general pet ownership in Germany has not shown a significant change in the last five or six years (4.6 million in 1992; 4.8 million in 1994; 4.9 million in 1996). The reunification of Germany influenced the ranking of the most favoured dogs slightly, but brought neither a significant change in the trends of pet ownership nor a change in the attitudes towards pets in Germany (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 6 November 1990). So how can we explain the recent popularity of pet dogs among German Turks? What are the sources and dynamics of this demand?

A closer look at German Turks' pet dog ownership and their relationship to these dogs reveals that there are at least three groups, each of which prefers a different kind of dog. These groups also differ in the meanings and functions they attribute to their pet dogs.

In contrast to general pet ownership in Germany, there is relatively little consciousness about dog breeds among German Turks in Berlin. In their discourse on dogs, these pets are not categorized according to their breed, but as: (1) süs köpekleri (lap dogs) or as küçük köpekler (small dogs); (2) bekci köpekleri (watchdogs); and (3) Kampfhunde or kavga köpekleri (fighting dogs). Their differentiation is a descriptive and functional one. Congruent with this missing consciousness about dog breeds, a discourse about the individual characteristics of different species of dogs is very underdeveloped among German Turks.

**Kampfhunde**

If any type of pet dog has become more visible in Berlin since the second half of the 1980s, it is those dogs that are usually categorized as Kampfhunde (fighting dogs). These include the pitbull terrier, bull terrier, Staffordshire bull terrier, bull mastiff, rottweiler and Dogo Argentino (Berliner Morgenpost, 1 April 1992). Their popularity in Berlin is rising. In 1992 there were 1200 Kampfhunde in Berlin and in 1994 the number of pitbulls alone reached 600 (Berliner Zeitung, 23 August 1994; Wochenpost, 8 September 1994a). These dogs are well-known and popular for their aggression towards people and other dogs. Attacks by such dogs receive considerable publicity in the newspapers. In the district of Neukölln in Berlin there were cases of dog bites every third day (Berliner Zeitung, 26 June 1993).

The increasing aggression of Kampfhunde and their use as a weapon by their owners alarmed the authorities so much that in 1992 a decree for Kampfhunde was issued (Kampfhundeverordnung). This obliges the owners of particular dog breeds that are officially categorized as Kampfhunde to use a short leash and muzzle.

Kampfhunde also enjoy an increasing popularity among young
German Turks (mainly from the second and third generations). In the areas densely populated by German Turks (like Kreuzberg, Wedding, Neukölln and Schöneberg), young German Turkish males walking their Kampfhunde make their presence felt. These people, who are referred to by other German Turks as serseri Türkler (vagabond Turks), walk their dogs day and night, meet each other and train their dogs in the parks (for example in Görlitzer Park in Kreuzberg, or in Nettelbeckplatz in Wedding).

At the entrance of a Kneipe (pub) in Kreuzberg that became one of the meeting points of second generation German Turks who own dogs, I asked Bilal (who does not have a dog) and Cem (Bilal’s friend) whether having pet dogs was getting widespread among Turks in Berlin or not:

Bilal: Definitely.
Ayse: Before, pet dogs were not seen to be appropriate indoors. Is this changing?
Bilal: In fact, nowadays everyone wants to wear one on his hand [to carry one around].
Cem: Those who are single and living alone buy dogs.
Bilal: If the apartment is suitable then why not? Then it is not a problem.
Cem: Who has a suitable apartment here [in this area]?
Bilal: If you are a single, then you can perfectly well have one in your apartment.
Ayse: What kind of dogs do Turks buy?
Bilal: Like this! (He shows the bulldog standing next to him.)
Ayse: What kind is it?
Bilal: Like this. Strong, and it can fight well.
Ayse: You mean Kampfhund?
Bilal: Yes. Kampfhund.
Ayse: Why? Isn’t it difficult to keep such a big dog in the apartment?
Bilal: [laughing] Obviously people feel themselves comfortable with such dogs so that they buy them.
Cem: It is the parents who object to having dogs indoors. If you are not living with them, then it is not a problem at all.

