

## CHAPTER 7

# BUILDING A PUBLIC SPHERE: TURKISH-ORIGIN WORKERS IN GERMANY

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### **Abstract**

Scores of migrants, who have been employed in various industries for decades, who pay taxes, are consumers and carry out their obligations, are, however, unable to fully participate in the political process because of limitations and requirements of citizenship policies. In some cases, they are even barred from having a say in local administration. Representation and participation processes are however not limited to voting or being represented in the central or local administration. For instance, many Turkish-origin immigrants in Germany, who are unable to vote in municipal elections, can be elected as worker representatives and distinguish themselves as outstanding political figures, as they speak on behalf of all workers. This article elaborates on the transnational social spaces of immigrants as a unique form of public sphere, and demonstrates the similarities between the birth of the public sphere and the formation of the transnational social space, focusing on the experiences of Turkish-origin migrant workers in Germany.

**Keywords:** Public sphere, Turkish migration, guest workers, transnational social space, trade unions

## 1. Introduction

Migration is among the most important causes of contemporary social transformation. This puts significant pressure on the nation-state system that codifies the rights and obligations of states and citizens to one another. Political, social and economic rights and responsibilities of citizenship are brought into question once again with the emergence of large communities that do not have these rights. Demographic structures, which change within a matter of decades, may reinforce cultural, social and identity-based concerns on the part of the host societies. (Fraser, 2014; Faist, 2000).

Capitalist economies, on the one hand, need migrant flows as a source of cheap labour and a reserve army of labour; on the other hand, they try to manage flows of migration (Oner, 2012). However, migrants refuse to play this passive role. The desire to live in better conditions, or at the very least to prepare better conditions for children and future generations, is the primary motivation. With the participation of migrants in the economic and social life in large numbers and in a continuous way, reciprocal effects and relationships start to be formed in daily life (Kolb, 2008). This research focuses on migrant workers with Turkish origin. Here, the term “Turkish-origin immigrants” is used to refer different ethnic communities in Turkey and also to include immigrants from Turkey who hold German citizenship, and second and third generation migrants.

Large numbers of people, who have been employed in various industries for decades, who pay taxes, are consumers and carry out their obligations are, however, unable to fully participate in the political process because of limitations and requirements of citizenship policies. In some cases, they are even barred from having a say in the local administration. The representation and participation processes are, however, not limited to voting or being represented in the central or local administration (Nash, 2014). Many Turkish-origin immigrants, who are unable to vote in municipal elections, can be elected as worker representatives of their workplace or the local branch, and distinguish themselves as outstanding political figures, as they speak on behalf of all workers.

Immigrants may experience both countries (country of emigration and country of immigration) through transnational social spaces at the same time via networks, organizations and technology. Transnational social spaces enable immigrant communities to construct a unique identity. They do not simply adopt the dominant identity of the country of immigration or they are not simply an extension of the societies of country of emigration. They are also not a part of a dominant community of a certain nation-state. They construct an identity

which is a product of their constant, mutual relations with two societies based on their transnational social networks.

Majority of literature among transnational social spaces of Turkish immigrants focuses on their relation with Turkey such as how they internalize conflicts, confrontations and political polarizations exported from Turkey. This reflects one side of the transnational space and illuminates the importance of the Turkey reference. On the other hand, immigrants have constant and dynamic relations with natives and other immigrant communities in the country of immigration, and such relation has an essential impact over the characteristics of the transnational social space.

Today, the transnational social space of Turkish-origin immigrants in Germany is multi-layered. Even still, an important proportion of Turkish-origin immigrants works in German industry, they are not only employees; there is also an entrepreneur class. There is a widespread media network, while some are representatives of Turkish-based media, some others are directly managed by and for Turkish-origin immigrants, and even some were established in Europe to address certain communities living in Turkey. There are increasing number of immigrants in arts, sports and politics. Additionally, there are organizations that are directly or indirectly supported by Turkish and German authorities.

