

HANDOUT 2.1.4

HAS GERMANY BECOME A GENUINE “COUNTRY OF IMMIGRATION” FOR TURKISH-GERMANS DBQ?

Background: Many of you are probably familiar with the poem *The New Colossus*, inscribed on a plaque at the base of the Statue of Liberty at the entrance to New York harbor.¹

The New Colossus

by Emma Lazarus

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

Written in 1883 at a time when then millions of people were immigrating to the United States, Lazarus’ poem captured the ideal that “America was an immigrant nation.”

The term “Immigrant Nation” means more than foreigners coming to a country. It implies that newcomers will be able to make a home in their country. It suggests that natives will accept them, laws and officials will be fair and that talent and hard work will be rewarded.

Nation of Immigrants DBQ: This question is based on the accompanying documents. It is designed to test your ability to work with documents. Some of the documents have been edited for the purposes of the question. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

Background: Today, encountering people of Turkish descent and aspects of German-Turkish culture is a daily experience for much of the German population.

Task: Using information from the documents and your knowledge of contemporary Germany, write a well-organized essay that includes an introduction, several paragraphs, and a conclusion on the following topic: Has Germany become a genuine “Nation of Immigration” for its largest ethnic minority, the Turks?

¹ Lazarus, E. (1883). *The New Colossus*. Retrieved from the Academy of American Poets, <http://www.poets.org/viewmedia.php/prmMID/16111>

Document 1: Excerpts from an edited interview by Barbara Weber with the politician sometimes called the German “Obama,” Cem Özdemir. Some reporters have called Mr. Özdemir the German “Obama” because he is the first person of Turkish descent to be elected to the German Bundestag (lower house of parliament). He was elected in 1994 as a member of the Green Party.

On Immigration

I think we are in a transition phase. For me it's quite clear that the slogan that “Germany is not a Country of Immigration” (*Einwanderungsland*) has been revealed as the Lie of the Republic, but we have not yet formulated what should replace it.

I feel very optimistic. I don't want to make too much of an issue out of this, but look at me, I'm a representative in the German Parliament. I come from a working-class family. My father has very little schooling. My parents both came to Germany as guest workers. I did very poorly in school, but I worked hard to improve myself and went on to the university and got my degree. I firmly believe that change can happen. I did all this as a member of just the second generation of Turks in Germany. Some say, well, I'm just an exception to the rule. This is not true. When I say to those who doubt, “I am just like you, my parents didn't have any better conditions than your parents did when they came over,” they understand me. Then they listen to what I have to say.

Problems facing people of Turkish descent in Germany

Many members of the Turkish community have used the previously unknown amount of freedom for their personal development. They have created individual identities that combine elements of both cultures and countries without having any loyalty problems...Unfortunately, the more isolated community members are, the less educated and less able to communicate successfully, the more likely they are to stick to pre-democratic behavior in families or society, and the more likely they are to turn to nationalist or fundamentalist Islamic ideologies. In fact, many of the Islamic fanatics – a small minority among Turkish Muslims – have had their religious born-again experience in Germany.

Another problem group is the older immigrants. Little or nothing has been done to prepare German society for the needs of the elderly and the recently retired generation of immigrants. It cannot be denied anymore that a high proportion of them will spend their lives in Germany. Social services are not prepared to meet the special needs of Muslims.

Are Turkish Germans Assimilating?

It has taken almost thirty years, but Germany is finally coming to grips with the fact that it has become – or at least has been for many years – a melting pot or immigration country. Like other ethnic groups, the Turkish community – which totals 30 per cent of seven million immigrants in Germany – has undergone a process of amazing assimilation. According to recent studies, more than 60 per cent of all Turkish inhabitants in Germany would be willing to become German citizens if they were able to keep their Turkish passport too.

Other social developments in the Turkish community of two million are quite amazing: there are over 40,000 Turkish companies in Germany that employ hundreds of thousands of people. There are more than 13,000 Turkish students at German universities. And more than 400,000 people of Turkish origin have German citizenship. (Berlin alone has a community of 150,000 Turks.)

Contrary to what some populist ideologists preach, there is no going back to old and simple social formations and traditions.