For this group of people, the physical appearance of the dog plays a crucial role. Ironically, they categorize not only those dogs that are known for their aggressiveness as Kampfhunde, but also, for example, the rather harmless bulldogs as such. The tough appearance and particularly the ‘ugliness’ are more important in categorizing them as Kampfhunde than the dog’s specific breed.

The physical appearance is important because their German Turkish owners aim to use them for defensive and offensive purposes as well as to scare any potential attackers away. Thus these pets need to be strong, aggressive and have a frightening appearance. In Berlin, it is known that people who are active in the red-light district and in right- and left-wing milieux particularly favour Kampfhunde (Berliner Zeitung, 23 August 1994).
Although there are such people among the German Turkish Kampfhunde owners, the latter could by no means be reduced to the former. Among German Turks, it is mainly young single males who own Kampfhunde.

The popularity of these pets among German Turks is closely related to the increasing hostility and violence directed against foreigners and immigrants in Germany since the fall of the Wall (9 November 1989). In fact, there has been a drastic increase in hostile attacks against German Turks since 1989. The arson attacks in Mölln and Solingen (which left eight German Turks dead) are the most explicit examples of such racist violence. These left deep traces in the consciousness of German Turks. This political context laid the ground for German Turks to arm themselves against possible attacks from skinheads with all sorts of weapons, including these fighting dogs. Without taking the wider political context into consideration, it is not possible to explain why Kampfhunde became desirable for second-generation German Turks at a particular time. However, it has to be noted that these pets are not acquired simply for security purposes. Given the aggression of these pets, which is difficult to calculate and control, there is a physical challenge and threat to the environment inherent in their ownership. Both defence and physical challenge are combined in these pets.

No matter what lies behind German Turks' demand for fighting dogs, these pets became one of the constituents of a life-style by means of which groups of German Turks are defined. As mentioned before, those who own such pets meet at particular places, are young, mostly single, do not live with their families and are identified by other German Turks as forming a group with their own life-style. Dogs are integrated into their self-image. In that respect they constitute sites around which they articulate desire and pleasure. These pets become part of the 'life spaces' (Friedman, 1990) they try to create.

By means of the specific qualities of their dogs this group of German Turks come into contact with other groups organized around such dogs in Berlin. For example, there are signs that they are also involved in the illegal commercial dog fighting that is known to take place in the vicinity of Berlin (Berliner Zeitung, 19 July 1993). The names German Turks give to their Kampfhunde, like Pasa (pasha), Gangster (gangster), Cirkin (the ugly), Çako (that nails down), Rambo, etc., all allude to a desired aggression and/or strength and domination symbolized by the pet. These dogs become part of the macho image and the masculinity of their owners. Interestingly, in the aforementioned talk at the entrance of the pub, Bilal formulates the increasing popularity of pet dogs by saying 'in fact, nowadays everyone wants to wear one [a pet dog] on his hand'. He uses the verb 'to wear on' (eline takmak) as if dogs were jewellery or part of the owner's body.

The combination of dominance and affection produces the pet (Tuan,
With regard to Kampfhunde, the dominance aspect becomes particularly important. The dominance and control of the owner over the pet dog gains importance and value with the increasing aggression, physical strength and dangerousness of the pet owned. Although German Turks started acquiring Kampfhunde on a quite functional basis, these pets became part of a group's life-style and went through a kind of embodiment process. Now these pets are themselves part of one group of German Turks' physical appearance.

**German Turks and Their Watchdogs**

Among German Turks, it is usually the businessmen who run shops, restaurants, kiosks or bigger businesses such as construction firms that prefer pets that they identify as watchdogs. They are especially popular among German Turkish businessmen whose businesses are located in the former German Democratic Republic (hereafter GDR).

Entrepreneurship among German Turks increased steadily in the 1980s and gained a clear momentum after the Fall of the Wall. Today there are over 35,000 workplaces owned by German Turks in Germany. In Berlin there are 5000 such businesses. As semi- or unskilled workers, German Turks were the first to be unemployed in the face of economic crisis. One way of overcoming unemployment was to join family savings together and to open stores, restaurants, kiosks. Moreover, with the reunification of Germany, the German domestic market grew considerably. These German Turks were quick to make use of this expansion. Although they are active in several areas, they are especially concentrated in gastronomy in the former GDR. They run mostly Döner Imbisses and 'Italian' restaurants there.

