

CHAPTER SIX

TURKISH POLITICAL ISLAM AND EUROPE: STORY OF AN OPPORTUNISTIC INTIMACY

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Introduction

The maintenance of the links with the country of origin is a central question in the studies on migration in Europe, the territories of residence as those of origin no longer being conceived separately one of the other. The second and third generations whose parents migrated to Europe during the 1960s do not escape this formal remark, even if, for most of them, the notion of country of origin has not the same significance. For a long time marginal in the studies of Islam in Europe, the transnational dimension of religious belongings and mobilisations among migrants settled in Western European countries has recently started becoming fashionable.¹ The label covers, however, various definitions in a scientific debate in which the term ‘transnational’ often refers to the interference of the countries of origin in the financing of the places of worship built in Europe. Transnational dimensions of immigration are nevertheless multiple, even if considering them as *de facto* elements of migration—i.e. as flows and movements of people, of ideas and of assets which circulate between home-countries and host-countries—means simply avoiding to set up a clear and useful definition.² The developments and

¹ For a state of the literature, see Valérie Amiraux (1999, a and b). Concerning the fluidity of religions with respect to political borders, see Rudolf & Piscatori, 1997.

² The transnational dynamics of Islam are not exclusively limited to the migration waves to Europe. In fact, the membership of the *umma*, the believing community, is not structured by a territorial and geographical principle. The assimilation of the Muslims to a community is a recurring *cliché* of migration studies. The community concept (*umma*) is part of the Qurʾān (5: 143/137). It therefore fits more-over less into one religious specific character than in political continuity with the post-Muhammad period. The *umma* is not however comparable even less assimilable to a state as it is defined as exerting its sovereignty on a territory defined by

evolutions of some Turkish Islamic associations settled in Germany is a relevant illustration of how two national arenas of socialisation may interact and give birth to what I call transnational space (in a similar approach, see Faist, 2001). In this perspective, political Islam as embodied in Turkey in the experience of the ex-Refah Partisi, today Fazilet Partisi,³ is of central interest: how did the party benefit from the migration, capitalising and mobilising resources at an individual as well as collective level?

The history of the establishment of Turkish Islam in Germany is relatively well known. The ‘culture of the back-yards’ (*Hinterhofkultur*) which characterises the way in which Islam develops in Germany, revolves around certain groups which distribute the production of the religious assets and compete in the management of the believers. The three most significant actors of Turkish Islam in Germany—at least from a quantitative perspective—(namely the *Süleymançılar*, the *Diyanet* and the *Millî Görüş*—hereinafter the acronym IGMG for *İslamische Gesellschaft Millî Görüş*) are the result of transfer from Turkey to Germany.⁴ This move is partly, as in other European countries, motivated by the needs of the first migrants to reconstitute the basic conditions of practising their faith (basically *halâl* food circuits and places of worship, being firstly prayer rooms then proper mosques, during the second half of the 60s). But partly, it is also the consequence of

borders (Watt, 1968). In the political context of Western Europe, the term ‘community’ falls under the dialectical tension between universalism and particularism which structures the modern Nation and postulates the overshooting of the community links as a condition of citizenship. In the current situation of Islam in Europe, be it only with respect to its ethnic diversity, the Muslims’ community is however more imagined than lived.

³ In the text, we will stay with the former name *Refah Partisi* rather than the current one (*Fazilet Partisi*). This decision is based on the fact that the events we are referring to concern a period (1996–1997) during which the party was still called *Refah*. It has been renamed *Fazilet* from 1998 onward.

⁴ A selection never aims at covering the whole spectrum of trends especially when it comes to religious groups. This restriction of the sample to three associations is based on their common features: they are all Sunni, they are quantitatively the most significant Turkish associations in terms of membership, and represent three different ‘ways’ of dealing with Islam and politics in Turkey: a mystical-brotherhood way (the *Süleymançılar*), a public-official way (the *Diyanet*), and a political-islamist one (the *Millî Görüş*). Working on religious membership imposes a clarification of the means of dealing together with a population with multiple practices. In our fieldwork, we have circumscribed the Turkish Muslim sample by selecting them on the basis of their formal membership of the one of these three Sunni associations. For instance, this text does not deal with Alevis.

the political repression against religious political organisations in Turkey at the time of the coups in 1970 and 1980 for example.

This paper aims to show how a particular trend of political Islam in Turkey, namely the *ex-Refah Partisi*, has drawn benefit from the expatriation of a part of its structure in Germany. Beyond a quantitative evaluation of the performance and the effectiveness of transnational space based on fund raising ability and voters' mobilisation, how far can the Turkish migration to Germany be considered as a resource of a particular significance for such a political organisation? The heuristic value of this case study derives from the idea that networks of young Turkish Muslims settled in Germany draw advantage, in particular as regards political representation, of their environment although not being citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany. This refers to the divergences between, on the one hand, the logic produced by the standards and the institutions on either side of the migratory flows—i.e. in Germany the law on nationality, in Turkey the complex articulation between Islamism and secularism—and, on the other hand, the collective and individual strategies of Muslims living in Germany. In between emerges what I mentioned earlier as being a 'transnational space' facilitating the capitalisation of a number of resources, material or symbolic. The Islamic associations—i.e. arguing for recognition and defence of the Muslims' rights—in which individuals choose to engage being ordinary members, militants or leaders, provide individuals with alternative forms of participation to the classical participative ways a citizen is supposed to deal with. Temporarily disconnected from both German and Turkish national sovereignty, individual and collective actors organise the ways and the means of their participation by other channels than that of citizenship. Moreover, these avenues of participation and mobilisation intervene in a German context giving the religious reference a stability, a longevity, a radically new and different autonomy and independence as compared to what the Turkish environment proposes (Kriesi, 1991).⁵ The capitalisation of the resources by the group as well as by the individual is therefore facilitated by the context.

