

## International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces: their Evolution, Significance and Future Prospects

Faist, Thomas

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**THOMAS FAIST**

**INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND TRANSNATIONAL  
SOCIAL SPACES:**

THEIR EVOLUTION, SIGNIFICANCE AND FUTURE  
PROSPECTS

**InIS-Arbeitspapier Nr. 9/98**

Institut für Interkulturelle und Internationale Studien  
(InIS)

Universität Bremen  
Postfach 33 04 40  
28334 Bremen

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## 1. From International Migration to Transnational Social Spaces?

For the viewers of the Turkish government channel "TRT Avrasya" on German cable TV it is obvious that some children of Turkish immigrants in Germany have embarked upon successful musical careers in both Turkey and Germany. For example, during the summer of 1995, the German-based Turkish rap group "Cartel" (now disbanded) replaced Michael Jackson from being number 1 in the Turkish charts. Also, the nightly news on German TV usually feature reports on the widely known Kurdish political-military organization - the *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* (PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party). The PKK not only operates in Turkey but also tries to influence German politicians to exert pressure on its Turkish counterpart. Moreover, TV shows for Turkey are often produced in Germany and vice versa. For example, the state television engineers about a quarter of its shows for viewers of TRT Avrasya in Germany. The growing presence of Islamist groups is another example for ties that criss-cross nation-state borders. Not being allowed a formal status in the 1970s and 1980s in Turkey, these organizations have grown and flourished in Germany. Also, it has been obvious that the remittances of Turkish migrants have been complemented by a flow of goods and information in the other direction. In addition, remittances are now being gradually replaced by capital flows such as direct investments of the children of Turkish migrants who invest in textile production in Turkey but market their products in Germany. Similar observations can be made for many other cases of sending-destination linkages and ties, such between the Caribbean islands and the United States (see, for example, Pessar 1997) or Morocco and France.

All these examples point towards a circular flow of persons, goods, information and symbols that has been triggered by international labor migration and refugee flows. These exchanges include the circulation of ideas, symbols and material culture, not only the movement of people. The question is how such transnational phenomena can be described, categorized and explained. Are these phenomena limited to the first generation of migrants, or have the one-and-a-half, second and third generations developed their own forms of transnational linkages? What are the implications for the incorporation of international migrants and their descendants in the economic, political and cultural realms in the countries of settlement?

The existence of transnational spaces carries important implications for the insertion of immigrants and refugees in the receiving nation-states. Up until now, two main strategies or ways of responding to the new environment in the process of settlement have been available to newcomers: adaptation and segregation. Transnational spaces enlarge the range of responses (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Responses of Immigrants and Refugees to Opportunities in the Receiving and Sending Countries)**

<i>Responses of Immigrants and Refugees</i>	<u><i>Adaptation in the Receiving Nation-State</i></u>	<u><i>Segregation in the Receiving Nation-State</i></u>	<u><i>Border-Crossing Expansion of Social Space</i></u>
<i>Dimensions of Insertion</i>			
<i>Economic</i>	socio-economic integration by adaptation to autochthonous population	ethnic niches and enclaves; „middleman minorities“ (groups specializing in trade and concentrating in the petite bourgeoisie) and/or socio-economic marginalization in the labor markets	transnational reciprocity and transnational circuits (high degree of transnational exchange, trade and traffic)
<i>Political</i>	citizenship (citizenship of one nation-state)	political autonomy in receiving country	transnational solidarity; „multicultural citizenship“; dual citizenship
<i>Cultural</i>	cultural assimilation (acculturation)	cultural segregation (collective identities transferred from sending country)	transnational community (syncretist collective identities)

We can differentiate the responses in distinct dimensions of insertion, ranging from economic over political to cultural. Although we can distinguish three broad strategies, the causal dynamics in each of these dimensions are somewhat different. The first strategy, adaptation in the receiving state has been conceptualized eloquently by the Chicago School of Sociology and their successors.<sup>1</sup> Without necessarily adhering to the stage-conception of these models (e.g., cultural assimilation as a necessary step towards economic integration), we could take some of their main tenets to describe this pattern: In the socio-economic realm it means that immigrants and refugees adapt to the prevailing occupational, residential and behavioral patterns shown by the native population. In the political realm we would expect immigrants or, at the latest, their descendants to acquire the citizenship of the country of settlement and show loyalty, e.g., in case of war. Cultural assimilation, especially prevalent among the second generation, can then be seen to exemplify the tendency towards an

<sup>1</sup> This model aptly applies to the U.S.-American situation in a specific period, because there was a long period of extremely low immigration (from World War I until the end of World War II), during which assimilationist tendencies could work.

eventual full acculturation in the receiving country -- not necessarily excluding a mutual exchange of norms, values and behavioral patterns between the migrant and native groups. Segregation constitutes a second main way of insertion. The formation of ethnic enclaves and ethnic niches corresponds to this strategy because it entails separate economies based on labor, capital and even consumers in distinct ethnic communities. A specific variant of this pattern are „middleman minorities“, consisting of groups specializing in trade and concentrating in the petite bourgeoisie -- with a high degree of hostility directed towards them; for example, Chinese migrants in 19th century America.<sup>2</sup> In the political sphere the claim of political autonomy could even go as far as efforts to secede, as demanded by some African-American groups during the 1930s who strove to establish a black state in the U.S.-American South. Cultural segregation essentially means that collective identities are transferred from the sending to the receiving country and that these identities develop in relative isolation from the receiving context. Extreme examples would include Hutterite settlers from Russia who settled in sparsely populated regions of the USA and Canada. In sum, the claim here is that these two main patterns of response have been complemented by a third one -- the border-crossing expansion of social space -- described above. While the causal factors and dynamics in the economic, political and cultural dimension of insertion may differ (see Figure 2, p. 12), all three main responses have corresponding patterns in each dimension. This discussion focuses on this third and relatively new response.

Transnational social spaces develop in two stages. In a first phase they are a by-product of international migration and seem to be basically limited to the first generation of migrants. Researchers have long recognized that migration is not simply a transfer from one place to another with few social and material links. Rather, migration usually generates continual exchanges between geographically distant communities and migrants do not automatically sever their ties to the sending countries (Werbner 1990: 3). As a matter of fact, migration flows are characterized by migrant networks. First, only by the creation and reproduction of networks of migrants do migration flows turn into chain migration and thus become mass phenomena. Second, migrant networks, interacting with groups and institutions in the areas of destination and origin, form the raw material for the formation of new ethnic communities. Migrant communities in the receiving country can best be described from a structural perspective as a network of networks and organizations. In turn, international migrations are often also characterized by ongoing processes of return migration, where recurrent migrants regularly go home for varying periods each year, or migrants return to their communities of origin for good. After all, it has long been a truism that every migration stream breeds a counterstream.

In a second phase -- the emphasis of this analysis -- transnational social spaces go beyond strictly migratory chains of the first generation of migrants and develop a life of their own. A qualitative leap occurs when transnational social spaces are characterized by self-feeding

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<sup>2</sup> In his essay on "The Stranger" Georg Simmel underlined the innovative economic capacity of those who have come today but will stay tomorrow (Simmel 1995: 764-71). It remains a question for further research why some of these groups have been economically so successful as "middleman minorities" (Bonacich 1979) who connect majority groups. For example, the position of Jews and other minorities as pariah groups is certainly one important element (Weber 1980: 536-7), along with the internal distribution of accumulated capital. Occupying a mediating function, these minorities can be seen as a sort of Simmelian *tertius gaudens* with nonredundant social ties in a sandwich constellation of groups.

processes or the dynamics of cumulative causation (see also Faist 1997a). This concept is similar to the notion of path-dependence that has been linked to stable equilibrium concepts in economics. Unlike this latter concept, cumulative causation focuses on the social context that (1) makes spiraling effects possible that may result in a vicious or virtuous circle: feedback cumulative causation and (2) denotes developments in which effects can turn into causes: A --> B --> C: cause-effect-cause cumulative causation. The first pattern (1) comes in two basic varieties: There are dynamics of cumulative causation that are positive feedback situations describing a sort of escalation (a) or feedback circles that end in going back to the state of origin (b).<sup>3</sup> In his analysis of *The American Dilemma* in the 1940s, for example, Gunnar Myrdal proposed a model of dynamic causation. According to Myrdal, the reason for discrimination on the part of the whites was dependent on the response of African-Americans to initial discrimination: White discrimination and black responses mutually caused each other, they formed a positive feedback loop: As white discrimination intensified, so did black exclusion and anomic social behavior such as criminal acts increase. (Myrdal 1972, Vol. 1: 75-8 and Vol. 2: 1065-70). The second pattern (2), cause-effect-cause cumulative causation, is a process in which effects turn into causes at a later stage in the development of a process. An example for cause-effect-cause cumulative causation in the process of migrant selection is the following scenario: Pioneer migrants start moving to countries of destination (A). Then migrant networks evolve when movers remit money, visit home, exchange goods and participate in various reciprocal actions (B). These migrant networks, in turn, form the raw material of ethnic communities to emerge in the receiving countries upon settlement and transnational social spaces (C).

A process of cumulative causation can have final effects quite out of proportion to the magnitude of the original push. In our case the original push was the onset of international South-North migration. One of the effects has been the transnationalization in the economic, political and cultural realms for migrants and immobiles in the sending and receiving regions. Some examples exemplify this trend among the socially, ethnically, religiously and politically diverse Turkish migrant population:

- In the economic realm there has been a partial shift from the remittances of the first-generation migrants working in Germany to ethnic businesses in Germany and further to direct investment in Turkey of second-generation Turkish entrepreneurs living in Germany (e.g., production facilities in Turkey while administration and distribution occur in and out of Germany). When Turkish ethnic businesses such as restaurants and travel agencies started to emerge in Germany during the 1970s, this sector rapidly expanded in the 1980s. Yet in some fields Turkish entrepreneurs started to compete with German firms. This was one of the factors leading to investments of German-based Turkish entrepreneurs in Turkey. Transnational networks of entrepreneurs have begun to encompass both Turkey and Germany. These processes can best be described by processes of cause-effect-cause cumulative causation.
- In the political realm Kurdish immigrants came to Germany in the course of guestworker recruitment of the 1960s and early 1970s. This wave has been followed by a smaller one

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<sup>3</sup> Of course, the best example for this latter form (negative feedback loops) is the thermostat.

of refugees who fled Turkey as a result of the armed conflict between the Turkish army and the guerilla forces of the PKK in the 1980s and 1990s. The growing militance of the fighting in Turkey, the continuing flow of refugees and the establishment of both militant (supporting the PKK) and moderate Kurdish organizations outside Turkey have turned the German polity into an extra-territorial stage for domestic Turkish conflicts and the attempted establishment of a homeland for Kurds, "Kurdistan". Elements of a German-European-Kurdish diaspora in exile have emerged. This example corresponds best to "positive" feedback cumulative causation.

- In the cultural realm the religious practices of second- and third-generation Turkish immigrants cannot be simply interpreted as a continuation of first-generation experience. Faced by xenophobic violence, manifold social and political discrimination and sometimes non-recognition of religion by majority groups, a considerable share of young Turks have also turned to Islam. In turn, the emergence of Islamist groups in Germany has been interpreted by some German groups to mean that Turkish immigrants do not want to assimilate. Again, this has reinforced Islamist trends among young Turks. Some analysts have described this as "positive" feedback cumulative causation that could end in a vicious circle for young Turks in Germany.

The development of transnational social spaces now offers a unique opportunity to look into the formation of groups that span at least two nation-states. Some classics have argued that propinquity -- among other factors, such as a shared common interest and a common language -- is conducive to the formation of groups. For example, English trade unions first organized along patterns such as location, for example cities. Later, trades replaced location as an organizing principle, for example, among carpenters and other crafts (Simmel 1955: 128-130). However, international migrants living in transnational social spaces form networks, groups and "communities without propinquity" (Webber 1963). One of the questions is by what principles propinquity is supplemented. Perhaps physical location and geographical distance are not the only grid upon which political (collective) action, shared culture and economic cooperation can be mapped.