In the former GDR, these businessplaces and their owners and employers have become the particular target of animosity against foreigners - especially Turks - and are vulnerable to hostile attacks. Thus they acquire dogs to protect their businessplaces and themselves, in short, for security purposes. Those German Turks whose businesses are located in the former 'East' do not live there. These dogs are primarily kept at their businessplaces and usually outdoors. Very rarely do they take these dogs with them to the 'West'. These dogs are simply part of a defence against possible racist attacks. Unlike the Kampfhunde owners, these owners do not identify themselves with the qualities or physical appearance of the dog. They do not walk them, and these pets are not part of their life-style.

Interestingly, only within this group were pet owners able to specify their preference in terms of dog breeds. They prefer and mostly own German shepherds (in Turkish, kurt köpeği or simply kurt, which literally means wolf). However, their interest in dog breeds is still of a very limited
nature. It is not articulated into a general interest in pets or a discourse about the characteristics, needs, weaknesses, sicknesses of German shepherds. Those who identified their dogs as German shepherds were not able to name breeds of dogs other than boxers and shepherd dogs.

Gülizar’s husband has a construction firm and his main contract is in the ‘East’. He bought a pet to protect his business there. Due to the pressures coming from his children, he brings the dog from time to time to Berlin. I asked Gülizar what kind of a dog it was. She said: ‘It is something black. What type? It is a bekci köpeği [watchdog]. But it is quite smart. The children like it. Even we like it now’.

Although Gülizar’s husband knew that it is a German shepherd, this knowledge was not transmitted to his wife. She identified the pet simply with its function. Moreover, she is herself surprised to see the family forging an affectionate relationship with the dog, as if this element of affection were something unexpected.

German shepherds’ popularity in Germany and their reputation as watchdogs plays an important role in their preferment. These are still the most favoured dog in Germany (Wochenpost, 8 September 1994b). Inside and outside Germany, these dogs were and are used by the authorities as watchdogs (in customs, by the police force, and in the former GDR they were utilized at the borders). German shepherds’ reputation of being good, reliable watchdogs is the only characteristic important to them. Furthermore, these pets enjoy a considerable prestige in Turkey. On Turkish media, wealthy businessmen are usually portrayed with watchdogs watching their villas. Such images also play a role in German Turkish (small or big) businessmen’s preference for German shepherd pets.

**Lap Dogs (Süs Köpekleri)**

The third category of pets owned by German Turks is lap dogs, which they refer to either as küçük köpekleri [small dogs] or sus köpekleri. These are small dogs and are not attributed any explicit function by their German Turkish owners. Usually, these are the pets German Turks take to airports when meeting their families or friends arriving at Berlin or leaving for Turkey for their summer vacation.

German Turkish families with children favour these pets. Most often the owners give in to their children’s desire for pets as the reason for buying such pets. They are kept indoors in their apartments. Although Yorkshire terrier and Pekinese are quite common as such lap dogs among German Turks, their owners do not pay much attention to the specific breed. They usually identify them by size and colour. Often they are bought from the German–Polish border, where smuggling dogs from Hungary, Ukraine and Russia is a flourishing business (Der Spiegel, 1995: 103–4); Der Tagesspiegel, 17 August 1993).
Smallness and 'cuteness' are the most important criteria for this group of German Turks in choosing these pets. The names given to such pets, such as Sirin (cute), Yumos, Hanım (the lady) also bring these qualities to the forefront. In contrast to watchdogs and Kampfhunde, aggressiveness is not a desired quality for such pets. It is those Turkish families who have moved up economically that tend to buy these lap dogs. It is the symbolic utility of these pets that is prominent for these families. These pets are acquired as part of such German Turks' strategies to accumulate 'cultural capital' and move into the ranks of the middle classes.

As stated before, there was no significant change in the general popularity of pet dogs in Berlin at the end of 1980s. What then remains to be explained is why pets became part of this group of German Turks' mobility strategies at this particular time. Why do pets acquire a symbolic value in the eyes of German Turks at a particular given time? In order to answer these questions, we need to refer to the place of pets in Turkish society and German Turks' relationship to different social groups in Turkey.