⁵ These analyses concentrate however on fixed interpretation isolating the institutional appliance of any dynamic relation, of any interaction with the actors in movements. I will refer to it in this article from a point of view of the split into two spaces of action between Turkey and Germany, and without neglecting the tactical choices made by the actors, being associative or individual.

In this chapter, I shall focus on the 'conditions of production' of this transnational space, stressing the relevance of the adequacy between a context and certain types of claims. For instance, how does the mobilisation of religious belonging work, as far as a greater political visibility of Islam in Turkey and a strong movement of privatisation of religion in Germany are concerned? The Islamic groups, mainly associations, initially evolving in a context where they act as minority, gradually try to adapt to it by drawing its resources, winning in autonomy and in mobility with a dual prospect. On the one hand, the prospect is highly political and indexed on the country of origin. On the other hand, it remains cultural, being intended for customers who are young believers born and socialised in Germany, radically different from the prime waves of migrants they are the children of. This analysis will be covered in three steps. In a first part, I will come back to what I define as transnational space in which different types of actors, individual or collective, intervene between Turkey and Germany. I shall start with a brief survey of the state of the art and a summary of the way the label 'transnational' has been used in the context of migration studies and especially applied to the example of Muslims settled in Europe. In a second phase, I shall focus on the path dependent on these mobilisations, confronting the specificity of both contexts, Turkish and German, as far as the relationship between state and religion is concerned. Lastly, a third part of this paper will elaborate on how transnational space has been used and what can be drawn as limits to the capitalisation of resources in the case of Turkish-Islamic associations in Germany and the conversion of resources to Turkey.

1. *From transnational ties to transnational spaces*⁶

Far from being univocal in its use and its significance, the term 'transnational' goes beyond the simple official report of the migratory reality, and crosses several prospects. Being conceived either as challenge to the sovereign right of the nation-state to control and defend its borders, as international agreements and norms producing new forms of constraints, or as indicator of tensions between the denationalisation of economic spheres and re-nationalisation of the political discourse, the term is however too often reduced to a security

⁶ This analysis has been developed in French in V. Amiraux, 1999b.

prism associating mobility and threat, in particular when it comes to religion. The growing use of transnational as qualifying the emergence of non-official actors competing with nation-states on the international relations scene (Risse, 1995) goes together with a switch in the perception of the world from a stato-centred towards multi-centred perspective (Rosenau, 1980).

Networks and secondary groups are key actors of these transnational movements, on a collective scale as much as individual, in particular as they offer an alternative in terms of benefits, or even enjoy certain regulating effectiveness (Colonomos, 1995, 1998). The concept of network deserves a brief clarification. In the way I use it, it designates on the one hand the position of an individual actor mobilising its multiple belongings to diverse community type organisations, being its family, its tribe, the village he is coming from or the association he is member of. On the other hand, I consider networks from a policy perspective and then as the result of a more or less stable cooperation between organisations (associations) which know each other, can work together in order to negotiate with public authorities, exchange resources and share norms and interests (Le Galès and Thatcher, 1995). Then the contacts, coalitions and interactions crossing the official borders, not mastered by foreign policy central authorities and other institutions of the various governments occupy a central place (Keohane and Nye, 1972), making possible in particular the use of the 'solidarity' resource as was the case within the Muslim population in Europe at the time of the Bosnia conflict. This development has been mainly helped by the technical support of new methods of communication, changing scales in time and space, by the increasing power of the media. To put it briefly, transnational dynamics demonstrate that the political practices do not need anymore to be activated from a national territorial basis in order to be effective.⁷

As far as Turkish Islamic associations in Germany are concerned, the transnational dynamics become for them a working method and provide them with different types of resources. From a constraint inherited from the migratory waves, the de-territorialisation produced a space of action in which the defence of different interest could be

⁷ In several countries, for instance Israel and Turkey, return trips to countries of origin (and of citizenship) have been organised by parties such as the *Likud* or the *Refah* for important elections.

