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Migration and Literature: London's Turkish Immigrants

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Abstract

This paper examines the link between the monocultural British education system and the struggles of UK immigrants, with a focus on London's Turkish community. Widespread hostility towards migrants and foreign culture in British society is concluded to stem from the assimilationist ideology originally at the heart of the education system and its policies. It is argued that monoculturalism itself is the mother of racism, and that Britain's monocultural education system has been feeding racial tensions for decades. Similar concerns regarding the education system are covered, such as institutional racism. Multiculturalism and its promotion of tolerance if not respect towards cultural differences is proposed as a solution to replace monoculturalism. London's Turkish community, it's history and "self-sufficiency" is examined in detail, especially the causes behind widespread academic underachievement in younger generations. It has been advised that a middleman helps schools and parents communicate and cooperate, as lingual barriers and lack of parental involvement seem to be the biggest causes. On the literary side, the lack of new authors in the Turkish community is attributed to poor academic success and lack of cultural cultivation, while the paucity of translated material is attributed to public disinterest in foreign works, again caused by monoculturalism. Overall, it is concluded that the tendency of Turkish immigrants to rely on their network of countrymen to get things done, as well as lingual, racial, and social barriers have all contributed to an unintentional segregation of the Turkish immigrants from the rest of British society.

Keywords: Cultural diversity, ethnic minorities, migration, monoculturalism, Turkish literature.

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Göç ve Edebiyat: Londra'nın Türk Göçmenleri

Öz

Bu makale, özellikle Londra'daki Türk toplumuna odaklanarak, tek kültürlü İngiliz eğitim sistemi ile İngiltere'ye göç edenlerin çektiği sorunların arasındaki bağlantıyı incelemekte. İngiliz toplumunda göçmenlere ve yabancı kültüre yönelik yaygın düşmanlık aslında İngiliz eğitim sisteminin ve politikalarının eski temellerinde bulunan asimilasyonist ideolojiden kaynaklandığı tespit edilmektedir. Tek kültürlülüğün ırkçılığın anası olduğu ve İngiltere'nin tek kültürlü eğitim sisteminin yıllardır ırksal gerginlikleri beslediği iddia edilmektedir. Eğitim sistemiyle ilgili benzer endişeler, mesela kurumsal ırkçılık ile ilgili iddialar elden geçirilmiştir. Çok kültürlülük ve onun kültürel farklılıklara saygı olmasa da hoşgörünün teşvik etmesi, tek kültürlülüğün yerini alacak bir çözüm olarak önerilmektedir. Londra'daki Türk toplumu, geçmişi ve "kendi kendine yeterliliği" tahlil edilmekte, özellikle genç kuşaklarda yaygın akademik başarısızlığın ardındaki nedenler. Dil ile ilgili engeller ve ebeveyn katılımı eksikliği en büyük nedenleri gibi göründüğünden, okullar ve veliler arasında iletişim ve işbirliği sağlayabilecek aracı tavsiye edilmektedir. Edebi açıdan, Londra'daki Türk toplumunda yeni yazarların eksikliği akademik başarının zayıflığı ve kültürel tarım eksikliğine bağlanılıyor, ve çevrilen eserlerin azlığı yine tek kültürlülüğün sayesinde yabancı eserlere olan ilgisizliğine bağlanılıyor. Sonunda tespit edilmiştir ki, Türk göçmenlerin kendi işlerini halletmek için genellikle kendi yurttaşlarına başvurma eğilimleri, bir de onların dil, ırk ve sosyal anlamda yaşadığı engelleri, onların İngiliz toplumunun gerisinden istemeden ayrı ve uzak olmalarını sağlamıştır.

Keywords: Kültürel çeşitlilik, etnik azınlıklar, göç, tek kültürlülük, Türk edebiyatı.

Extended Summary

The change of residence by an individual or group of people can be classified as migration. Migration has existed for centuries as humans have, for one reason or another had to leave their previous settlement. Whatever the motivation for migration may be, it is inevitable that problems arise as humans migrate from one land to another. From struggling to fit into the new society, and trying to adjust to the new and forgein lifestyle and system.

The British foreign policy has created a hostile atmosphere for new migrants that moved to the uk. With hate crimes against race and religion on the rise and Brexit which divided the country creating a hostile and divided public. This paper will analyse the British education system, focusing on its agenda and implementation of monoculturalism and assimilationism. Despite Britain being an undeniably multicultural society the syllabus issued under the education system has undeniable undertones of a white ethnocentric perspective. Thus, leading to a generalised monoculturalism ideology embedded within the british society. Furthermore, the system demands for 'total assimilation' with no room for differences and other cultures. This approach leads to disconnection, discontent and fractures within the society. The foreign born uk population begin to disassociate themselves from the rest of society. Deepening the fractures caused by the ideologies ingrained within the system that this paper discusses.

This paper will focus heavily upon the Turkish community in London and its paradox as an immigrant community. Highlighting the issues that are overlooked and the problems that arise with the lack of proper education. Immigrant children feel constant pressure to assimilate and in due course smothers immigrant self-identity and self expression. This leads me onto the importance of written word and the argument discussed within the paper. The written word provides voice to those of minorities as literature itself is a gift to humanity. The self expressive freedom of literature provides for humans' own individual experience becoming a voice for the ethnic minorities. Expressing themselves, allowing them to shine a light upon the struggles they face that may go unno-

ticed within Britain. There are but few authors and poets of different ethnicities, such as writers like Bali Rai, John Agard and Sujata Bhatt. However, this paper finds that the voices of Turkish writers are but few. Mentioning writers such as Nazim Hikmet, Yasar Kemal and Orhan Pamuk. In particular this paper will be analysing the works of Namik Kemal, Ziya Pasha, Feyyaz Fergar Kayacan and translator-Nermin Menenmencioglu.

The longstanding history of the interaction with the Turks and Brits will be discussed and categorises the Turkish identity in Britain into three sections. Forgotten and overlooked, the turkish community is misunderstood to have a self-sufficient community. The paper discusses the Turkish students not moving onto further education. Resulting in a low margin of students that actually continue their studies and voice their experiences with literature.

Findings

This article focused on the effects of the national curriculum and the reaction to the migrants. Assimilationism and monoculturalism pros and cons of the ideologies is discussed and reveals the undeniable streaks of hidden constitutional racism. The hidden evils of Monoculturalism that leads the child to feel disconnected and confused, rejecting other cultures.

The surveys and research discussed with this paper, showcases the racial and religious motivated hate crimes on the rise. This paper connects the importance of literature and exhibits how when other cultures express their feelings on literature we enrich ourselves with creativity such as poets and writers such as; Namik Kemal, Feyyaz Kayacan and Ziya Pasha.

Conclusion

To conclude, the paper analyses the ideologies and the effects it has upon the migrant communities. The success of the Turkish community within the business sector in Britain but the lack of voices in literature. Many institutions have failed the Turkish community but this paper hopes to shine light on what needs to be done in order to encourage the voices of the migrant community as it enriches Britain as a whole.

For many years now, the UK's foreign-born population have found themselves at the centre of fierce tensions as controversial debates on immigrants, refugees, racism, nationalism, and so on have raged. Migration in itself is an arduous task, but perhaps the most difficult component is what comes afterwards. Settling into a new home does not just mean finding jobs and housing, but integrating into the host country's society and structure.