**PET DOGS IN TURKEY**

Interestingly, the popularity of pets among German Turks coincides with the increasing popularity of pets in Turkey. Contrary to Germany, there has been an increasing demand for pet dogs in the major cities of Turkey, such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir and Antalya, since the late 1980s. Unfortunately, there are no statistics available on this matter in Turkey. However, it is possible to identify an increasing popularity of pet ownership in Turkey by means of indirect indicators.

First of all, there is a significant increase in the number of pet shops specializing in pet equipment and pet clinics in the aforementioned cities. Despite the high prices they charge for their services, shop owners and assistants in these shops and veterinaries draw attention to a booming interest and demand for pet dogs and cats in certain districts and milieux within some big cities of Turkey. There has been increasing publicity about pets in the media. Some newspapers recently introduced weekly columns on pets (e.g. hayvan dostlarımız ['our animal friends'] in Yeni Yüzyıl). The bookshop managers say that now they carry books on pets (mainly on dogs and cats) – mostly in English – due to an increased interest in them. Canned dog and cat food have recently appeared on the market and have been able to establish themselves despite their high prices.

Second, some recent conflicts centred around pet dogs (in major cities like Istanbul and Izmir) are also indicators of the fact that pet ownership is becoming widespread. There have been reports in the
newspapers about conflicts among tenants resulting from pet dogs being kept in apartments. Some tenants in Istanbul took their pet owner neighbours to court on the charges that by law they are not allowed to keep dogs in their apartments. After a series of such cases, the authorities made it public in 1995 that a regulation against keeping pets in the apartments existed and although it had not been enforced it would be available in the case of future conflicts. These conflicts indicate the extent of the phenomenon of pet dogs in Turkey, and its manifestation as a new discourse.

What is particularly new about the relationship to pet dogs in Turkey and among German Turks in Berlin is the setting, i.e. their presence indoors. In Turkey there is a general contention that animals, particularly dogs, are considered to belong to nature (in this case, to the garden). Inside houses or apartments, they are considered to be out of place and are therefore seen as polluting and dirty. This is also a common point raised by most of the German Turks I interviewed in Berlin. This out-of-placeness is seen not only as a source of contamination of the interior, but also as a kind of torture to the animal (as eziyet). Both the contamination of the interior and this idea of torture are believed to have religious connotations, in that according to Islam both would be considered a sin. This is a view that is also common to most of the first-generation (and partly to second-generation) Turkish migrants I spoke to who are explicitly against keeping pets indoors.

In the rural areas, people always had dogs, but kept in their gardens. Similarly, the newcomers to the city, who are settled in gecekondu areas (shanty towns in major cities) also keep dogs, but outside, not indoors:

We always had dogs in our village. You don't know how I like them, but not here. Not in the apartment. They are a source of microbes. Very dangerous. Also it is a pity for the dog. Dogs are dogs, people are people. You can not mix them. Everything should stay in its place.

This is how a woman of 56 years of age in Berlin explained to me why she did not allow the dog they bought three years ago – to protect their business in the former GDR – into her apartment during the weekends, although her children wished her to do so.

When we look at the social group buying pet dogs in Turkey we see an interesting development. The pet shops and clinics in Istanbul are concentrated in middle-class and upper middle-class areas. Even the signs of these shops, which are either completely or partly in English, indicate the characteristics of the social group they target. They aim at social groups at least privileged enough to be educated in the (mostly) private colleges that provide education in English. The high prices of canned cat and dog food on the market also indicate the relative affluence of the targeted consumers.
Having pet dogs is not new to the old bourgeoisie in the major cities in Turkey. However, the old bourgeoisie do not dwell in apartments but in houses, so they are not the basis of this change in the demand for pet dogs. Pet dog ownership became visible in Turkey when it was adopted by a relatively well-off group that nevertheless lives in apartments.