First, this analysis outlines some causal macro-factors that may have opened up opportunities to build transnational spaces to a greater extent than before World War II. Second, the discussion tries to clarify basic concepts such as transnational social space and the main resources involved, such as social capital inherent in social and symbolic ties. It also presents some causal chains leading from migration and flight over transnational exchange and reciprocity to transnational circuits and transnational communities. A few forays into the empirical realm serve to sketch the lineaments of transnational social spaces, focusing on the German and somewhat neglecting the Turkish end: the emergence of ethnic Turkish businesses in Germany and transnational businesses spanning both countries; efforts of some Kurdish groups to establish a homeland called "Kurdistan"; and collective identity in the religious realm involving Islamist thought and organizations, but also secular forms of everyday culture.<sup>4</sup> The article concludes with a discussion of factors that may limit the future growth of transnational social spaces.

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<sup>4</sup> Islamist here means the instrumentalization of religion as a political ideology (*Köktendincilik* or *İslamcılık* viz. *İslamizim* in Turkish and *Fundamentalismus* or *İslamismus* in German).



## 2. Towards a Definition and a Typology of Transnational Social Spaces

The examples mentioned above attest to the ability of movers to creatively pattern their personal and collective experience. We need to develop concepts that can be applied not only in either the sending or the receiving regions but also refer to emerging transnational<sup>5</sup> linkages, such as those between Algeria-France, India-United Kingdom, Turkey-Germany and Mexico-Caribbean-USA (cf. Pries 1996). Transnational social spaces are combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organizations, and networks of organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places. These spaces denote dynamic social processes, not static notions of ties and positions.<sup>6</sup> Cultural, political and economic processes in transnational social spaces involve the accumulation, use and effects of various sorts of capital, their volume and convertibility: economic capital (e.g., financial capital), human capital (e.g., skills and know-how) and social capital (resources inherent in social and symbolic ties). The reality of transnational social spaces indicates, first, that migration and re-migration may not be definite, irrevocable and irreversible decisions; transnational lives in themselves may become a strategy of survival and betterment. Second, even those migrants and refugees who have settled for a considerable time outside the original sending country, may maintain strong transnational links. The transnational social spaces inhabited by (former) migrants and refugees and immobile residents in both countries thus supplement the international space of sovereign nation-states. Transnational social spaces are constituted by the various forms of resources or capital of spatially mobile and immobile persons, on the one hand, and the regulations imposed by nation-states and various other opportunities and constraints, on the other; for example, state-controlled immigration and refugee policies, and institutions in ethnic communities.

Space here not only refers to physical features, but also to larger opportunity structures, the social life and the subjective images, values and meanings that the specific and limited place represents to migrants. Space is thus different from place in that it encompasses or spans various territorial locations.<sup>7</sup> On a micro-level this has to be seen in conjunction with the use of time to form particular time-space strategies of potential migrants. The context of decision-

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<sup>5</sup> There is a marked difference between the concepts of globalization and transnationalization: Transnationalization overlaps with globalization but typically has a more limited purview. Whereas global processes are largely decentered from specific nation-state territories and take place in a world context, transnational processes are anchored in and span two or more nation-states involving actors from the spheres of both state and civil society. For a review of the conventional literature on transnational linkages, see Meyers (1979: 311-27). Also, transnationalization differs from denationalization. The latter term denotes the fact that the stateless and many minorities (in post-WWI Europe) had no recourse to governments to represent and protect them (Arendt 1973: 269).

<sup>6</sup> Basch and her associates give a vivid picture of social ties in transnational social spaces. They define "'transnationalism' as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders.... An essential element ... is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies. We are still groping for a language to describe these social locations." (Basch et al. 1994: 8)

<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed discussion relating to international migration, see Malmberg (1997).

making is constituted by the potential migrants themselves in interacting with significant others, for example within kinship groups. Larger structural factors such as economic and political opportunities constitute a more remote, albeit an enabling and constraining context in which individuals, collectives and networks operate.

Transnational social spaces are characterized by triadic relationships between groups and institutions in the host state, the sending state (sometimes viewed as an external homeland) and the minority group -- migrants and/or refugee groups, or ethnic minorities. It is useful to distinguish between transnational spaces formed and inhabited by migrants and refugees, and national minorities who have lived in a state since its foundation. Sometimes, the latter groups have stronger claims to cultural and political autonomy than the former minorities because of a longer history of discrimination and exclusion. For example, migrants and refugees with Turkish citizenship or ancestry in Germany can be distinguished from Turkish minorities in countries such as Bulgaria. Here, only the former case is of interest.

One set of resources in transnational social spaces has to be explained in more detail: social capital embedded in social and symbolic ties. Social ties are a continuing series of interpersonal transactions to which participants attach shared interests, obligations, expectations and norms. Symbolic ties are a continuing series of transactions, both face-to-face and indirect, to which participants attach shared meanings, memories, future expectations and symbols. Symbolic ties often go beyond face-to-face relations involving members of the same religious belief, language, ethnicity or nationality.

Social capital are those resources inherent in patterned social and symbolic ties that allow individuals to cooperate in networks and organizations. It also serves to connect individuals to networks and organizations through affiliations. We can differentiate the following forms of social capital:

- (1) reciprocity as a pattern of social exchange: mutual obligations and expectations of the actors, associated with specific social ties and based on exchanges and services rendered in the past (Coleman 1990: 306-9). These obligations and expectations can be an outcome of instrumental activity, for example, the tit-for-tat principle.
- (2) reciprocity as a social norm: what one party receives from the other requires some return (Gouldner 1960; Putnam 1993: 171-76).
- (3) solidarity with others in a group who share similar positions (cf. Portes 1995: 16). It is an expressive form of social interaction. The most important form of solidarity is "collective representations" (Durkheim 1898). These are shared ideas, beliefs, evaluations and symbols. Collective representations can be expressed in some sort of collective identity ('we-feeling' or 'we-consciousness') and refers to a social unit of action. Cultural communities are the ideal-typical form such as families, ethnic groups, national groups, religious parishes, congregations, communities and nations. Solidarity can also be institutionalized: Citizenship, for example, is an institutionalized form of solidarity (and thus social capital) that is in short supply among those immigrants barred from naturalization.

There are two main benefits to be derived from social capital: In general, it helps members of

networks or groups to get access to more financial (economic), human and social capital. This crucially depends on the number of persons in a network or collective which are prepared or obliged to help you when called upon to do, i.e., on the number of social and symbolic ties (Bourdieu 1983: 190-95).

(1) Increasing information is the first specific benefit of social capital. Holding other factors constant, the information benefits of a large, diverse network are higher than the information benefits of a small, homogeneous network. In short, bigger is better; but size is a mixed blessing. More ties can mean more exposure to valuable information, more likely early exposure, and more referrals. But increasing network size without considering diversity can cripple a network in significant ways. What matters is the number of nonredundant contacts. Contacts are redundant to the extent that they lead to the same people, and so provide the same information benefits. People who know each other tend to know about the same things at about the same time. Therefore, the more redundant contacts one has and the more contacts reached through these primary contacts, the higher the potential to get nonredundant and thus new information. However, nonredundant ties do not always matter, there is at least one important exception. In leisure and kinship clusters it makes more sense to optimize for saturation than for efficiency. They constitute a congenial environment with redundant contacts. Efficiency mixes poorly with friendship and affective ties.

(2) The higher the stock of social capital, the more control can be exerted, monitoring and sanctioning other actors. The basic idea is that the extent matters to which any particular person is an important link in the indirect social ties to others in controlling the flow of information, authority, power, and other resources. This means that some positions in a network or a group mediate the flow of resources by virtue of their patterns of ties to other points. The subsequent centralization of links means that ties and resources are concentrated in a few individuals rather than being spread more evenly across the whole group. Centralization is a necessary but not sufficient prerequisite for exercising authority. Authority relations as a form of social capital exemplify this importance. For example, if a kinship group strives towards collective goals such as economic security, authority is one mean to solve to so-called "free-rider" problem (Olson 1965). Freeriding is an obstacle to sharing the costs of governance and is a component of transaction costs, i.e. the cost of policing the agreement on governance within the kinship group. The head of a household may decide who migrates and for what purposes the remittances are used. Authority relations may also be important in enforcing the norm that individual interests must sometimes take a backseat vis-à-vis the norms of the collective. This can be done by sanctions, by the internalization of norms and by a solidary structure.

Social capital has two important characteristics: First, it is very hard to transfer from one country to another, it is primarily a local asset. Thus, in addition to political regulations of international migration, it is one of the main causes for the relatively low albeit increasing rates of international mobility. However, if transnational networks and chain migration emerge in the course of migration, the transferability of social capital and other forms of capital increases. Second, social capital is a crucial mechanism for applying other forms of capital, it is a transmission belt that bridges collectives and networks in distinct and separate nation-states. In short, social capital is necessary to mobilize other forms of capital, especially among those short of financial (economic) capital. And often, immigrants need

social ties to established immigrants or brokers to find work, i.e., to employ their human capital such as vocational skills and educational degrees in the receiving country. Social capital is also a sort of castor oil to establish a flourishing cultural life in the receiving country. Thus, social capital is crucial in the formation of a circular flow of goods and persons between countries and fulfills a bridging function. It is only when persons in distinct places are connected via social and symbolic ties enabling the transfer of various forms of capital, that transnational social spaces emerge.

### **3. Factors Contributing to the Formation of Transnational Social Spaces**

What needs to be explained is the formation of transnational social spaces, ranging from rather short-lived exchange relationships to long-lived transnational communities (see Figure 2). One macro-structural trend may have accelerated the emergence of transnational social spaces. The technological breakthrough in long-distance communication and travel occurred in the 19th century, new and improved methods of communication and travel, combined with increased levels of labor migrants and refugee flows after World War Two set the necessary but not sufficient stage for the development of transnational ties. The communication and transport revolution that started in the 19th century with transoceanic steamship passages and telegraph communication considerably decreased costs for bridging long geographical distances. This trend sharply accelerated after World War Two. Trans-European commuting is now possible to a higher extent than during the 1960s and 1970s (e.g., massive growth of airline flights). One may speculate that the full breakthrough of factors enabling long-distance communication and travel was significantly delayed by the two World Wars and the period in between that was characterized by isolationism, immigration restrictions to a level not known in the 19th century and today, and economic depression. In sum, a variety of structural and technological developments has liberated communities from the confines of territorially restricted neighborhoods.

**Figure 2: Factors Contributing to the Formation of Transnational Social Spaces**

Macro-Space	Factors Contributing to Transnationalization		Outcomes or Types of Transnational Spaces
Country of Origin	export of conflicts	transfer and use of social capital in processes of various forms of cumulative causation →	
Transnational	exchange of ideas, persons, goods and information; often through circular or return migration		transnational exchange and reciprocity
Receiving Country	barriers to cultural assimilation or recognition and/or difficulties in socio-economic and political integration		transnational circuits
General	better conditions for deployment of (economic and human) capital abroad than at home		transnational communities

We have to distinguish processes of transnationalization in the economic sphere, on the one hand, and in the political and cultural realm, on the other. Transnational spaces developing in the economic sphere need transnational circuits plus beneficial conditions to invest physical capital in the original sending country, e.g., lower production costs, may suffice. Although individual transnational entrepreneurs obviously benefit from social and symbolic ties between sending and receiving countries (for example, ties through friends and kinship systems), economic activities do not need to be strongly embedded in these systems over extended periods of time through social capital in the form of solidarity. Exchange- and reciprocity-based resources are sufficient.