Progress in transportation and information technologies allows Turkish-origin immigrants to combine their relation between “home country” and “country of work” within their daily lives. Two countries’ geographies became just a few hours’ flight distance as a result of frequent economic charter flights. Internet, TV channels, newspapers, associations and certain economic activities allow Turkish immigrants to experience both countries at the same time in their daily lives (Öner, 2012), and these all developments demonstrate the dynamism of the transnational social space. (Faist, 1998) The transnational social space of Turkish-origin immigrants is not a passive and introverted space, but rather provides a lively public sphere that also includes sub-spheres such as Kurds, Alevis, some religious and political groupings, etc. (Ayhan&Kaya, 2007)

This offers them to the opportunity to live in a distinctive public sphere, which is constructed in a bottom up perspective, and may allow them to escape from the total hegemony of states to a certain extent. From another perspective, they also share common public spheres with natives, and internalize common values and principles as well.

This article argues that the transnational social space approach shall be elaborated together with the Habermasian “public sphere” theory. As will be expressed in following chapter, there

are remarkable similarities with the formation of historical bourgeois public spheres and the formation of the transnational social space of Turkish migrants in the last six decades. Additionally, evaluating the “transnational social space” concept with “the public sphere” shall contribute to answering the changing conditions coming from globalization and the existence of millions of non-citizen migrants living in Western democracies (Finlayson, 2005).

## **2. Migrant Networks and Transnational Social Spaces**

The concept of transnational social space has been widely used in the literature since the 1960s, but the emphasis was on transnational organisations and transnational corporations. From the mid-1990s onward, however, it started to be applied to individuals and in particular to migrant networks. An important factor in the development of the idea of transnational social space was the realisation that viewing immigrant communities as a simple extension of the people of the country of origin was inadequate (Faist, 1998). Using the networks they form, immigrants establish reciprocal, stable and dynamic relationships with societies in both countries, and create a new identity of their own.

The transnational social spaces contribute to migrants’ life strategies by reinforcing internal solidarity, preserving their ties with the country of origin and, at the same time, lowering the costs and risks of new migration processes (Preis, 2008). As Preis (2001) argues, transnational migrant networks should be described as pluri-local communities rather than local communities. Locals/citizens build their social spaces around a single locality, whereas migrants can form transnational social spaces around multiple localities and sustain relationships with both societies via different localities. The description of transnational social space as pluri-local, indicating that immigrants are in contact with multiple localities, is also important because it emphasises that the transnational social space is not an abstract, floating “space” independent of localities or physical spaces (Jurgens, 2001). It is not that localities disappear; rather, localities are multiplied and achieved across nation-state borders.

“Space” is composed of cultural, economic and political practices of actors and relations among different actors at a certain “place”. (Faist, 2004) Kaya & Şahin (2007) define “space” as a concept that contains both material and discursive aspects including behaviours, practices and discourses. The space concept elaborates immigrants, not as passive individuals who are victims of global capitalism, but as the ones that are active agents that determine their own future. Social space is in relation with the public sphere because there is no hegemonic power centre, and it is constructed by communication, negotiation and trust based on common cultural values, interests and solidarity.

The distinctive feature of the transnational social space is that all imagined and constructed social practices, symbols and products are not limited within borders of a certain nation-state, rather they are imagined and constructed within the relation among two countries and two societies. Transnational social space is differentiated from other international and multinational structures and entities with its balanced and equivalent share of impact of both countries. For instance, for Turkish-origin people in Germany, while social practice may be more German-centred, symbolic systems, may be mainly referenced to Turkey and products may be transferred between both countries. Therefore, transnational social space includes organizations, immigrant networks, companies, diasporic entities and governmental agencies.

