

From Guest Workers into Muslims

From Guest Workers into Muslims:
The Transformation of Turkish Immigrant
Associations in Germany

By

Gökçe Yurdakul

**CAMBRIDGE
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P U B L I S H I N G

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For Michal and Daphne

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Works frequently cited are identified by the following abbreviations.

- AABF: *Föderation der Alewitischen Vereine in Deutschland* (Federation of Aleviten Associations in Germany)
- CDU: Christian Democratic Union
- CSU: Christian Social Union
- DGB: *Ausländerberatungsstelle des Deutschen Gewerkschaftsbundes, Landes Bezirk Berlin-Brandenburg* (German Trade Union Federation Foreigners Commission)
- DIDF: *Demokratischen Arbeitervereine in Deutschland* or *Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu* (Federation of Democratic Workers' Association)
- DITIB: *Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği* (Religious Affairs Turkish Islam Union)
- ETZ: *Europäisch Türkischen Zivilplattform* (European Turkish Civil Platform)
- FDP: Free Democratic Party
- GEW: *Gewerkschaft für Erziehung und Wissenschaft* (Union for Education and Science)
- IGMetall: The Union for Metal Industry
- IGMG: *Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs* (Islamic Community National Perspective)
- KdÖR: *Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts* (Status of Corporation of Public Law)
- KOMKAR: *Yekitîye Komelên Kurdistan* (Union of Associations from Kurdistan)
- PKK: *Partiye Karkeren Kurdistan* (Kurdish Workers' Party)
- SPD: Social Democratic Party
- TBB: *Türkische Bund Berlin-Brandenburg* (Berlin-Brandenburg Turkish Federation)
- TDKP: *Türkiye Devrimci Komünist Partisi* (Turkish Revolutionary Communist Party)
- TGB or *Cemaat*: *Türkische Gemeinde zu Berlin* or *Berlin Türk Cemaati* (Turkish Community of Berlin)
- Ver.di: *Die Vereinte Dienstleistungsgewerkschaft* (United Union of Service Supplies)

PREFACE

LOOKING AT IMMIGRATION THROUGH IMMIGRANT EYES

ELISABETH BECK-GERNSHEIM

In the 1950s, Germany was, to a great extent, an ethnically homogeneous country. At that time, foreigners made up only one per cent of the inhabitants. Today, eight per cent of the population consists of foreigners, including those who, although they have a German passport, are considered persons “with a migration background,” i.e. those for whom migration is part of a personal or family history. Within the population as a whole, every fifth person has a “migration background,” and among children under six, it is every third child. The Federal Republic of Germany has become the “colourful Republic of Germany.”

A demographic transformation of such magnitude changes the very coordinates of society. German politics has reacted to the subsequent challenges in a variety of ways. The first phase of political reaction was characterized by *not acting*. Urgent action did not seem necessary because, according to general expectations, the increase in foreigners was only temporary. Because the migrant laborers of the 1950s and 1960s, notably referred to as “guest workers,” would soon return to their home countries—why then should the German government occupy itself with groups who after a few months would no longer be in Germany? This notion was refuted by the subsequent ban on recruitment (1973), which was meant to bring about a reduction in the foreign-born population. Paradoxically and unexpectedly, however, it contributed to its increase. Instead of returning to their countries of origin, many migrants decided to bring their families to Germany. German

policy, surprised by these unintended consequences, reacted for the most part in a helpless manner, especially with a strategy of denying reality. When it was obvious that for many, the time as a guest was turning into permanent settlement, the Kohl Government (1982-1998) sullenly countered with the motto: “We are not a country of immigration.”

After the interlude of the red-green government, which at least brought about a reform of the citizenship law, the next phase has begun with the government of Angela Merkel. The new slogan *integration* is finding a consensus across party lines. Integration is the magic word, the magic formula, which everyone refers to when the topic of migration is discussed in Germany today. Such general agreement may occur because integration is a term that allows many interpretations. In the media, politics, and in public, for example, it often includes a criticism of migrants. Sometimes in an unspoken undertone, sometimes overtly addressed is the idea that migrants are isolating themselves, even building up parallel societies. “They,” the migrants, need to change, must come out of their niches and work on becoming closer to Germany and the Germans.