gathered. In particular, this possibility for the Islamic Turkish association to delocalise their activities from Turkey to Germany helped them maintaining intimate ties with the electorate and militancy in Turkey especially during difficult moments such as the *coups d'état* (in particular the last two ones). Relatively to the uses of the label 'transnational' as an alternative circuit to the action of the state, or even a threat to state sovereignty (Sassen, 1996), it seems to me an absolute necessity to keep distance from a reading considering transnational dynamics exclusively in a relational and linear prospect in which nation-state remains the ultimate principal and exclusive framework of reference. In doing this, I intend to give priority to a reading in terms of social spaces conceived by Bourdieu as a combination of social positions and lifestyles, shedding light on the reorganisation of the relationship between geographical space and social space (Bourdieu, 1979). I then conceive the transnational dimension rather in a spatial perspective than in a linear one. Hereby I identify a form, of the structures, a number of functions, i.e. 'the space of the social practice, that the sensitive phenomena occupy, without excluding the imaginary, projects and projections, symbols, utopias.' (Lefebvre, 1974, 19). This concept of transnational space avoids an exclusively bilateral perception of cross-national ties and insists on the idea that social practices can be produced in a space which is to a certain extent, as I shall demonstrate in the last part of this chapter, autonomous regarding national determination. It makes it possible then to envisage the social processes in their coexistence and their overlap. I would therefore suggest to adopt the definition of transnational social spaces given by T. Faist and which he applies to a broader reality (Turkish migrants in Germany) than the one I am focusing on: 'Transnational social spaces are combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organisations and networks of organisations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places' (Faist, 1999, 40). The social arena that members of the Islamic associations in Germany are evolving in consists therefore in an 'interplay of their social positions in two different societies and is characterised by a severe deficit in symbolic and identity capital in regard to both societies.' (Caglar, 1995: 320) The latter point is of considerable interest insofar as these practices resulting from transnational space do not deal exclusively with an economic entrepreneurship (e.g. ethnic business, see Cassarino, 1997) based on traditional, cultural, religious activities, but can be extended

within political careers. Moreover, in the post-migratory context of Western Europe, national spaces lose their political obviousness. In fact, one does not reside systematically in the country one is citizen of.⁸ The involvement of the actor in a plurality of dynamics reflects a certain pluralism at the scale of the individual whose reintegration in a national political system is neither automatic, nor completed without difficulty. The polychrome belongings and the multiplicity of the subsystems, which single persons evolve in, establish the links between Turkey and Germany at various levels (political allegiance, economic investments, matrimonial strategies, and communications) without guaranteeing its political clientelisation in Turkey yet.⁹ Certain practices, labels, statutes do not cross the 'border', in particular in relation to different requirements of invisibility, vis-à-vis social methods of assessment exerted differently from one society to the other.

If we look at other examples of political mobilisation claiming to establish an Islamic state through political action, we have to underline the double-bind effect they are actually experimenting with. On the one hand, these movements try to settle their action and discourse in a domestic framework. This has been qualified by O. Roy as the 'nationalisation' of Islamism by contrast with the neo-fundamentalist anchored in supra-national dynamics (Roy, 1999). On the other hand, the states being socially and politically challenged by those types of developments (let us call it political Islam) entered during the 1980s into a phase of repression in some cases hidden behind the production by the public authorities of an 'official Islam', mainly through reorganisation of the curriculum and other action in the field of education (Anderson, 1997). T. Özal is the incarnation of this attempt to place religion under the control of the state by giving it a new public visibility. The Turkish *Diyanet* (Office of Religious Affairs) cre-

⁸ Turks living abroad (4% of the Turkish population) are not allowed to vote from their place of residence (through the consulates) as it is often the case for foreign people residing in Europe (cf. the Algerians).

⁹ While participating in the coalition *Refahyol* in Turkey, N. Erbakan addressed discrete signals to the Turks settled in Europe during the first six months. A first example of measures taken by Prime Minister Erbakan planned to allow the Turkish workers living abroad to bring to Turkey cars younger than five years old in exchange for a deposit of DM 50,000 in the Central Bank for at least one year. As second example, the coalition government envisaged reducing the threshold of the deposits in currencies made by Turks living abroad from 50,000 to 30,000 DM and from 25,000 to 15,000\$, also reducing the duration of these placements from two to three years.

ated by the Atatürk regime in 1924 has always played a central role in this process of facilitating state control over religious affairs, and this specific function has in a way been re-invented on the basis of Turkish migration towards Europe. In the context of Turkey, the meeting of these two tendencies (nationalisation versus control by the state) has originated a radicalisation of secularist positions.

The multiplicity of social spaces an individual is confronted with in the post-migratory context correlates in the same time a movement of individualisation among young migrants, in particular young Muslims. At this stage, the relevance of transnational dynamics has to be seen together with the generation change inside the Muslim population living in Europe. While the stay in Europe produces new ways of being Muslim, it also redefines the religious membership, both inherited and conquered, transformed and reinvented. These phenomena of hybridisation, of 'creolisation' (Hannerz, 1992), benefit from the transnational dimension, from the possibility of an individual to be implicated in several social spaces. These hybridisation processes are at the same time cause and consequence of the transnational mechanisms: 'Les Solidarités religieuses, régionales, culturelles, linguistiques et économiques inscrivent concurremment l'individu dans des espaces multiples dont l'équilibre reste fonction de l'intensité de chacune des allégeances ainsi consenties.' (Badie, 1995, 240) As a matter of fact, being a Muslim does not anymore and only correspond to a genealogy and the passive inherited registration as member of a '*lignée de croyants*' as pointed out by D. Hervieu Léger (1986), but also to a position of actor in a specific socialisation network. Moreover, the displacement of Islam from the countries of origin to the host-countries highly affects the relationship between the believer and the community of membership at various levels. When an institution has been set up, as in the case of Turkey and the Diyanet, its symbolic strength and its authority are directly undermined, individuals becoming more autonomous and, in a way, protagonists of their own faith. Recent work on Islam in Europe refers to this desegregation of the coercive power of the community of believers, the lack of institutions drawing up norms once Islam is settled in Europe, and underlines the relevance of individual choice in a context where religious practice is not any longer obvious and does not respond to any social conformism (Roy, 1998; Dassetto, 2000). The change in institutional symbolic authority underlined by O. Roy leads to the next step of our analysis e.g. the path of dependence (North, 1990, 100) of the