The pet dog owners in the apartments are the members of those groups identified with new bourgeois and new petit bourgeois consumption classes (Bourdieu, 1984; Featherstone, 1991; Lash and Urry, 1987; Pfeil, 1988). These refer to groups of people with occupations that are a product of the massive expansion within the services and white-collar sectors. Defined as a new class of intermediaries (Pfeil, 1988) they are particularly active in the sectors concerned with the production of symbolic goods and services—publishing, journalism, advertising, design, cinema. The new bourgeoisie, which has a relatively high economic and cultural capital, is located 'within a cultural space which sits somewhat uneasily between the life styles of the old bourgeoisie and those occupied by the intellectual classes' (Lee, 1993: 165). Pfeil (1988) notes that these groups, with their relative economic affluence, have 'an access to the full means of modern commodity consumption and to the material and cultural opportunities that such consumption may afford . . . [they] also . . . [derive their] character from the relative linguistic and cultural competences which flow from the investments of time into higher or college education' (p. 164).

From these consumption classes, those to be found within the lower echelons of the service class, who have less social capital and rather impoverished cultural capital, are identified as new petit bourgeoisie (Bourdieu, 1984). Commodities and consumption practices have a pivotal role in these social groupings' attempts to create a space of cultural recognition for themselves, and to stabilize their unstable social space (Lee, 1993). In Turkey, pets are popular amongst this new bourgeoisie and new petit bourgeoisie.

**GERMAN TURKS' INTERTWINED SOCIAL SPACE**

German Turks' consumption patterns, life-styles and tastes are influenced by trends and social groups in Turkey as well as in Germany. Social groups in Turkey have a presence in the formation of German Turks' life-styles in Germany. This is one of the consequences of their intertwined social space, crosscutting Turkey and Germany.

Today around 1.9 million German Turks live in Germany. They came to Germany after the first bilateral agreement signed between Turkey and Germany in 1961. Although most Turkish migrants were recruited within the guest-worker system designed to serve the labour needs of Germany and came there as workers, today they no longer form a
homogeneous group as workers. They are represented in all strata of German society.

The guest-worker programmes were designed to be temporary and this double-bind situation introduced ambiguities and inconsistencies into their legal, political and social status. German Turks have multiple and multi-local attachments and commitments, which could not be reduced to travelling and simple contacts across nations. They are legally incorporated into both Germany and Turkey. Although rates of naturalization among German Turks are increasing, it is still low (4.2% for Germany). The majority of German Turks, despite 35 years of residence in Germany, have Turkish citizenship and are subject to rights and obligations vis-a-vis the Turkish state. However, in the meantime, on the basis of their status as temporary or permanent residents in Germany, they are incorporated into the welfare system there. They have access to its benefits (such as health insurance, unemployment benefits and pension, etc.). They have social, economic, civil and (though limited) political rights and are subject to duties vis-a-vis the German state (Soysal, 1994).

Moreover, German Turks have growing business involvements and investments both in Turkey and in Germany. In Germany there are around 35,000 business places run by German Turks, employing over 120,000 people. In Berlin, with 5000 business places, their presence in economic life is definitely growing. On the other hand, German Turks are shareholders in cooperatives and middle-size firms and partners in small businesses run by their relatives, fellow villagers or friends in Turkey. More than 70 percent of Turkish entrepreneurs in Germany have business relations with Turkey and have investments there. German Turks also invest in housing in both Turkey and Germany.

Furthermore, the intensive media networks between Germany and Turkey, including the daily Turkish television broadcasting to Germany from Turkey, and the major Turkish newspapers with slightly altered European editions, contribute to the generation and reproduction of German Turks' multi-local attachments. All these shape a different rhythm of being and living for German Turks that could not be confined to Germany and Turkey respectively but that incorporates the relationship between these places. Their intertwined social, legal, and economic presence in both countries shapes and orients their experience, desires and encounters in a specific way. Not only the distinctions between Germany and Turkey are blurred, but also a complex structure of reference groups including both places shapes their life-styles.

However, despite their varying degrees of economic mobility both with regard to Turkey and Germany, German Turks do not enjoy a corresponding social mobility in both societies. Stigmatized as a 'foreign' group with its alien and 'non-European' culture in Germany and as
almancis (Germanites) in Turkey, they suffer from a lack of social recognition in both Germany and Turkey. In order to overcome this deficit of ‘symbolic capital’ (Bourdieu, 1984), different groups of German Turks develop several strategies.