This situation is quite different from the formation of transnational communities built around political or religious projects. Here, the main catalysts are, first, strong ties of migrants and refugees to the sending country and strong ties of non-migrants to the receiving country over an extended period of time. Social ties and symbolic ties need to flourish, i.e., social connections, language, religion and cultural norms. Second, these ties and corresponding resources viz. capital are not only embedded in migration flows but in other linkages as well, such as trade and mass communication. Third, juridical and political regulations (domestic and international regimes) may allow to varying degrees for the movement of people and tolerate or repress political and religious activities of (former) migrants and refugees in either sending or receiving countries. In short, *ceteris paribus*, the stronger the manifold social and symbolic ties of migrants and refugees between the two or more areas, the more numerous linkages other than migration and the more favorable the conditions for public political and cultural activities, the more propitious the conditions for the emergence of transnational

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spaces in the form of transnational communities.

We now need to specify some of the *ceteris paribus* conditions in the sending and receiving nation-states. First, the factor most conducive to transnationalization of politics and culture in the sending countries has been contentious minority politics relating to ethnicity and religion, often associated with the building of nation-states. These sending country conflicts tend to be exported or imported, depending on the point of view, (in)to the receiving countries. Examples abound, ranging from Indian Sikhs in Great Britain, Canada and the United States to Kurds in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden. In the receiving country, conflict import is more likely the more liberal or tolerant the political regime, thus allowing for the mobilization of transmigrant or transrefugee resources, the deployment of capital and, eventually, full-fledged organization.

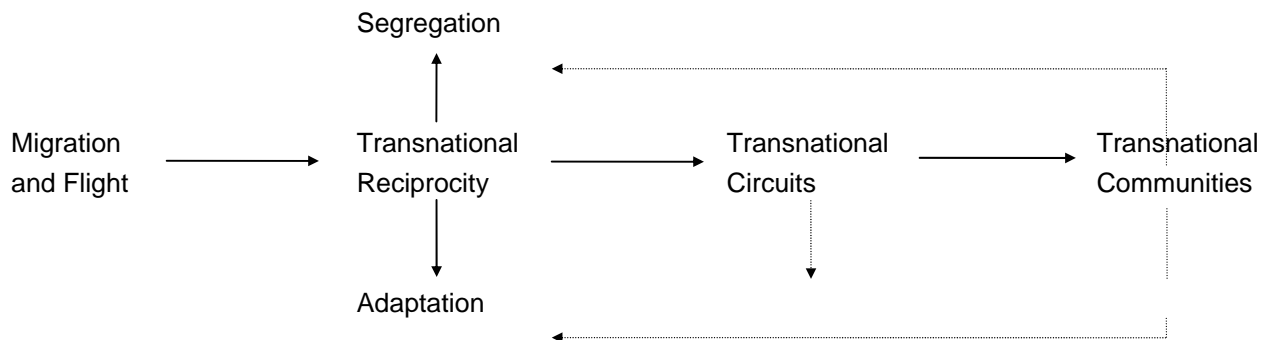
Second, in the receiving context a bloc to socio-economic integration and/or a denial of cultural assimilation or cultural recognition is most conducive to the transnationalization of political and cultural activities. The two difficulties may go hand in hand, or may proceed separately. For example, an immigrant group may be locked for some time into a subordinate socio-economic position through lack of opportunity. Also, some groups may be denied opportunities for cultural assimilation or recognition while they are well-integrated socio-economically. This used to be true for Chinese in the white settler colonies, sometimes until the late 1960s. In other cases, partial socio-economic exclusion and a perception on the part of substantial groups among the newcomers that their cultural recognition is blocked, may go hand in hand, as the examples of some labor migrant groups in Western Europe suggest, e.g., Turks in Germany and the Netherlands, and Caribbeans in the United Kingdom. It may also happen that the migrant or refugee groups exhibit inappropriate cultural commitments to the receiving society, and/or are not interested in cultural assimilation or coexistence -- although this frequently charged claim rests on exiguous empirical foundations. Historically, white settler colonies have shown conditions most unfavorable to the continued existence of strong versions of transnational spaces such as diasporas. Colonists generally imposed their systems upon the indigenous people (e.g., American Indians or Australian aborigines), and established economic, political and cultural hegemony.

Third, there must be a continuous and bi-directional exchange of goods, information and persons between the two or more countries involved. Anyway, a necessary prerequisite for international migration to occur are prior exchanges in the economic (e.g., foreign investments), political (e.g., military cooperation or domination), or cultural (e.g., colonial education systems) dimensions. This is why activities in transnational social spaces do not create such transnational linkages but usually reinforce them. There need not to be a constant circulation of migrants as described for the Caribbean context (Pessar 1997). Yet, return migration is important because it transplants former migrants back into the sending context and thus sets a stage for transnational reciprocities and solidarities.

We can differentiate the options adaptation, segregation and transnational social spaces along two dimensions, the degree of integration into structures of both the sending and the receiving states, and the length of time involved, the durability of transnational linkages. The first criteria involves the spatial extension and measures the extension of social space by looking to what extent ties cross various groups and nation-state boundaries, while the

second refers to the duration, to the temporal stability of transnational linkages (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Stylized Development of Adaptation, Segregation and Three Stages of Transnational Social Spaces**



Adaptation, segregation and border-crossing expansion of social spaces are all responses that start from dispersion in the wake of violent conflicts and repression, or expansion of labor and trade. Transnational exchange and reciprocity (strong simultaneous embeddedness in both sending and receiving countries but rather short-lived social and symbolic ties) are typical for many first-generation labor migrants and refugees. Transnational exchange becomes very visible in the manifold "export-import" businesses established by immigrants in the receiving countries so as to satisfy typical needs of immigrants communities for mother tongue videos, food, clothing and other supplies. The establishment of enclave businesses and niche economies, homeland-oriented voluntary associations (e.g., soccer clubs of Mexican immigrants in Chicago or tea houses of Turkish immigrants in the Ruhr area), the transplant of homeland political organizations, and the emergence of religious congregations are regular features of these processes. Reciprocity can be seen, for example, in remitters sending back money to members of his or her kinship group in the country of origin; especially in those cases when (temporary) territorial exit is part of a strategy including economic survival or betterment among migrants and those who stay behind, i.e., migration as a sort of informal risk insurance. In those cases the migrants remit money to those who run household affairs in the sending place. Often, seasonal, recurrent and eventual return migration are part of these strategies. Yet, even the return to the sending country may not be permanent, as many older migrants temporarily migrate again in the opposite direction in order to secure their medical needs in the countries in which they once worked and some of their children or other kin still live.

Following this stage immigrants and refugees in the receiving countries could take four distinct paths, all including processes of cumulative causation. First, assimilation -- immigrants and refugees embedded in the receiving countries and short-lived transnational social and symbolic ties -- implies that immigrants in a receiving country eventually integrate and assimilate culturally (acculturation) into the host society within one to three generations. In some cases the immigrants and refugees gradually break off most ties to the original sending country. Nevertheless, symbolic ties may still exist and even a form of "symbolic ethnicity" (Gans 1979) could emerge that refer to ethnic collective identity without having a

strong organizational basis among those who consider themselves belonging to an ethnic group. The case of "white ethnics" in the United States, the descendants of European immigrants who arrived until the First World War, is a case in point.

Second, segregation is a likely response of immigrants and refugees when the receiving society discriminates the newcomers economically, culturally and politically severely. The case of the descendants of slave labor in the Americas is an example; e.g., African-Americans in the United States from 1865 until the mid-1960s. In this instance the social space of these groups is even more restricted than under assimilation because segregation prevents the frequent and beneficial exchange of goods, information, persons and ideas across the boundaries of ethnic groups.

Third, ties of transnational exchange and reciprocity may also develop into transnational circuits (Rouse 1991) that are characterized by a constant circulation of goods, people, and information transversing the borders of sending and receiving states over a long period of time. In the context of international migration, for example, kinship ties stunningly cross national boundaries. For example, by the end of the 1980s, about half of all adult Mexicans were related to someone living in the United States. Transnational circuits seem to be most developed in such cases of circular international migration. They also typically develop in a context in which we find (often rather successful) socio-economic adaptation to the conditions in the receiving country, or successful re-integration in the sending country. Sometimes, we see the so-called "second-and-plus-generations" involved in business activities in the former sending country of their parents or grand-parents. The overseas Chinese family businesses in South-East Asia and Indians in East Central Africa are cases in point. What is crucial is that these entrepreneurs and their dependants are firmly rooted in either the former sending or the former receiving country and use it as a sort of base from which to carry out entrepreneurial activities in the other country. Economic, political or cultural entrepreneurs use "insider advantages" such as knowledge of the language, knowing friends and acquaintances in the other country to establish a foothold. For example, a second-generation Turkish textile manufacturer in Germany may use his or her contacts to establish production facilities in Turkey, taking advantage of cheaper-priced Turkish labor. The above-mentioned Turkish rap band "Cartel", based in Germany, stormed the Turkish hit charts and thus successfully widened its international market. And members of Islamist organizations in Turkey and Germany use the atmosphere of German-style liberalism to subsidize the manifold political and religious activities of the Islamist *Refah* party. At this stage there is a possibility that persons engaged in transnational circuits choose adaptation. It is not far fetched to assume that successful entrepreneurs in transnational circuits will use their benefits and credentials to adapt to the socio-economic position of comparable autochthonous entrepreneurs. Such a development could also increase the readiness to assimilate culturally. It is much less likely that a path leads from transnational circuits to segregation, because mostly economically successful persons occupy the former space.

Forth, transnational communities<sup>8</sup> characterize situations in which international movers and stayers are connected by dense and strong social and symbolic ties over time and across

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<sup>8</sup> Communities [that is, *Gemeinschaft*] "encompasses all forms of relationship which are characterized by a high degree of personal intimacy, emotional depth, moral commitment, social cohesion and continuity in time." (Nisbet 1966: 47)



space to patterns of networks and circuits in two countries. In addition to social exchange and reciprocity, social capital as solidarity is necessary for the functioning of transnational communities. Such communities without propinquity, in which community and spatial proximity are de-coupled, do not necessarily require individual persons living in two worlds simultaneously or between cultures in a total "global village" of de-territorialized space. Living in two places simultaneously is true of only very few migrants, such as hypermobile Chinese businessmen in North America in the late 20th century. This is an effect of the growing interdependence of the U.S. economy with the Chinese Pacific economies of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and China. For example, these *Tai Ku Fe En* ("astronauts") establish a business in (say) Singapore, yet locate their families in Los Angeles, New York or Toronto to maximize educational opportunities for their children or as a safe haven in the event of political instability. The astronauts are constantly moving between the two spaces (Cohen 1997: 93).

In most cases the existence of transnational communities means that social and symbolic ties criss-cross nation-state boundaries for a considerable amount of time between persons and groups who are firmly grounded. After all, social capital flowing through and sometimes inherent in social ties is above all a local asset although it may become mobile and is transplanted from one context to another via migrant and migration networks -- which constitute accumulated social capital. Social capital acts as a conduit or transmission belt to transnationalization because it is both firmly grounded in at least two local contexts and still has the capacity to link across borders. It helps to transfer economic, cultural and human capital.

This is a new quality that comes into existence through international migration and refugee movements. International movement, however, constitutes a necessary but by no means a sufficient prerequisite for the emergence of transnational communities; only the continued interaction between sending and receiving networks and groups that encompasses ideas, goods and information can lead to such an outcome. Of course, this is not to say that communities in sending states were isolated from the world political economy prior to migration. In virtually all migrant-sending countries peasants and other rural inhabitants have been connected to a global system of production and exchange, and located within a national and international economic and political hierarchy for decades or even centuries (Wolf 1966). Rather, international migration represents opportunities for an expansion of these manifold ties. As international migration becomes prevalent in a certain place, growing numbers of actors acquire ties that link them with sundry cultures, economies and nation-states. Transnational communities may take the form of borderlands. They imply a situation of bi-locality where an emerging syncretic culture is temporarily separated by nation-state border controls, but linked by legal and illegal migration. Good examples for borderlands are the riverain areas of the Rio Grande linking Mexico and the United States, and the Oder-Neisse linking Poland and Germany.