Transnational social spaces become more visible and concrete in today's world as a consequence of the development of communication and information technologies that make easier the movement of capital, workforce, product and services. Symbols, ideas, social practices and values are not necessarily produced and shared within a certain nation-state but also there are more opportunities for transnational interaction. (Preis, 2001; Şenay, 2010) The transnational social space provides a base for sustainable, durable, mutual, dynamic and intense sharing of symbols, ideas, products and practices. (Faist, 2000)

Within the scope of this paper, the continuous and dynamic transfer of ideas, symbols and products between Germany and Turkey indicates that immigrants are potentially open to being influenced by political and social developments in both countries, and have the potential to affect both countries. The transnational social space created by Turkish-origin immigrants in Germany has very dynamic aspects. A multi-layered transnational social space with political, cultural, religious and commercial networks, organisations and ties, together with an extensive media network, affect both Germany and Turkey (Evwals et.al., 2007). For example, immigrant workers can make social, political and economic demands via labour unions, even if they are not citizens of the host country. At the same time, they can contribute to the political processes of the country of origin, by utilising opportunities in the transnational social space, thanks to their citizenship ties.

### **3. The Public Sphere in Workplaces**

The public sphere is an arena of political communication, one in which—in the ideal democratic sense—the ideas generated and the discourse advanced allow for criticism of the government, hold it accountable, and create pressure on the government to translate the public interest so articulated into law. This paper argues that the analysis of the public sphere

can be used to understand the formation of transnational social spaces of immigrants, which could be considered as a sort of public sphere.

The paper examines workplaces and workplace-based social organisations because these are places where immigrant workers spend a significant part of their daily lives together with local workers and have the chance to observe and communicate with one another. This article focuses on the experiences of Turkish-origin immigrants in Germany, where labour relations are characterised by concepts, such as “co-determination” and “workplace democracy”. The labour union, DGB, represents a significant portion of the workforce, and offers democratic mechanisms in the workplace. Works councils are organisations that are required by German law, regardless of whether the workplace is unionised or not, to cover all employees, and are elected via democratic means which allow worker representatives to participate in the decision making process of the management of the corporation. Both labour unions and works councils provide lively public spheres for workers through elections, meetings and training programmes (FMLSA, 2013). In this public sphere, local and immigrant workers represent themselves, and enter into dialogue with one another. This opportunity provides immigrant workers a way to represent themselves and benefit from democratic mechanisms, regardless of their citizenship status.

Nevertheless, the visibility and engagement of immigrant workers in the public sphere may be influenced by their role in the transnational space, and some skills and opportunities may be transferred between two different spheres. For example, an immigrant worker might be a candidate in elections for workplace representative, not because of their previous labour union activism, but because of their activism in the transnational social space or vice versa.

Another motivation for focusing on immigrant workers employed in large heavy industry enterprises was to offer an analysis that takes into account the principle of socio-economic equality, an important characteristic of the public sphere. Industrial workers are essentially equal in terms of class position and socio-economic status: they have similar wages and similar working conditions, and the opportunity to participate in the same voluntary social organisations via labour unions and works councils, and also to observe, get to know one another and socialise during work and rest periods. Thus, compared with other immigrants, immigrant workers have more opportunities to come together and take collective action with their German colleagues and immigrants from other nationalities under the same roof in voluntary social organisations.

Habermas’ public sphere is an arena of political communication, where, in a democratic environment, legitimate political ideas are generated that are critical of the government, hold

the government accountable, create pressure on the government and ultimately aim to become law (Dacheux, 2012). These characteristics make the public sphere a fundamental concept for democracy, and an ideal concerning equality and autonomy. Thus conceived, the public sphere is not an institution, but a space that is open to all actors, with no developmental ‘end point’, and one that is vulnerable to significant disruption and even attenuation (Specter, 2012; Onat, 2013; Dacheux, 2012).

An important principle for participation in the public sphere is equality; therefore, the bourgeois public sphere or mass democracy/parliamentary democracy is criticised for the social and class inequalities in society (Onat, 2013; Dacheux, 2012). Therefore, institutions that claim to offer a public sphere should provide conditions that allow internal critical reflection and an environment of open dialogue. An important distinction is whether the institution is participatory, in other words, whether or not there are marginalised groups. These institutions should not simply be platforms for interest intermediation; they should also be open to radical criticism. This and other reformulations of the public sphere can make it possible to avoid the manipulative character of the space offered by contemporary capitalism (Goode, 2015).