It has been argued for several decades that Britain's monocultural education system is harmful to both its native and foreign population due to its assimilationist roots and potential to breed racism (Parekh, 1987; Troyna, 1991). The monocultural education system is believed to have informed the values of British culture and society, which have remained insular and monocultural despite the wide ethnic variety found in the current British population. It has long been proposed that the UK implements a multicultural education system instead for the sake of the prosperity of future generations (D'Angelo et al., 2011; Parekh, 1987).

Amongst all the UK's ethnic minorities, the Turkish community stands out as an interesting paradox. On the one hand, they have been praised as one of the most "self-sufficient" ethnic minorities in London; on the other hand, they are at a position of severe disadvantage so far unseen in any other ethnic group (Enneli et al., 2005).

One cannot speak of culture without mentioning literature. Self-expression in literature is vital for ethnic minorities to give voice to their daily struggles and inspire change in society. Similarly, the presence of foreign-born authors as well as translated foreign works is necessary for sympathy and understanding between different cultures to be fostered, as well as nurturing a multicultural society.

This paper is dedicated to understanding the struggles of the UK's ethnic minorities, pinpointing the roots of their problems, and proposing possible solutions. It will examine the ways in which monoculturalism, racism, and the assimilationist ideology link together to influence both natives and non-natives in British society. There will be a particular focus on London's Turkish commu-

nity, its history, and the unique obstacles faced by its new generation. In the vein of cultural exchange and literary self-expression, the presence of Turkish writers as well as the availability of translated Turkish works will also be covered.

1. Migration

Migration has long been the last resort of people faced with insurmountable problems in their homeland such as war, tyranny, poverty, discrimination, etc. Historically, it may be argued that individuals and masses alike have mostly migrated in pursuit of personal safety. However, this is not the only major driving force behind migration. Ideological differences, the search for personal and social freedom, as well as wanting to improve one's quality of life are all equally valid reasons for migration.

The lives of the Abrahamic prophets are perhaps the earliest as well as best examples of migration due to clashes of belief as well as persecution. A cursory study of the lives of the prophets leads one to find multiple root causes of migration. The prophet Abraham parted from the idolatrous people in Mesopotamia because they refused his message of monotheism. The prophet Noah and his followers similarly left their idolatrous kinsmen, simultaneously saving themselves from the Great Flood. The prophet Moses took his people and fled from the Pharaoh's persecution. The prophet Muhammad and his followers similarly emigrated from Makkah to Madinah, seeking sanctuary from the Quraysh tribe's torment.

Today, migrants around the world follow the footsteps of their ancestors as they flee from discrimination, destitution, and disaster. Motivators may vary from the financial to the ideological, but whatever the initial push may be, all migrants leave their homes looking for a better life somewhere more unfamiliar.

The British Isles are no stranger to immigrants. During the time of Septimius Severus, the North African who ruled England as the Roman Emperor (193-211 AD), the natives were forced to establish close contact with foreigners. Later, in 1066, a drastic change came about as William, Duke of Normandy, defeated the English king, Harold. This caused a rise of emigration from France to England, as the new Royal courts became home to French rather than English courtesans.

Not all such migrations to Britain were made by personal choice. The

forced settlement of black people in Britain goes back to the 16th century, when West African slaves were being sold in England as servants. The slave trade became a lucrative business as the emergence of the industrial revolution came closer, filling Britain with unwilling migrants.

Later down the line, migration to Britain rapidly increased. Large numbers of the Irish began to migrate to Britain in the 1820s. Jews arrived from Eastern European countries, about 40 years before the First World War. Settlers from East Europe poured into Britain in the time between the two World Wars, mostly made of parents hoping for a better education for their children. After the second World War, there came the arrival of West Indians and people from the subcontinent of India – Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis – who were motivated by economic considerations. Turkish immigration during this period will be addressed in detail further on. By 2019, the UK's estimated foreign-born population stood at 9.5 million, with 33% of them said to be residing in London (Migration Observatory, 2020).

2. Monoculturalism and Racism

An FEU report in 1989 (as cited in Oliver, 1990:25-28) said on the British education system: "At the national level, syllabuses issued by all examination boards take little account of the fact that we live in a multi-cultural society. The syllabuses appear to be influenced only by white ethnocentric perceptions and interests".

It is indeed undeniable that there is a strong monocultural bias to be found throughout the UK's national curriculum. History classes stand out in particular, with a hyper-focus on British history remaining at the centre of children's learning, supplemented only occasionally with perhaps a brief overview of American and/or European history, while on the whole ignoring the rest of the world. Religious studies are also mostly dominated by Christianity; while some other religions are occasionally touched upon, they remain forever a "side" topic, not possessing a legitimacy of their own right.

At first glance, a monocultural education system may not seem alarming. However, on the informational aspect alone, Oliver (1990) makes a striking point on the importance of relaying historical interactions with other countries that are often passed over in British schools:

Historically, European culture has gained an enormous amount from contact with China, India and the Islamic world. We have only, for example, to think of Arabic words such as alkali and algebra. To ignore this cultural inheritance is not only to do a disservice to other cultures but to seriously limit the intellectual experiences of our own students. (pp 25-28)

It is not just international cultural inheritances which tend to go unaddressed in the UK's national curriculum, but also old crimes committed by the British Empire towards other countries; a far more glaringly problematic omission, especially when compared to more self-aware and conscientious countries such as Germany.

That said, mere historical omissions are not the real problem with or even the true hallmark of a monocultural education. Rather, the poison lies in the social values ingrained in the monocultural education system itself; particularly in the way that teachers interact with non-native students, as informed by the educational policies in place. It is not a restricted historical view which defines a monocultural education, but rather the imposition of a certain set of social and cultural values on its students.

Troyna (1991) traces the most prominent instances of monocultural British education back to the 1960s, when assimilating Afro-Caribbean and South Asian children was a prime priority; he describes monocultural education as having been prompted by assimilationist ideas and being "centred on the suppression and deprecation of ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity". In other words, the current monocultural British education system stems from a historic (if not present) aim of assimilation.

Assimilation on its own is not necessarily negative; as pointed out by Michael Banton (1988, as cited in Troyna, 1991), one can "assimilate" in one aspect (by learning their host country's language) while differentiating in another (by continuing to wear their cultural clothing). There is no set definition for assimilation stating that to truly assimilate into your surroundings, you must not only learn their language and culture, but also give up your own.

However, it is unfortunately clear that it is the ideology of "total assimilation" which seems to have seeped into the British consciousness from its years of

implementation in the UK's education system. Total assimilation is not just seen as the desired result for foreigners in British education- it is demanded of them.

An example of such sentiment is a quote from the former MP for Southall, George Partiger, in 1964 (Troyna, 1982, as cited in Troyna, 1991):

> I feel that Sikh parents should encourage their children to give up their turbans, their religion and their dietary laws. If they refuse to integrate then we must be tough. They must be told that they would be the first to go if there was unemployment and it should be a condition of being given National Assistance that
>
> the immigrants go to English classes. (p. 67)

One cannot see much difference in mentality when comparing the above to another quote from writer George Gale of the Daily Mail during the Salman Rushdie controversy in 1989 (as cited in Troyna, 1991:68): "Newcomers here are welcome. But only if they become genuine Britishers and don't stuff their alien cultures down our throats."