Source:

Weber, B. (2006). *Interview with a Turkish member of the Bundestag*. Retrieved from the Centre Interculturel euro-libanais at the Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth (Lebanon): http://www.ciel.usj.edu.lb/observatoire/docs_actus/ImmigrationandPoliticsinGermany.pdf

Document 2: Turks as coal miners and steel workers in Germany

This is an excerpt of a translation from a newspaper published in the Turkish language, but aimed at Germans. The paper is called The Hürriyet Daily and Economic Review; this article was published on 3 September 2009.

“German shift from coal to culture leaves Turkish workers behind”

As Germany’s former industrial backbone tries to transform itself from a coal-mining center into an enduring European culture capital, the residents of the Ruhr region, including many Turks, risk being left behind.

“Many towns in this region are located right around the coal mines because the workers wanted to live close to their work. Yet, with the mines closing, there are no more jobs in these towns, especially for the Turks,” Haluk Köker, a former coal miner who is now a social worker in Hamm, one of the 53 cities or towns in the Ruhr area, told the *Hürriyet Daily News & Economic Review*.

“The older generation was able to retire, but unemployment especially affects the young generation. They don’t know how or aren’t interested in moving into the creative jobs sector,” Köker said.

Until the mid-20th century, the Ruhr region was the center of Germany’s coal and steel industry. At its peak, **600,000 people** were employed in the area’s 200 mines. Today, just four are active, employing roughly **30,000 people**, many of whom are of Turkish descent.

Source:

Eğrikavuk, I. (2010, September 3). *German shift from coal to culture leaves Turkish workers behind*. Retrieved from *Hurriyet Daily News and Economic Review*: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=-2010-09-03>

Document 3: Jobs and Businesses Created by Turkish Germans

“In 2008 there were approximately 9,000 small and medium-sized enterprises of Turkish origin in Berlin. They employed about 29,000 employees and created a yearly turnover of about 3.5 billion euro.”

Source:

Turkish-German Employers Association (TDU) of Berlin and Brandenburg (*Türkisch-Deutsche Unternehmervereinigung Berlin-Brandenburg*) <http://tdu2.rescue-it.de/de/startseite/81-tdu.html>, retrieved September 2012.

Document 4:

USA TODAY

*The Doner-Kebab: the German Taco?***DONER KEBAB BECOMES GERMANY’S FAVORITE FAST FOOD**

By Kirsten Grieshaber

2010

BERLIN — Forget about bratwurst, currywurst and other kinds of sausages — doner kebab, or shawarma, has overtaken traditional German fast food as the country’s favorite snack on the go.

First brought to Berlin by Turkish immigrants in the 1970s, the grilled meat snack that comes wrapped in a pita bread with shredded lettuce, tomatoes, onions and different dressings, is now being sold everywhere in Germany from the Baltic Sea to the Bavarian Alps.

Students and late night revelers relish it as much as construction workers, children and foreign backpackers on a tight budget.

“We assume that doner kebab is the Germans’ favorite fast food by now,” said Yunus Ulusoy, an expert from the Center for the Study of Turkey in Essen, who has done extensive research on how the ethnic specialty conquered Germany’s culinary mainstream.

The secret behind the doner’s success story is not only its satisfying grilled taste, Ulusoy said, but also the big portions and its affordability — a regular doner in a pita costs only between 2.50 euros and 5 euros (\$3.30 to \$6.70).

The veal and chicken sandwiches are more popular than pizza, hamburgers, French fries and even classic German sausages, according to a poll by German *Men’s Health* magazine from 2008.

“We can actually no longer speak of Turkish food, because the Germans like it even better than the Turks,” said Ulusoy.

Some 15,500 doner places in Germany sell about 400 tons of doner meat every day, according to ATDID, the Association of Turkish Doner Producers in Europe. About 60,000 workers produce, cut and process the hearty delicacy with annual sales of 2.5 billion euros (\$3.3 billion).

The word doner, comes from the Turkish verb donmek, or to turn, because it is grilled for hours on a spit and cut off in razor-thin slices when the meat is crisp and brown.

In Turkey, the dish was originally made of lamb and sold only on a plate. According to the legend, it was Mahmut Aygun, a Turkish guest worker, who invented the first doner sandwich in 1971, when he sold the meat in a piece of pita bread with yoghurt dressing at

City-Imbiss stand near West Berlin’s main Zoo train station.

