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God Can Wait – New migrants in Germany between early adaptation and religious re-organisation

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Abstract

In this paper, we analyse migration-related changes in religiosity among new Polish and Turkish migrants in Germany by using novel data from an international survey project on *Socio-Cultural Integration Processes of New Immigrants in Europe* (SCIP). The study confirms, first of all, that both groups of newcomers experience a decrease in religious practices after the migratory event. This decrease is more pronounced among Muslim Turks than among Catholic Poles and more pertinent for worship attendance than for prayer. Secondly, we show that among new Polish immigrants, religious decrease is more pronounced among individuals with stronger social ties to the secular German mainstream; moreover, there are no signs that religious practices are being re-captured after the rather disruptive first couple of months. For Turks, however, our study shows that initial religious decrease is followed by a process of religious re-organisation that is independent from assimilation in other social spheres. We discuss the role of "bright" symbolic boundaries against Islam in Germany that may play a role in explaining these group specific patterns and conclude that publicly visible religious diversity may well remain a permanent feature of modern immigrant societies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The religiosity of migrants has received increasing attention among social scientists in Western Europe. Unsurprisingly, given on-going public controversies over the accommodation of Islam, scholarship has overwhelmingly focused upon integration patterns among Muslim immigrants and their children. In addition to a highly developed qualitative literature on individual styles, organisational forms, and political mobilisation of Islam (for an early review see Tezcan 2003), there is now an emerging quantitative literature on various aspects of Muslim religiosity in Western Europe (for review see Voas/Fleischmann 2012).For instance, several studies have found Muslim religiosity to decrease from the first to the second generation (on the Netherlands see Maliepaard et al. 2010; Phalet et al. 2008; on Belgium see Smits et al. 2010), although others point to greater inter-generational stability (on Germany Diehl/Koenig 2009, Jacob/Kalter in this issue). It has also been argued that levels of Muslim religiosity are affected by contextual factors such as public hostility against immigrants (Connor 2010). In light of widespread perceptions of "bright" religious boundaries against Islam (Zolberg/Woon 1999; Alba 2005), scholars have furthermore started to address ethno-religious penalties in education and on the labour market (Connor/Koenig forthcoming), and to analyse, more generally, how religiosity is linked with structural and social assimilation across integration contexts. Comparative studies within Europe suggest, for instance, that in contexts with strong institutional closure against Islam, unlike in more accommodative contexts, Muslim religiosity is negatively related with structural assimilation (Fleischmann/Phalet 2011).

In spite of increasing availability of quantitative data, however, many questions concerning the link between religion and immigrant integration remain unresolved. Perhaps the most

important limitation is that by focusing on Muslim migrants exclusively, the existing literature largely fails to put their religious characteristics into comparative perspective with other religious groups, notably with Christians who, after all, constitute about sixty per cent of the non-European immigrant population within Western Europe (see Pew Research Centre 2012: 52). The few studies that do analyse integration trajectories across different religious groups in Europe (Tubergen/Sridottir 2011, Aleksysnka/Algan 2010: 27) typically suffer from small subsample sizes and limited measures of religiosity. A further limitation is that due to a lack of longitudinal data the vast majority of studies fail to trace changing patterns of religiosity and their relation to integration processes, among either first or second generation immigrants, over time. And finally, practically nothing is known about the initial period of immigrant integration. While the impact of the migratory event upon religion has been thoroughly studied in the US (Akresh 2011; Cadge/Ecklund 2006; Connor 2009a; Massey/Higgins 2010) and in Canada (Connor 2008; Connor 2009b), no data existed until recently in Western Europe to understand early dynamics of immigrant integration which are of crucial relevance to ethnic group formation and may prefigure long-term integration outcomes such as structural and social assimilation.

In this paper we aim to contribute to the literature on religion and immigrant integration in Western Europe by presenting unique and novel data from an international survey project on *Socio-Cultural Integration Processes of New Immigrants in Europe* (SCIP) which, amongst many other topics, allows studying changes in religiosity in the very early period of immigrant integration. We focus on two distinctive groups, newly arriving Muslim Turks and Catholic Poles in Germany. Both groups come from highly religious countries of origin and thus share the experience of entering a receiving country that is dramatically more secularised. However, both groups also differ considerably. They enter distinctive religious fields and encounter different ethnic networks resulting from earlier waves of immigration.

Most importantly, Turks face the salient religious boundary against Islam while this is not the case for Poles. Comparing both groups should thus provide further insights into the multifaceted dynamics of changing religiosity in the period immediately following the migratory event.

We start by spelling out a number of theoretical arguments about potential changes in newcomers' religiosity after their arrival (2.). We then provide some more detailed background information on Turks and Poles in Germany and formulate more specific expectations on their early religious adaptation (3.). After introducing the German SCIP dataset on which our empirical analysis is based (4.), we present initial empirical findings, showing that worship attendance as well as prayer, albeit to different degrees, decrease considerably among newly arriving Polish and Turkish migrants in German and provide insights into underlying mechanisms of religious adaptation (5.). In sum, we find that beyond an initial and substantial drop in religious participation based on lack of opportunities among both groups, Poles and Turks experience rather distinctive dynamics. While for Poles religious decrease is linked with social assimilation, Turks seem to recapture their religious practice with increasing length of stay independently from their early integration trajectories.