The above quotes are representative of a sentiment where total assimilation of foreigners is not simply expected, but demanded, and lack of compliance is met with aggression as well as uncompromising rejection of any remnants of their foreign values. It is ironic how proponents of this sentiment believe that they have all the right in the world to stuff British culture down immigrants' throats, while complaining of immigrants' supposed attempts to do the same.

These attitudes do not just carry an uncompromising expectancy of total assimilation, but also strong undercurrents of racism. As such, it is important to note something here: in contemporary times, international tensions and terrorism is often blamed for increased racial tensions and racism in the public, however, both of the above quotes were spoken years before 9/11, the most frequently cited "cause of increased racism". Thus, when looking for the root cause of this behaviour, it may be wiser not to look at the inflammatory actions of a handful of extremists, but a more systematically widespread problem within the public consciousness.

As such, one cannot help but link the monocultural British educational system to ongoing social issues stemming from racism in the UK. This leads us to rightly consider: perhaps racism itself is the child of monoculturalism?

Parekh (1986) points out that a monocultural education is the ideal breeding ground for racism, stating that a child educated in a mono-cultural school is either "not exposed to [other societies or cultures] at all or [...] [they are] presented in uncomplimentary terms, or both"; with such a set-up, it is inevitable that when exposed to foreign cultures the child "judges other cultures and societies by the norms and standards derived from its own, and predictably finds them odd and even worthless".

When a person has spent their whole life only learning about their own country, its own perspective, its own history, its own social and cultural values, it is outright implied if not openly taught to them that anything "other" is not worth their time or consideration. Foreign societies, their history, culture, and values are thus deemed worthless. What then stops the child from making the logical assumption that foreign people should also be deemed worthless? A monocultural education does not just plant the seed for seeing other societies as inferior, but also for seeing one's own as overwhelmingly superior, as they have not been taught about any rival society that could possibly compare. What then would result from such an education if not a racial bias?

Let us now turn our attention to the racial attacks and disadvantages suffered by ethnic minorities in Britain. There is an overwhelming amount of research on the topic, so this paper will suffice by listing merely a demonstrative few.

In 1991, a poll taken amongst Asian settlers in Britain resulted in 56% of Asians feeling that the British were "very" or "somewhat" racist (Minorities at Risk Project, 2004). In 1993, the British Crime survey reported that around 140,000 racially motivated verbal and physical attacks had occurred that year, but only 9,700 were reported (Minorities at Risk Project, 2004). These statistics confirm significant levels of hostile behaviour towards immigrants in British society - and again, that these were present before any of the commonly blamed terrorist attacks could "trigger" increases of racism.

Hostility towards immigrants does not necessarily have to manifest as verbal or physical attacks. Pure prejudice alone can cause harm to immigrants due to them being passed over for jobs in favour of their British counterparts. The 1991 census showed that when the national unemployment level was 9%, this

figure amongst Afro-Caribbeans was 19%, Africans 27%, Pakistanis 29%, and Bangladeshis 32% (Owen, 1993 as cited in Modood, 1994), displaying a stark concentration of unemployment rates in non-native citizens.

Of course, such statistics have not been left behind in the 20th century. In recent years, data compiled by the Home Office (2019) shows that racially and religiously motivated hate crimes have only increased, as demonstrated by Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. *Racially and Religiously Motivated Hate Crimes in England and Wales from 2011/2012 to 2018/2019*
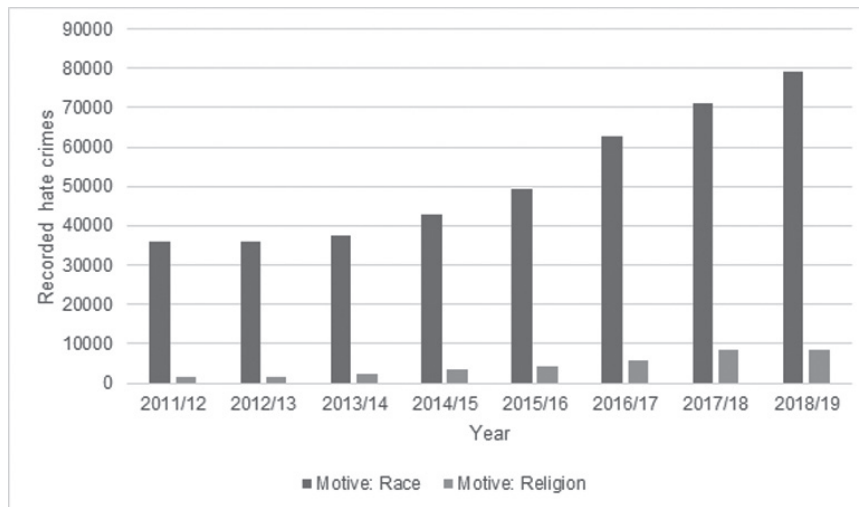
It is important to note that there seems to be a significant rise in hate crimes after the year 2015/16, which is when the Brexit referendum took place. The Centre for Social Investigation at Nuffield College released an analysis stating that there was a clear increase in racially and religiously motivated hate crimes after Brexit; one which cannot be accounted for by time trends and overall crime patterns, or explained away by different police procedures (Cavalli, 2019). Common assumptions that Brexit has acted as a catalyst giving courage to perpetrators of racial crimes to become more active and/or overt (BBC, 2019) can thus be confirmed by hard data.

This paper supports the concept of monocultural education lying at the root of these issues, however it is of course not the only factor. Politics and the media are also powerful contributors, and those who can speak loudest in these circles often abuse their power for their personal interests. Britain as well as many other European countries have witnessed many politicians exploiting the "issue of immigration", dramatizing and exaggerating immigrant issues in order to divert the attention of the public from real issues in their economy, healthcare, education, etc. Such tactics only serve to further fuel racial hatred and xenophobia, as evident by the hate crime statistics post-Brexit.

It is ironic how "refugee problems" in particular are so focused on in European politics, considering that the UN's Refugee Agency (2020) states that 85% of refugees are hosted in developing countries with the top three countries being Turkey, Colombia, and Pakistan. And yet, despite these statistics, refugees are presented to be Europe's problem. In fact, a fear of an in-flood of refugees has often been given credit for Brexit as well as European resistance to Turkey entering the EU (Boffey and Helm, 2016).

3. New Generations

The monocultural values of British education, societal expectations of cultural assimilation, and increasing levels of racial tension have all become factors that smother immigrant self-identity and self-expression. Immigrant children in particular live under constant pressure to assimilate, and soon learn to be ashamed of anything marking them as "other", be it their cultural clothing, mannerisms, or even their mother tongue.

For example, Parekh (1991) cites an event he witnessed when he was travelling by train from London to Hull:

> I was sitting opposite an elderly Pakistani couple and next to their daughter. When the crowded train pulled out at Kings Cross, the parents began to talk in Urdu. The girl, who was sitting next to me, began to feel restless and nervous and started making strange signals to them. As they carried on their conversation for a few more minutes, she angrily leaned over the table and asked them to shut up. When the confused mother asked her for an explanation, the girl shot back. Just as you do not expose your private parts in public, you do not speak that language in public! (p. 193)

The daughter's attitude reflects the general feelings of ethnic minorities, especially the youth who are more regularly subjected to censure at school and university. Whatever may be said in public speeches or written by the policy makers, until there is a significant change in British society's attitude towards non-natives, immigrants will always feel like second-class citizens who do not belong.