One of these strategies is adopting life-styles encoded in the images of consumer goods that act as markers. Manipulation of consumer goods plays an important role in these strategies. Goods have a privileged role, especially in a world where images of life-styles are attached to goods and material objects, more than ever serving as a pivot around which identities are constructed and asserted (Miller, 1987: 124). In that context, goods associated with a particular life-style become a social arena for the social positioning struggle of various groups. Trends, fashions and the life-styles of the middle classes in general in Turkey come to play an important role in shaping the life-styles of those German Turks who have moved up economically and desire to move up socially. Goods that are attached to the life-styles of the middle classes (which includes the new petit bourgeois) in Turkey become objects of desire for those German Turks in Germany. Pets are such ‘goods’. Given the significant presence of pet dogs in Germany, pets become particularly suitable and desired for this purpose. Thus pet ownership for this group of German Turks, who prefer primarily sus köpekleri, has symbolic utility. It is no coincidence that it is usually the sus köpekleri owners who are keen to take their pets with them to Turkey. The context of intertwined social space explains why pets acquired symbolic value in the eyes of German Turks and became incorporated into their strategies of social mobility.

However, for those German Turks who own sus köpekleri and see them as the symbol of a desired life-style, it is very doubtful that this proves to be a successful strategy. In a country where relationships to pets are seen primarily as an affective one rather than a material one, their predominantly utilitarian relationship to their pets may act against the likely success of their strategy.

In the German context, pets are the symbol of a social relationship – their commodity aspect is highly suppressed. They are treated as a member of the family or a relative. The graveyards for pets illustrate this relationship clearly, as do ideas about the self-consciousness of pets (Neue Zeit, 8 December 1992), their psychological needs, behaviour and disorders (Verhaltungsstörung) when these needs are not properly satisfied (Der Spiegel, 1995). This and their supposed contribution to happy marriages are all part of the discourse on pets (especially pet dogs) in Germany. In fact, even in the debates about proper precautions against the uncontrolled aggressiveness of Kampfhunde, the focus is on the distinction between the properly and not properly kept Kampfhunde. Proper care, responsibility and affection are the key terms of these debates. So it is not only that the commodity foundation of pets is suppressed but
also that those who treat their pets as a commodity are in fact considered to maltreat the animals. It becomes a kind of crime. The moments during which the commodity aspect of pets are evident, such as buying and selling them, are encountered with clear uneasiness. This is apparent particularly in news items about the cruelty and 'inhumaness' of greedy dog traders and smugglers who are simply interested in selling dogs and earning money as if dogs were a simple commodity.

This treatment of pets as having human-like qualities in Germany has an institutional and legal back-up due to the changes in the civil code (Bürgerlichen Gesetzbuch) in 1989. With these changes animals are given a new legal status and recognized as 'pain feeling creatures and co-living beings' (schmerzempfindene Lebewesen and mitgeschöpfe) and no longer simply as things (Frankfurter Rundschau, 29 June 1989). According to the 1994 'Verordnung über das Halten von Hunden' (Decree on Dog Keeping), which dictates even the minimum illumination of the places dogs are kept in, or the minimum amount of time the owners are obliged to devote to their dogs daily, the pet dog is recognized as a 'person' with public rights, and its rights are under legal protection (Die Tageszeitung, 23 February 1994).

In such a context people capable of developing such relationships, sensitivities and emotions are thought to represent a higher order of humanity and moral superiority. It follows that German Turks' utilitarian relationships to their pets, with relatively little affection and knowledge about their individual or breed characteristics and of how to take proper care of them, become signs of their vulgarity and uncivilized condition. Thus, instead of bringing social recognition and easing their social mobility, their pets and their relationships to them become one of the legitimations of their low symbolic and social capital in German society. It is particularly the middle and lower middle classes who employ such a discourse of civility against German Turkish pet owners in their cultural warfare of class conflict in Berlin.

The above-mentioned attitude is apparent in the following written complaint faxed to the Turkish Consulate in Berlin. The neighbour accuses Turkish owners of the dog of not being able to keep the dog properly and writes: '... so the dog which is kept secluded and tied in the garden usually barks continuously - like now while I write these lines at 1.50 p.m., during the Mittagsruhe [noon break] - Perhaps the owners are not suitable for owning a dog?'