2. THEORETICAL ARGUMENTS

Within the North American literature, there is a long-standing debate on the effect which the migration has upon religious practices. On the one hand, scholars have argued that the migratory event amounts to a traumatic experience that in and of itself would be conducive to greater religiosity. Migration in this view has even been regarded as a "theologising" event in which uprooting is interpreted in religious vocabularies of "exodus", "pilgrimage" and the like (see Smith 1978: 1173). The crucial mechanism implied in this argument is psychological; experiences of anomia or existential insecurity – such as the migratory event – are regarded as potentially increasing the receptivity to religious belief and meaning systems.

Such religious beliefs and identities may ultimately translate into active participation in religious communities to the extent that these provide "refuge, respectability and resources" (Hirschman 2004).

On the other hand, despite their prima facie plausibility, these arguments have received hardly any support in recent empirical research. In fact, recent quantitative studies among new immigrants in the US and Canada have shown worship attendance and other indicators of religiosity to decrease and not to increase between pre- and post-migration period (Cadge/Ecklund 2006; Connor 2008, 2009a, 2009a; Massey/Higgins 2011; for a review of earlier studies see Mol 1979: 33, for a recent overview Breton 2012). While it may be true that (some) pioneer migrants in American history were disproportionately involved in religious practices, notably by establishing "ethnic churches" (see Alba et al. 2009), later cohorts of migrants seem to experience different religious dynamics.

But if newly arriving immigrants do indeed experience an overall disruption in religiosity, this raises a number of additional questions. Are there between and within group differences in the extent to which religiosity decreases after the migratory event? If so, what accounts for these differences? And, finally, does the disruption in religiosity constitute a temporary deviation from a habitual pattern of religious practice that immigrants eventually recapture, or is it the beginning of a long-term assimilation to the mainstream of the receiving society? In the following we discuss these questions by building upon theoretical insights from sociology of religion and migration studies and by relating them to empirical findings on newly arriving migrants in North America. We formulate three sets of arguments on new migrants' religiosity that address the highly dynamic initial phase of integration upfront.

The *first* argument essentially focuses on opportunities for religious participation. It is, in fact, not hard to imagine why the migratory event may be rather disruptive for religious practices. In newcomers' short-term calculus, participation in religious activities competes strongly with

secular options (on religious-secular competition see Stolz 2009), such as finding home and job, learning a new language and establishing new social networks. One could furthermore argue that new immigrants may not only lack time but also infrastructural opportunities for religious involvement. Churches, mosques, or other sites of religious participation may not be readily available or not known to be available, especially for members of religious minorities. This implies that members of religious minorities should experience even more of an initial decrease than members of religious majorities, as confirmed by empirical research on religious participation among newcomers of non-Catholic and Catholic background in Quebec (see Connor 2008).[2]

The *second* set of arguments starts from premises of assimilation theories and regards the early disruption of newcomers' religiosity as the first episode, as it were, in the long story of migrants' acculturation, social network dynamics and structural mobility.[3]For instance in the US, notwithstanding an initial disruption of religiosity, immigrants quickly start adapting to the vital religious field characteristic of North America by conversion, denominational switching, or by increased worship attendance (Akresh 2011). In Western Europe, by contrast, where societies have become much more thoroughly secularised since the 1960s (see e.g. Voas 2009), migrants would be expected to become less religious as they adapt to the secular mainstream; the initial disruption would thus be regarded as an early phase in newcomers' long-term religious adaptation.

This line of argument assumes a number of individual-level mechanisms that link religious change to assimilation in other spheres. As a starting point, immigrants' behaviour is modelled as investment in either ethnic or receiving country options (see e.g. Esser 2006; see also Alba/Nee 2003). As long as newly arriving immigrants regard their stay in the receiving country as temporary, they have strong incentives of investing in the maintenance of ethnic social ties and cultural attitudes that may be relevant for their eventual return to the country of

origin. Such incentives weaken, however, as receiving country options – such as learning the language, achieving an educational degree, establishing a professional career, building friendship networks – become more attractive. Maintaining religious practices is in this perspective typically regarded as ethnic retention and, hence, as closely linked with ethnic social ties more generally. This perspective builds upon Breton (1964) whose original analysis of ethnic institutional completeness found religious organisations to be of crucial importance for the maintenance of ethnic networks; one might add that religious organisations are also crucial for the maintenance of transnational ties (see e.g. Hagan/Ebaugh 2002; Levitt 2003).In sum, religious stability among newcomers is argued to be intricately linked with ethnic orientations, while social and structural assimilation would be conducive to religious decrease.

Assimilation theory furthermore predicts group differences with respect to the maintenance or decrease of ethnic orientations. For instance, Esser (2006) highlights group size, institutional completeness, and ethnic boundaries as crucial group properties that impinge upon individuals' investment strategies. Newcomers belonging to an immigrant group that faces "bright", that is socially and structurally consequential ethnic boundaries (Alba 2005) confront particularly high costs when maintaining ethnic ties. By implication, for new immigrants from such backgrounds the maintenance of religious practices should be inversely related to social and structural assimilation. By contrast, religious decrease might be less dramatic among immigrants who do not face such salient religious boundaries; for them, "bicultural" options, i.e. orientations towards both the ethnic group and to the receiving context (Berry 1997), may be more feasible thus moderating the (group-specific) link between structural and social assimilation and religious decrease.

Assimilation theory faces a number of problems, however. Above all, religiosity need not necessarily amount to an ethnic investment strategy, as the above arguments tacitly implies.