Literature is perhaps the most precious creative medium gifted to man. The written word not only gives a voice to minorities who often go unheard, but it creates the opportunity for easy and meaningful cultural exchange. Literary self-expression allows ethnic minorities to shine a light on the often unreported discrimination which regularly taints their daily lives, and to give others an insight into their cultural values and customs. Monoculturalism does not end at the educational system or in a society's values; publicly available literature that focuses mostly on people from a certain ethnicity or culture is also a part of the problem.

In recent years, there has been a greater awareness of the need for POC (People Of Colour) literature, and the significant increase in the publishing and availability of such works has certainly answered that call. However, while there has been an increase of non-white voices in literature, it does not follow that there has been an increase of different cultural perspectives portrayed in literature. It might be argued that many POC authors write works that could be written by any white author, with no real input on their own unique perspective on cultural or racial issues. Either way, one is compelled to admit that issues faced by immigrants in particular remains the road less travelled compared to the majority.

There are, however, various striking examples of immigrant writers giving voice to their perspectives and issues. The novel *Killing Honour* by Bali Rai (2011) showcases the Leicester Indian community's struggles with issues such as rape, premarital sex, and the fallout effecting both their young and old generations. The poem *Half Caste* by John Agard (2005) is a passionate yet clever outburst, keenly questioning the racism shown towards those who are mixed race. *Search For My Tongue*, a well-known poem by Sujata Bhatt (n.d.) is another beautiful example of a poem expressing the struggle of an immigrant child being stuck between two languages: the mother and foreign tongue.

The breadth of variation between the perspectives of different ethnic mi-

norities and the powerful messages in these works serve to underline how important it is for minority ethnicities to be able to share their experiences. If they were not given a voice through the written word, the world would not know the difference.

To this we must add another crime of monoculturalism: stifling creativity. At a young age, immigrant children learn to be ashamed of whatever marks them as different from the socially accepted norm, and actively work to hide any "otherness" they may have. This is perhaps one of the largest and yet most unaddressed threats to future literary contributions from those of an immigrant background. When young writers, cowed by years of social pressure to conform, shy away from voicing their multicultural perspective and censor everything they express in the written word, then their attempted literary self-expression becomes nothing more than an exercise in futility. Who is to know the number of great works that have gone unpublished due to their shackles around their potential authors' tongues?

It is not enough for the problems caused by monoculturalism to simply be heard. For change to truly take place, the source of conflict must be nipped cleanly in the bud. Which brings us back to the British education system and its negative effect on ethnic minorities, both socially and academically. It is not simply the White ethnocentric syllabus which is a problem here. A larger concern is teacher's attitudes, support, or lack of, towards foreign students as informed by the educational policies in place.

For decades, concerns regarding the UK's monocultural education system negatively affecting ethnic minorities have been raised, with the most famous examples including the *Education for All* Swann report in 1985 or the *Excellence for All Children* Green Paper in 1999, both focusing on proposing a multicultural approach for education which could support and accept the ethnic diversities in students lives (D'Angelo et al., 2011). In the wake of these reports, commitments were made towards inclusive schooling; however these have on the whole been "small scale attempts in the context of more pervasive mechanisms reinforcing inequality" (D'Angelo et al., 2011).

It is in this context that Warren (2007) argues that the British education system is institutionally racist; as despite the overwhelming evidence for the dis-

advantages suffered by ethnic minority students in education, government-sponsored policy interventions consistently lead to white middle-class social and racial advantage. D'Angelo et al. (2011) cites the work of Sneddon, Maylor et al., and Conteh while pointing out that "the existing stereotypes and negative vision of supplementary schools and teachers from mainstream schools show how assimilationist views and racist assumptions are still embedded in educational policies."

These are not merely remnants from leftover from old educational policies, but a symptom of a current and ongoing problem. Researchers and practitioners of migrant education voiced concerns after the White Paper and the 2011 Education Bill derived from it came onto the scene (D'Angelo et al., 2011). The new educational agenda focused on attainment, leaving things like equality and relationships with the community on the margins (Garside, 20). More alarmingly, the White Paper reinforced stereotypes about ethnic minority behaviours and a teacher's authoritarianism to "fight against this" (Tomlinson, 2011, as cited in D'Angelo et al., 2011). No matter how hard concerned parties may try, the assimilationist and racist undertones of the British education system just seem to keep coming back from the dead.

This paper is simply one of many to raise their voice against the practice of monoculturalism in education and to advocate multiculturalism in its place, however it is hoped that it is not the last. Action must be taken to support the UK's ethnic minorities in order to foster the growth of future generations, unhindered by these obstacles, so that they can then contribute to both their own communities and society as a whole. As it is, British society remains divided, and hindered by its own refusal to reflect its people, native and non-native alike, in its policies. For there to be any progress, the assimilationist mindset at the heart of the UK's monocultural education system must first be defeated.

The most obvious solution seems to be that a new multicultural mindset should be nourished in order to combat the damage left by years of monoculturalism. Native and immigrant children should be taught at a young age to celebrate their cultural differences, without pressure for any one side to conform to the other. If the new generation is taught to understand that different cultural values and customs naturally exist within British society, then it is expected that native aggression towards anything "foreign" would decrease due to its incompatibility with such a mindset.

Multiculturalism in schools is the first step towards not just lessening incidences of racism, but improving academic performance and equal opportunity in ethnic minorities as well, as there is strong evidence to indicate that rather than conforming to one mainstream culture, the ability to "straddle" between cultures is a factor for success for many non-native students (Cater, Flores-Gonzalez, and Gibson as cited in D'Angelo et al., 2011).

Some rudimentary changes may start with changing the national curriculum to reflect a multicultural perspective that befits the multicultural society the UK currently hosts, and similarly hiring an appropriate proportion of ethnic minority teachers. Perhaps the addition of special cultural classes, or school-wide activities, can be considered to help foster relationships and improve understanding between native and immigrant children.

Research has also consistently indicated that migrant and minority ethnic families "often face a number of obstacles, including limited language skills, inability to navigate the system and discrimination" (D'Angelo and Ryan, 2011 as cited in D'Angelo et al., 2011), so a prime move would be to consider how schools can support these families: providing interpreter services or EAL classes, perhaps assigning certain teachers of the same ethnicity to act as a go-between for non-English speaking parents and the school, training staff avoid ingrained racial assumptions when dealing with students of different ethnicities, creating increased awareness on racial issues, etc.

It is hoped that with a multicultural education, pupils from ethnic minorities will at least have access to an inclusive rather than exclusive curriculum, leaving less room for feelings of alienation and more room for the possibility of equal opportunity. Just as a monocultural education can seep into the consciousness and breed racial tension, it is hoped that a multicultural education could teach mutual respect if not tolerance to the generations to come.

4. London's Turkish Community

Turks and Brits are no strangers to each other. In fact, their history predates the Republic of Turkey, with interactions between Ottoman Sultans and British rulers going as far back as King Henry VIII. Brotton (2016) states that King Hen-

ry VIII would often dress in oriental clothing that came from trading with the Ottoman Turks; such trades also included various sweets to which Henry's daughter, later Queen Elizabeth I, had such a weak spot for it would turn her teeth black.