Again, as in the case of transnational circuits, there are alternative paths back to adaptation and segregation. As in circuits, successful economic, political and cultural entrepreneurs in transnational communities may finally adapt to the receiving society. Looking at another end of the spectrum, it could well be that marginalized descendants of immigrants and refugees develop syncretist identities that end up to function in a culturally segregative way, a sort of

multiculturalist segregation of the socio-economically excluded.

We have now come full circle to the opposite end of the spectrum from where we began: Transnational communities vanish when we see gradual cultural assimilation or acculturation, or a forced rupture of material, social and symbolic ties to the country of common origin. In the 19th and 20th centuries transnational communities formed by labor migrants and refugees have usually been of a transitory type, especially in the white settler colonies of the Americas, Australia and South Africa. The generations following the first advanced to middle class status or returned home. Whether this pattern repeats itself in international migrations that have started in the 1960s is too early to say. This scenario requires that "immigrant jobs" or slots for immigrant entrepreneurs are filled by successive groups in a sort of queue.<sup>9</sup> What is certain, however, is that in order to flourish and survive transnational communities need to distance themselves both from the culture of origin and of settlement in order to choose appropriate strategies of moving "in between". What a sociologist of religion observed for diasporas is equally apt for transnational communities: "La survie de toute diaspora dépend en fait de sa capacité à s'assurer la conquête de deux types d'autonomie: a) savoir maintenir sa propre spécificité par rapport à la société d'accueil, b) prendre ses distances à l'encontre de la culture d'origine afin de pouvoir choisir librement ses stratégies d'intégration et ses propres critères d'identification et de socialisation." (Saint-Blancat 1995: 10) Essentially, transnational communities differ from transnational circuits in that the former retain some degree of insularity from the two receiving societies while the latter are much more embedded in one or both contexts.

Transnational communities are characterized by a continuous involvement in a triadic relationship between themselves, the host country and the original homeland. They could evoke solidarities that may be inconsistent and sometimes even contradicting the allegiances demanded by the territorial nation-states involved (see also Sheffer 1986: 8). This is most often the case with diasporas. It is important to discuss the relationship between transnational communities and diasporas. Especially in cases of war between host and sending nation-states the charge of dual loyalty and disloyalty has come up. In diasporas, there is a vision and remembrance of a lost or an imagined homeland still to be established, often accompanied by a refusal of the receiving society to fully recognize the cultural distinctiveness of the immigrants. Diasporas frequently include a full cross-section of community members who are dispersed to many diverse regions of the world, and who yet retain a vision or myth of their uniqueness and an interest in their homeland (for a fuller list of characteristics, see Safran 1991). Diasporas typically span collectives and networks in more than two nation-states.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> There is contradictory evidence on this point. For solid support of the queuing-thesis for the 70s and 80s in big American cities, see Waldinger (1987); for a more skeptical but much less substantiated view, see Gans (1992).

<sup>10</sup> However, diasporas can only be called transnational communities if the members do also develop some significant social and symbolic ties to the receiving country. If they do not, we can speak of exile. There are basically two forms of exile, political and economic. The political exilee is a person who yearns to return to his home country after persecution and flight. Some temporary labor migrants with a clear intention to return home can also be regarded as exilees. Exilee communities are single-mindedly drawn to the former homeland; albeit the intentions, especially among labor migrants may change. This goal is so overriding that no substantial ties to the new and supposedly

There are two traditions of diaspora that can be distinguished in order to look at more permanent transnational social spaces emerging out of international migration and refugee flows: the victim diaspora and the active colonizer or settler diaspora (Cohen 1997). It is the second that could serve as a point of departure for our purposes; albeit with some qualifications. The Jewish experience usually first comes to mind as a prototype for diaspora formation; and could be extended to include African-Americans, Armenians and Palestinians. This characterization of a victim diaspora focuses on the catastrophic origins; albeit with enriching and creative aspects even for the dispersed themselves.

By contrast, the active colonizer or settler diaspora finds its prototype in the Greek colonization of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean. It includes expansion through conquest and colonization -- and most important for our purposes -- international migration. Historical examples that come close to our purpose are the Lebanese, Indians, and Chinese who moved abroad to trade and establish commercial networks, beginning in the 19th century (e.g., Sowell 1996: chapter 5). In an age of increasing transnational exchange we could go beyond these well-established cases and add international migrants and refugees as new groups who would fit the bill. Examples include Caribbeans in the UK and the USA and Turks in Europe.<sup>11</sup>

However, while transnational communities are typically embedded in an ongoing structure of social ties between sending and receiving countries, diasporas do not necessarily need contemporary and concrete social ties. It is possible that the memory of a homeland manifests itself primarily in symbolic ties. This has been the case for the Jewish diaspora for centuries after the destruction of the Second Temple, and for Sikhs after Indian troops stormed the Golden Temple in 1984. The difference between diasporas and other transnational communities becomes clear when we compare the Jewish diaspora before the establishment of the state of Israel with global communities such as Chinese entrepreneurs and traders in many countries of Southeast Asia, Africa, and the two Americas. The vision of the Chinese was (at first) much less oriented towards the ancestral homeland, and lacked components of exile.

#### **4. Economic Transnationalization: Entrepreneurs Moving from the Ethnic Niche to Transnational Businesses?**

In the Turkish-German case we find a gradual transition from intra-household and intra-familial transnational exchange and reciprocity to partial transnational circuits that include families, but also larger groups such as ethnic communities. Three periods of self-feeding processes of economic transnationalization can be distinguished: first, remittances of labor migrants from Germany to Turkey; second, the inception and growth of ethnic businesses in

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temporary country of settlement develops. Therefore, exile is not a form of transnational community.

<sup>11</sup> Even the groups involved in merchant and trade diasporas such as the Indians and Chinese included substantial numbers of forced labor. Just think of the *coolie* trade in the 19th century.

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Germany; and third, transnational production, distribution and sale.

The first period from the early 1960s until the 1970s and 1980s was characterized mainly by labor migrant remitters who transferred money to Turkey, and returning migrants who invested into housing and consumer products. In the 1980s and 1990s, the share of remittances from Germany to Turkey as a percentage of foreign trade have decreased; probably due to family reunification; partly, remittances from the Gulf states compensated for this decline. Nonetheless, if migrants' participation in the tourist and housing industries and their investments in other sectors are taken together with family remittances, international migrants have become not only the single most important source of hard currency in Turkey.<sup>12</sup>

The second period has been characterized by higher scales of economic activities in Germany such as investments in housing and the growing importance of a thriving so-called ethnic economy in Germany (ethnic niche). The number of Turks self-employed in Germany tripled from 1983 until 1992, from about 10,000 to 35,000. In Germany about 8 percent of all immigrants are self-employed; with Turkish immigrants coming closer to the higher rates among Greeks and Italians.<sup>13</sup> This overall rate of immigrant self-employment corresponds to the rate of self-employment among German citizens (Bericht der Beauftragten 1994: II.2.10). Typical activities of Turkish migrants have included grocery shops, craftspersons, travel agencies, and restaurants.

About 65 percent of all these companies are family-owned that employ above all the owner and family members (Zentrum für Türkeistudien 1989: 177-78). Thus, new labor for businesses, serving the ethnic niche and a small but growing German clientele, has often come from the respective kinship group in Turkey. Therefore, many Turkish companies in Germany use a sort of ethnic social capital that emphasizes kinship groups as a recruiting pool (Goldberg 1992). Kinship-migration and marriage migration have enabled Turkish entrepreneurs in Germany to tap this pool of cheap and docile labor since the recruitment stop in 1973. Kinship-based exchange, reciprocity and solidarity is often accompanied by a well-known noir side: excessive exploitation of new labor from Turkey.

Yet, more recently, a transition has occurred from the second to a third period, from the ethnic niche to transnational coordination of business activities. Some Turkish entrepreneurs have entered fields in which they found themselves competing with German businesses, e.g., software development and textile production (ATIAD 1996). Especially in the latter sector production costs are much lower in Turkey than in Germany. This induced textile companies to move production to Turkey, while retaining their sales and distribution centers in Germany. A small group of Turkish immigrants based in Germany could exploit various forms of social capital such as insider advantages: They have used language skills (a form of human capital) and social ties to friends and acquaintances in Turkey in order to gain a foothold in a transnational market. In these cases social capital is of utmost importance

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<sup>12</sup> After Germany and other receiving countries had implemented the recruitment stop in 1973 new labor migrants from Turkey increasingly turned to work in the oil-rich countries of the Middle East.

<sup>13</sup> Labor migrant groups started in the entrepreneurial sector from a somewhat disadvantageous position because their initial large-scale entrance into the manufacturing sector and low amounts of human capital slowed down the accumulation of the assets necessary to establish businesses.

because it helps to lower transaction costs; i.e., costs arising from enforcing formal contracts. Informal arrangements cover diverse areas such as credits, labor recruitment and dealings with German and Turkish authorities (own interviews; this corresponds to the findings of Light (1972) and the subsequent literature on ethnic niches, enclaves and businesses in North America and Europe). In some cases social capital even helps to circumvent costly contracts, for example, in dealing with Turkish authorities when establishing production facilities and paying taxes.

One could argue that this latest stage of business cause-effect-cause cumulative causation is restricted to privileged entrepreneurs with relatively high amounts of financial capital; such as the textile entrepreneurs just mentioned. It certainly is important to emphasize that the majority of migrants has remained proletarians or -- a small but growing minority -- modest self-employed (e.g. shopkeepers), or being increasingly excluded from the labor market on the German side (Faist 1995: chapter 7). Yet small-scale export-import businesses and mid-sized textile firms both benefit from the same set of innovations in communications and transport that underlie larger-scale industrial relocations (e.g., of textile production). Put more broadly, these economic grassroots initiatives do not arise in opposition to more general trends of transnational relocation of production and trade, but are partly driven by them. Petty transnational migrant entrepreneurs and mid-sized companies occupy specific niches in the international division of commerce and production. In doing so, some migrant laborers who become self-employed partly substitute social capital for financial capital.

A case study helps to illustrate the processes of cause-effect-cause cumulative causation involving smaller economic actors riding on the crest of transnationalization.<sup>14</sup> In the case of international migrants from a small Anatolian village, Alihan in the 1970s, there was frequent contact between and among those men from Alihan who lived and worked abroad. Those in foreign countries such as Sweden (and Germany) also maintained links to family members still living in Turkey. These ties extended to Turkish migrants from other regions and Turkish male clubs and associations. These wide networks of communication were used to transfer messages and information about situations in Europe and happenings in the home village. By contrast, the Yeniköy migrants from a village in the same region concentrated their social interaction and ties exclusively on their own group. There were few ties to men from other regions and villages, even in mens' clubs, leisure activities concentrated very much on men from the same kinship group.

Social capital among Alihan men enabled them to be very ingenious in the economic realm. They could be seen to be much more heavily involved in import-export business than Yeniköy men. For them international migration was indeed a part of a household survival and improvement strategy. Virtually all those who returned to Turkey became self-employed and settled outside Alihan, mostly in Konya, the provincial capital -- in addition to building houses. Some of the returnees did not only invest in joint projects with other Alihan returnees but also with persons from other parts of Turkey. Alihan men often went into joint-ownership projects with Turks outside their own immediate group (a sort of *tertius gaudens*), whereas the Yeniköy men made no attempts to make investments together with anyone outside their own group. Yeniköy migrants mostly returned to their village and tried to fit savings and

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<sup>14</sup> The following account is based on a cautious secondary analysis of Engelbrektsson's (1978) superb ethnographic study of migration from two very different Turkish villages to Sweden (and Germany).

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investments into the local economic structure of the village. One of the reason for their higher rate of return to the sending village was that they usually faced better economic opportunities than their Alihan counterparts.