Rather, while religiosity does sometimes come along with the maintenance of ethnic identity, religious practices often follow distinctive logics of their own (see e.g. Green 2002; Mitchell 2006). Most importantly, there is some scattered empirical evidence that among Muslim migrants in Europe religiosity is relatively stable in segregated as well as mixed neighbourhood contexts (Bisin et al. 2008) and across immigrant generations (Diehl/Koenig 2009; Jacob/Kalter in this issue). One could interpret such findings as indicating a greater resilience of cultural practices that are strongly linked to deeply held values and identities which have in fact been argued to change more slowly than social networks and structural positions (see e.g. Phalet/Schönpflug 2001).

Given these considerations, we suggest to explore a *third* line of argumentation which puts religious boundary dynamics centre stage. New immigrants facing a "bright" religious boundary such as Muslims in Europe might be expected to maintain their religious practices since religion may constitute a buffer against experiences of discrimination and exclusion. For members of such religious minorities, the migratory event amounts to a "critical transition" that may actually strengthen the salience of hitherto implicit or taken-for-granted identity categories (Hardin 2001), including notably their religious identity. According to this line of argumentation, one would assume that previous levels of religiosity should be recaptured – if not even surmounted – after the initial period of disruption. Crucially, such religious reorganization would be expected even notwithstanding early individual assimilation in other social spheres. Put differently, a decoupling of religious from social/structural assimilation seems thus to be *more*, not less likely for migrant groups facing bright religious boundaries as compared to those not facing such boundaries.

3. POLES AND TURKS IN GERMANY – EXPECTED RESULTS

In the existing literature, the above mentioned theoretical arguments have so far only been analysed with immigrant survey data from the US and Canada. As repeatedly noted, the North

American integration context varies substantially from the Western European context. While North America is known for its vital, pluralistic religious field and its rather blurred religious boundaries, Western Europe has experienced far more pronounced processes of secularisation while symbolic boundary configurations are said to include "bright" religious markers vis-à-vis Islam (Zolberg/Woon 1999; Foner/Alba 2008; Connor/Koenig forthcoming). The Western European context thus lends itself to explore some of the above theoretical arguments in group comparative perspective. In this article, we focus on Muslim Turks and Catholic Poles who have newly arrived as migrants in Germany. In the following, we provide some background information on these two groups, in order to spell out hypotheses derived from the above theoretical arguments in greater detail.

Contemporary newcomers from Turkey or Poland enter into rather distinctive trajectories of Germany's post-war history of immigration. There are now about 2.8 million German inhabitants with Turkish migration background, thus constituting the largest single immigrant group in Germany. The pioneer migrants were predominantly male low skill labour migrants who came to fill the German economy's labour demand in the 1950s and 1960s. After the recruitment stop in 1973, family members came along and settled permanently in the Federal Republic. Notwithstanding declining levels of immigration family reunion is still the major migration motif among Turks (Migrationsbericht 2008: 206). There are also a considerable number of Turkish migrants coming to Germany to pursue post-secondary education, and some Turkish skilled migrants have also arrived under the new governmental policy of attracting professionals for the upper end of the German labour market. By contrast, while it is true that large numbers of Polish speakers had migrated from the eastern Prussian provinces of pre-World War I Germany to the industrial centres in the West, today's 640.000 or so persons with Polish migration background have mainly come during the post-communist period – either as *Aussiedler* or as workers or students (Migrationsbericht 2008: 37-38). Since

Poland's accession to the European Union (2004) Poles have received new rights to free movement within the wider European labour market, even though it should be noted that Germany has kept in place legal barriers to labour migration from Poland until May 2011.

Newcomers arriving from Turkey, a predominantly Sunni Muslim country, or coming from overwhelmingly Catholic Poland experience a similar transition from a rather religious to a thoroughly secularised society in Germany. In fact, both countries are not only among the religiously most homogenous but also among the most highly religious countries in Europe by almost any indicator. Recent ISSP data (2008), for instance, show that more than three quarters of the Turkish and Polish population, respectively, see themselves as somewhat, very or extremely religious; and figures of monthly or more worship attendance are around 50 per cent for both Poles and Turks. In both countries, religion has become increasingly salient in the political arena, with religious protest movements challenging authoritarian Kemalism and Stalinist socialism and with nationalist movements drawing strongly on Islamic and Catholic traditions, respectively (Yavuz 2003; Zubrzycki 2006). For both groups of newcomers, there are thus strong reasons to expect that migration to Germany – or to any other Western European country – will prompt considerable changes in religious identities, beliefs, and practices. However, both groups also differ considerably with respect to the factors highlighted in the three lines of theoretical argumentation.

First, newly arriving Turks and Poles enter very differently structured religious sub-fields in Germany. Given the quasi majority status of Catholicism in bi-confessional Germany, Poles should find a sufficiently developed religious opportunity structure; drops in religious participation induced by lack of actual or perceived religious "supply" should thus be less pronounced. Among Turks, there now exists a thriving religious field with strong competition between different strands of Islam including mosque associations sponsored by Turkey's Office for Religious Affairs (Diyanet) and others linked with the varieties of modern Islamic

movements (e.g. Milli Görüs, Gülen Movement, Süleymanci).However, despite German governmental initiatives to engage in dialogue with the rivalling Muslim umbrella organisations (Laurence 2012; Schiffauer 2009), difficulties in receiving zoning permits for mosque buildings, let alone equal recognition of religious communities as corporations of public law, still exist. Religious supply thus continues to be less easily available for Muslim Turks than for the immigrants affiliated with the well-funded and transnationally embedded Catholic Church. We thus expect that while both groups should experience a disruption of religious participation and, if to lesser degree, of private religiosity, these drops should be more pronounced among Turks than among Poles.