As long as the emphasis in German Turks' pet ownership is on function and not on the particular affective relationship they develop with their pets, their strategy of using pets for desired upward social mobility will remain unsuccessful. Compared to other German Turks who own Kampfhunde or watchdogs, the lap dog owners show a greater amount of affection to their pets. However, the commodity aspect of pets
is still unmistakably present in this relationship. In one sense they have not yet made these dogs inalienable and irreplaceable. The attractiveness of the battery-operated 'Go Go Dog' (even as an idea) is an illustration of the relatively unmasked commodity foundation of German Turks' pet ownership. Dogs are treated like any other goods. Their materiality is unaltered. What makes the 'Go Go Dog' attractive and ideal in their eyes is the possibility of fulfilling their desire, that is, of having the pleasure of walking a dog, representing a life-style, and at the same time avoiding the unpleasant work and dirtiness caused by having actual pet dogs in their apartments. That is, the emphasis in their pet ownership is on mere possession, but not necessarily on forging a relationship. In that sense Sema's appraisal of the 'Go Go Dog' illustrates the core of the dilemma of German Turks' pet ownership in Germany.

Acknowledgements

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Fifth Interdisciplinary Conference on Research in Consumption at the Department of European Ethnology, Lund University 18–20 August 1995. Here I would like to thank the participants of the conference, particularly Daniel Miller and the anonymous reader for their criticisms and comments.

Notes

1. Kreuzberg has the highest Turkish population in Berlin.
2. In Berlin, dog owners are estimated to spend DM50 annually on dog accessories and equipment (Berliner Morgen Post, 10 September 1994).
3. With the exception of birds. Some German Turks kept birds and sometimes even trained them.
4. Here, the data used in relation to German Turks' pets are confined to Berlin. Berlin is chosen due to its high German Turkish population - with over 150,000 German Turks, Berlin has the highest 'Turkish' population in Germany - and its prominence in the pet population in German Society.
5. Although statistics are available from the Tax Office (which collects the dog tax) showing the distribution of pet dogs according to districts in Berlin, they are neither accurate nor reliable. Even the Tax Office employees admit that a great number of people fail to register their pets to avoid paying tax. Very few of the German Turk pet owners I encountered registered their dogs.
6. Depending on the season there are around 1–15 flights from Berlin to Turkey every week. During the summer months this figure rises to 30 flights.
7. The 'Easterners' lag behind in pet ownership. In 1994 only one sixth of the registered pet dogs in Berlin were from former East Berlin (Wochenpost, 8 September 1994).
8. In Berlin pet owners are organized into about 30 different dog breed associations such as Verein für Schäferhunde (Society of German Shepherds), Pudelverein (Society of Poodles), and Allgemeine Club für English Bulldogs (General Club for English Bulldogs). There is a great awareness of dog breeds in Germany. For example, the advertisement for beauty and hairdresser salons for dogs or the dog training schools are all targeted at
different dog breeds. If they do not specialize in one, then they advertise as 'all races'.

9. In the 1980s five or six people were killed by dogs each year. In the 1970s this figure was only one or two. In Potsdam City alone there were 115 reports of dog bite incidents in 1992 and 46 per cent of these (1792 cases altogether) were by Kampfhunde (Berlin Morgenpost, 18 July 1993).

10. Although these hostilities are not only directed against German Turks – Blacks, Vietnamese, the disabled, and homosexuals also suffer – German Turks are the main target.

11. The police and vets have evidence of such commercial Kampfhunde dog fights. According to a spokesperson for The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, a rescued pitbull showed signs of involvement in such events. The dog's foreleg was amputated, her head was full of dog-bite scars, she liked travelling in the trunk and she understood commands in Turkish (Berliner Zeitung, 19 July 1993).

12. This name Çako comes from the verb çamak, to nail down; to slap. In terms of structure and sound it is made to resemble one of the most common names given to dogs – though mostly to German Shepherds – in Germany, namely Hasso.

13. The Tasas, the favourite pets of the Samurai, are now used in illegal dog fights by Yakuzas in Japan. According to one of the famous Yakuza bosses they provide channels for satisfying manly fantasies.