settlement of Islam in Europe, and the intimacy of its evolution with the patterns of political management of religious elements in the public sphere, both in Germany and in Turkey.¹⁰ Coming from an inhibited context as regards religion, and facing the series of opportunities offered by the German context in this matter (Tarrow, 1998, 76–77), the Islamic Turkish associations working for the defence and protection of Muslim rights act and get empowered without this being any longer ‘conditional on their accepting the principles, values and identity of a specific political community; that is, the socialisation process dictated by the necessity of membership and belonging in a particular nation-state’, as expressed by Favell *à propos* Y. Soysal’s argument for the opening of a post-national dimension to social and political action in post-war Europe (Favell, 1999; Soysal, 1994). Following up on this statement, the next section elaborates on the historical embeddedness of the religion-politics relationship in both national contexts and the windows of opportunities it may open to Turkish political-Islamic mobilisations.

2. *How does political Islam benefit from the specificity of a configuration?*

Muslim migrants coming from Turkey do not arrive in Germany innocent of any experience of the policy but, on the contrary, bring with them representations, symbols, and cognitive stocks. Located in a radically new and different context, they meet an environment they have to adapt to and which they can eventually use to the benefit of some specific claims. The following section deals precisely with this interaction between two distinct management of the relationship between religion and state. The religious matrix of Turkish Islam established in Germany confirms the importance of this remark. In Turkey, the *Diyanet İsleri Türkiye İslam Birliği* (DİTİB)—created in March 1924—manages the relationship between Islam and the state safeguarding the secular nature of the Kemalist project, promoting a ‘non-traditional’ Islam conforming to the standards of the westernisation project launched by Atatürk during the 1920s. The intervention of Ankara in the religious life of its nationals installed in Germany is part of this ideological narrative dominating public life

¹⁰ The Kurdish case is another extremely heuristic illustration of this as, for example, analysed by Bozarlsan, 1997 and Van Bruinessen, 2000.

and policy-making in Turkey. The Turkish state cannot let the religious life of its co-nationals settled in Germany out of control. Bypassing the Turkish state and its authoritarian management of religion while settling and developing in another territory, the Turkish-Islamic associative networks are nevertheless the reason for its move to Berlin in 1982, which follows the *coup* of 12 September 1980 and signals the entrance of the Turkish regime in a decade of growing attempts to master the visibility of religion in the public life, from Özal and his tactical use of brotherhoods and public revalorisation of religious education, to Erbakan and his political use of a religious repertoire. In the same time, this decision to set up a representation of the *Diyanet* attests to the strategy of maintenance by the state of its influence outside the national territory.

Compared to the Turkish context they are coming from, Muslim migrants coming from Turkey find in Germany a juridical architecture more favourable to religious engagement and its possible public visibility, collective or individual. Germany is more open to socialisation space than Turkey, in particular because of the autonomy which the Islamic groups have with respect to both states, Turkish and German, for recruitment and for finance.¹¹ As regards the management of religious business in Germany, the Turkish state is thus forced to take a position in the migratory field, obtaining access to Germany through embassies and consulates and then becoming an actor of the transnational space I have been defining in the first section of the chapter. With regard to the practical management of religious life, the oppositions between the Islamic government and the groups thus materialise on very basic items, in particular concerning the imams and the construction of the places of worship. The adaptability of the associative network to the opportunities provided by the German legal system in order to stabilise and realise their claims can be assimilated to an entrepreneurial logic mixing social, cultural and economic activities but thereafter maintaining the political project alive, at least on the Turkish side.

¹¹ Thus, the possibility of constituting itself in foreigners' association (*Vereine*) allows the various actors of Turkish Islam, sanctioned or even censured at certain moments of the recent history of Turkey, to acquire a legal position and visibility of which they are not inevitably holders in the country of origin. The fragmentation of the decision levels, the corporatist organisation of the institutions, that of the civil society, the state-religion, are as many elements of a partnership which enters into the dynamism of transnational space and directs the actors in their choices.

The legal and political hostility of the frameworks with regard to Islam in Turkey sees itself to some extent compensated by the advantages and opportunities proposed principally by the German legal system. The Islamic associations transplanted to Germany experience autonomy, freedom of organisation and public recognition. Consequently, moving from the perception of constraint inherited from the migratory movement, the transplantation of the main Islamic groups from Turkey to Germany gives birth to alternative socialisation arenas where different expressions of religious belongings can be expressed, trying to adapt to a new environment by capitalising all possible resources. The immediate result from this settlement in Germany is increasing competition inside the network. This can be observed at two levels. Firstly, at the associative level, political projects indexed on the country of origin govern the development of the networks in a competitive context from the point of view of the audience. The associative discourse is addressed to young believers born and socialised in Germany. The conquest of this new generation of customers becomes even more difficult in a context where pluralism becomes the social standard (Amiriaux, 2001). Religious associations are here engaged in a struggle to establish the continuity of a community not only in terms of concrete durability, sharing traditions, values, behaviours, but also at the level of its public and symbolic recognition in the public sphere, this not being the exclusive case of Islam. In the context of migration, the associations remain in the first line as regards to their mediatory function. Delocalised in Germany, Turkish-Islamic associations mobilise a number of performances ('the ability to effectively articulate and achieve organisational goals', Levitt, 1997, 510) to survive the increasing competition between the various actors of the religious field providing social services, comfort and support, facilitating the daily life, ensuring the production of cultural references to a continuously changing population. The sharing of a common experience, that of migration, and mobilisations for the defence of the interests of those involved, rather develop sector logic than corporatism. The associations fight by investing various sectors of activities (sport, teaching, social aid, *halāl* business), competing inside a new religious market where material goods but also authority over the believers are at stake. The various forms of mobilised capital, the tools of the construction of the legitimate authority, become then many instruments for gaining a better position in the transnational