The *second* line of argumentation derived from assimilation theory generally predicts religious decrease among newcomers who are determined to stay, build strong ties to majority members and are structurally integrated in the receiving society. By contrast, religiosity should remain more stable among newcomers committed to return to their country, being less involved with major structural sectors of the receiving society, living in segregated neighbourhoods, and having strong ethnic social ties. While these links should generally hold for Poles and Turks alike, their strength can be expected to vary since Poles and Turks confront rather different situations in terms of their ethnic group's size, ethnic institutional completeness, and strength of ethnic boundaries. Given their numbers, especially in some larger German cities such as Berlin or Cologne, new coming Muslim Turks enter institutionally more complete ethnic communities than Poles. Moreover, they encounter social distances on behalf of natives and experience discrimination more often than non-Muslim immigrants (Blohm/Wasmer 2008; Hans 2010) such as Catholic Poles. Hence, assimilation theory would predict that among Turks in Germany, early structural and social assimilation leads to a more pronounced religious decrease; maintaining strong Muslim religiosity would simply impose unfeasible costs given the public stigmatisation of Islam. For Poles, by

contrast, integration should be much more compatible with religious maintenance; while vibrant Catholic religiosity may have become rare among young Germans, one could hardly argue that such religiosity leads to stigmatisation.

The *third* line of argumentation would make a different claim. The brightness of the religious boundary against Islam would here be regarded as condition for the maintenance of religious habits independently of early assimilation in other spheres. If relevant at all, early ties with majority members and participation in the German labour market should come along with an adaptation to the German secular mainstream only for Poles. Muslim Turks, by contrast, do not have the option of becoming "just a little less religious". One would thus expect that "bright" symbolic boundaries against Islam foster religious resilience even if pragmatically motivated assimilation in other spheres of lives does occur. Accordingly, Turks who have already stayed longer and will have had the chance to learn more about available mosques recapture their previous levels of religious participation. For them, the initial disruption would thus be precisely that: a disruption which does not preclude religious re-organisation while for Poles it might in fact constitute the beginning of a long-term religious assimilation process.

4. DATA AND METHODS

To test the theoretical arguments among Poles and Turks in Germany, we draw on data from a unique dataset produced in the international survey project on *Socio-cultural Integration Processes among New Immigrants in Europe* (SCIP).[4] The SCIP project is a two-wave-panel study of selected migrant groups in which about 7.000 migrants aged between 18 and 60are surveyed in four European destination countries – Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Ireland. In this paper, we draw upon data from the first survey wave in Germany. Here, immigrants from Turkey and Poland having stayed in Germany up to 1.5 years were interviewed in Turkish and Polish CAPI-interviews in 2010/2011. Initially, a random sample was drawn from population registers in five cities (Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, Munich and

Bremen). Ultimately, 2.697 face-to-face interviews (1.516 among Poles; 1.181 among Turks) were conducted in the first wave.

Since we are interested in the religiosity of Muslim Turks and Catholic Poles, we limit our analysis to those who declare some religious affiliations. Thus, we exclude Poles and Turks who report having no religious affiliation whatsoever; furthermore we exclude those reporting another religious affiliation than Muslim or than Catholic, respectively. Our analysis is thus based on 1.343 Poles and 1.028 Turks.

The questionnaire includes a number of items pertaining to religiosity, including worship attendance, prayer, fasting, self-declared religiosity, and identification with a broader religious community, e.g. Christianity or the Islamic Ummah. Moreover, there is information on the ethnic composition of religious communities among those who participate regularly, on assistance received by religious organisations, and on experiences of religious discrimination. We draw on this information wherever it helps interpreting the results of our analysis.

Our main analytical interest, however, is in changes in religiosity after the migratory event. Thus, we rely on those religious items (worship attendance; prayer) that respondents were also asked retrospectively for the pre-migration period.[5] In our modelling strategy we draw upon existing studies from the US and Canada. While some scholars have attempted to focus directly on the pre-/post-migration change by modelling religious practice as a function of time (Connor 2008: 252; 2009: 793), others have chosen a strategy that predicts post-migration religious practice by various independent variables, including pre-migration religious practice (Akresh 2010: 654; Massey/Higgins 2011: 1385). The latter strategy has the main advantage of focusing upon the theoretically pertinent outcomes of post-migration religiosity while taking pre-migration levels of religiosity into account. It assumes that outcome variables such as worship attendance and prayer are to a large degree determined by pre-migration religious practice, and it aims at explaining remaining variance by additional

independent variables. In our analysis we follow this basic modelling approach, focusing on those independent variables that capture our major theoretical arguments.