Queen Elizabeth I is perhaps the most prominent example of Ottoman-British, as her interactions with the Islamic world deepened significantly when the rest of Catholic Europe shunned England for its Protestantism, resulting in an increase of trade as well as a military alliance against Spain. However, this does not mean that the British outlook in Ottoman Turks was positive.

This is perhaps best exemplified by the 16th century phrase of "turning Turk", utilised most famously in Shakespeare's *Othello* (2015). Vitkus (1997) describes how the term is seen as a curse, exemplifying how Othello uses the term aggressively as he damns the one who doubts his loyalty to the Venetians. He further comments on the time-period during which the play was written, when Europe was gripped with fear over the ever-expanding Ottoman empire, and a mix of religious as well as political interests resulted in increasing Protestant portrayals of Turks as assistants of the devil, full of savagery and sexual aggression.

In this vein, even somewhat positive British references towards the Ottomans tend to find themselves sexualised. A clear example can be found in the poem *To his mistress going to bed* by John Donne (n.d.) who compares his lover to an angel bringing "a heaven like Mahomet's Paradise" before delving into depictions of sexual activity. This usage, although undesirable, underlines the importance of self-expression in literature, as it gives later generations a window into the past generation's worldview. A window through which we can peek and conclude that, collaborations in trades and battles aside, Elizabethan Brits have mostly viewed Ottoman Turks through the same lens they have other foreign cultures; enjoying their foreign foods and clothes while deeming their foreign characters as lesser and depraved.

Before we can move onto the topic of migrant Turks living in contemporary Britain, two quantificational difficulties must be addressed.

First, most surveys undertaken in Britain do not include "Turkish" as an option when selecting one's ethnic group (D'Angelo et al., 2011). This makes

it difficult to isolate statistical data on Turks, who often find themselves forcibly lumped together with other ethnicities. The problem is exacerbated by Turks themselves being unsure how to identify themselves on such surveys, often selecting "White", "White Other", or "Other - Please Specify" (Enneli et al., 2005). These factors make it difficult to find truly representative figures concerning Britain's Turkish population.

Second, there is the problem of who to classify as "Turkish". The Turkish Constitution considers every citizen to be a Turk, regardless of race or religion (King et al., 2008). Thus, despite the wide range of ethnic groups (Albanian, Arab, Bulgarian, Georgian, etc.) that make up the ancestries of many Turkish citizens, each and every citizen is still equally regarded as a Turk (Enneli et al., 2005). However, this labelling is often protested by Kurds from Turkey and Turkish Cypriots, who prefer to be identified as independent ethnic groups (King et al., 2008).

Due to a lack of refined data, and for the sake of simplicity, this paper will use "Turk" and "Turkish" as umbrella terms to refer to all three groups (mainland Turks of both Turkic and other/mixed ethnicities, Cypriot Turks, and Kurds from Turkey) while singling them out whenever necessary.

The most recent statistics on Turks living in the UK come from the Office for National Statistics (2020). Their Jan-Dec 2019 dataset estimates the number of Turkish-born UK residents to be around 71,000. Most of the Turks in the UK have been estimated to reside in London (Onal, 2003 and cited in Enneli et al., 2005), which is unsurprising when one looks at the history of their migrations.

It is the Turkish Cypriots who first began to migrate to the UK from as early as the 1930s (King et al., 2008). They had several reasons for this. On the one hand, there were economic motivators; this first wave of migrants came from mostly rural agricultural backgrounds, with very little formal education (D'Angelo et al., 2011), understandably carrying the desire to escape poverty and earn more money (Ladbury, 1977 ad cited in King et al., 2008). On the other hand, safety also became a significant motivator during the 1950s, when in-fighting between Greek and Turk Cypriots began to spark (King and Bridal, 1982 as cited in Enneli et al., 2005).

Turkish Cypriot migration to the UK peaked in the 1960s (King et al., 2008), and can easily be linked to both motivators. Cyprus gained independence in 1960, which resulted in many Cypriots losing jobs linked to the British (King et al., 2008); in the meantime, post-war Britain beckoned with its high employment rates (King and Bridal, 1982 as cited in Enneli et al., 2005). 1963 and 1964 witnessed the worst of the Cypriot infighting prior to which many Cypriots, both Greek and Turk, had left Cyprus in fear of the rising tensions (King and Bridal, 1982 as cited in Enneli et al., 2005). Thus, we can conclude that safety and economy were the biggest motivators involved in Cypriot Turks' migrations. But why the UK?

A likely reason is that during this time period, Turk Cypriots were the only Turks to have pre-existing ties to the UK; both with Cyprus being a British colony and with some of their fellow Greek Cypriots having migrated to the UK years prior (Enneli et al., 2005).

The Greek Cypriot immigrants who were already in London are a significant factor that deserve special attention. Many Greek Cypriots had settled into London years prior, taking over jobs left by the Italians who left due to the second World War (Oakley, 1989 as cited in Enneli et al., 2005). They thus functioned as a support for incoming immigrant Cypriots. Ladbury (1977, as cited in Enneli et al., 2005) states that immigrant Turk Cypriots were dependent on their Greek counterparts during their initial settlement; they relied on them for employment and assistance with housing. Eventually, the Turk Cypriot immigrants owned their own businesses, becoming a community in their own right (Enneli et al., 2005).

It must be noted that the support from their Cypriot brethren was likely a crucial factor in the Turk Cypriots' successful settlement in London. King et al. (2008) states that despite the infighting in Cyprus, there was a reasonably cordial relationship between the London immigrant Cypriots; he attributes this to both groups having left before Cyprus's infighting came to a true head which, while no doubt a factor, does not explain their cordial relations as simply as the idea that immigrants fleeing from violence at home would be likely to actively avoid doing anything with the potential to cause a repeat in their new settlements.

The mainland Turks made up the next wave of immigrants. Again, we find

a mix of motivators. Initially, Turkish men were migrating to the UK for work from the late 1960s, with their families joining them about a decade later (Mehmet Ali, 2001 as cited in Enneli et al., 2005). King et al (2008) comments how this mirrors the much larger number of Turkish guest workers going to other areas of Europe such as Germany and the Netherlands during the 1960s and 1970s. We can thus say that the UK was not a specific target for these Turks, but merely part of a broader economically motivated migration to Europe (D'Angelo et al., 2011).

However, the real outpouring of Turkish immigrants came after the 1980 military coup in Turkey. Political dissent led to a huge wave of migrants leaving Turkey; some in protest, some concerned for personal safety, and some opting for self-imposed exile. It is not just their political motivations which makes this migration different; unlike the Cypriot Turks, the majority of these migrants were academics, professionals and trade union activists from Turkey's urban areas (Erdemir and Vasta, 2007 as cited in King et al., 2008). We can again comment, however, that the UK was not a specific target in this migration, and simply one of many European destinations migrants preferred for political sanctuary.

Although the UK was not the only location for these immigrating mainland Turks, it is important to note that those who did settle in the UK were once again concentrated in London. Enneli et al. (2005) hypothesised that just as the Turk Cypriots were supported during their initial settlement by their Greek Cypriot brethren, the mainland Turks were supported by their Turk Cypriot brethren until they also owned their own businesses.