The key to understand these differences among the communities are to be found in the ability to mobilize various sorts of social capital such as reciprocity and solidarity embedded in social and symbolic ties. The potential migrants in Alihan who followed the first pioneer migrants could resort to dense social ties that encompassed more than one kinship group, whereas those interested in migrating from Yeniköy could not, unless they were members of one kinship group from whom the first migrant left for Europe. Alihan represented a village with a strong social cohesion and relatively few economic differences. The "collective representation" of the village as a cohesive unit was pervasive. All villagers considered themselves descendants of the original settlers and most families showed marital connections to other families in the village. Marriages were mostly arranged within the village with few newcomers entering the resident kinship groups. Help was present in times of need. Reciprocity in the form of mutual obligations thus even extended beyond the kinship group; there was a non-kin reciprocity, embedded in a village-wide solidarity of a sense of common origin, shared history and multiple bonds of kinship (certainly not representative of all Anatolian villages). In other words, various benefits from social capital, in particular information, could be derived from reciprocity and village solidarity acted as a partial substitute for financial capital. Alihan migrants were able to rely on a high degree of social capital. By contrast, migrants from Yeniköy exclusively supported the members of their own kinship group. Other potential migrants could not rely on the valuable social capital flowing from this one kinship group. The village that had existed for about 100 years in the mid-1960s was grouped into various communities (Turks from Anatolia, Turkish refugees from Bulgaria, Kurds) that had little contact to each other. It is thus not surprising that the one kinship group -- located in the poor Turkish community -- did not share its social capital resources concerning migration with other villagers.

In sum, when migrants from both villages found themselves abroad, the Alihan community with higher amounts of social capital more successfully exploited the new opportunities of transnational social spaces offered to them than those migrants from Yeniköy who kept very close ties to their kinship group only. We conclude that the transnational ties in the Yeniköy case existed for roughly a generation only; transnational exchange and reciprocity in a single kinship group. Transnational economic activities in the Yeniköy case effectively stopped when the migrants returned from Europe to Turkey, whereas it continued longer in the Alihan case, namely transnational circuits, embedded in a socially and culturally cohesive community.

## 5. Political Transnationalization: Kurds between Adaptation and Exile?

In the public realm transnational social and symbolic ties and linkages are particularly visible among migrants and refugees who mobilize and struggle for political change in their former or prospective homelands. The vision of a homeland (yet to be created) and return to it is a powerful and crucial ingredient of diaspora formation in the case of large-scale ethnic transnational communities. Many politically active Kurds are engaged in a simultaneous "group-making" and a "state-making" project. Although not concerned with the maintenance or restoration of a homeland, some Kurdish groups have its very creation as a goal; be it an autonomous nation-state or, more modestly, increased cultural and political autonomy of the regions inhabited mainly by Kurds in southeastern Turkey. Kurds as a relatively coherent ethnic or national group and their homeland "Kurdistan" clearly are *ex post facto* constructions (Behrendt 1993).<sup>15</sup> It is certain that they form a sort of stranded minority: A prior state never existed before they started to fight for national autonomy. Yet, the territory now claimed by nationalist Kurds was partitioned into several territories after World War One. Some Kurdish migrants and refugees from Turkey exemplify this tendency. They live in Germany and demand political and cultural autonomy in the Republic of Turkey. Various organizations, ranging from the dictatorially-led PKK involved in armed struggle with the Turkish army to groups using more peaceful means, such as KOMKAR (abbrev. for "Organization of the Associations from Kurdistan"<sup>16</sup>) and the Socialist Party of Kurdistan (PSK), direct their demands to both Turkish and German governments. At the same time, some organizations maintain intense cross-national ties to Kurdish organizations in various other European countries (e.g. Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium; cf. Nielsen 1992: 123) and, of course, to Turkey. Political transnationalization has to be analyzed primarily as a triadic relationship between the host states such as Germany (and other receiving countries), the sending state Turkey (and other sending countries) and the refugee or exiled minority.

Numerically speaking, the Kurdish group constitutes the second-strongest ethnic immigrant group after the Turks in Germany. Most Kurds either arrived as guestworkers or asylum seekers. First, Kurds migrated to Germany as guestworkers in the late 1960s and early 1970s (according to estimates of experts about 85 percent of all Turkish citizens of Kurdish descent in Germany). Second, some Kurdish refugees arrived after the military coups in 1971 and 1980 as activists, victims or targets of the fighting between "security forces" and PKK in the 1990s (about 15 percent). Compared to labor migrants who are ethnically Turks, very little remigration has occurred among migrants and refugees who are Kurds. This suggests that ongoing military conflicts, resulting ecological devastation, poor economic prospects and continuing persecution of the civilian population from either the state "security forces" or the guerilla PKK trigger out-migration and flight but prevent sizeable return migration.

Three periods mark the development of this particular transnational social space. In the first

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<sup>15</sup> This is typical for new challenger groups in diasporas; see the Sikhs's intentions to form "Khalistan").

<sup>16</sup> Komkar was founded in the early 1980s; consisting originally of eight local associations, it came to include 40 centers and committees all over the Federal Republic in the mid-1990s.

period guestworkers of the southeastern Turkish provinces arrived in Germany; in the 1960s and 1970s no significant political mobilization rallying around Kurdish questions occurred. In a second period, tension and violence escalated since the 1980s between Turkish "security forces" in southeastern Turkey on one side, and Kurdish armed groups, mainly the PKK, on the other. Since then more or less open warfare between the two sides with massive destruction of the environment led to high rates of out-migration and many refugees who mostly move towards the major cities in Western Turkey such as Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara, but also big cities surrounding the southeastern provinces such as Adana. Only few of these refugees ever arrive in Germany -- many of those who do are activists. Martial law has been in use in many southeastern provinces.<sup>17</sup> Beyond the guerilla warfare in the southeastern provinces -- many of which are inhabited by a Kurdish majority while others are heavily mixed along ethnic lines -- there exists also a repression of all kinds of democratic forces. Kurds are among both the challengers and victims.<sup>18</sup> Ironically, the severe repressive measures the government took have alienated a growing proportion of the Kurdish population, causing the PKK gradually to gain widespread support in spite of its reputation for brutal violence. Certainly, the armed conflict did not help to shift allegiances (symbolic ties) to the Turkish government.

In a third period both the PKK and the Turkish government moved this conflict abroad, to Germany in particular. The German government as a NATO ally and host to a large Turkish and Kurdish population became the target of demands from the PKK who threatened to use Germany as a theater for warfare.<sup>19</sup> In turn, the Turkish government intervened and demanded to outlaw PKK; the German Ministry of the Interior finally followed other countries such as Sweden and did so in late 1993. Yet this conflict does not simply involve militant organizations such as the PKK. The Turkish side also asked the German government not to grant official status to other Kurdish organizations. In 1985, for example, the German federal government decided not to recognize Kurdish and Armenian organizations as ethnic groups (*Volksgruppen*) who can apply for government monies to undertake integration measures (e.g. social work and language instruction).

Intensifying conflicts in Turkey and the neighboring countries that also involved the German government and public have certainly added to the very high rate of mobilization of Kurds. For example, out of an estimated 500,000 persons of Kurdish descent up to 100,000

<sup>17</sup> While the activities by the PKK have not undermined the territorial integrity of the Turkish state, they have nevertheless been a formidable military threat. This stark claim has to be further qualified. Even the PKK has signalled that it is ready to compromise on the question of territorial independence. For example, PKK chief Abdullah Öcalan has stated that politically he may be satisfied with Kurdish autonomy in a reformed Turkish state with a federal instead of the current rigidly centralized political system.

<sup>18</sup> Much of this persecution is motivated by an authoritarian brand of central and dirigistic nationalism (Kemalism), directed at all democratic opposition forces and thus including politically active Kurds. Examples for this suppression are the prosecution of Kurdish journalists and Kurdish language media reporting on events in the southeastern provinces. Other events have concerned the incarceration of Kurdish deputies in the national grand assembly. These members belonged to the Kurdish political party HEP-Workers' Party of the People (founded in 1991; later reconstituted as DEP-Democracy Party and HADEP-Democracy Party of the People) in 1993 and 1994. There seem to have been linkages between PKK activists and members of these Kurdish parties -- a high density of social ties and information flows as forms of social capital (Cürükkaya 1997: 76).

<sup>19</sup> The PKK has used countries neighboring Turkey as major supply centers, such as Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.



participated in a single mass rally in 1993 (Mönch 1994). Although this should not be taken as a sign of political support for a particular organization, this mobilization rate is indeed remarkable. One of the crucial results of mobilization on all sides involved has been an increasing transnationalization not only of major actors such as the PKK. Also, there is a close exchange of information and persons between migrated or exiled Kurds and those left behind in the southeastern provinces, or living in the Western parts of Turkey. The density of social ties is continuously increasing. Among some of the means used are newspapers, telephone, video and music cassettes. Yet social capital used in the process of mobilization and challenge to state authorities also has to be closely differentiated according to its effects. For example, the authoritarian leadership in the PKK is a form of negative social capital, and the enhanced capacity to monitor and control members a negative benefit derived from this resource. It helps to advance the cause of an authoritarian organization involved in a separatist or autonomous Kurdish project but sacrifices individual autonomy and many lives.

In the face of immense conflict, we could hypothesize that among refugees who struggle with adaptation in their new environments the acceptance of radical organizations is higher than among those who stayed. This would mean that symbolic ties can be mobilized more efficiently among refugees. There is some indirect evidence for this thesis. In a survey in the mid-1990s respondents in two main centers of refugees within Turkey (Adana and Mersin), the acceptance of PKK is higher than in cities with higher rates of emigration (Diyarbakır, Batman and Mardin). Moreover, a newspaper close to PKK, *Özgür Ülke*, is more widely read in the in-migration than in the out-migration cities (Ergil 1995: 26 and 16-7).<sup>20</sup>

The domestic aspects of the conflict have spurred the efforts of Kurdish organizations in Germany advancing the interests of Kurdish immigrants. Among the demands of organizations such as Komkar are additional instruction of Kurdish school children in their mother tongue(s) in public schools<sup>21</sup>; radio and TV programs in Kurdish language; counseling centers for Kurds; recognition of Kurdish names at German registrar's offices and support for Kurdish self-help groups.<sup>22</sup>

Solidarity -- as a form of social capital -- extended by the Kurdish activists and their Kurdish and German supporters to activists in Turkey makes the feedback loop complete and has

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<sup>20</sup> The written survey included a sample of 1,267 respondents in three cities with high out-migration (Diyarbakır, Batman and Mardin) and three cities with high in-migration (Adana, Mersin and Antalya). The latter cities were the most affected by domestic refugee flows within Turkey.

<sup>21</sup> Up until the mid-1990s, mother-tongue instruction in schools has only been offered in Turkish; with a few exceptions such as in Bremen and Hessen where it is taught in a variant of the Kurdish language or dialects.

<sup>22</sup> All these events did not only contribute to the mobilization of the Kurdish population in Germany but also sparked debates in the German public on whether to send back to Turkey those Kurdish asylum seekers whose claims were rejected by German authorities. For example, one position advocated by German authorities has been that there are alternatives to Germany as a safe heaven, e.g., the western provinces of Turkey in which no warfare has taken place. A further issue concerned the usefulness of selling or donating arms to the Turkish army in 1991-92, outlawing the PKK, and human rights in Turkey. A veritable train of delegations from all walks of life in Germany to Turkey followed, including members of parliament, government, unions and NGOs. In the end, Turkish-Kurdish trench lines have come to even characterize public controversies among German citizens (Hockert and Liebe-Harkort 1996: 338-363). Thus the triadic relationship between host state, sending state and minority has to be further disassembled by distinguishing various groups in the host state Germany and different groups among politically active Kurds in both Germany and Turkey.

triggered a process of "positive" feedback cumulative causation: The armed conflict in Turkey has produced many refugees. The ensuing social and symbolic ties that span places in Germany, other EU states, Turkey and countries adjoining Turkey are the basis of support for PKK warriors and those sympathetic to this organization. In turn, this solidarity and the material resources flowing from it intensify the armed conflict in the southeastern provinces. One of the consequences is that the flow of displaced persons and international refugees is steadily replenished. Some of the refugees move to Germany and are mobilized by various Kurdish organizations, some of whom claim that life in Germany is a temporary exile to be followed by the establishment of an independent Kurdistan.