We thus start with a baseline model that, in addition to pre-migration worship attendance or prayer, includes socio-demographic variables of sex, age, education, and rural background. These factors are generally known to affect religious practice, and in separate analyses we found that they do in fact have strong relevance for the two groups' overall religiosity.[6] The baseline model furthermore includes length of stay (in months) to explore the dynamics of religious change during the first months in Germany. It thus allows testing expectations about group-specific rates of decrease among Poles and Turks derived from the first argument about religious opportunities.[7]

To test the second argument developed from the assimilation literature, we start with a variable on respondents' migration situation. Migrants planning to stay in Germany, we assume, will develop stronger orientations to the receiving society than those planning to move back and forth, to return to their country of origin or to move to a third country. To capture structural integration, we include a variable on newcomers' main activity. Having a job – and, if to a lesser extent, studying at a university – provides exposure to major spheres of the receiving society and can thus be assumed to strengthen respective orientations as compared to those who are unemployed, on parental leave or stay at home. Social assimilation can be measured by networks of strong or weak ties with people from the receiving context. Given the recent arrival of the migrants upon whom we focus we use information on the living situation as indicating the strongest possible social ties; living together with people born in Germany can be considered as providing greater occasions for developing orientations to that country, while living together with other people born in Turkey or Poland should strengthen ethnic orientations; living together with both German- and foreign-born then evidently lies in between these two extremes. Finally, we include (subjectively perceived)

ethnic composition of the neighbourhood as an indicator for migrants' early spatial assimilation. Respondents were asked how many people of their country of origin live in their local area, and we assume that those living in highly segregated neighbourhoods will more readily develop ethnic orientation and, not least, would have easier access to (information on) Turkish mosques or ethnic Polish churches.

We start out with modelling post-migration worship attendance and prayer as dependent on pre-migration religiosity, socio-demographic characteristics, opportunities, and structural as well as social assimilation for Turks and Poles separately. We finally display a full model including countries of origin (Poland versus Turkey) as an independent variable, in order to analyse whether differences in religious maintenance between both groups remain stable after controlling for group differences in early integration patterns.

5. FINDINGS

Descriptive information on new immigrants from Poland and Turkey in Germany (see table 1) show that both new immigrant groups share a number of characteristics. They have an average duration of stay of in the country of about eight months, they are rather young, they typically come from urban or suburban background (especially for Turks), and they are relatively well-educated with 71% Poles and 46% Turks having some post-secondary education. There are, however, also some substantial differences between both groups of newcomers. Thus, slightly less than half of the Turks plan to stay in Germany, while this is true for only a quarter of the Poles. At the same time, 65% Poles report working as their main activity, while only 22% Turks do so.

- Table 1 about here -

Turning to religious practices as our main outcome variable, we first of all find that Poles and Turks display relatively high levels of religiosity. It should be stressed, however, that both

groups are somewhat less religious than comparable age groups in Poland and Turkey: While in the ISSP more than over 70 per cent of Poles and over 80 per cent of Turks in the age group between 20 and 40 describe themselves as somewhat, very or extremely religious, self-rated religiosity, among recent newcomers from both countries the figures are at 66.8% and 53.9%, respectively (not displayed in the table).[1] Still, the means of worship attendance and prayer clearly (table 1) are clearly above the average of the German population.

What the means of both religious variables also show, however, is that religious practices decrease considerably for both groups, with worship attendance decreasing much more strongly than regular prayer. This finding confirms recent research results from the US and Canada according to which migration is rather disruptive for migrants' religious practices. The differential decrease of worship attendance and prayer furthermore lends some initial support to the opportunity argument which predicts stronger decrease for institutionalised practices that require access to religious infrastructure.

- Figure 1 about here -

To describe the patterns of decrease in greater detail, we display a bar chart indicating all possible combinations of pre- and post-migration religious participation for both groups (see figure 1).We limit ourselves to presenting detailed results for worship attendance; after all, the public dimension of religious practice is not a more dynamic indicator for religious change but also seems to be more relevant for the study of early integration patterns. To start with religious participation in the *pre*-migration period, the chart underlines that Catholic Poles were considerably more strongly involved in the Church than Muslim Turks are involved in mosque life, probably due to well-known gender differences in mosque participation among Muslims. At the same time, religious practice seemed more polarised among Turks than among Poles. On the one hand, more than a quarter of Turks never attended mosque, while only slightly above five per cent of Poles abstained from worship attendance entirely. On the

other hand, more than ten per cent Turks, but less than five per cent Poles, say they attended worship daily.

Of crucial interest, however, are patterns of change in religious participation from pre- to *post*-migration period. As Figure 1 shows, an increase in religious participation can be observed among only very small fractions of either Poles or Turks. Unsurprisingly, stability is strongest among those who never attended church or mosque anyway. Of greatest interest are the specific patterns of decrease among both groups. Regardless of the pre-migration level of religious participation, a substantial number of respondents indicate they would never attend worship in Germany. For instance, of those Turks who indicate weekly mosque attendance before having migrated, about a third never goes to mosque in Germany. The most obvious reason for such extreme drops in religious practice would be lack of (knowledge about) religious infrastructure necessary to pursue one's religious habits. Thus, the opportunities argument seems to receive some initial support from our empirical data. In analyses not shown here, we find that among those Poles and Turks who do participate regularly in worship, most attend ethnically highly homogenous churches or mosques. Preferences for ethnic religious institutions may underline that both groups confront a less developed religious infrastructure than in their homeland, however, Poles can still be expected to find more opportunities for religious participation given the majority status of Catholicism in certain German cities – and indeed they seem to experience a slightly less pronounced decrease in their worship attendance than Turks.

To test the various theoretical arguments more comprehensively, we move to multivariate analyses starting with religious participation as dependent variable. The baseline model (table 3, model I for both groups) includes pre-migration religious participation, basic socio-demographic variables, length of stay, and also city of interview (the latter variable as a control not displayed in the table). Evidently, pre-migration religiosity is a strong predictor of

religious participation after the migratory event for both groups, although the effects are stronger for Poles (b=.75) than for Turks (b=.53). Apart from that, patterns of religious participation differ markedly between the two groups. Among Turks, being female has a strong negative effect on post migration religious participation while for Poles it seems to be elderly women who retain high levels of religious participation after migrating. Religious participation in Germany is not associated with new migrants' level of education. Interestingly, length of stay has a positive effect upon stability in religious attendance (b=.04) only for Turks but not for Poles. For Turks, a greater initial decrease seems to be followed by religious reorganisation, while for Poles there is no evidence that they resume to their high levels of pre-migration religious participation. Finally, model I of the full sample confirms that Turks experience a substantially stronger religious decrease than Poles even if differences in both groups' socio-demographic composition are held constant (see the negative coefficient for being Turkish).