According to Fraser (2014), besides citizens, there are immigrants and refugees of various nationalities and holders of dual citizenship within the borders of nation states. As a result, political membership becomes less important for participating in the public sphere because citizens are not the only people affected by the outcomes of the political decision-making process. This gives rise to the question of how to make collective demands binding, whether they come from citizens or non-citizens. Therefore, rather than arguing for the disappearance of the public sphere, issues such as participation, solidarity, having a critical attitude and generating political power, which form the essence of the public sphere theory, should be reinterpreted in the light of changing conditions.

Essentially, the public sphere points the social organizations and networks of people independent from the dominance of state power. Indeed, trade unions and works councils may lose some aspects of their public sphere characteristics as a consequence of its relations with state and capital together with its bureaucratic structure, it shall still provide “public sphere” at the workplace level, where voluntary members may debate freely, decide and act jointly.

While discussing the relations of native and immigrant workers, and focusing on how they share a common public sphere at workplace level, different motivations and tendencies of migrant workers and native workers shall be analysed in order to understand compromise,

solidarity and tension among themselves. This may explain the reasons of the transfer of different qualifications and opportunities from one social space to another one. At this point, the Habermas' concepts of "life-world" and "system", and his approach of "the colonization of life-world by the system" under the "communicative action theory", shall provide a framework. According to Habermas, as a consequence of the collaboration of state, media and capital, "the System" invades and colonizes the "life-worlds" of people where people join the public sphere and experience solidarity. (Johnson, 2006) This restricts democratic participation and representation of citizens. Therefore, the native workers' struggles and demands at trade unions shall be defined as to preserve their life-worlds to counter the invasion of the system.

In the case of Turkish-origin immigrant workers, the majority moved Germany to work with legal work permits. At the first phases, they were "guest-workers", as being invited for a temporary time period, their aim was just to work and save money before returning their homelands. During the "guest worker period", Turkish-origin workers could achieve their social, political, cultural, ethnic, and religious demands and necessities through grassroots/ bottom-up initiatives. Even this could occur contrary to the German governments' attempts to limit the citizenship rights, and their aim to motivate migrants to return back to their home country in the 80s and 90s. (Akalin, 2012) From this perspective, migrant workers were thrown over the very deep parts of the "system", directly colonized by the system, and a "life-world" was not presented. Migrants achieve their "life-worlds" via their transnational social spaces and their struggles in the public sphere provided by organisations and institutions through their inner solidarity and own experiences.

Trade unions have become the first and the only social organizations in the first phases of migration where migrant workers are recruited together with native workers, enter the dialogue with them and demand/act together. If the migrant-native worker relation is compared from the perspective of Habermas' life world-system dichotomy, one may claim that, while native workers' principal aim is to preserve their life world and resist against the colonization of the system through the public sphere presented by trade unions, immigrant workers' principal goal is to liberate themselves from the total colonization of the system and create their own life-worlds. Such different motivations and expectations towards trade unions may explain the relations among native and migrant workers, and may demonstrate how the "transnational social space" coincides with the "public sphere".

Adler and Fichter's (2014) case study on immigrant workers' organisational efforts in Kiel also shares a similar approach. Since 1983, the IG Metall's Kiel Branch supported the



Migrant Committee within the branch, and the leadership of the branch has been shared with the president of the migrant committee as co-President since the 1990s. Also, all elections within the branch were done according to the migrant-native ratio of membership figures. Adler and Fichter (2014) defend that such experience resulted in a better integration of immigrants. For instance, as a result of the union's family support programmes, immigrant children could study in better schools, and many of them could have the opportunity to receive an undergraduate level education.