space.¹² With Ankara intervening in the management of Islam in Germany after 1982, the cleavages between the various trends have been clarified through immediate competition in cities. The migratory settlement extends, in a way, the political instrumentalisation of religion from Turkey to Germany. This intimacy and resonance between Turkish domestic policy events and the sensitivity of the Turks in Germany have been more and more placed under a security blueprint, in particular after the *Refah* arrived at the head of the governmental coalition formed with the DYP in June 1996. The financial support by Islamic groups settled in Europe was even explicitly denounced by the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*, MGK) in February 1997.¹³

At a second level and in a broader perspective, this process has to be contextualised and replaced in the logic of secularisation which both Germany and Turkey are confronted with, however differently. I understand here secularisation in a broad sense as the transfer of the management of functions of general interest from religious institutions to the administration of a secular state, which obviously does not produce the same institutional configuration in the two countries. Rather than a strict separation 'à la française', religion in Turkey has been placed under official control of the state since the early days of Atatürk's Republic. Throughout history, this has led to the competing promotion of two antagonistic value systems: Islamism *versus* Kemalism. Strictly deprived of any legitimate expression in politics and in general in the public life of modern Turkey, by the first Kemalist elite, the use of religion as political tool became a tradition

¹² In Germany, public opinion has never felt so intensively touched by the argument 'Islam' as it has been the case in France, in particular because the young Turks born and live in Germany were never perceived as potential electoral supporters, even if the major political parties—SPD, CDU, FDP in particular—organised their think tank on the 'Turks of Germany' by the 'Turks of Germany'. Cem Özdemir and Leyla Onur, two MPs of Turkish origin, were long the models of this. Moreover, the export of political violence and of Turkish-Turkish confrontations on German soil is at the centre of the political problematisation of bilateral relations between Turkey and Germany.

¹³ Through this list of 20 points, the military dominating the MGK put an end to the *Refahyol* coalition mixing Islamists of the *Refah* and conservatives of the DYP. This list was explicitly delimitating the legitimate space of exercise of the policy in Turkey as conceived by the military institution. The ultimate measure points to the transnational activities of some Islamic groups by prohibiting the financing of the Turkish political parties by 'organisations installed in Europe like Millî Görüş'.

of Turkish politics after the Second World War with the introduction of multiple parties and especially under Menderes' influence. Both of these eternal enemies nevertheless structure in Turkey what Eickelman and Piscatori conceptualised as Muslim politics: 'the competition and contest over both the interpretation of symbols and control of the institutions, formal and informal, that produce and sustain them' (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996, 5). It is then an absolute necessity to define Islamism in the Turkish context beyond the simplistic idea that it consists of the political use of Islam, which would have made Atatürk the leader.

In Germany, the history of the secularisation process is based on the political regulation of the confessional rivalry between Catholics and Protestants symbolised by the institutional recognition of parity. This political regulation of religious competition gave birth to the current partnership between state and church. This partnership is of particular significance as regards to the way Islamic associations, Turkish in first line but not exclusively, have adapted their activities to the institutional German framework in religious matter, benefiting for instance from the legal opportunity to get the status of public law corporation (*Körperschaft öffentlichen Rechts*). In addition to the financial argument concerning taxation, the public law corporation would allow Islamic groups to decide autonomously the contents of the religion courses,¹⁴ of the opening of Islamic schools and places of worship. The same status manages also the presence of spiritual advisers (*Seelsorger*) in various public services (such as army, hospitals, police, prisons, and media), and benefits finally from free publicity on public televisions and radios. The material and symbolic interest of this status explains the stability of this constant claim by all the Islamic associations in Germany.¹⁵ Since 1977, various associations, gathered as federations or not, regularly address requests for official recognition by the public authorities at a local and regional level. The reason why there has not been a positive answer to this request until today is the same as elsewhere in Europe: which of the asso-

¹⁴ The on-going debate on religious teaching in Germany and the actual possibility to introduce Islam as part of the compulsory courses will certainly give new incentives and reconsideration of the former alliances.