- Table 3 about here -

To test the arguments about assimilation and religious reorganisation, respectively, model II adds the variables measuring social and structural assimilation to the baseline model. The socio-demographic effects described above remain stable in the full models and the results differ rather strongly between the two groups. For Poles, it seems that while intentions to stay in Germany do not have any statistically significant effects, social assimilation has effects as predicted by assimilation theory. Compared to those living together exclusively with Germans, all other living situations come with stronger religious participation.

Results are rather different for Turkish newcomers. True, those committed to return to Turkey display greater stability in their religious participation than those who plan to stay in Germany (b=.41). But the living situation, i.e. cohabiting with natives or with Turkish migrants (or ethnic segregation in the neighbourhood) does not have any statistically significant effect

upon religious participation.[8] And above all, the effect of length of stay remains rather stable after the inclusion of assimilation variables. For Turks, in sum, the empirical evidence points into the direction of our third argument about religious re-organisation occurring independently from their social assimilation. Unlike Catholic Poles – who can find a religious infrastructure in Germany –Turks experience not only greater religious decrease after immigration but also show a pattern of resuming religious activities over time – even after controlling for structural and social assimilation.

While the findings on both groups' social assimilation are straightforward, structural assimilation, e.g. having a job versus being unemployed, does not seem to play an important role for either group. However, among both groups being in full time education, which typically means studying at a university, seems to come along with greater religious stability. This seems to indicate that university students may find relatively easy access to Catholic or Muslim student groups that, in turn, provide (knowledge about) opportunities for religious involvement.

- Table 3 about here –

Turning to prayer as dependent variable confirms a number of the insights gained from the analysis of worship attendance. First of all, the opportunities argument receives additional support by the fact the decrease in private prayer is far less pronounced than decrease in worship attendance. Pre-migration prayer for both groups has stronger effects on post-migration prayer than pre-migration attendance for current worship attendance, although the effects are again weaker among Turks than among Poles. It is also interesting to observe that Turkish women tend to experience greater stability in prayer than in worship attendance which might point to gender-specific dimensions of religious opportunity structures. Finally, it is notable that length of stay has again an effect among Turks, but not among Poles, on religious practice as measured by prayer.

The full models also confirm grosso modo the findings discussed in greater detail for religious worship attendance. Among Poles, we find that social assimilation, i.e. living together with Germans only comes with less religious stability. Among Turks, plans of returning to Turkey tend to be linked with religious stability, whereas social assimilation does again not have any effect. The effects of length of stay remain unchanged for this group thus supporting the idea of an early process of religious re-organisation among newcomers from Turkey. Again, structural assimilation is unrelated to both group's levels of religiosity. Moreover, those in full-time education are not more likely to engage in regular prayer which confirms our interpretation above that studying at German universities provides better access to opportunities for socially embedded religious activities.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we have analysed patterns of religiosity after the migratory event among recent immigrants from Poland and Turkey in Germany. This is the first study to address questions of religious change after the migratory event in Western Europe; it thus contributes to the existing literature by moving beyond the North American context and exploring dynamics of religious adaptation among two distinctive immigrant groups in a Western Europe context.

We find mixed support for some of the major arguments advanced in the existing literature. Above all, the study confirms that far from constituting a "theologising" experience new immigrants experience a decrease in religious practices as previous research in North America has found. In line with the argument that initial drops in religious practice are partly due to lacking access to religious opportunities, we found religious decrease to be greater among Muslim Turks than among Catholic Poles and to be more pronounced for worship attendance than for prayer. The crucial question, however, is whether such opportunity-based initial drops in religious practice constitute the beginning of a long-term process of religious adaptation linked with structural and social assimilation, or whether they are followed by a

process of religious re-organisation, independently from assimilation in other social spheres. For immigrants coming from Poland, we found that, as suggested by assimilation theory, individuals with pronounced social assimilation experience stronger religious decrease than those having weaker ties to the secular German mainstream. Moreover, there are no signs that religious practices are being re-captured after the rather disruptive first couple of months. That, however, is precisely what happens in the case of newcomers from Turkey. The longer they stay in Germany, the more they seem to resume their various religious activities. Moreover, this process of religious re-organisation - which classical assimilation theory leaves rather underspecified - is relatively independent from social and structural assimilation processes that do occur, as indicated by living with German born people and in ethnically mixed neighbourhoods. It may be assumed that "bright" symbolic boundaries against Islam in Germany play an important role in this regard; they render gradual acculturation difficult if not impossible for this group and thus contribute to greater religious stability as previous studies have found as well (see Diehl and Koenig 2009).

Evidently, our analysis faces a number of limitations. Compared to some of the more qualitative literature, our data are unable to capture which kind of religious communities newcomers enter; thus in the case of Turks, it may make considerable differences whether new Turkish immigrants participate in mosques organised by DITIB or by Milli Görüs, to mention only the two most prominent strands of Islam in Germany (Schiffauer 2009). Moreover, measuring religious change by relying on retrospective information about worship attendance and prayer is certainly less reliable than measuring these changes prospectively. Structural and social assimilation is also measured as a time-independent variable, thus missing the highly dynamic changes that individuals experience in the first years of their stay. We have to await the second wave of the SCIP project to address these limitations and to thus gain more robust results about the early dynamics of religious change.