#### **4. Turkish-origin Immigrants and Transnational Social Space as a Unique Public Sphere**

Turkish-origin migrant workers' experience of almost 60 years resulted in the creation of a unique transnational social space between Turkey and Western European countries. A significant proportion of Turkish-origin immigrants are still citizens of the Republic of Turkey, and they have now become part of the society of the destination country. Because of the nation-state/ citizenship connection, many migrants do not hold citizenship, and the ones who are naturalised still face challenges to represent themselves within the democratic life (Crul et.al., 2010; SVR, 2015; Rühl, 2007).

This paper aims to demonstrate the significant similarity between the Habermasian narrative of the emergence of the public sphere in Western Europe and the formation of the transnational social space of Turkish-origin immigrants. Habermas (2005) examines 18th and 19th century England, France and Germany to define the ideal type of bourgeois public. He argues that literary and artistic debates held by small, well-educated and critical bourgeois circles in salons of France, tea houses of England and coffeehouses of Germany have over time acquired a political character, and led to the creation of an oppositional space independent and critical of the government (Habermas, 2005; Finlayson, 2005).

Similar to the emergence of public spheres through grassroots network, this paper defends that the formation of the transnational social space of Turkish-origin immigrants in Germany shares such features, and it is possible to claim that the transnational social space created by immigrants is a unique public sphere. This transnational social space is unique in that it is not based on citizenship or nation-state borders, and is referenced to Turkey, the country of origin. Because the model that was applied when Turkish-origin immigrants were invited to work from the early 1960s was temporary and based on rotation, immigrant workers were expected to work in Germany for a few years, and then return to Turkey. Therefore, apart from accommodation, immigrants were not provided with a particular social space or other

opportunities. There were no efforts made in this direction because both German and Turkish authorities considered the migration to be temporary. Turkish-origin immigrants in this period met their cultural, religious and social needs using their own means, via grassroots initiatives. (Akgönül, 2008). Coffeehouses, mosques and hometown associations or political organisations inspired by political developments in Turkey have in essence served as spaces where Turkish-origin immigrants reinforced their internal solidarity in a country that was foreign to them in all respects. They shared knowledge and experiences concerning the German state, authorities and laws, organised their religious activities, and met their social and cultural needs. Moreover, these communities, which consisted of voluntary individuals of the same socio-economic status and were formed without the intervention of the states of either country, became active in the political space of both countries, engaging with the German state and political parties, and political developments within Turkey. Turkish-origin immigrants tried to make their voices heard in Germany via transnational organisations, and labour unions, and took different positions regarding political developments in Turkey.

#### **4.1. Historical Background of the Formation of the Transnational Social Space of Turkish-origin Immigrants**

Turkish-origin immigrants in Germany form a unique transnational social space with an over 60 year-long experience. An important portion of these immigrants are still citizens of the Turkish Republic, and they became part of German society during these decades. As a consequence of Germany's citizenship policies, most immigrants may not enjoy primary citizenship rights. Even if they contribute to the economic wellbeing of the country of immigration for decades; immigrants holding Turkish citizenship only enjoy secondary political rights, including the right to unionise. On the other hand, millions of immigrants holding a Turkish passport have primary political rights in Turkey, but their economic and social contribution to Turkey is limited. Turkey is perceived as a country for tourism, family visits or investments. However, their political potential as voters and economic potential that fosters the trade cooperation accredit Turkish-origin immigrants as an important actor as well.

In modern Turkish history, the massive immigration movement began in the 1960s. Apart from Western Europe, there was labour immigration towards Australia, the USA and Canada, the Middle East and North Africa and after the Cold War, towards the former Soviet Republics. Today, almost 6 % of the Turkish population lives abroad (İçduygu, 2012). Labour immigration, family unification, refugees, asylum-seekers and students lead to the migration of millions. The majority of the Turkish-origin immigrants live in Europe, and within Europe,

the majority lives in Germany. While German authorities and industry benefited from low-cost immigrant labour, Turkish authorities received foreign currency, the unemployment rate fell, and remittances supported a vital segment of society under poverty conditions, which reduced the workload of social services of the authorities. (Toktaş, 2012)