We can certainly discern diaspora elements among the Kurdish population in Germany (e.g., seeking to establish a homeland or cultural autonomy) and efforts to adapt to the German environment in trying to advance socio-economic integration. But the variety of positions taken on all these issues is too wide and too diffuse to speak of coherent trends going either way. It is likely that activist refugees form the main basis of the groups building a diaspora. However, there are significant differences: Activists and supporters of the PKK and their German intellectual allies are trying to build a sort of "refugee warrior diaspora" akin to the Palestinian example. They insist on the exile aspect of the diaspora and are busy affirming an emerging Kurdish identity. Yet the shared cultural expressions are still few (aside from folkloristic phenomena such as the *Newroz* festival). By contrast, representatives of Komkar correspond much more to the active settler type community. They demand both more rights to cultural and political autonomy for Kurds in Turkey and the integration of Kurdish settlers in Germany on an ethnically self-conscious basis. In short, the development is somewhat contradictory and full of unresolved tensions. Elements to be found in transnational communities, especially those in non-PKK groups and organizations, compete with conceptions of Kurdish politics and collective identity that clearly are projects of exiles in the PKK transporting nationalist projects.

This tension among Kurds in Germany can be tentatively seen in the self-descriptions of collective identity. Comparing two representative samples from the mid-1980s and early 1990s, Brieden finds that the percentage of Kurds in Germany who feel "Turkish" went down significantly both among the first and second generation, from about 40 percent to close to zero (Brieden 1996: 41). This research also indicates that there is very little social contact between Kurds and Turks living in Germany. The frequency of contact primarily depends upon the attitude towards the "Kurdish question" (1996a: 49). There is an attenuating trend, however: The reethnicization is much stronger among the first than among the second generation of Turks and Kurds. Also, importantly, among both Kurds and Turks there is a significant percentage saying that they are neither Kurdish, Turkish or German but European, cosmopolitan or simply "human being".<sup>23</sup> If we do not interpret this result as an expression of a purely instrumentalist attitude, it would flatly contradict the one-sided hypothesis that political transnationalization serves to carry particularistic projects.

## 6. Cultural Transnationalization: Young Muslims Between Disintegration,

<sup>23</sup> This is reminiscent of the "cosmopolitan stranger", an ideal type who would show no ethnic or racial identification, except when pressured to claim identity (Park 1950).

## Syncretism, and Segmentation?

To emphasize the transnational aspect in the development of collective identity<sup>24</sup> is not the same as saying that labor migrants and refugees live "between" two cultures. Early attempts have sought to interpret the experience of one-and-a-half and second-generation Turkish immigrants as being uprooted from Turkish culture(s) and not having been inserted in German culture. Also, in the literature on refugees one finds the assumption that to become uprooted and removed from a nation-state community means automatically to lose one's identity, traditions and culture. Thus, there is not only a transformation but a loss of culture and identity (for a sophisticated version of this argument, see Stein 1981: 325). Here, the emphasis is not on how international (trans)migrants have lost culture and identity but on how they may have developed new practices and orientations in transnational social spaces, a trans-cultural *mélange*. In its most pronounced form -- transnational cultural spaces such as the community of Muslim believers (*umma*) -- this claim poses a challenge to the binary either-or logic. The following analysis looks at re-ethnicization of immigrants and syncretist identities as two examples of the development of transnational social spaces in the cultural realm.

A first impression of the complicated set-up relating to collective identity can be seen from empirical evidence generated by ethnic and national self-description. In the survey mentioned above, Brieden finds that the percentage of Turks and Kurds who feel totally German is close to zero; even among the second generation (Brieden 1996: 43). The reasons given by the respondents can be grouped into two sets: First, a feeling of rejection by German culture and second, the experience of discrimination by native German citizens. Yet, the percentage of those who also feel German was already 29% among Turks and 12% among Kurds; an indication towards a sort of hybrid identity that includes both German, Turkish or Kurdish elements of collective identity. We can now phrase the question as to what kind of syncretism (nowadays often called hybridity) exists regarding collective identity more precisely. Is this the sort of transitory syncretism or hybridity observed by scholars among immigrants of European descent who arrived in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (e.g., Italian-Americans, Irish-Americans, etc.), finally leading to cultural assimilation in generations following the original migrants? Or, do these syncretist viz. hybrid identities indicate a more sustained and uneasy coexistence of various ethnic and national identities and cultural practices that are not brought together successfully in an integrative synthesis because cultural segregation develops that isolates these communities from both the sending and receiving contexts? Yet another alternative would be that syncretist collective identities develop that successfully occupy a cultural space in between sending and receiving states.

Transnational social and symbolic ties and the development of collective identities in the realms of religion, nation and ethnicity can be interpreted as a process of "positive" feedback

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<sup>24</sup> Collective identity is here meant to denote two dimensions: first, a common core of shared beliefs, ideas, the memory of a common history, aspirations, the identification with certain projects and second, ascription by others concerning the collective character, certain dispositions, memories, etc. Mechanisms of cumulative causation help to understand why the formation of collective identity among (young) Turks in Germany has followed neither cultural assimilation nor an often assumed reorientation to Turkey.

cumulative causation in the cultural realm. Again, various periods of transnationalization can be distinguished. The first phase was characterized by Turkish labor migrants, sometimes joined by family members, who intended to spend a few years to earn enough money and return to Turkey. In this period cultural practices were mostly confined to the private sphere; for example, the perceived transitional nature of religious affairs found its expression in the fact that rooms in factories or apartments served as prayer halls. The sending country's (state) control of these affairs was minimal. The Turkish government certainly did everything to increase the flow of remittances but did nothing to organize religious life. This completely changed in the second period when various aspects of Turkish cultures in Germany began to flourish more visibly in the 1970s and 1980s. For example, mosques were built; cultural organizations founded. In short, cultural affairs became visible and its internal differentiation along ethnic, religious and political lines increased. In a third period transmigrants have come to use more and more elements found in both sending and receiving societies to cope with discrimination they encounter in the receiving countries, to participate in events back in the sending countries, but also to take advantage of an increasingly "multicultural" environment and public policies in the receiving polities that recognize "cultural difference" and "ethnic diversity". The triadic nature of the relationship has come to the fore when both sending and receiving country governments have sought to control religious and cultural organizations.

The emergence of a transnational social space and concomitant feedback loops in the cultural realm can be exemplified when looking at young Muslims. Some authors have interpreted the experience of many Turkish youth in Germany to be one of disintegration (Heitmeyer et al. 1997). The underlying hypothesis is that issues of collective identity surfaced because of problems concerning socio-economic and political integration. Nationalist and religious we-groups grow more important because universally valid mechanisms such as access to the labor market and the educational system have not provided the basis needed for the formation of a satisfactory individual identity. According to this view many young Turks suffer from the effects of modernization such as ever-increasing demands on educational credentials or higher than average rates of unemployment compared to German youth, xenophobic violence, and a denial of cultural recognition on the part of German majority society. These tendencies could contribute to the retreat of Turkish youth into ethnically organized we-groups that offer collective identity along nationalist and religious lines. Importantly, these youth are seen as "rootless" in both the German receiving and the Turkish sending society. Many descendants of Turkish migrants are Turks in Germany and *Almanclar* ("*Deutschländer*") in Turkey. In short, this view holds that the experience of disintegration and manifold fears are the fertile breeding ground for Islamist orientations among many Turkish youth because they are threatened to become a liminal people. And the stronger discrimination is felt and the higher the propensity that "traditional values" are passed on from parents to youth in Turkish migrant families, the greater the likelihood that these youth espouse positions such as support of Qur'an courses and schools, of Islamic superiority and of religiously legitimized readiness to use force as a means of politics (Heitmeyer et al. 1997: 44).

Extending these thoughts in a more systematic manner, we could now go on to argue that the tendency among some descendants of Turkish immigrants to adhere to Islamist groups has been taken by certain German groups as a sign that these young men and women of Turkish descent are unwilling to assimilate, to fit in. This could be taken by populist and

xenophobic groups in Germany to mean that they are justified in their prejudices. The feedback loop would be complete when manifestations of racism loop back to engender new sources of apprehension and further inclinations to clannishness and endogamy. For example, a substantial number of one-and-a-half- and second-generation Turks in Germany marry imported partners from Turkey. This kind of behavior could be thought to breed further hostility and estrangement on both sides.

While the idea of a feedback loop is plausible, this particular interpretation of Islamic youth as the victims of both xenophobia and rejection on the part of German society is flawed for at least three reasons. First, not only discrimination and exclusion have contributed to practices and orientations that extend beyond cultural assimilation to German majority society or the uncritical acceptance of Turkish secular, nationalist or Islamic orientations. We also have to consider German public policies and proposals meant to advance "multiculturalism". Second, the above account overestimates the effects of discrimination in the receiving country and underestimates the political instrumentalization of religious mobilization in the sending country as causes of underlying Islamist orientations.<sup>25</sup> Third, the interpretation of Turkish migrants and their descendants as victims seriously underrates their creative potential to establish social spaces beyond cultural assimilation on the one hand and a wholesale transplantation of Turkish orientations to Germany on the other.

First, the transnationalization in the cultural realm is readily advanced by discourses and even public policies favoring multiculturalist tendencies, a mix of demands and efforts to grant specific (group) rights to ethnic minorities, so that they may express their cultural distinctiveness, develop political organization and engage in economic betterment. The demands of the certainly not coherent multiculturalist agenda include voting rights for permanent residents who are not citizens; affirmative action programs that aim to increase the representation of visible minorities in major educational and economic institutions; revising work schedules so as to accommodate the religious holidays of immigrant groups; providing bilingual education programs for the children of immigrants, so that their earliest years of education are conducted partly in their mother-tongue, as a transitional phase to secondary and post-secondary education in German. In the 1980s and 1990s, these tendencies have been publicized above all by German academics and politicians. Also, Turkish interest groups who do not share any of the premises of the German organizations have taken up many of these demands and made them part of their own agenda. The demands of Islamist groups who demand recognition as a religious group on a basis similar to the main Christian denominations and Islamic organizations who establish primary schools and look for public subsidies are another. To the extent that multiculturalist policies agree with the agenda of Muslim organizations, we should expect efforts on their part to maintain, change and build socially cohesive collectives based on symbolic religious, ethnic and national ties. However, these processes are not signs of disintegration. Rather, they are

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<sup>25</sup> It is not possible here to discuss the problems pertaining to the conceptualization of collective action underlying the disintegration thesis. It should suffice to point out that this thesis rests on a simplistic understanding of Durkheim's *Division of Labor* (1964): The advancing differentiation of something called "society" (read: increasing division of labor, modernization, etc.) threatens the "shared consciousness" based on the essential similarity of individuals. Into the gap arising between the level of differentiation, on the one side, and the level of shared consciousness, on the other, moves anomie. For a devastating critique of the Durkheimian model of collective action and alternatives based on the resource mobilization theory, see Tilly (1978).

regular features of the integration of newcomers.

Second, the activities of Islamist organizations in Germany are partly an outgrowth of an ever-increasing re-islamization of public life in Turkey. For these organizations Turkish migrants in Germany are primarily of political interest. These groups try to gain power in Turkish domestic politics. Since the 1950s Islam has become an extremely contested current in Turkey. For example, Islamist groups have tried to present Islam as the new bond for Turkish nationalism; thus challenging the legacy of Kemalist nationalism. The DİTİB (Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği), a branch of the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Bakanlığı, DİB) has been active in Germany since 1985; but only after Islamist organizations such as the Association of the New World View in Europe (AMGT/Avrupa Milli Görüş) and the Association of Islamic Cultural Centers (VIKZ/İslam Kültür Merkezleri Birliği) had recruited members and built mosques (Faist 1996: 87-8). These developments in Germany cannot be understood without the new policies of the Turkish government towards Islam. It has accelerated mobilization around religion among the most numerous religious groups, the Sunnis and Alevis. Since the early 1990s the Turkish government has departed from the Kemalist tradition, at times actively fostering a Turkish-Islamic synthesis. For example, religious education, once an optional subject in primary and secondary schools, was made mandatory. The Directorate of Religious Affairs was strengthened, numerous new mosques built and imams appointed; not only in Sunni but also in Alevi communities. What once started out as a confused right-wing doctrine to address the spread of socialism during the 1970s in Turkey -- combining fervent Turkish nationalism and Islamism -- has virtually come to be elevated to a quasi-official state policy.