This perspective, even if it does encounter broad agreement, has a decisive flaw. It is one-sidedly fixated on the “other” of the migrants, on that which is unfamiliar and therefore conspicuous, and for that reason this perspective is unable to see what many migrants have already accomplished in terms of acclimating to German culture—and at a time when no one was speaking of integration.

Herein lies the significance of this book. It is an eye-opener, a term meant to be taken literally. By presenting the perspective of the migrants and not the dominant society—“looking at integration and citizenship from the immigrants’ eyes” (p.2), Gökçe Yurdakul manages to show the situation in a completely new light. Her case study focuses on Turkish migrant associations—which the dominant society considers to be forms of isolation, of abiding in the ethnic niche. Yurdakul perceives them as the total opposite: namely, as forms of integration.

To summarize the main thesis, in such groups, migrants negotiate their social localization not in Turkey or elsewhere, but in

Germany. Their participation and/or obligation is not towards rights and duties in their country of origin, but towards those of the host country. They form their own interest groups—just like other groups in Germany, such as Catholics, doctors, women, homosexuals, handicapped people, and so on. Consequently, the interim arrangement is over: the migrants have arrived, and they are adjusting to life in the new country.

By guiding the focus in this direction, Gökçe Yurdakul's study takes on a task that belongs to the classic concerns of sociology: it both enlightens and educates. The study delivers visual instruction on the topic of integration. It tells us that integration can only succeed if the dominant society does not insist on its understanding of integration as the only true concept; rather, it must accept the perspective of its migrants. Not least, the members of the dominant society must recognize and respect what Yurdakul presents in her study in a detailed manner, based on large amounts of material—"how immigrants create their own strategies of integration" (p.1).

Anyone serious about integration will be interested in this study's look at the problem areas of practical implementation, which until now have rarely been discussed. For one thing, Yurdakul reports on the Turkish union members who time and again attempt to build connections with German unions, only to find that the interest of the Germans is limited to a type of obligatory program: "On almost all occasions, German union leaders have been invited to give talks and engage in discussions.... They generally do not stay for discussions or even until the end of the conference" (p.56). Yurdakul has similar experiences while conducting research. When she attempts to interview German and Turkish politicians on the topic of immigration policy, she is forced to note that the willingness to answer is rather one-sided: "[A]lthough political party members of Turkish and Kurdish backgrounds were generally available for interviews, German political members were not" (p.5). One can interpret such examples in different ways. One can regard them, from the perspective of the dominant society, as trivial or coincidental individual stories, and therefore meaningless. Or one can view them as an impetus to think about the situation, to reverse the common perspective. One can

begin to ask: “Who is remaining in their own ethnic niche? Who is showing little willingness to grow closer and to act together?”

Such questions are important, not only in Germany but in other western countries where the age of ethnic homogeneity is over and fundamental demographic change has begun. When such questions are posed, the cohabitation of groups is placed on a new foundation. When the members of the dominant society begin to realize what the world looks like from the eyes of the minority—“looking through immigrant eyes”—then the grand project of integration can truly succeed.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

After the Second World War, and more recently, with the formation of the European Union, Europe, in a sense, has gradually devolved into a larger region; yet along with consolidation has come a host of new problems. Notably, it has become a region of migrants with problems of social and political membership. And among all countries of the European Union, Germany has emerged as a key source of debate in terms of its migration policy and treatment of migrants (Soysal 1994; Rätzzel 1995; Joppke 1999; Sassen 1999; Castles 2000; Kastoryano 2002; Klopp 2002; Joppke and Morawska 2003). Specifically, the case of Turkish immigrants has become a paradigm for challenges faced by immigrants with respect to German civic traditions, norms and values (Abadan-Unat 1976, 1985; Caglar 1994; Soysal 1994, 2000; Amiraux 1997, 2003; Schiffauer 1997, 2000; Kaya 2001; Jonker 2004; Mandel 2008).