The guest-worker program was initiated by the German Federal Republic to overcome the scarcity of labour-force in the heavy industry as a result of high growth rates and the rapid industrialisation in the post-War period. According to the program, guest-workers would be invited from selected countries; they would work temporarily based on the rotation system, and would return to their countries when their contract was terminated. The first agreement was signed with Italy in 1955, and then, between 1960 and 1968, Germany signed similar agreements with Yugoslavia, Tunisia, Portugal, Jordan, Turkey, Spain and Greece. Guest workers were mainly employed in the metal, automotive, mining and waste cleaning sectors. (Kolb, 2008) This program was designed on temporary employment and rotation of the workforce, and aimed to control the labour immigration process by the authorities. Being “guest” and working temporarily enabled the authorities to legally restrict some fundamental rights. Also, it could be possible to stop labour immigration during recession periods. Priority was given to the full employment of citizens. (Kuhn, 1978)

Turkey and the German Federal Republic signed the workforce agreement on 30th October 1961. Seven hundred ninety thousand workers went to Europe between 1961 and 1973, and 80 % of them arrived in Federal Germany. Turkish authorities encouraged labour immigration in the First Five Year Development Plan (1962-1967), as a part of the development strategy. Guest workers would send foreign currency, the unemployment rate would be lower, and when they returned, they would use their skills, experience and information for the industrialisation of Turkey. However, the majority of the labour immigrants did not turn back, and the ones who had returned preferred to use their savings in trade activities. (İçduygu, 2012)

The German Federal Employment Office was responsible for labour recruitment, and they invited workers following a selection process. According to the procedure, German companies requested the number and skills of workers they needed to the Employment Office, and the Office’s Istanbul branch selected the applicants based on their skills, physical strength, health and criminal record. Workers, who passed all these examinations, received their train tickets. (Eryılmaz, 2002) This procedure was solely focused on economic expectations, and purely approached the labour force as a commodity. They did not consider the cultural and social needs of workers. The residence permit was bound to the work permit,

and the legal regulation was focused on the control of immigration instead of their rights and liberties. (Topal, 2011)

Turkish-origin guest-workers faced harsh living conditions. Many companies had offered 6 square metre hostel rooms or crowded dormitories. According to research, in 1971 at NRW, 10 % of hostels could not provide sufficient conditions for accommodations. Twenty people shared a shower on average; and ten people shared a toilet on average. As a result of hard-working conditions and temporary contracts, guest-workers could not learn the German language comprehensively.

This was the first time that German society met with an Islamic community in their daily lives, with the arrival of Muslim guest-workers. So there were not a mosque nor prayer rooms at factories, workers faced difficulties with Ramadan fasting and Eid al-Adha. There were also problems concerning food and shopping. Many workers had psychological problems due to the working conditions and being away from their families for long years. Even Italian, Greek and Spanish guest-workers could bring their families to Germany; Turkish-origin guest-workers were not permitted to bring their families with them. This was due to the agreement signed between the governments. Family unification could be possible for them following the 1965 Foreigners Act. According to the Act, immigrant workers who were working at least three years, having a long term contract and providing accommodation for their families could have the right to bring their families. (Eryilmaz, 2002; Topal, 2011)

On 12th December 1964, the German employer association demanded from the government to halt the rotation system by mentioning their satisfaction with the guest-workers' labour force, and this paved the way for the permanent residence for immigrant workers. One other reason was that it was taking time for workers to learn their jobs, and their contract period was terminating when the employer began to benefit from their performance. Even the guest-worker program was terminated by the 1973 Crisis, because of the demand for low-cost labour, authorities encouraged family unification if other family members were also able to work.