Since then, the snack has been exported around the globe, and even countries as far away as Vietnam, now sell doner pita as “typical German students’ food,” as papers in Germany have repeatedly reported.

Germany is home to 2.7 million people of Turkish origin; an estimated 500,000 are German citizens.

While the dish was first mainly sold in Berlin, outlets sprang up across the nation in the 1990s, when the second generation of immigrants came of age and set up their own, family-run doner shops. Wholesale dealers who are offering meat already on the spit — between 22 to 175 pounds (10 and 80 kilograms) — have also mushroomed.

In the last 40 years, doner vendors have refined the taste and assimilated it to the gusto of German palates. Razor-thin slices of crispy chicken or veal are usually accompanied by chopped lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, cabbage and red onions. Customers can choose between garlic, yoghurt and spicy dressing.

“In Turkey, the dish is served without dressing, but Germans just can’t eat any meat without sauce,” said Ulusoy, adding that the meat itself is also much more seasoned in Germany than in its country of origin.

The recipes for the seasoning vary and are a well-kept secret. Often the meat is marinated in yogurt and flavored with bell pepper flakes, salt and black pepper, cumin and pimento. Arabic shops who sell the so-called shawarma variety, sometimes add cinnamon, coriander seeds and pomegranate juice.

Different from gyros, the Greek pork spit that contains a lot of oregano and is served in bigger chunks, doner has to be cut very thinly.

“You need to have a real feel for the meat when you slice it,” said Ismet Donmez, who runs Rosenthaler Grill- und Schlemmerbuffet in Berlin. “The art is to cut thinly, but to avoid pressing the knife against the spit, otherwise all the fat will run out and the meat becomes dry.”

Donmez, who immigrated from Turkey 20 years ago, sells chicken and veal doner 24 hours a day on a busy square in the city’s Mitte neighborhood. He insists that his workers cut the meat by hand, using long knives with rounded tips.

When asked about the so-called doner robot, an automatic doner cutting machine that was invented in Izmir, Turkey, and recently introduced at Germany’s first doner trade fair, Donmez only snubbed.

“Ten years ago, they tried to introduce electronic knives and that also didn’t work out,” he said. “We’re going to continue doing everything manually, that’s the best way.”

The long line of customers forming in front of his store, seemed to prove him right.

“I’ve come here every day for lunch since I arrived in Berlin,” said Ofir Steinberg, an Israeli tourist, who was visiting the city for a week. “It’s the best shawarma I’ve ever had. It tastes even better than at home.”

Source:

Grieshaber, K. (2010). *Doner Kebab Becomes Germany’s Favorite Fast Food*. Retrieved from *USA Today*: http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/travel/destinations/2010-04-11-germany-doner-kebab_N.htm

Document 5: Xenophobia in Germany

Racism and xenophobia are by no means extinct. A dossier of articles by the German magazine *Der Spiegel* provides students with an excellent and current overview of how German society deals with the problems of integration of its immigrant communities. The articles are available online at: http://www.spiegel.de/international/topic/integration_debate/

The Goethe-Institut also provides a rich variety of articles about integration and migration issues at <http://www.goethe.de/lhr/prj/daz/en/index.htm>

Document 6: Speeches by German Politicians

2002: German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder: “We have created new citizenship laws [1999] and are in the process of creating immigration laws that make it clear that Germany sees itself as an open country, as a country that wants to be attractive to the world’s best minds, and wants to afford them opportunities to do research and to work as well as opportunities for investment. The so-called ‘Green Card’ program we introduced is only one aspect of this necessary and important change.”

[Note: Schroeder was the leader of the Social-Democrat Party (SPD) and Chancellor of Germany from 1998-2005 – in a coalition government with The Green Party.]