This is a reasonable assumption, as Turkish society itself strongly relies on networking and connections to meet common needs in everyday life, let alone when it comes to something as significant as leaving your home country. Thus, the mainland Turks who did immigrate to the UK likely did so because they believed that they could rely on the already settled Turk Cypriots there for initial support. And so, the presence of Turks calls forth more Turks.

The Kurds from Turkey were the last group to migrate to the UK, their immigration taking place from the late 1980s to the early 1990s (D'Angelo et al., 2011). Where the Cypriot Turks left due to infighting between the Greek and Turk Cypriots, the Kurds from Turkey fled due to the full-on war taking place between

the Turkish army and the PKK guerrillas (Enneli et al., 2005). Thus, most of these immigrant Kurds came to London as refugees (D'Angelo et al., 2011).

Why then, to the UK? It was not the only destination for refugee Kurds, as they settled across Europe in general (Enneli et al., 2005). Some might suggest the attractive policies on council housing or unemployment, however when we look at how Kurdish refugees were similarly concentrated in London, the mind calls forth a simpler, more likely explanation: the already-present Turkish community. Enneli et al. (2005) surmises that like each group of migrants which came before them, Kurds relied on their ties to the already present Turkish immigrants in London to help them get settled in, before they too eventually owned their own businesses.

Migration is no easy task. Motivations and circumstances for migration may vary, however in each case there must be a significant amount of importance and urgency behind the need to relocate for migrants to decide to leave their homes. It is a frightening thing to be on your own in a foreign land with nobody to turn to for help. Thus, it is unsurprising that at the heart of Turkish immigration to London, we find pre-existing human relationships. Countrymen, family members, friends or even the friends of friends were all invaluable sources of emotional and economic support for each group of immigrants as they settled into London. Perhaps without these pre-existing ties of kinship and friendship, there would not have been immigrations of any scale worth discussing in this paper.

The present-day Turkish community in London has been built on this chain of support between immigrant kinsmen going back almost a hundred years. Turkish reliance on networking and personal connections shows not just in the history of their migration to London, but even after settling into their new home. Enneli et al. (2005) have remarked that the London Turkish community is "probably one of the most self-sufficient communities in London" due to the wide range of help and services offered for Turks, by Turks. There are dozens of small Turkish-owned businesses in London, from kebab takeaways to small markets, and it is common for Turks to find jobs through connections, or alternatively find themselves saddled with a job for a short period of time to help out a family member or friend. However, as noted by Enneli (2002, as cited in Enneli et al., 2005), while

such jobs through Turkish connections are plentiful, the majority of them are in the food sector and relatively undesirable due to the low wages and long hours.

Which brings us to the problems faced by London's Turkish community. One must not be deceived by the praise of "self-sufficient", as this does not mean things are perfect. Simply being able to find a job at a kebab shop does not guarantee any kind of financial or educational success. The personal connections which Turks have so relied upon during their settlement in London have become a double-edged sword, as when one relies on finding everything they need within their own community, they will find themselves stuck within the characteristically small limits of immigrant resources.

Thus, the greatest obstacle faced by the Turkish community raises its head: the British education system. It has previously been covered in this paper how students from ethnic minorities suffer both socially and academically from the current monocultural British education system, which is still tainted by an assimilationist ideology. This is no less true when it comes to the Turkish community.

As early as 2001, Aydin (as cited in D'Angelo, 2011) lamented that for several decades, there had been high levels of underachievement in Turkish pupils with nothing being done to correct it. A few years later, Enneli et al. (2005) reported high rates of not just underachievement, but an overall bad school experience for Turkish students that involved discrimination as well as a lack of support.

In 1997, Modood et al. (as cited in Enneli et al. 2005) stated that in terms of facility in English, educational qualifications, unemployment, occupational levels and earnings, the Bangladeshi are the most disadvantaged minority group; more shockingly, however, they stated that some groups of Turkish-speakers seem to be even more disadvantaged.

Academically, this is reinforced by Strand et al. (2010) finding that while even Bangladeshi students have gotten higher attainment rates over the past few years, Turkish students continue to perform below the national average.

Education is vital not only for self-development but for success in any society. School qualifications are what give students the opportunity to progress onto well-paying jobs or studies involving higher academia. A lack of such qualifica-

tions inevitably results in a whole generation suffering from unemployment, low wages, and other occupational difficulties.

How, then, could this be such a problem in London's Turkish community when it is so widely praised for its self-sufficiency? What resource is the community lacking? Why are Turkish students hindered even more than students of other ethnic minorities?

The biggest obstacle in the path of the Turkish community may well be the same thing which ties them together: language. Out of all the waves of Turkish immigrants, it is only the group of academics and professionals (which are in no way the majority) that would have had any likelihood of already speaking some English; the others were from rural areas and/or without higher education qualifications, thus possessing little to no English skills. This is supported by Labour Force Survey data on Turkish workers from 1998-2005 (Demireva, 2011, as cited in D'Angelo et al., 2011) showing that about 44% had pre-primary/primary education, about 45% had lower secondary education, about 6% had upper secondary education, and only about 5% had tertiary education.

We have already covered how Turkish immigrants depended on their predecessors for support with jobs and housing as they settled into London. This would leave little motivation for Turkish immigrants to learn much English beyond simple words for daily necessities. Why learn another language when the people you rely on for help the most, your own countrymen, speak your mother tongue perfectly? Thus the double-edged sword of a self-sufficient immigrant community makes its biggest flaw known.

The language problem does not stop at the first generation. When immigrant parents speak little to no English, it is only natural for their children to learn whatever is spoken at home as their first language. The 2010 School Census (as cited by D'Angelo et al., 2011) lists the number of primary and secondary pupils in England whose first language was Turkish at 18,750 - making them the 11th largest group of such pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Thus, children who have only spoken Turkish at home and their parents who can only speak Turkish themselves are thrust into a monocultural education

system tailored for White English-speakers that is already working against them on racial bias alone. It is little wonder that underachievement is rampant.

Another possible factor for underachievement comes in a concept put forward by Enneli et al. (2005); that Turkish children are often ignored by teachers, remaining the "invisible disadvantaged" compared to ethnic minorities who are more "visible" due to their skin colour and being more well-known targets for racial abuse. Thus, even educational policy makers and teachers looking to support students from ethnic minorities may often end up overlooking the struggles of students from Turkish backgrounds.

These struggles are not just due to language barriers. Enneli et al. (2005) have reported that schools are often an "alienating environment" to Turkish children, with many young people recounting experiences of discrimination from both white and non-white parties. Grieff et al. (2011, as cited in D'Angelo et al., 2011) similarly found many young people complaining about frequent instances of bullying and racism. Such incidents do not always have to be violent to wound the young psyche. Enneli et al. (2005) quote a young girl who could not forget overhearing her teacher call her the "surprisingly intelligent" Turkish girl. D'Angelo et al. (2011) bring another quote: "Some children didn't want to speak in Turkish [in the school] – they felt shame."