In this book, I discuss immigrants' claim for political representation, with specific reference to five of Berlin's Turkish immigrant associations, all located in the Turkish enclave of Kreuzberg, Berlin. One of these associations extends to the other parts of Germany, namely Hamburg and Cologne, where I have also conducted interviews. I examine how these immigrants shape their political representation as well as their social integration, either by collaborating with the receiving state or by challenging state hegemony over immigrant integration. What I do here, unlike the existing studies, is to discuss immigrant political representation through immigrant associations and their claims for membership through their participation in the politics of the new society. In other words, I explore how immigrants create their own strategies of integration by political participation and negotiate their social rights and obligations with the German state. This is the major

contribution of this book: looking at integration and citizenship from the immigrants' eyes.

While I argue that Turkish immigrants in Germany politically incorporate into the majority society through their immigrant associations, I contend that they do so in diverse ways. To be specific, the immigrant associations are shaped by the socio-political contexts in which they have emerged and developed. It therefore follows that the socio-political dynamics shaping these associations also deeply affect strategies of integration. In order to reflect the diversity of integration strategies, I offer a comparative analysis of the following five Turkish immigrant associations: the Turkish Federation of Berlin-Brandenburg (*Türkischer Bund Berlin-Brandenburg*, hereafter TBB), an ethnic oriented association; the Turkish Community of Berlin (*Türkische Gemeinde zu Berlin*, hereafter *Cemaat*), a nationalist religious oriented association; Religious Affairs Turkish Islamic Union (*Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği*, hereafter Diyanet), a Muslim religious association that is mainly supported by the Turkish state; the Federation for Democratic Workers' Associations (*Demokratik İşçi Dernekleri Federasyonu*, hereafter DİDF), a left wing association that supports workers' rights; and the Islamic Community *Milli Görüş* (*İslamische Gemeinde Milli Görüş*, hereafter *Milli Görüş*), a Muslim religious association that is not supported by the German or Turkish states and which, in fact, is considered a "threat" to both German and Turkish societies.

By examining these associations' views on assimilation/multiculturalism, nationalism/ ethnicity, and secularism/ Islam, as well as their relations with mainstream German political parties and trade unions, I show that immigrants are not passive recipients of the German state's political decisions. Rather, these immigrant associations develop their own patterns of integration, depending on their interactions with the receiving state. In this process, Turkish immigrant elites become important political actors in the negotiation of rights and memberships for their ethno-national group, and in some cases, also for other disadvantaged groups. In sum, I suggest an approach that recognises the agency of the immigrants in both socio-political discourse and the governing process.

Three main questions crosscut the chapters of this book. First, how do immigrant associations participate in politics and establish social networks and political lobbies? Second, how do immigrant associations confront and/or modify traditional concepts (such as nationality/ ethnicity, secularism/ Islam, assimilation/ multiculturalism) and civic traditions (such as citizenship)? And lastly, how does the relationship between state authorities, political parties, trade unions, and immigrant associations influence immigrants' integration? Specifically, how does interaction with German institutions and the socio-political environment shape Turkish associational policies and campaigns? In short, I analyze how immigrant associations shape the integration of Turkish immigrants in German society, in an effort to understand how these immigrant communities transform German civic traditions.

This book unfolds as follows. In Chapter Three, which deals with the history of immigrants in Germany after 1961, I focus on the situation of Turkish immigrants, the emergence of immigrant associations according to different migration waves, and their shaping in key events, with specific reference to historical changes in Turkey and in Germany. Chapters Four, Five and Six are based on my fieldwork, mostly in Berlin, but also in Hamburg and Cologne. In each chapter, I discuss a specific immigrant association in terms of its historical development and its particular relationship with Turkish and German states and politics. Then I locate associational claims for political representation on the axis of multiculturalism/assimilation, nationalism/ethnicity, and secularism/Islam, showing how the association's relationship with the state influences its political representation and the development of its social integration model. Finally, I illustrate some typical outcomes of this relationship by using a particular court case, the headscarf debate which can be considered as a political claim, or ideological stance.