Source: Speech by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder at the World Economic Forum 2002 in New York <http://usa.usembassy.de/gemeinsam/schroeder020102.htm>

August, 2009: Thilo Sarrazin, a one-time finance minister for Berlin and a member of the group running the German Central Bank, publishes a book called *Germany Does Away With Itself*, arguing that foreigners, particularly Muslim foreigners, are destroying Germany’s future. His argument is that Muslim culture produces less intelligent and less hard-working people than German culture and causing Germany’s economy to fail. “No other religion in Europe is so demanding and no other migration group depends so much on the social welfare state and is so much connected to criminality... We are not a migration country,” Sarrazin said. [Note: Sarrazin was forced to resign his position as a member of Germany’s Central Bank after his comments.]

Source: Slackman, M. (2010, September 2). *Book Sets Off Immigration Debate in Germany*. Retrieved from *The New York Times*: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/03/world/europe/03germany.html>

October 2010: German Chancellor Angela Merkel addresses a conference of young members of her political party, The Christian Democratic Union, with a speech that emphasizes the need for citizens of Germany to accept a unified German culture. “*This multicultural approach, saying that we simply live side by side and live happily with each other has failed. Utterly failed,*” Merkel said. [Note: Merkel is the leader of the generally conservative Christian Democratic Union. Her party governs Germany today [2012] in a partnership with a centrist party, the Free Democratic Party.]

Source: Johnson, B. (2010, October 17). *Merkel: Multicultural approach has ‘utterly failed’*. Retrieved from About.com World News: <http://world-news.about.com/b/2010/10/17/merkel-multicultural-approach-has-utterly-failed.htm>

Document 7: The Influence of Immigration on German Soccer

Background: Soccer (or Football as it is known outside of the United States of America) is the world’s most popular sport. The Football World Cup, played every four years, is the most-watched televised event on the planet. The World Cup pits the national teams of almost 200 countries against each other. Over the 80 years of World Cup play, other nations have won more outright championships than Germany (e.g. Brazil), but no country has a better overall record, or reached semi-finals more often.

In 2010, when the World Cup was played in South Africa, Germany was again one of the final four teams in the world left playing.

7A. June 2010: (the German public broadcaster aimed at foreign audiences)

Of the 23 players representing Germany at the World Cup, 11 have foreign backgrounds. More than half of the outfield players selected by Joachim Loew were either born outside Germany themselves, or have a non-German parent. The squad has roots in eight different countries – nine when Germany’s included.

The role of sport in incorporating ethnic minorities into society is one of the Olympic movement’s central leitmotifs.

According to the most up-to-date figures from the Federal Statistics Office, one in five people living in Germany in 2008 was of foreign descent. From the total of 15.9 million with roots abroad, 2.9 million were from Turkey. Two likely starters for the national team at the World Cup – Serdar Tasci and Mesut Özil – both have Turkish parents. “A gift for German football,” was how German National Team coach Joachim Loew described Özil.

Comments about Mesut Özil, the most prominent German Soccer player of Turkish descent.

Background: Mesut Özil was born in Germany. So were his parents. His Turkish roots go back to his grandparents who immigrated to Germany in the 1950s as part of the Guest Worker program. Now 22 years old, Özil caught the attention of German soccer experts from a very early age. Yet, it was not until 2009 that he decided to play for the national team of Germany instead of the national team of Turkey in the World Cup.

Source: Matic, S. (2011, May 7). *Germany's soccer squad boasts ethnic diversity*. Retrieved from Deutsche Welle: <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5678110,00.html>

7B. June 2010; German National Team Manager Oliver Bierhof:

“Mesut Özil [is] a devout Muslim of Turkish origin [who, when he plays], hugs Cacau, a devout Christian with Brazilian roots. That is a symbol for integration, as it is lived by us.”

Source: Ahrens, P. (2010, October 7). *Football Clash Puts Özil in the Spotlight*. Retrieved from Spiegel Online: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/0,1518,721795,00.html>

7C. June 2010; Turkish National Team Member Hamit Altintop.

Like Özil, Altintop is a top international Soccer player born in Germany. However, he has chosen to play for Turkey’s national team. “I am a tolerant person and I respect Mesul’s path but I cannot support him.” Altintop argued that Özil had more sway as a German national player, a higher market value and earns more money. “That has nothing to do with integration,” he said.

Source: Ahrens, P. (2010, October 7). *Football Clash Puts Özil in the Spotlight*. Retrieved from Spiegel Online: <http://www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/0,1518,721795,00.html>