> Enneli et al. (2005) offers a striking summary on the school experience for Turkish children:
>
> The invisibility of the Turks means that their particular problems are not noticed or grasped by teaching staff. Much schooling is subsequently missed through truancy and exclusions. Concerned parents are not able to help because of language difficulties and their limited understanding of the educational system. Many of the young Turkish-speakers thus end their schooling demotivated, uninterested and without qualifications. (p. 18)

Of course, we cannot speak on anecdotes alone. The London Challenge Turkish Forum (2004), Enneli et al. (2005), Strand et al. (2010) and D'Angelo et al. (2011) have all undertaken investigations to identify the factors affecting underachieving Turkish pupils. There is some variation in the number of factors reported, however three factors consistently appear to be stressed: language barriers

for students and/or parents due to poor English skills and/or lack of interpreters; lack of parental involvement and understanding of the school system; and lack of school support for both parents and children.

Lack of school support for parents and children may be linked back to the UK's previously discussed faulty education policies, as well as the "invisible disadvantaged" theory concept by Enneli et al. (2005). Overall, however, the language barrier remains at the heart of the problem. If problems were effectively communicated with school staff, it would only be a matter of time for corrective measures to fall into place.

It would be naive to assume that the problem would be solved purely through focusing on the English fluency of the children in school. One cannot burden children with the role of interpreting for their parents, or for asking school staff for support in their parent's stead. The biggest priority should be getting parents involved and able to communicate with school staff so both sides can collaborate in giving children the support that they need. The works of Ladky & Peterson, Poomerantz, and Boethel (as cited in D'Angelo et al., 2011) all contain compelling evidence showing that parental involvement results in a positive impact on pupils academic and linguistic skills.

For example, Turkish parents who spoke good English would be able to communicate with school staff, understand the school system, get involved with their child's schooling, and ask for school support when it is needed (though we cannot address how successful such requests would be). Their children would also have an easier time learning English if it were spoken at home alongside Turkish, and an English-speaking parent's help with homework would be invaluable.

Unfortunately, one cannot expect all immigrant parents to immediately become fluent English speakers. Even if EAL (English as an Additional Language) classes were fully funded and available, many parents would likely be unable to attend due to duties at home or work. And it would take years for them to reach the level of fluency required to communicate, by which time another generation of Turkish students would have gone through the same cycle of helpless underachievement.

However, that does not mean that current solutions are impossible. It is clear that the parents of London's Turkish community need urgent support for language and communication with schools. The quickest solution would be an increase of readily available interpreters working with school staff, supplemented by increased EAL classes for both parents and children. Of course, the ideal solution would be the presence of Turkish-speaking teachers who can communicate with parents, however it would be unrealistic as well as unfair to other similarly disadvantaged minorities to expect a Turkish-speaking teacher to be hired at every school with Turkish students.

Thus, it would seem that the situation calls for a middleman. Ideally, this would be an organisation devoted to supporting Turkish students and their parents. The most urgent services would be that of simple interpretation and information, helping parents communicate and coordinate effectively with schools. Ideally, such an organisation might also offer EAL classes or supplementary classes tailored for Turkish-speaking parents and children. There is a promising precedent in the Day-Mer community centre evaluated by D'Angelo et al. (2011). But one cannot expect them to take on the burden for the whole Turkish community. In the end, whether a middleman will come from the local authority, the Turkish community, or a third sector organisation, there is a clear and urgent call for their presence.

Overall, there is a question on whether Turkish immigrants truly found the higher standard of living they were seeking upon their migration. The quality of housing, roadworks, etc. might be better in Britain, however socially the perils are much greater.

King et al. (2011) quote a Kurdish refugee's perspective:

We live here as second-class citizens. Of course some migrants have financially good positions. But living standards cannot be measured by money alone… Many migrants only work to earn money. Their living standards are, of course, more comfortable than in Turkey. The country's democratic rights, education and institutions are a thousand times better than in Turkey. But there is a question mark in my mind about how much migrants are allowed to use them. (pp. 17-18)

5. Turkish Literature for English-Speakers

We have previously covered the widespread lack of academic success and/ or qualifications in current and previous generations of Turkish immigrants in London. Language barriers have been identified as a prime culprit for the younger generation's lack of academic achievements, however it is also fair to say that educational cultivation has simply not been the priority of many migrant parents.

As previously noted from Labour Force Survey data, most migrant Turkish workers themselves had not received high levels of education; why then should they consider it important for their children? Adding onto this is the fact that most Turkish immigrants migrated for economic or safety reasons, making their most pressing goal to earn enough money for them and their families to get by. The daily scramble to make ends meet by the end of each month would not leave much room for parents or children to partake in cultural or educational activities.

Thus we should not be surprised that there is a striking lack of cultural cultivation in London's Turkish community, especially compared to the intellectual brilliance that characterises other such immigrant communities; notably, the Jewish immigrants in America, concentrated on both the East and West coasts, who hold many key academic positions. The main reason for this is simply that academic and cultural cultivation has not been a priority to the majority of the current and past generations of Turkish immigrants.

It must be noted that successful literary self-expression is indivisibly linked to education. Which is not to say that raw talent is not a factor, but that in the same way a master blacksmith will forge their swords based on techniques handed down from master to apprentice throughout centuries, so does the master wordsmith hone their talent in their craft by absorbing the works and techniques of great masters before him. Thus, with London's Turkish Community so academically stunted, it is little wonder that its cultural production has not passed the stage of publishing weekly newspapers.

It is hoped that when the problems hindering the younger generation are solved, we will see fresh voices emerge, of poets and short story writers and novelists. For now, we must suffice by mentioning what little works we do have.

There is, unfortunately, a severe paucity of Turkish works available translated in English, an overview of which can be found done by Tekgul and Akbatur (2013). The first monumental work involving translated Turkish literature was Orientalist E.J.W. Gibb's *A History of Ottoman Poetry* (1900). Until 1980, less than a handful of literary genres were translated into English. The handful of Turkish authors/ poets who enjoyed international recognition the most were Nazim Hikmet, Yasar Kemal and Orhan Pamuk. Pamuk winning the Nobel Prize in 2006 particularly created greater awareness towards Turkish Literature. But let us move onto some examples beyond the well-known novelist.

Nermin Menemencioglu was the granddaughter of the poet Namik Kemal. She was one of the editors for *The Penguin Book of Turkish Verse* and introduced many Turkish poets (her grandfather included) to English readers.

Namik Kemal (b. 1840 - d. 1888) was one of the founders of the Young Turks movement (Jön Türkler); he was a versatile writer whose talent was not confined to any one genre, as he expressed himself vivaciously through poetry, drama, fiction, history and journalism. He lived in London from the spring of 1868 to the summer 1870, and is perhaps most well-known for publishing the newspaper Hurriyet. In his poetry, he used simple language and emotive terminology like "fatherland". Freedom was an essential part of his poetical lexicon. He was one of those writers whose works created political changes that contributed to the eventual fall of the Ottoman empire. An example comes in the poem below.

From the Kaside to the Fatherland

We saw the rulers of the age, their edicts of futility,
And we retired from office, with honour and with dignity.

From service to their fellow men, true men will never rest,
The brave of the heart will not withhold their help from the oppressed.

[...]

Beloved hope of days to come, how warm your presence is,
And how it frees our troubled world from all its miseries! (Kemal, 1978, p. 167)

The writer Ziya Pasha (b. 1825/1829 - d. 1880) was Kemal's contemporary; he also resided in London and contributed articles to the newspaper Hurriyet. Kemal and Ziya were both critical of the Sublime Porte. In his below poem *Gazel* (Pasha, 1978), Ziya criticises the lack of importance given to education and how it has created the inevitable downfall for the Ottomans. The poem also highlights the social issues that arise with lack of education.