In spite of these limitations, we are confident that our analyses contribute to the existing literature by offering first insight into the early dynamics of religious change in the Western European context, in group-comparative perspective. Our empirical results suggest that classical assimilation theories need to be complemented by theoretical arguments that capture the dynamics of religious re-organisation and reproduction among new immigrants facing bright religious boundaries. If such religious re-organisation turned indeed out to be a more stable pattern among immigrants from non-Christian countries in Western Europe, this would have far-reaching implications. Our first findings on religiosity among newcomers to Germany in fact lend some support to the view, expressed by various authors (Alba et al. 2009, Bramadat/Koenig 2009), that publicly visible religious diversity may well remain a permanent feature of modern immigrant societies.

Table 1: Distribution of model variables, Polish Catholics and Turkish Muslims (means)

Dependent variables	Poles	Turks
Religious participation RC (1=never; 7= weekly)	3.40	2.47
Religious practice RC: praying (1=never; 6=every day/several times a day)	3.50	2.68
Independent variables		
Religious participation CO (1=never; 7= weekly)	4.75	4.01
Religious practice CO: praying (1=never; 6=every day/several times a day)	3.79	3.19
Female	.45	.49
Age	33	28
Education: primary	.06	.18
secondary	.71	.46
tertiary	.22	.33
Background CO (1=urban, 5=country house)	2.58	1.79
Share CO members neighborhood (1=(almost)none; 5=(almost)all)	2,04	2,41
Months since immigration	8,62	7,37
Migration situation: stay in RC	.23	.42
move back and forth	.23	.20
return to CO	.40	.29
move to third country	.05	.04
Main activity: working	.65	.22
in full time education	.16	.27
unemployed	.08	.31
looking after home/parental leave	.08	.13
else (retired, sick, disabled, missing)	.02	.07
Lives: alone	.20	.15
with CO born only	.34	.32
with RC born only	.10	.34
with CO and RC born	.36	.20

Source: SCIP Project, own calculations.

Figure 1: Religious participation of Polish Catholics (P) and Turkish Muslims (T) in Germany by religious participation in country of origin

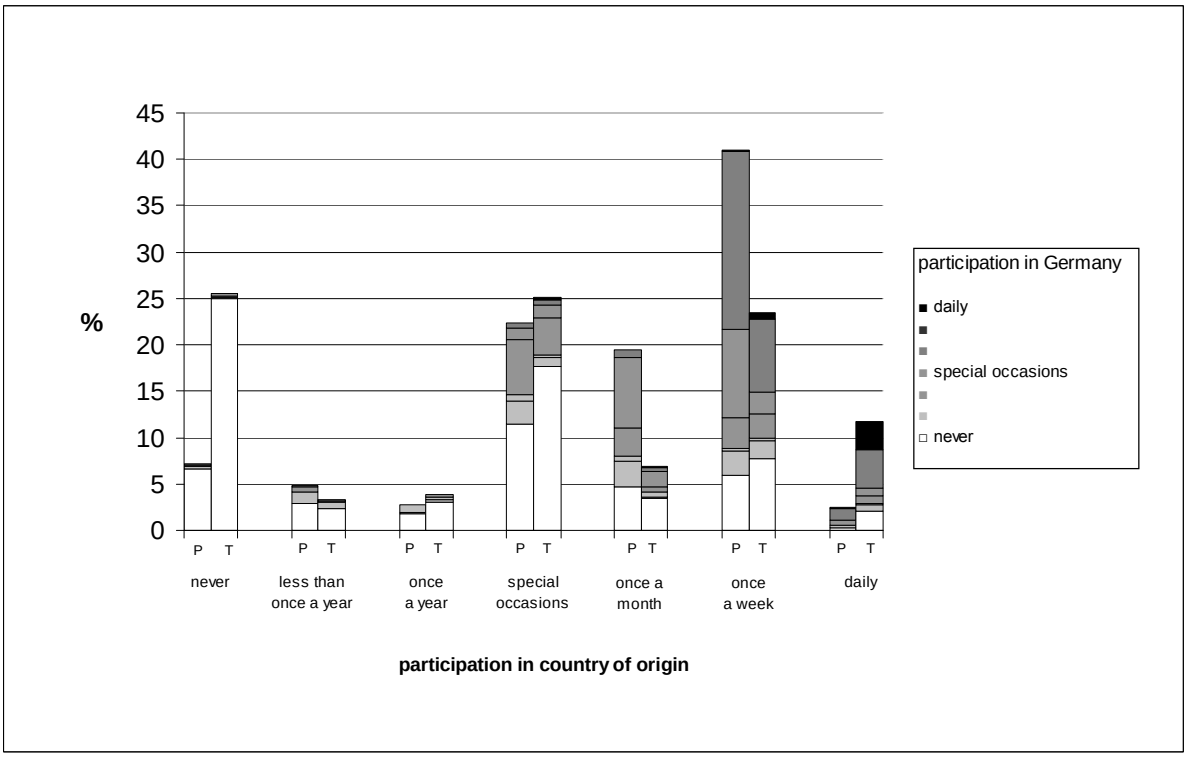

Table 2: Which factors influence stability in religious participation? Polish Catholics and Turkish Muslims (linear regression, unstandardized coefficients)