Within this framework, I analyze the DIDF as a marginalized immigrant association which establishes relations with German trade unions (Chapter Four). I look at the TBB which receives support from the German state and promotes the idea of assimilation, comparing it to the *Cemaat* which receives political support from the Turkish state and campaigns for Turkish

nationalism in Germany (Chapter Five). And I compare the *Diyanet* and *Milli Görüş* which received public attention specifically after September 11 (Chapter Six). I conclude by noting that immigrants' claim for political representation results in the social transformation of both the immigrant associations and the civic traditions of the German state. I explore the nature of this challenge by locating the headscarf debate within Turkish immigrant associations and German political parties.

For this book, I interviewed five different groups of people connected with the five immigrant associations: (1) executive committee and managing staff; (2) managers of sub-associations; (3) clients; (4) critics of the organization, including former members; and (5) politicians.

The executive committee and the managing staff provided information about the management of the organization, its history, and its relations with other organizations and the German state. They provided access to the offices, archives, and related documents, and recommended potential interview participants. I also found phone numbers of the member organizations through the managers. In short, the interviews with the managing staff gave me a view of the overall structure of the organization and its relationship with both German society and the Turkish community.

Member organizations provided information about how they relate to the larger organization and what they expect from this cooperation. They told me about their own projects and goals, which I evaluated in relation to their umbrella association. They provided brochures, newspaper articles, and other relevant documents about their organization. In certain cases, they invited me to their public meetings to observe. Through these interviews, I discovered the relationship between the sub-associations and the umbrella associations.

Clients explained how they benefit from the policies and actions of the organization. I paid attention to the fact that clients are representative of first- and second-generation immigrants, men and women, employed and unemployed. For their part, critical people, such as former members of the organizations, provided valuable information about how and why they criticize the organization and offered suggestions as to what might be changed. Through such

interviews, I learned things that had not been revealed to me by the umbrella associations themselves.

With respect to German authorities and political parties, I conducted participant observations with two groups of people: a) Foreigners' Officers in different municipalities and the Coordinator to the Chair of the Berlin Foreigners' Office; and b) political party members with connections to the immigrant organizations. Foreigners' Officers provided information about government policies and their relationship to these immigrant organizations. I asked questions about the specifics of the relationship, such as financial support, collaborative campaigns, and personal connections. I evaluated relationships in terms of agreements or disputes over common policies and projects, specifically with respect to issues of education and employment. Political party members with connections to immigrant organizations also provided information. I approached members of the *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* (Green Party), *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Social Democratic Party), *Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* (Christian Democratic Union), and *Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus* (Party of Democratic Socialism) responsible for foreigners' policies. I asked how the current immigrant integration policies are constructed and enacted. I addressed the issue of what kind of campaigns they carry out with immigrant associations, how they relate to each other, and what kind of agreements or disputes they may have. Interestingly enough, although political party members of Turkish and Kurdish backgrounds were generally available for interviews, German political members were not. Therefore, in the latter case, I collected information through their press consultants, public speeches, websites, newspapers, and local TV channels.

I looked at newspapers, government reports, and publications of the immigrant organizations. First, I scanned hard copies of major German and Turkish newspapers. I pulled out the important events for the Turkish community, such as campaigns, street protests, or the introduction of immigration policies. I found newspaper articles relevant to the TBB, the *Cemaat*, the DİDF, *Diyanet İşleri* and the *Milli Görüş*, and listed these newspaper clippings chronologically. In this way, I could detect how the associations have responded to

the major events, organizations, and public figures in Berlin. This was also important in order to determine how the immigration organizations have developed their policies in relation to social, political, and economic events. I analyzed the detailed and informed historical account of the Turkish community in Berlin by situating these immigrant organizations within the key events of the past 14 years (1991-2005).