While the activities of Islamist organizations in Turkey and Germany may have strengthened Turkish nationalism and Muslim transnationalism, the messages of the organizations involved have contradictory implications. On the one hand, Islamist propaganda emphasizes in-group social and symbolic ties and thus segregation from German society (Gür 1993: 45-9). On the other hand, the overwhelming majority of the first generation is to stay in Germany and there is no question about the one-and-a-half, the second and third generations. While staying in Germany does not necessarily lead to increased contacts to Germans and vice versa, it replaces a one-sided orientation to Turkey with a bi- or transnational focus. For example, issues of education and employment are practical questions to be solved in Germany. And even nationalist and religious organizations wooing young Turks grown up in Germany deliver a double message: "Wir, wir, wir sind von hier, sind Einheimische" (We, we, we are from here, we are indigenous") and "Wir sind Türken, sind Muslime, sind zivilisiert" (We are Turks, we are Muslims, we are civilized; cited in Karakaşlıoğlu-Aydın 1997: 37). This double message is extended to young Turks in Germany by very different organizations, ranging from the now nationalist-cum-Islamist Grey Wolves and the Islamist Milli Görüş to the religious organizations directed by the Turkish Directory of Religious Affairs with its German branch DİTİB. In short, in an effort to control young Muslims in Germany through social and symbolic ties and capital, religious organizations inadvertently relinquish a one-sided sending country orientation. Symbolic ties of a more complex nature are bound to appear, with implications for group solidarities.

Third, the victim angle emphasizing discrimination or disintegration and the

instrumentalization of young Turks by religious and nationalist organization could seriously underrate the creative and enriching potentials of young Turks living in Germany. For example, it neglects all those youth who understand themselves as practicing Muslims, yet not as Islamists. And in a representative survey among young Turks in Berlin (1993) one third reported to be "atheists". The concept of disintegration is flawed because it tends to emphasize the idea of uprootedness and transplantation. It is here that the term "translated people" may be apt to enrich existing images.<sup>26</sup> The term suggests that the social context of adaptation for migrants in transnational social spaces has changed considerably over the past decades. Translated migrants are continually engaged in translating languages, culture, norms, and social and symbolic ties. Translated persons are situated in diverse contexts and occupy ambivalent positions. However, there is no simple return to the sending country. The individual and collective identities are not fixed once and for all; they are not permanent over decades or centuries. The translations keep going on; embedded in concrete social ties and newly-emerging symbolic ties. This last qualification clearly goes beyond the postmodernist tinge this term has in Rushdie's writings. If we assume for just a moment that people don't fly around on magic carpets but cross bridges and enter doors, the spatial embeddedness of locally-specific resources places a limit to the free-floating symbolic attachments. In short, we should not overemphasize the aspect of translation as opposed to real experiences of uprootedness for refugees and the problems of transplanting old elements and adapting to a new environment. Yet it would also be inadequate to underestimate the translating capacities of immigrants and their descendants.

This energy becomes visible, for example, in the adaptation of musical styles. Hiphop and rap are exported to Turkey (see, for example, *Zeitmagazin*, 25.4. 1997: 16-19). A preliminary ethnographic analysis of some texts by Turkish youth suggests that empirical research would do well to extend its one-sided focus on discrimination, alienation and subsequent entry into religiously-Islamic and nationalist organizations. In one of the songs of the former Turkish rap group "Cartel" we find: "DU BIST TÜRKE ... in Deutschland ... verstehe das, vergiß' es nicht." (cited in Heitmeyer et al. 1997: 84)<sup>27</sup> This is not (yet) double consciousness in the sense of W.E.B. DuBois (1989: 1-9); it is partly a self-conscious search for individual and collective identity, keeping a distance to both German and Turkish contexts.

These expressions of identity are both transnational and youth-subcultural. Yet, unlike subcultures, which can be understood as persistent behaviors, values and norms of socially homogeneous groups who live in a single national or even a global society, Turkish

<sup>26</sup> This term, borrowed from the novelist Salman Rushdie (1989), is different from "uprooted" (cf. Handlin 1955) and "transplanted" (cf. Bodnar 1985). The term "translated" is not meant to criticize Handlin's and Bodnar's analyses. Their work dealt with European migrants in the United States around the turn of the century. Migration and integration occurred under very different circumstances from today. -- The term "uprooted" has much similarity with Robert E. Park's "marginal man" (Park 1950). This term, borrowed from the novelist Salman Rushdie (1989), is different from "uprooted" (cf. Handlin 1955) and "transplanted" (cf. Bodnar 1985).

<sup>27</sup> "YOU ARE A TURK ... in Germany ... Understand it, don't forget it." One young Turkish man put it succinctly: "Ich bin, der ich bin. Diese scheiße mit den zwei kulturen steht mir bis hier, was soll das, was bringt mir'n kluger schnack mit zwei fellen, auf denen mein arsch kein platz hat, 'n fell streck ich mir über'n leib, damit mir nich bange wird, aber unter'n arsch brauch ich verdammich bloß festen boden, wo ich kauer und ende. Die wollen mir weismachen, daß ich wie ne vertrackte rumheul an muttern ihr zipfel und, auch wenn's hell is, bibber vor angst, weil mich das mit innen und außen plagt." (Zaimoglu 1995: 96)

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transmigrants are a heterogeneous group. They often have lived for extended periods of time in two countries and have incorporated both German and Turkish cultural influences. At times, they activate elements of both selectively. Migrants' transnationalization grows hand-in-hand with their insularity from both German and Turkish society. This, in turn, is one of the main characteristics of diaspora formation.

What the discussion of transnationalization of politics already indicated, comes to the fore when looking at collective identity related to religion and nation: Underlying this extension is a recognition that transnational social spaces are not only constituted by concrete social ties but also by symbolic ties involving acts of imagination. In the age of instant telecommunication (not to forget instant social science and theology!) and good value for money long-distance travel, religious communities such as the *umma* can be created and integrated in a new image through the mind and through shared imagination. Yet these communities are not simply transnational. They have local roots, sometimes in two or more countries, while symbolic ties act as bridges between different nation-state contexts.

The *umma* is a particularly interesting case of imagined transnational space because the claim extends to a truly transnational Muslim community of believers transcending nation-state borders and the domestic politics of the countries covered. While there is certainly no one *umma* (Roy 1996), many Turkish(-German) organizations maintain close formal links to counterparts not only in Turkey but also in other European countries. For example, IGMG has close links to the Turkish *Refah Partisi*. Even more transnational is the Association of Islamic Cultural Centers (VIKZ) since it constitutes the German branch of a worldwide enterprise with representations in countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia, USA, Argentina and Brasil (for more examples, see Feindt-Riggers and Steinbach 1997: 44-6). While Muslim organizations are not structured in the same way as the Catholic church worldwide, transnational ties foster networks that go beyond bilateral linkages.

In sum, the "positive" feedback processes involving cumulative causation concerning a declining legitimacy of cultural assimilation as a shared vision, the extension of multicultural rights, the political mobilization around cultural discrimination and socio-economic exclusion and the translation of cultural and political conflicts from Turkey to Germany and back have contributed to an increasing transnationalization.

Instead of stretching the term diaspora beyond its limits, I propose to speak of a transnationalized and segmented cultural space characterized by syncretist identities, populated by sundry ethnic, political, religious and subcultural groups: Transnational means that cultural elements from both the original sending and receiving countries have found entry in the cultural repertoire of the descendants of migrants. In addition, it is sometimes part of an international or global culture, as in the youth subculture. Collective representations can be thought to be syncretist to emphasize the active role of the immigrants themselves. The main opposition between sending and receiving areas is attenuated by the fact that transnational collective identity means that there is a cultural distance towards both mainstream Turkish and German cultures. This is sometimes seen as the hallmark of diasporic cultures. However, I think it is a characteristic of most transnational social and cultural spaces. The major resources to bridge networks and groups across borders are local assets such as various forms of social capital. This enables transmigrants



not only to "think transnationally and act locally" but also to "think locally and act transnationally" and to "think transnationally and act transnationally".

Segmented cultural space means, first, that there could be a significant dichotomy between cultural expressions and identity in the public realm on the one hand and in the private sphere on the other. So far, most of the discussion of cultural practices and collective identity has focused on the highly contested public realm, revolving around Islamic fundamentalism, cultural (non-)recognition and multicultural policies. This is especially true for the proponents of the disintegration thesis. However, it would be premature to conclude from highly contested and symbolic political debates and answers of respondents to such items (e.g. Islamic conceptions of law and order vs. laicism and democracy) that disintegration of Turkish migrants in Germany is deepening. By contrast, we know very little about adaptation (*uyum* in Turkish and *Anpassung* in German) to cultural practices and everyday life in the private or small-group realm. For example, we would need to know more about important daily matters such as involvement of migrant school children in preparations for Christmas, or youth in soccer clubs (see Yalçın-Heckmann 1994 for further non-representative examples).

Second, cultural segmentation characterizes the world of Turkish migrants along ethnic and religious differences. For example, not only Sunni but also Alevi groups have begun to act collectively. The internal and cross-cutting ethnic and religious differentiations among Turkish immigrants in Germany are varied and complicated. If we take the three most numerous both self- and other-defined ethnic groups among Turkish citizens and their descendants as a point of departure -- Turks, Kurds and Arabs -- we can differentiate the following groups in a rough and preliminary way: Among Turks and Arabs we find mostly Sunnites, Alevites and atheists; among Kurds we find all these groups and very small Shiite groups such as the Yezidis (for a more nuanced view, see Spuler-Stegmann 1996). A recent study identified 47 distinct ethnic groups in Turkey (Andrews 1989). Current processes of "positive" feedback cumulative causation suggest that groups other than Sunnis and Alevis are waiting in the wings to join the multicultural party. A move from very repressive to somewhat attenuated policies towards non-Turkish cultural practices the rate of mobilization among ethnic and religious groups has surged. With the Turkish government's relaxation of bans on associations and non-Turkish languages, culture and identity politics among ethnic groups in Turkey have "revived", for example among Alevis, Circassians and Laz. As has been the case among Kurds and Sunni Islamists discussed above, we could expect this new mobilization to be translated from Turkey to Germany.

This mobilization has been underway among Alevis in Turkey and Germany, involving an ethnicization and politicization of religion in both contexts, mutually reinforcing each other. In Turkey, a state obligated to a laicist model, the rulers have shown tendencies to elevate the Sunni version of Islam to a quasi-official religion since the early 1990s. In turn, the PKK also jumped the train of incorporating Islamist rhetoric into their program and official proclamations. This has had severe consequences for some PKK adherents and supporters. For example, Alevis have been a very secular group. During the 1970s and 1980s they formed a good-sized support group for militant left operations; and a sizeable portion of PKK fighters were recruited from this milieu. However, estranged by Islamist declarations by the PKK's leader, some Alevis have turned to ethnic symbols, thereby claiming their own

collective identity. One way of doing this has been by the adoption of Zaza, a language spoken around Dersim, a majority Alevi city in southeastern Anatolia (Roy 1996: 101). In Germany, the conflicts between Sunnis and Alevis were imported. Since Sunni groups have vied for the second generation in Germany, Alevi groups have faced competition. Up until now, most active Alevis participated in the political realm, for example in the Social-Democratic Party (SPD). Growing competition for the second generation has led to a politicization of religion. Trying to reach members of the second generation, more and more Alevi entrepreneurs organize religious groups and try to mobilize their clients around the cultural symbols of Alevidom. In turn, this has feedback effects on conflicts between Sunnis and Alevis in Turkey; financial, human and social resources flow from Germany to Turkey to support the building of an organizational infrastructure among Alevis.