	Poles (N=1327)		Turks (N=985)		All (N=2311)	
	Basis	Assimilation	Basic	Assimilation	Basic	Assimilation
	dependent variable: Religious participation in Germany (7-point scale)					
Relig. participation in CO	.75***	.73***	.53***	.50***	.65***	.65***
Female	.16*	.24*	-.61***	-.66***	-.10	-.06
Age	.02**	.02**	.00	-.01	.01**	.01**
Education: *primary ed.*						
middle	-.01	-.04	-.17	-.20	-.02	-.05
higher	.13	.13	-.16	-.17	.08	.04
Rural background	.04	.05	.03	.01	.02	.02
Turkish					-.38***	-.45***
Seg. neigborh.		.03		.03		.06
Months in RC	-.01	.00	.04**	.03**	.01*	.01
Plans to: *stay in RC*						
move back and forth		.11		.04		.07
return to CO		-.02		.41**		.14
move to third country		.04		.26		.05
Main activity: *working*						
full time ed.		.43**		.35**		.07
unemployed		.11		-.06		.14
home/parental leave		-.07		-.28		-.10
else		.41		.11		.31*
Lives: *with RC born only*						
CO born only		.56**		-.02		.06
alone		.58**		-.13		.09
both		.45**		.15		-.03
Constant	*-0.933***	*-1.911****	*1.160***	*1.262***	*.342*	*.142*
R^2	.327	.353	.371	.390	.362	.366

Notes: * p < .10 ** p < .05 *** p < .001; all full models control for city of interview.

Table 3: Which factors influence stability in praying? Polish Catholics and Turkish Muslims (linear regression, unstandardized coefficients)

	Poles (N=1276)		Turks (N=966)		All (N=2242)	
	Basic	Assimilation	Basic	Assimilation	Basic	Assimilation
	dependent variable: Praying in Germany (6-point scale)					
Praying in CO	.90***	.90***	.77***	.76***	.84***	.84***
Female	.27***	.34***	.16*	.09	.23***	.25***
Age	.00	.00	.01	.00	.01*	.00
Education: *primary ed.*						
middle	-.03	-.01	-.14	-.13	-.07	-.06
higher	.06	.09	-.15	-.16	-.01	.00
Rural background	.04	.04	-.02	-.03	.01	.00
Turkish					-.32***	-.29***
Seg. neigborh.		-.06*		.02		-.01
Months in RC	.00	-.01	.02**	.02**	.01	.01
Plans to: *stay in RC*						
move back and forth		.08		.05		.08
return to CO		.06		.23**		.11*
move to third country		.16		.24		.20*
Main activity: *working*						
full time ed.		-.15*		-.15		-.12
unemployed		.11		.06		.06
home/parental leave		-.15		-.01		-.07
else		.36**		.15		.17
Lives: *with RC born only*						
CO born only		.31**		.10		.15**
alone		.29**		.13		.18**
both		.32**		.32**		.22**
Constant	*-.442***	*-.587***	*-.168*	*-.246*	*.164*	*.001*
R^2	.741	.745	.619	.620	.691	.693

Notes: * p < .10 ** p < .05 *** p < .001; all full models control for city of interview.

NOTES

[1] Data from the US suggest that low levels of religiosity among new immigrants attest to the selectivity of immigrants who may be less embedded in religious communities than their non-migrating compatriots (see Alanezi and Sherkat 2008). Such selectivity, however, cannot explain differences between self-rated retrospective religiosity and current religiosity.

[2] Building on the supply-side theory in sociology of religion, one might even push the argument further so as to say that a de-regulated religious economy, religious diversity and inter-religious competition stimulate religious vitality; in North America, the initial decrease in religiosity among newcomers has indeed been found to be less pronounced in contexts with higher degrees of religious diversity (see Connor 2009).

[3] We stress that the concept of "assimilation" is here understood, as in most of the recent literature, in its intransitive meaning, as occurring under contingent contextual conditions, and as occurring in various dimensions whose actual interrelation is subject to empirical study; see Brubaker 2001.

[4] The SCIP project is funded by the NORFACE Research Programme on Migration and is coordinated by Claudia Diehl at the University of Göttingen.

[5] Retrospective questions were also asked about religious fasting and, among Turkish women, about wearing headscarves. We exclude the first of these items since some respondents, given their short stay in Germany, did not yet have any occasion (Ramadan or Lent) for fasting thus inflating the amount of religious change; as we are interested in comparisons between Turks and Poles, we furthermore exclude the item of wearing headscarves.

[6] We measured Turks' and Poles' overall religiosity by creating an additive index including all religious items included in the SCIP questionnaire (Cronbach's alpha = .746) and regressed it on core socio-demographic variables. As one would expect, religiosity among the Poles is correlated with age, being female, and coming from rural background. Among the Turks, it is the young and the male who tend to be more religious (low rates of religious participation among Muslim women should not come as a surprise, given Islamic norms of mosque attendance).

[7] We also include city of interview (not displayed in the models) to account for potential selectivity of respondents and unobserved contextual factors.

[8] Due to data restrictions, we cannot rule out that new Turkish migrants living with people born in Germany actually do live together with other people of Turkish migration background, namely second generation Turks. However, in separate models not presented here we found that having people with similar ethnic background (and not similar country of birth) among the three closest friends does not affect religiosity. We are therefore confident in concluding that social assimilation is not linked to more stable religiosity.

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