

Gonul Tol, Political Science, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

***“THE RISE OF ISLAMISM AMONG THE TURKISH IMMIGRANTS:
A COMPARISON OF THE GERMAN AND THE DUTCH CASES”***

The problem to be examined is the rise of Islamism among the Turkish immigrants living in Western Europe and the functions that Islam serve within the Turkish community. The primary purpose of the research is to study the role of Islam in a modern Western context and how it shapes the identity and the perceptions of both the immigrants and the host society in Germany and the Netherlands. A secondary purpose is to argue that radicalization tendencies within the Islamic community is a response to social marginalization and a search for a positive identity in an alien social, political and economic context.

The preliminary hypothesis suggests that as social marginalization increases, so does the level of radicalism of Islamism. Social marginalization is going to be measured by looking at 1) percentage involved in the labor market 2) percentage that speaks German 3) level of representation in the institutions of the host country 4) level of contacts with the members of the host society 5) perceptions of isolation 6) geographical isolation 7) level of intergroup marriages.

Radicalism has been examined in two different forms: violent and non-violent. Violent forms of radicalization have been defined as the “politically motivated violent activism and terrorism” while non-violent forms of radicalization have been defined as the acts that “stir up hatred, demonish other groups in society or pursue extreme social isolationism” (Annual Report 2003, 23). The level of radicalism is going to be measured by conducting content analysis and examining the activities of the group. This study will focus on the Turkish Islamist movement, Milli Gorus (National Sight) in Germany and the Netherlands and make a comparative analysis. The Turkish Islamists in Germany and the Netherlands provide a good opportunity for comparative analysis since these groups share socio-economic characteristics but differ in their level of marginalization. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques will be utilized in this study. Data will be collected through qualitative interviewing, surveys and analyzing a variety of documents.