Second, government reports provided useful information about the declared policies of the state and political parties with respect to Turkish immigrants. In these texts, I found legal procedures, statistics, and lists of recognized organizations. Legal procedures showed the difference between law and practice. Government lists of recognized associations revealed that the government recognizes the legitimacy of only certain immigrant organizations (such as the *Wegweiser* in the *Ausländerbeauftragte*, which lists immigrant organizations in Berlin). These organizations evidently appeal to state policies and needs, and therefore may be eligible to receive state funding. I evaluated these government reports in relation to the findings of my participant observations and interviews.

Third, I examined the publications of the immigrant organizations. These included brochures, quarterly journals, and media announcements. I assessed the information in these publications by comparing them to newspapers and government reports to see whether various agencies (German society, Turkish immigrants, and immigrant associations) have different perspectives about a given issue. Fourth, I analyzed associational archives, newspaper clippings, journal clippings, local brochures, newsletters, e-mails, handouts, websites, and government reports, highlighting the appropriate themes in each. On occasion, I taped local television programs to catch relevant interviews, press releases, or commercials. Finally, I gathered demographic facts from the German Statistical Office website. Official statistics of the German state provided information about how governments have perceived the Turkish immigrant population. I particularly benefited from the statistics of the German Statistics Office (DESTATIS).

As noted above, I am primarily concerned about how immigrant associations seek political representation in the new country and

how the political agendas of the immigrant associations lead to a variety of integration patterns. To this end, by drawing upon five Turkish immigrant associations, in the following chapters, I show how each has created its own relations with the receiving state, its own integration patterns, and its own attitudes towards secularism/ Islam, nationalism/ ethnicity and assimilation/ multiculturalism. In sum, I emphasize the important role of immigrant associations in both shaping the integration patterns of immigrant communities and transforming the majority society.

CHAPTER TWO

GERMAN CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRANT POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The nation-state and the concept of national citizenship have faced major challenges in the current era of globalization. Many of these challenges are the consequences of the migration flows which have accompanied globalization and the concomitant political and economic expansion of nation-states across national boundaries (Guarnizo and Smith 1998). Immigrants today often develop ties that cross national, political, and cultural boundaries (Clifford 1994; Faist 2000), thereby contesting the concept of a unilinear relationship with a single nation-state, and forming “multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Basch, Glick Schiller, and Szanton Blanc 1994: 7).

Recently, some European states, such as the Netherlands and France, have changed their immigration policies, abandoning the idea of cultural pluralism in favour of a “new” assimilation (Brubaker 2001; Korteweg and Yurdakul 2008). The retreat of multiculturalism in more than one European country is not coincidental; rather, it is related to the high unemployment levels and economic instability in those countries carrying the lion’s share of the financial burden of the European Union, such as Germany, France, and the Netherlands. Borders have become tighter, and immigration regulations have become harsher, as one ideology (multiculturalism) yields to another (new assimilation) in Europe (Brubaker 2001).

Given these countervailing trends—the increasing migration flows and the tendency to tighten state borders—the political rights of immigrants are an important and often contentious topic. In some countries, such as Sweden and the Netherlands, immigrants are

encouraged to participate in the political decision-making process (Bloemraad, Korteweg and Yurdakul 2008). This is not the case, however, in many EU countries, even when immigrants have been residents for decades, and this is becoming an increasingly problematic political issue.

Some scholars argue that non-EU nationals, residing in EU countries should have political rights as soon as they satisfy residence requirements (Bauböck 1996). In this way, naturalization of immigrants will become merely a symbolic concern, and political integration into the new country will be greatly facilitated. In some cases, immigrants who choose to be naturalized are asked to give up their citizenship in their country of origin (Brubaker 1989a, 1989b; Layton-Henry 1990). However, as Rainer Bauböck argues it may be unfair to require such renunciation, especially as many naturalized immigrants pursue projects that are tied to their country of origin, regardless of whether they maintain legal citizenship there (also see Cinar 1994).