¹⁵ The German context is not the only one to offer such a possibility to Islamic groups in Europe. In Italy, the realisation of an Agreement-*Intesa* with the State which would protect the rights of Muslim in Italy is still under review. See Allievi, 2000.

ciations can be legitimately chosen by the German government to represent unanimously the complete 'Muslim community'?¹⁶

More than a rather simple compensation mechanism, I would assess that the interests of both German and Turkish states converge as far as the management of Islam is concerned. On several points, in particular as regards religious education, the German regional and federal authorities from the 1980s chose to collaborate with the Turkish government and the Directorate of Religious Affairs. This first element is of particular importance if we keep in mind that education is the first domain in which the state in Islamic countries applies its policy of repression and control over Islam (Roy, 1999). This option chosen by the German state, even if locally some other partners can be identified, corresponds to the general way German governments have managed Islam since the 1960s: it is part of the foreign affairs agenda, in perfect coincidence with the German terminology as regards to migrants.¹⁷ The Turkish state through the *Diyanet* maintains Islam as part of Turkish domestic policy, at least out of the legitimate spheres of intervention of the German state (unless national security is at stake).¹⁸ The position of the *Diyanet* as trying to monopolise the official partnership is not however admitted and recognised by everybody, even if it results also from the convergence of the analyses made by the trade unions, the churches, the teachers who caught very early the attention of the policy-makers on the dangers of 'laissez-faire' regarding Islam in Germany. This containment line adopted by the German administration leaves Ankara a wide freedom to use the delegations of the *Diyanet* as many poles of influence and control over other fields of the social life of its citizens abroad.

¹⁶ This is a common feature in Europe. France, Italy, Germany and others face the same question without coming to a solution: who can legitimately be chosen as leader of an institutionalised Islam. Beyond the ideological and historical difficulties of finding out who could be selected as leader, this common question shows the impossible challenge for Western European countries to think of Islam out of the Church-based model.

¹⁷ The stay of the *Gastarbeiter* (host-workers) was conceived as provisional, the denominational claims of the *ausländische Mitbürger* (foreign fellow-citizens) do not register themselves on the domestic policy agenda.

¹⁸ Islamists are defined in the annual report of the *Bundesverfassungsschutz* as the extremist groups and Islamic associations aspiring to a totalitarian Islamic state, they would represent the largest potential of members placed under the influence of foreigners organisations.

The Turkish state can then be said to be an actor of political Islam present and active on both territories. If, in the Turkish context, this is linked with historical developments of the Kemalist project, in the German context, this almost monopolistic position of *Diyanet* comes as a consequence of the incapacity of the German system to conceive a national project on Islam, built in collaboration with local partners and strictly connected with the needs of the Muslim population settled in its territory.¹⁹ This position of the Turkish state obeys a double logic, being controlled on the one hand by the Turkish domestic policy agenda (the state delocalises its policy-making in religious matter), responding on the other hand to a specific situation logic, connected with a peculiar context, and with the need to react to the development in Germany of a 'deviant' from Turkish orthodox Islam as the legitimate legatee of the secular dogma built by the Kemalist elite.²⁰ The Turkish state tries again to take up position in a territory of which it is not the legitimate sovereign, as it does also through conscription and fiscal taxation. The political treatment of Islam in Germany is therefore at the crossroad of various registers, religious, cultural, security and legal, even if as such, Islam remains rather discrete in public debates. Access to nationality, until now closed, and the legal regulation of the links between state and church contribute to maintaining the legitimacy of the transnational as a method of action and resource, as a form of communication, thanks to associations receiving and transmitting information allowing the access, inside a given territory (Germany), to a sense of the community independent of any official control. Unlike other European countries, and in relation to the existence of a legal status governing the position of the religious, Islam appears marginally in the public debates on migration.

In many ways, the picture I have just given in order to explain the opportunities which in both contexts could help to understand the configuration of the transnational social space, shares a lot of elements with the concept of '*champ*' given by P. Bourdieu as a market with a dialectics of power positions, offer/demand and producers/con-

¹⁹ This remark would need to be adjusted to the various local situations.

²⁰ This control of 'Kemalist Islam' is placed, semi-officially but increasingly explicitly, under the authority of the military institution in Turkey. On an evolution of the civil-military relationship as far as Kurdish nationalism and Islamism are concerned; see Cizre, 2000.

sumers of goods, in the case of Islamic Turkish associations, religious goods. Between the different actors, the stake of the competition consists in the accumulation of an amount of symbolic capital, which would allow one of these actors to dominate the *champ*. It can even be said that the competition between the different associations can be developed with a wider range of manoeuvre as the territory in which it is taking place is far from the control by the main agent of the Turkish state in religious matter: the army. The next step will go back to the benefit or damage this specific configuration may have created. How far does this interaction of two contexts and the transnational social space affect the evolution of political Islam as illustrate the itinerary of one of its main actor, the Refah?