Additionally, struggles of immigrants' associations, trade unions, pro-immigrant political parties and decisions of legal courts based on the Basic Law (German constitution) on universal rights provided more rights and longer-term contracts for immigrants. (Kastoryano, 2000; Castles, 1986; Kaya, 2008)

In 1976, while 90 % of Italian guest-workers, 80 % of Spanish guest-workers, and 70 % of Greek guest-workers returned to their countries, only 50 % Yugoslavian guest-workers and

30% Turkish guest-workers did the same. (Costant and Massey, 2002) The political and economic conditions of Turkey in the 1970s, and the military regime in the 1980s, motivated Turkish-origin guest-workers to stay in Germany. Also, with the family unification and the formation of associations, mosques and other networks, their transnational social space enabled them to experience their culture, transfer their identity to the new generations and strengthen solidarity among themselves.

The number of Turkish-origin immigrants in Europe was 600 thousand in 1972. This number increased to 2 million in the first years of the 1980s, 3 million in 1990s and in 2010 it was over 3.5 million. These consist of labour immigrants, asylum-seekers, refugees, family unification, students and second and third generations. During these years, 1 million immigrants also returned to Turkey. (İçduygu, 2012)

In the 1970s and 1980s, when guest-workers became permanent workers, they began to be defined as foreigners (auslanders). Even over 4 million immigrants were working in the German Federal Republic in 1985; German authorities refused to recognise Germany as a country of immigration. (Castles, 1985) This continued for decades, and in 2000, Germany decided to recognise itself as a country of immigration, and began to take further positive steps on the citizenship rights of immigrants. (SVR, 2015)

#### **4.2. Building a Public Sphere**

Habermas (2005) analyses the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain, France and Germany to define the ideal type of bourgeois public sphere. He argues that small intellectual bourgeois communities were meeting at saloons in France, tea houses in Britain and coffee houses in Germany to discuss literature, art and politics from a critical perspective, and formed an oppositional space independent from the authorities. The spread of such groups of educated bourgeoisie led to the formation of press and journalism, which acted as a communicative tool among different public communities and intensified their political power. The main feature of these communities was the socio-economic equality of voluntary members. As a consequence, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was possible to witness the politicization of the social life, the rise of journalism and the spread of networks that struggled for freedom of expression. (Habermas, 2005; Finlayson, 2005)

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, such initiatives were developed within the working class which had been excluded from the citizenship rights. Enlargement of the public sphere paved the way for the formation of the mass democracies. Such political and cultural mobilizations and initiatives lead to various and competitive public spheres. Exclusion of the culturally and

politically motivated lower classes mobilized and multiplied public spheres. (Habermas, 2005) It is possible to demonstrate remarkable similarities between the birth and formation of the transnational social space of Turkish-origin immigrants in the last six decades, with the formation of historical bourgeois public spheres, as explained by Habermas.

The transnational social space of Turkish-origin immigrants is a distinctive public sphere. Its distinction is based on the fact that this space is not formed within borders of a nation-state, demands for citizenship rights had a secondary importance, mainly focusing on the demand for double citizenship and reference was given to the country of emigration, Turkey. When Turkish-origin workers were invited to work in the 1960s, the guest-worker program was based on the temporariness and rotation of the workforce, so that Turkish-origin workers were expected to work a few years in Germany, and then, would return to Turkey. Therefore, only accommodation was provided by the authorities/companies. Social space was constructed by guest workers. Turkish-origin workers could address all their cultural, religious and social demands and necessities through grassroots initiatives. In a foreign environment from every aspect, through the establishment of coffee houses, mosques, fellow townsman associations and political associations, Turkish-origin immigrant workers tried to consolidate inner solidarity; shared experiences and information about laws, regulations, attitudes of authorities and working conditions; worshiped and celebrated religious festivals; and fulfilled their social and cultural necessities. As a consequence of all these Turkey-referenced associations and networks, Turkish-origin immigrant guest-workers found ways to stay permanently and provided opportunities for their families and other immigrants to migrate to Germany.