Drawing on the growing literature on immigrant integration, I argue that we should also look at the political integration of immigrants from the perspective of immigrant associations, taking into account their inner dynamics. By so doing, it is possible to see how immigrant associations mobilize to claim rights, negotiate memberships, and how their members become citizens through participation. This is particularly significant in Germany, where citizenship has been heavily defined in ethnic terms (especially until 2000)¹ (Hansen and Köhler 2005). Studying immigrant associations as a syncretic point at which immigrant political participation is activated, allows us to see the discussion of group rights from a new and complementary angle.

The Challenge

The migration literature has chiefly concentrated on how the majority society perceives and deals with immigrants as a source of potential problems (Bourdieu 2004) and has rarely investigated how

¹ In 2000, German government introduced a new citizenship law that combines *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis* citizenships.

immigrants transform the country of settlement (for exceptions, see Kemp et al. 2000; Goldring 2001; Klopp 2002; Jacobson and Ruffer 2004). Studies of immigrants and the theoretical approaches that analyse immigrant rights in Europe also tend to consider immigrants as victims of the receiving country's political decisions (Berger 1975; Gitmez 1979; Castles 1980; Abadan-Unat 1985), and this may not always be the case. Furthermore, such studies usually focus on macro levels (Soysal 1994; Sassen 2003), rarely acknowledging the significance of immigrant political mobilisation in the negotiation of social membership.

In this book, I look at how immigrants transform the civic traditions of the new country through their own associations. I analyze how immigrant associations formulate and enact their political representation and how immigrants make claims and negotiate memberships through immigrant associations. I consider how they make political decisions, organise organize campaigns, and develop strategies in relationship to the political organisations organizations of the majority society. I attempt to show that immigrant associations are not isolated and passive recipients, but rather, active political agents in the political system (Kemp et al. 2000).

Of course, the issues around immigrant political representation, participation, and integration have been discussed in the social sciences literature (Miller 1981, 1989; Gitmez and Wilpert 1987; Özcan 1989; Schmitter-Heisler 1992; Bauböck 1996, 1999, 2003), but such studies are mainly concerned with the function of immigrant associations in representing immigrants' rights and interests. Since the permanent residence of migrants was not a concern in Europe during the 1980s, these earlier studies did not propose long-term solutions to immigrant political representation; nor did they consider its relation to citizenship.

As immigrants have become increasingly important political actors in European countries, interest in immigrant political representation has mounted. Several recent studies focus on immigrant claims-making and/or immigrant incorporation (Soysal 1994, 2000; Statham 1999; Ogelman 2003; Koopmans 2004; Koopmans, Statham, Giugni and Passy 2005). But these studies deal with state-immigrant relations through an external perspective

and fail to fully show the inner dynamics of the immigrant associations. It is these inner workings which shape the associations' reactions to state authorities.

A recent study by Eva Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) and an earlier study by Werner Schiffauer (2000) attempted to show how the politics of the country of origin have been carried to the political realm of the country of settlement by immigrant associations. Both studies successfully show the inner dynamics of specific immigrant associations, using ethnographic field methods. But even in these more sophisticated and insightful researches, the attempts made by immigrant associations to influence the political decision-making processes in the receiving state have not been a primary concern.

My aim, therefore, is to explore the ways in which immigrant associations seek political representation in the country of settlement, and how these lead to a variety of integration patterns. Through their associations, immigrants seek to integrate into the majority society in their own ways, rather than in the ways imposed on them by state authorities. Immigrant associations emerge as legitimate political actors in the receiving country, as their members attempt to be accepted as citizens through civic participation, transforming their own communities and the civic traditions of the receiving state in the process. More specifically, in the book, I ask three key questions: 1) Why do immigrants form political associations? 2) How do immigrants use them to solve their conflicts within the majority society's politics? 3) What are the consequences of this immigrant political mobilization for both the immigrant communities and the majority society?