3. *The limits of a double-market logic*

The use of transnational space by the main associations representing Islamic-Turkish militancy in Germany is based on a switch from a cultural mobilisation in the private sphere addressed to Turks living in Germany to a political action in the public life challenging the state in Turkey. The peculiar relevance of transnational spaces can then be summarised by the following statement: transnational space helps Turkish Islamic militancy in converting a cultural discourse ('a Muslim act' as D. Eickelman and J. Piscatori would say, defining it as a mix of traditions, ideas, practices shared by a community of believers) into a political action and a challenge to the state (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996). In a way, the Islamists of the *Refah* organised the reconquest of their participation in the Turkish politics on behalf of their 'backstage' success amongst private claims of Turks living in Germany. If the *Refah*-IGMG pair appears to be a paragon of such transnational ability, it does not have an exclusive hold on it. Bosnians and Albanians of Kosovo use Germany as a mobilisation space and capitalise on various network resources, in particular material. The SDA of Izetbegovic has for instance shown a real mastering of this technique of using the network of the mosques during the electoral campaigns. On the Albanian side, money was at the core of the mobilisation of the diaspora, between Switzerland and Germany, in particular to support the KLA in Kosovo. Concerning the IGMG and the *Refah*, the Bosnian cause played a central role in the use of the humanitarian seam as from 1992, drawing on a confident capital

and financial sector. The Turks primarily between 1992 and 1995, searching for right causes over-invested in the humanitarian aid sector. In the case of the IGMG, it led to a judicial-political dispute in 1994, connected with the money collected in Germany (and in Europe) for the Muslims of Bosnia to the benefit of the election campaign of the Refah.²¹

If the financial aspect seems in fact the most obvious of the transnational businesses, it is not the only one. The collecting of voices of nationals living abroad passes through a constant and regular presence of personalities of the Refah in the activities of the IGMG. Necmettin Erbakan's regular visits to the Turks of Germany since 1975 have been fulfilling an undeniably integrative function, both to the faithful and their leaders. Number of candidates or of leaders of the *Refah Partisi* thus circulate in migratory space, reactivating the sensitivity of the base in Germany, in particular for the elections: Sevkett Kazan, Minister of Justice of the *Refahyol* government, and Abdullah Gül, Minister of State, Halil Ürün (Konya mayor) went to Munich in December 1990, and Ahmet Tekdal, substitute for the president of the party, visited Bremen in December 1990. In November 1990, Necmettin Erbakan himself started a *tournee* of the different IGMG sections in Berlin, Hamburg, Bremen, Hanover, Hesse, Stuttgart, and Munich and in other European countries.²²

Logically, many positions of the *Millî Görüş* hierarchy are drawn from Refah leaders in Turkey. In the same perspective, substantive financial support circulates from one country to the other. In 1991, the amount of money transferred from Germany to Turkey was con-

²¹ The 'Mercümeke case' as it was called by the Turkish press, taking up again the main protagonist's name, is a genuine political-financial scandal, which had many repercussions in Turkey and illustrates the permeability of two national spaces. The business started with a banal call to the generosity of the believers to help the Bosnians via a humanitarian organization, the *Internationale Humanistische Hilfe e.V.* with its seat in a mosque of the IGMG in Freiburg. See the reproduction of the call for subventions in the annex n. 5, Amiraux, 1997. No legal link attached the two organisations, but persons who work on both sides are the same. On the whole, between February and April 1993, almost DM 3 million have passed from Turkey to Germany, then from Germany to Turkey but have never reached Bosnia and were illegally used for the election campaigns of the Refah.

²² This relates to the campaign before the 1991 general elections in Turkey: 40 members of Parliament for the Refah which gathered around 17% of the votes, see Amiraux, 1997. The same processes occurred again during the 1994-5 elections campaign, see Seufert, 1999, 297.

sidered six million DM, mainly used to support the election campaign of *Refah*.²³ Working from Germany permits them to escape the control of the state without disconnecting from national themes. Since the municipal elections of 1994, and even more since the legislative periods of 1995, the transnational activism has been more directly dedicated to the interests of the *Refah*, certain elected representatives being nothing less than former leaders of the IGMG which, using migratory space as a political springboard, went back to Turkey to finalise a political career, reaching the mandates of mayors or of MP.

The transnational dimension of the Turkish Islamic organisation network finds in fact a number of reflections in individual careers. Being in the framework of the local councils for foreigners (*Ausländerbeiräte*), as local representative of the CDU or member of parliament in Turkey, there are many roads in which militant socialisation functions as a ticket for entrance into political participation. Twice, the *Refah* has made use of the repatriations of the frameworks of the IGMG on electoral grounds. In the first case, during municipal elections in 1994, Zeki Basaran (Bremen) became mayor of Agri, Salih Gök (The Netherlands), mayor of Batman, and Sevki Yılmaz (Cologne) mayor of Rize. These local candidates are justified for the hierarchy of the *Refah* by the symbolic force of their success in Europe, in addition to that fact that those individuals are all local candidates. In the case of the legislative elections in 1991 and 1995, diverse MP have then been imported from Germany to *Refah* lists. Abdullah Gencer, ex-public relations responsive for the IGMG in Germany, and Osman Yumakogullari, former president of the IGMG, were elected respectively in Konya and in Istanbul (see interviews with the author in Amiraux, 1997, and Seufert, 1999, 296).²⁴ Their return in Turkey, called back by the *Refah*, is based on a strong legitimacy of the party structure. In a way, they materialise an imagined community of which the IGMG and the *Refah* are not rivals but two faces of the same figure. In parallel, as guarantees of the link between Turkey and Germany, these persons relayed for years the political message of the *Refah*, capitalising on a legitimacy inside the organisation while acting on a different territory.

²³ *Informationsdienst*, 1/94, p. 6.

²⁴ Seufert mentions about 30 persons from AMGT in Europe who were candidates in Turkey. Seufert, 1999, 296.