Gazel

In the land of the infidel, I have seen cities and mansions,

In the dominions of Islam, ruin and devastation.

I have seen countless fools condescend to Plato

Within the Sublime Porte, that home of divagation.

[...]

Ziya, in the tavern of the world, the hangover weighs heavy,

I've not seen much, in my brief time, worthy of admiration. (p. 165)

A century down the line, we have Feyyaz Fergar Kayacan (b. 1919 - d. 1993) who was a trilingual writer and poet, equally at ease in any of his three languages: Turkish, English, and French. One of his famous works is *Mrs. Valley's War*, which won the Turkish Language Academy award in 1962. French influence dominated the Turkish literary scene at that time, as the golden age of surrealism and post-war existentialism was when French culture held practically the entire world in awe.

Feyyaz personally knew Andre Breton, the father of surrealism, and it shows in his poetry which is remarkable for its vividness of imagery and uniquely original voice. He arrived in London prior to the outbreak of war; his writings from that point onward show a shift of focus, with a growing interest in the popular culture of the masses demonstrated in their wartime stoicism, for which he uses the air-raid shelter as a metaphor. The following poem shows his capacity for assuming an air of ironical detachment and iconoclasticism:

Co-existence

I have problems
they know me well
I know them well,
I let them worry me rent-free.
Sometimes when I'm reading a book
I lift my head to look at them.
Sometimes when I'm eating my heart out
they lift their heads to have a look at me.
[...] (Kayacan, 1987, p 23)

In 1987, Feyyaz Kayacan Fergar and I founded the international poetry magazine, Core, hoping to introduce translated Turkish literature to English readers. Our aim was to create a cultural bridge linking Istanbul to London, where ideas could travel freely back and forth between the two cultures. Later, our dream would be realised in a material form thanks to the construction of the Bosphorus Bridge linking Turkey and Europe. However, the literary atmosphere of the country remained unmoved. We soon realised we were building a one-sided bridge with no connection to the other side.

It then dawned upon us that the reason there was such a dearth of translated Turkish Literature was not a problem of production so much as a problem of demand. And thus, we link to the first issue discussed in this paper, that is, of Britain's monoculturalism.

As previously discussed, monoculturalism breeds the notion that one's own nation's culture is the only one of any importance. One way or another, this worldview manifests as a disparaging perspective towards other cultures. The effect of monoculturalism on Britain's general reception to foreign literary works can be easily spotted.

For example, Ian Hamilton once asked Philip Larkin if he read any foreign poetry and got a very abrupt reply: "Foreign poetry? No!" (Chaterjee, 2006). Larkins' attitude to foreign poets very neatly summarises the poor interest towards translated foreign works in the UK compared to other European countries.

Ruth Christie, one of the foremost translators of Turkish literature in England, has similarly commented that "perhaps we are still a very insular country" while expressing her opinion of the grim outlook on the reception of Turkish literature in the UK (Christie, 2010 as cited in Tekgul and Akbatur 2013).

In 2005, the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism set up the TEDA Translation Subvention Project to promote Turkish culture through translating literary works to other languages. The success of the project is debatable. A great number of Turkish works have found themselves translated into English thanks to its existence, however on the whole it is hard to say that there has been a significant growth of awareness towards Turkish Literature.

Alexandra Büchler, series editor of Literature Across Frontiers, has advised that beyond maintaining a synergy "between TEDA, publishers, agents, translators and authors", there needs to be more funding involved as the small grants provided by TEDA are not only a constraint on publishers but occasionally not even enough to make publications viable (Tekgul and Akbatur, 2013).

Funding, of course, links back to expectations of success which link back to interest. Or in this case, a lack of British interest towards foreign literature overall, let alone Turkish literature. So long as Britain's monocultural attitude persists, there is little indication that this situation will change in any way in the future. We must again look to multiculturalism being taught to new generations if we are to see any hope of an increase in Turkish works available to the English-speaking public, which could then contribute to greater cultural exchange.

6. Walls

No matter the time period, people have always been building walls to protect or divide them from what they deemed "other". For example, the Cold War's Iron Curtain, the Great Wall of China, and so on. Ironically, in this age of diversity and globalisation, there are still many walls to be found, albeit not of a physical nature. In this vein, we find London's Turkish community has become largely segregated from British society, be it in a social, academic, or literary sense.

Earlier in this paper, it was mentioned that the community's self-sufficiency was a double-edged sword, a statement which still holds true. On the one hand,

Turks have looked out for other Turks for generations, creating a chain of immigrants who managed to find jobs, housing, and so on through their countrymen's networks. On the other hand, this self-sufficiency has only allowed the Turkish community to merely survive rather than thrive in their new home, and it has created a certain complacency within them, leaving them happy with simply getting by on their limited resources. This has left most of their young generation leaving school with subpar if any qualifications to toil away in kebab shops.

But perhaps this isolation was not a choice of Turkish immigrants so much as it was a result of their environment. Monoculturalism, racism, language barriers, academic impediments and so on are only a few of the bricks in the wall that separates the Turkish immigrants from the rest of Britain. It is hard to say where the lion's share of the blame falls, but there can be no doubt that it is shared between the Turkish community and their host country alike.

Conclusion

The UK, and London in particular, has become home to a staggering number of immigrants over the past few centuries. However, the British education system has failed to reflect the now diverse population, instead continuing to enforce a monocultural perspective rooted in the concept of total assimilation. This monocultural and assimilationist ideology has seeped into the consciousness of society, suffocating multicultural immigrants and breeding increased racism in natives. The sufferings of immigrant communities in old and new generations cannot be overlooked any longer. A new, multicultural outlook which teaches mutual respect if not tolerance must be enforced if we are to see any change in future generations.

London's Turkish community is a peculiar case of immigrants who are more disadvantaged than the most famously disadvantaged Bangladeshis. Racial, lingual, and social barriers have all factored into this "self-sufficient" community being walled off from the rest of British society, stuck in their now typical low-paying jobs and high rates of academic underachievement. Education is at the core of improving life standards for any community's future generations. The implementation of multiculturalism in British schools is not enough of a solution; rather the intervention of a third party to ensure communication and cooperation

between parents and schools is vital for there to be any successful new generations of Turks in London.

It is too early to speak of literary works by Turkish authors born and/or brought up in the UK, as older generations of migrants were too busy simply getting by to invest in their children's education, leading to a lack of cultural or literary cultivation. Translated Turkish literature of older generations face no less obstacles, as the UK's monocultural attitude is reflected in a public disinterest towards foreign literary works. We must once again look to the future implementation of multiculturalism to open potential readers' minds to such cultural exchange.

Overall, while there may be varying levels of success in Turkish immigrant businesses or academics, London's Turkish community ultimately lacks a real voice or power which can bring change to their difficult circumstances. Monoculturalism, assimilation and racism are only parts of the puzzle. The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the Yunus Emre Institute have so far failed in providing Turkish immigrants with the support they need to grow and prosper as a part of British society. It is hoped that this paper lends awareness to the most critical issues at the root of this problem.

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