As a consequence of such transnational social space, struggles and polarizations of politics in Turkey could be transferred to Europe. Even the second and third generation immigrants, who have never lived in Turkey and never directly felt and experienced such problems, could engage in political movements, and may be polarized on the issues like Turks-Kurds or Sunnis-Alevis, and could re-produce such conflicts in the country of immigration. However, such confrontations, struggles and polarization are in parallel with the ones in Turkey but they are not the same, their dynamics vary and the problems are re-evaluated (Başer, 2013). The transnational social space provides a fertile ground for Turkey-referenced problems, contradictions and expectations, which are transferred and re-produced. Such events do not necessarily leave aside the Turkey reference, because feelings and approaches towards the home country for the second and third generation are not sourced solely from the symbols, traumas and values transferred from the previous generation, but also they can follow,

experience and contribute to the current developments, political agendas of Turkey on a daily basis via technological opportunities, i.e. TVs, newspapers, internet and frequent charter flights. Citizenship links of the majority of Turkish immigrants with Turkey and duties (i.e. military service) / rights (right to vote) of the citizenship also re-produce such relations.

These two spheres form a dynamic relation and feed each other. For instance, being elected to a position at the workplace, being active and visible in these organisations also brings prestige within the transnational social space. There are many instances where shop stewards or works council members transfer their skills and prestige between these two spheres. As a consequence of gaining years of experience of organisation, learning democratic mechanisms, creating alliances, representing people at various occasions, meeting thousands of workers and helping to support them when they face a problem, immigrant shop stewards can transfer such skills and knowledge to become active within their immigrant communities.

While Turkish-origin immigrant workers' social relations, inner solidarities or divisions within their own transnational social space influence the public sphere provided by workplace level social organizations, from the other point, being elected to a position at workplace level organizations, being active and visible in these organizations also bring prestige within the transnational social space.

### **4.3. Conclusion**

The concept of migrant, particularly in Europe, is not limited to people who migrate but can be transferred, as if it were a genetic trait, from generation to generation. Large numbers of people who were born, educated, brought up, employed and married in the country to which their parents migrated are not able to shed the status of migrant because of their religion, native tongue, name, or the country of origin of their parents and fail to become part of the local population. Education and employment policies, in particular, shape the social status and opportunities of second and third generation migrants.

Once the period of being guest workers was over, Turkish-origin migrant workers settled permanently in Germany, renewed their work permits, brought over family members, and worked in the industry and the service sector. For nearly 60 years, Turkish-origin migrants have featured prominently in the historical experience of the German working class.

In Germany, during the 1970s and 1980s, the labour union was of particular significance to Turkish-origin migrants – since trade unions were the key organisations in which they

could defend their rights. The democratic mechanisms provided by the union for the representation of migrant workers gave the latter an opportunity to take collective action with German workers and workers from other nationalities. In this respect, it promoted the integration process of the migrant worker.

Trade unions, networks and voluntary associations of immigrants had a determinant role in answering their demands and expectations, such as shifting from temporary residence to a permanent one, guiding to newcomers, providing better accommodation conditions after the family merging process and looking for education and health services for family members. Apart from serving immigrants to adopt their new lives, such networks consolidated solidarity and defence against racist and discriminatory acts and attitudes, and re-produce social, cultural and religious values and transfer them to new generations. Such networks also enabled some workers to establish enterprises.

Additionally, networks, organizations and communities, which were formed as grassroots organizations based on voluntary participation of socio-economically equal members independent from any intervention of the political authorities, could involve both politics of Germany and Turkey. For instance, some communities, which are supposed to be oppressed and discriminated in Turkey, use the advantage of democratic opportunities in Germany to wage open, legal and mass activities, and aim to act as spokespersons of their communities living in Turkey. This also points to Habermas' (2005) self-organizing potential of communities.

Therefore, the dynamism of transnational social spaces of immigrants can coincide with the public sphere in the country of immigration. This allows skills, agendas and prestige to be transferred from one sphere to another, providing flexibility to immigrants and contributing to their survival strategies.

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