Without a close analysis of actual patterns of adaptation and, possibly, syncretism in both the public and private realms and the manifold variations and trench lines in the religious world, we risk dramatic and unsubstantiated conclusions such as the portrayal of a more or less coherent Turkish transnational community or diaspora that is developing into a "parallel society" in Germany; with cumulative causation ending in a vicious circle (for this apocalyptic vision, see Heitmeyer et al. 1997). Most often, one particular form or sub-segment of a transnational community or a loose conglomerate of transnational circuits are taken for the whole. All we can say at the moment, however, is that cultural spaces inhabited by migrants and their descendants are undergoing rapid transnationalization in the context of feedback loops.

Syncretist identities in this case does not mean a diaspora consciousness, on the one hand (e.g., a collective identity carrying elements of both Turkish or Kurdish and German but with a strong dominance of the former element due to an imagined homeland or collective religious community), nor does it denote a successful stage in the transition from one collective identity to another, on the other (e.g., Italian --> Italian-American --> American). Rather, it is an outcome of transnational ties and often segmented cultural practices that do refer to a successful synthesis in some cases (e.g., hip-hop musicians among the cultural elite) but also to an un-integrated existence of both German and Turkish elements next to each other (e.g., among some young Islamists). The emergence of syncretist individual and collective identities raises important questions concerning the relationship of the three responses of newcomers to insertion discussed above (see Figure 1). For example, it could be that cultural assimilation and multiculturalism are not mutually excluding strategies. Both strategies could form the backbone of transnational cultural practices that propose a certain degree of assimilation but keep their distance to the countries of settlement by emphasizing cultural difference.

## **7. Conclusion: The Uneasy Existence of Transnational Social Spaces "between" and "in" Nation-States**

Various forms of cumulative causation in international migration are not restricted to migration as a set of self-feeding processes, typically producing migration flows that may last several decades with a clearly defined beginning and end. This is only a hallmark of the first period. Currently, a second period is characterized by a growing transnationalization of migrants' activities, encompassing all spheres of life. In a macro-structural view, international migrants partake as social capitalists in a more general process of transnationalization, albeit they are not large "global players" (Portes 1996). However, this does not mean that migrants engaged in transnational exchanges already form transnational communities. Whether or not lasting forms of transnational social spaces have developed that reach beyond the second generation of immigrants is too early to say. However, these phenomena have turned out to be a worthy subject of study in their own right.

The problems arising in this second period of transnationalization are much more far-reaching than in the first one. One challenge has been often noted: Nation-states trying to control international migration and the activities of migrants are not simply faced with controlling borders or with granting specific legal status up to citizenship. The "civil rights revolution" for immigrants and the internalization of human rights norms in nation-state regulations have limited the sovereignty of democratic nation-states in admitting and expelling non-citizens. An example for the first phenomenon is that immigrants with permanent resident status have social and economic rights equal to citizens; an example for the second is the so-called principle of *non-refoulement* in asylum law that forbids returning refugees to the country of origin if their life is threatened.

Yet the challenges to nation-state policies in receiving and sending contexts are much broader once transnational social spaces have unfolded. Although the relationship is still asymmetric in terms of power between sending and receiving countries, the interdependence is stronger due to migrants living in both contexts, either practically (e.g., migrants commuting; exchanging goods and information) or symbolically (e.g., cultural practices that span two or more countries). In this context questions emerge such as: What happens to kinship systems and their traditional living together in one place when economic reproduction, risk diversification and betterment encompass various countries? What happens to notions of nationalism and nation-state unity when citizens move abroad and seek to establish a new homeland, carved out of the old one? What happens to notions of cultural uniqueness when persons acquire cultural repertoires that are transnational? Can the ancestral or (imagined) future homeland also be a de-territorialized space, such as the Islamic *umma*?

In particular, the existence of transnational social spaces calls into question the dominant focus on immigrant (dis-)integration and (non-)assimilation on the nation-state level in receiving countries. As the initial empirical evidence presented here suggests, integration on the nation-state level (e.g., national citizenship and participation in formal labor markets and social insurance) is a crucial element of the migrant experience. However, this dimension needs to be complemented by a stronger focus on trans- (and sub-) national levels of analysis in order to capture the dynamics of exclusive or complementary sending and receiving country orientations of transmigrants and transrefugees, or even the formation of social spaces in between, such as diasporas.

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The emergence of transnational social spaces concerns strategies of governments and migrants dealing with discrimination and xenophobia as well as multicultural claims. Indeed, it seems as if the stronger the controlling efforts by the respective governments, the stronger the resistance of various transmigrant groups. For example, this applies to both politically active Kurds and politically-religiously active Muslims. One of the ironies is that some of these carriers of transnationalization are self-proclaimed guardians of rigorous nationalist and religious projects. Seen in this way various forms of social capital and their benefits function as bridges for "long-distance nationalism" (Anderson 1994: 326) and long-distance religion.<sup>28</sup>

Transnational political and religious groups in the Turkish-German space suggest that geographical propinquity is not a necessary requirement for communities. However, in the cases analyzed in this paper another sort of propinquity is of utmost importance: ethnic or national and religious solidarity among sections of Kurds and Muslims, respectively. It is thus apparent that not only actual social ties matter but also symbolic ties between sending and receiving countries. The bridging function of social capital cannot be thought without collective representations.

Migrations and refugee movements and the settlements of migrants and refugees is still at too early a stage to really evaluate whether transnational ties and linkages have crystallized in transnational communities such as diasporas. In order to speak of a diaspora, a group should be dispersed to more than one country. Although this is the case with Turkish labor migrants who settle not only in Germany but also, among others, in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Switzerland, the role of Germany is too dominating to speak of more than predominantly bi-national linkages and ties. This is somewhat different regarding Kurds. They seem to have dispersed more evenly in European countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden.

It is important to note that transnational social spaces are not deterritorialized. Some globalization scholars have already pronounced the detached nature of cultural representations in global flows. They posit that flows "occur in and through the growing disjunctures among ethnoscaples, technoscaples, financescaples, mediascaples, and ideoscaples" (Appadurai 1996: 37). The ethnoscaples relate to persons such as tourists, migrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers and other geographically mobile categories who influence the politics in and between nations to a degree not known before. To see transmigrants and refugees embodying as homeless is a tempting proposition. These could be seen as the first to live out transnational realities in their most complete form. Even those people remaining in familiar and ancestral places could find the nature of their ties to the place changed, and the image of an essential connection between place and culture, place and economics, place and politics broken. Instead, this analysis suggests that ethnoscaples are not magic carpets but fulfill contingent bridging function between nation-states

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<sup>28</sup> Sending countries riven by ethnic conflicts, economic crises and political instability seem to be much less effective in curbing transnationalization. This has only been possible in authoritarian and dictatorially-led regimes that prevented territorial exit. The collapse of the former Eastern communist bloc attests to the low viability of closed borders in the contemporary world. In the receiving countries large-scale ethnicization, sometimes accompanied by xenophobia, is a major outcome of transnationalization of civil and social rights (Faist 1995c).

demarcated by doors at the territorial borders and inside the nation-states. Aspects of the lives of transmigrants remain highly localized, albeit characterized by a profound bi- or sometimes even multifocality. This is so because the main resources involved -- social capital -- is a local asset that may nevertheless function as a transnational bridge.

Although transnational social spaces are by and large neither intermittent nor serendipitous developments, two caveats relating to their continued feasibility are in order.<sup>29</sup> Politicians, administrators and members of civil society in fairly liberal nation-states such as Germany may end the toleration or even casualness they currently show towards ethnically-based political, religious and cultural formations that maintain strong transnational linkages. The conditions for the existence of transnational spaces are mercurial. Under certain macro-structural conditions, such as war, nationalism in the receiving country may create conditions under which groups with transnational linkages may be accused of disloyalty and are tested about whether they are patriots or traitors. Take the case of German Americans or US-Americans of German descent for a moment. For most of the latter part of the 19th century and until World War One many of the economic, political and cultural ties this article described for Turks characterized German-Americans in the United States of America. A significant part of the German flow was triggered by the revolution of 1848-49 and -- going beyond contemporary examples -- there was much cross-fertilization between the radicals of that era and the reform wing of the Republican Party in the USA, as the distinguished career of Carl Schurz indicates. Economic ties can be found in the development of the American economy by firms such as Anheiser Busch, Steinway pianos, and all of the American optical industry. Moreover, German-language schools and a rich *Vereinsleben* signalled lively symbolic ties. Yet as a result of war between the USA and Germany in 1917, almost all of these linkages were sundered, and in fact most German Americans gave up their native language as well as their *Gesangvereine* and other distinctive cultural forms. For example, in 26 U.S. states German was forbidden as a language of instruction in high schools and church congregations switched from German to English. Germanness lived on only in certain sects of the Lutheran Church, and even there in a hidden form. Not only did transnationalism disappear, but for all intents and purposes so did America's largest white ethnic group.<sup>30</sup> In other words, the triadic reduced to a dyadic relationship between the two governments very rapidly.

Transnationalization may also be attenuated when seen in the longer historical perspective for reasons other than the domestic repercussions of international conditions. What seems like a comparative advantage at one point -- for example Turkish entrepreneurs in Germany having access to cheap labor in their garment factories in Turkey, Kurdish exiles having a secure political basis to struggle for more autonomy or even independence in the southeastern provinces of Turkey, or Turkish muslims of various religious groups using Germany as a base to fight against secularism and laicism in Turkey -- may be a springboard to something entirely else for some, while it becomes a kind of trap for others preventing them from making more successful moves within the nation-state that has become their new home. It is only when these immigrants and their descendants also find a basis for their economic, political and cultural activities other than sending country or homeland affairs that

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<sup>29</sup> I am indebted to John Mollenkopf for his comments on the limits of transnational social spaces.

<sup>30</sup> There are plenty of other instances, e.g., Japanese in the United States and Canada. Their internment in camps during World War Two signalled the end of the Japanese-American transnational space.

elements of transnationalization can remain beneficial to them in the long run. In short, we should not allow our infatuation with transnationalization to cause us lose sight of the ever-present lures of cultural assimilation on the one hand, and the dangers of segregation in the receiving countries on the other. It is an open empirical question whether some forms of transnational spaces turn into assimilation or segregation at a future date.

Nevertheless, transnational social spaces add doubt to the dictum that the effects of transnational relations in general and international migration in particular are only a matter of incorporating those who want to stay in the receiving country as a previously unincorporated economic, political and cultural force into the polity, national markets or the national culture. Also, they raise questions about the hypothesis that the main problem of return migrants and refugees is only re-incorporation in the original sending countries, albeit on another level. Rather, the reality of transnational spaces indicates the progressive diffusion of nation-state projects concerning the salience of nationhood for selected groups of residents, and the simultaneous development of a new supra-national consciousness. In short, diffusion is a complex and contradictory process that encompasses both resurgence of ethnic and national identities and emergence of novel supra-national identities. This could have tremendous consequences not only for economic activities but also for political mobilization and cultural identity. For example, challenger groups in polities may increasingly direct their demands to at least two different governments and supra-national institutions such as the EU, and diasporas keep a critical distance towards both sending and receiving nation-state cultures. These processes offer opportunities for political and cultural entrepreneurs to re-introduce or at least strengthen well-known religious and ethnic cleavage lines in politics that have characterized much of European political and cultural history, adding to the importance of non-class-identified groups and organizations. At the same time, immigrants' ties across borders can ease ethnic and religious tensions that accompany the adaptation of newcomers in the countries of settlement.

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