14. The unemployment rate among German Turks in Berlin is over 23 per cent which is 10 per cent higher than the average unemployment rate in Berlin (Senatsverwaltung für Soziales, 1994: 26).

15. For Döner business and its development, symbolism and transformations, see Caglar, 1995a and Seidel-Pielen, 1996.

16. Very few German Turks live in this part of Berlin and Brandenburg. Because of the hostilities against 'Turks' there German Turks are very reluctant to live or send their children to school in the 'East'.

17. All these talks were conducted in Turkish and the dog was always referred to as 'it'.

18. Sırs means 'ornament; decoration; elegance of dress; toilet; luxury....' (Red-house, 1984: 1042).

19. Paşaj is also a favoured name for lap dogs but in this context the allusion of paşaj (pasha) is to vanity and conceit as well as to dominance.

20. Socially this is a mixed group. This group of pet owners includes workers, store keepers (in [west] Berlin), teachers, social workers, etc.

21. For German Turks' desire and strategies of social mobility see Caglar, 1994.

22. A market for pet dogs is being developed in Istanbul. In Misir Carsisi (in the Egyptian Basar) dogs are sold in higher numbers than before. There is also dog traffic from Russia to Turkey.

23. Interestingly, in a few of the bookshops I visited in Istanbul, such books were displayed next to books on astrology, yoga and in some next to cookery. In short, they were categorized as 'hobby' books.

24. The constitution, of the Federal Republic of Germany does not allow dual citizenship. However, despite this restriction, most German Turks manage to keep their Turkish citizenship vis-a-vis the Turkish state.

25. The involvement in small businesses (in Turkey) of those German Turks who work in Germany blur their self-image as workers [see Caglar, 1995a].

26. Usually they spend their summer vacations in their houses or apartments in Turkey. It is not unusual for the retired German Turks to divide the year between Turkey and Germany.
27. Although this broadcasting of Turkish Television (from Turkey) is not limited to Germany, German Turks are its main consumers. Moreover, the number of German Turks reading Turkish newspapers is increasing (Senatsverwaltung für Soziales, 1993).

28. Even for those German Turks who did not move up economically in Germany, their economic capital acquires a different character and value in Turkey and entitles them economically to the ranks of middle classes there.

29. For a clear manifestation of the popularity of the idea that 'Turks' culture' is immutably alien to 'European' and 'German culture' see Augstein, 1993.

30. Until 1989 pets were categorized as things. With this change of status, pets are excluded, for example, from the range of material possessions that could be confiscated by court execution.

31. For the similar ways in which attitudes towards animals are used in distancing bourgeoisie from peasantry, see Löfgren, 1985.

32. This complaint was faxed on 14 February 1995. The dog in question belongs to a Turkish family. The house is located in a residential area of Berlin where extremely few German Turks live. Although the owners claim that they usually keep the dog indoors, and take it out regularly, and that the dog visited a dog training course, this neighbour kept on sending a series of written complaints in a similar tone.

References

Books


**Newspapers**

*Berliner Morgenpost*

*Berliner Zeitung*
(1994) 'Pittbull-Terrier bis sich an 33 jährigen fest', 23 August.

*Bild-Berlin*

*Der Spiegel*

*Der Tagesspiegel*
(1993) 'Manchmal sind bis zu 50 Hunde im Kofferraum', 17 August.

*Die Tageszeitung*

*Die Welt*

*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*
(1989) 'Wenn "pucki" an Heiserkeit leidet', 4 April.

*Frankfurter Rundschau*

*Hamburger Abendblatt*

*Neue Zeit*

*Suèdeutsche Zeitung*
(1990) 'Immer mehr Tiere im Haushalt', 6 November.

*Wochenpost*
(1994) 'Fass Hasso fass!', 8 September.
(1994) 'Der Vereinigte Hund', 8 September.

AYSE S. CAGLAR is an Assistant Professor at the Institute für Ethnologie, Free University Berlin. She has researched national discourses, processes of culture production (especially in relation to immigrants and minorities in Germany) and consumer culture of transnational collectivities. Address: Boli-varalle 9, D-1000 Berlin 19, Germany.