In seeking the answers to these questions, I draw on Bauböck's discussion on conflicts between the majority society and immigrants. I review how certain key conflicts form between immigrants and the majority society, namely, distributive, cultural, and boundary conflicts² (Bauböck 1996). *Distributive conflicts* derive from economics and assume that immigrants are financial burdens on the majority society. The counter-argument states that

² Bauböck includes ideological conflicts, but in my fieldwork, ideological conflicts seemed to dissolve into the other three, especially cultural conflict.

immigrants actually contribute, more than they take financially from the majority society (Fox 2004; Neumayer 2004; Cunningham and Tomlinson 2005). The notion of *cultural conflicts* stems from the argument that immigrant cultures and norms threaten the homogeneity of the majority society. Counter-arguments propose solutions to integrate immigrant culture and norms into the majority society (Joppke 2004; Pautz 2005). The last conflict, *boundary conflict*, questions whether immigrants can be legal, political, and social members of the country of settlement (Soysal 1994; Jacobson 1996; Sassen 1999). This argument is based on three propositions of immigrant integration: assimilation, cultural pluralism, and post-national membership. Each proposes different solutions to immigrant integration.

The three types of conflict cited above are central immigrant problems in Western liberal states today, appearing specifically in the current socio-political context of Germany (Castles 2000; Klusmeyer 2001; Pecoud 2002; Allievi and Nielsen 2003; Nielsen 2003), where they constitute the primary reasons for immigrant mobilization. Immigrant associations are primary actors dealing with these conflicts.

Defining the “Crisis”

In discussing how immigrants pose a challenge to the civic traditions of the nation-state (Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Yurdakul 2008), I turn to Gramsci’s use of the term “crisis,” and Stuart Hall and his collaborators’ use of the same term in *Policing the Crisis* (1978). Gramsci shows that organic crises in society, such as Black or immigrant political resistance, erupt not simply in the class struggle but also in industrial and economic life and in debates about sexual, moral, and intellectual questions in relation to political representation. In his book, Hall and his co-authors take Gramsci’s definition to discuss crime in contemporary London. They note that Black youth are targeted as notorious muggers. One cannot detect an increase in the number of mugging cases in the “crisis” period, however, and Hall finds evidence that the “crisis” has been constructed by the police and British media, who also represent mugging as Black youth crime.

In a similar fashion, immigrants are targeted as the cause of “social disintegration” in Germany. In the Gramscian sense, the “crisis” or “social disintegration,” as it is referred in the social sciences literature, shows itself at different levels of society. As the problems of the EU-expansion jeopardize German politics, immigrants are accused of being a burden on German society by German politicians and the German media. In this “crisis,” state strategies, such as compulsory German language courses for immigrants, the banning of double passports, and the requirement of full-time employment, represent an intensive and rigid control of immigrants’ lives, specifically for those from non-EU countries.

In this “crisis” period, even as German politicians and the German media target immigrants as sources of “social disintegration,” political resistance is being strengthened among immigrants. As immigrants have lost faith in the sincerity of the German state, and doubt the ability or the desire of political parties and labour unions to protect immigrant rights, more politicized immigrant political resistance has developed in Germany (*Türkische Gemeinde in Deutschland* 2003; Akgün 2004; *Kanak Atak* 2005).

Echoing back to Hall’s argument that the term “Black” is not only a racialized identity but also a common experience of racism and marginalization in Britain, we see that in Germany, immigrants share a common anti-immigrant experience, and this leads to political resistance. Here, Hall’s argument overlaps with Gramsci’s concept of hegemony. Gramsci shows that a class cannot become hegemonic if it only promotes class interests; it should also include the struggles of those people who do not have class character (Gramsci 1971; Simon 1991). In the German case, the political resistance of the Turkish associations reflects their unique qualities and cannot be reduced to a class struggle, even though it is not unrelated. That is, the associational struggle has what Gramsci calls a “national-popular” dimension, as well as a class dimension.

As the leaders and members of the immigrant associations participate in German political parties, establish immigrant political groups within labour unions, and intensify their relations with German institutions and non-governmental organizations, the national-popular dimension of their political resistance becomes