Whether this involves being elected in Turkey or working in Germany, the choice of participating into politics is based on capitalisation of different kinds of resources mixing social status, political ability and economic positions, but also a certain popularity. In Germany, the foreigners' councils (*Ausländerbeiräte*) and the councils of enterprise (*Betriebsräte*) are the first arenas in which this type of itinerary can be observed, even if this is strictly limited to informative and advisory work.²⁵ Leaving the associative structures as an exclusive framework of their militant history, some individuals chose to enter German politics. These initiatives still concern a minority of persons among the Turks from Germany. However, whether this political participation is community-based and remains within a local framework and the German federal spectrum (through the one major political party), or whether this political training indicates the 'return to the country of origin', the individual actors engaged in this process capitalise on resources in a transnational space, typically as result of an individual post-migratory configuration. The label which seems the most suitable to their trajectory is the one of 'mediator' as they are able to articulate a field of knowledge and a field of power, creating a new pole of identification. Nevertheless, in some cases, those who chose to go back to Turkey did not face success, in particular as they try to validate in Turkey a legitimacy inherited from a specific socialisation process made on a different territory. For instance, when Ali Yüksel tries to get a position on the *Refah* list for the legislative in Ankara, he then has to withdraw, facing the accusation of being 'an anti-constitutional candidate' as his honorific designation as *Sheikh ül-Islam* title (title given by one of the two important Muslims federations in Germany) has been officially abolished by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk at the very beginning of the Republic (see in particular for further comments on this peculiar example Calislar, 1995). In the same perspective of failure, during the autumn of 1996, a young

²⁵ The setting up of the foreigners' councils corresponds, in the middle of the 1970s, to the awareness that a number of needs and of foreign peoples' demands were not taken into account, at the same time as it enters the German political play consisting in gaining German voices by flattering the foreigners. These councils are conceived as places of expression for non-German minorities. Primarily attended by Spanish, Portuguese and Italians until the application of the Maastricht treaty, the tendency was long that of the lists by nationality but, in Nordrhein-Westfalen for example, since the beginning of the 1990s, some Islamic lists gathering various nationalities and associations began to win the elections in the Foreigners' Councils.

Turkish member of the IGMG (in charge of the public relations of the Berlin section), elected as representative of the Berlin region to the National Convention of the CDU, had to withdraw from this mandate after an accusation by so-called secular Turks from the same German party of being an Islamist. Being selected as a representative of the CDU at a federal level implies renouncing a particular identity which this individual could not guarantee.²⁶

All these initiatives remain in fact embedded in a specific configuration in which its relevance differs, especially according to the territories. Resources are not material assets performing out of any situational logic. One can then argue for a narrow definition of the mobilisation stressing mainly an instrumental vision—the use of particular resources to come to precise ends—the relational character of the resources preventing them from being isolated from the contexts and the social configuration. Their value changes from one territory to the other according to the sensitivity of the institutions, the continuity of the structures, the political and cultural correspondences, especially as far as religion and the public sphere are concerned. Moreover, the limits of the conversion of the resources from a transnational social space to a national framework reveal the distortions between social capital and the legitimacy coefficients of which identity markers (such as socialisation in an Islamic association, title of Sheikh *ül* Islam) are affected. This also draws the limits of a strictly instrumental reading of the mobilisations and underlines the social and historical processes connected with the control of certain resources (Etzioni, 1968).²⁷ The value of resources depends upon the context in which it will be capitalised but also used (Dobry, 1986).

The ‘de-territorialisation’ concept or rather the idea of new adjacency of the territories (Bigo, 1996) consequently becomes the cornerstone of reflection on the transnational space, on its operating modes and its limits, vis-à-vis a state understood as exerting its sovereignty

²⁶ This argument is further developed in Amiraux, 1997. For press articles, see in particular *Der Spiegel*, 41/1996, *Berliner Zeitung*, 8 and 10/10/96, *TAZ*, 10/10/96, *Berliner Morgenpost*, 10/10/96, *Die Welt*, 7/10/96 and the *Presseerklärung der CDU*, 8/10/96.

²⁷ To a certain extent, this relational dimension of the resource mobilisation can be compared with the economic mobility and the relative similar economic and material situation of Germans and Turks in Germany. This equivalence of economic position does not lead to an equal identification of both groups as far as cultural, social and symbolic capitals are concerned.

on a given territory, and connected in its legitimacy and its identity with this constraint. The transnationalisation of political Islam in the German-Turkish perspective, does not signal the end of a territorial definition of state action, but reformulates the whole process. It provides for new alternatives for mobilisations, revalidating in particular the local and cross-border dimensions. These new options are particularly visible, on the one hand in the changing topics invested by the Islamic associations in terms of social work (action against drugs, sport association for men and women) which helps building a local notability, and on the other hand in the quest for performance and effectiveness in all kinds of activities, including political careers. The transnational space is in this context a kind of extension of identity belonging beyond the national borders, independently of the institution of citizenship and relatively to the needs, whether those of the *Refah* or those of individual members of the associations. This means that associations compete with the governments' exclusive powers: more than one territory which would be erased, it is the exercise of state sovereignty on it which is modified and reformulated as a joint effect of the empowerment of collective and individual actors 'free of sovereignty' (Bigo, 1996, 336–7).

4. *Conclusion*

In this chapter, I have tried to elaborate on a double-sided argument. My main hypothesis concerned the way political Islam as materialised in Turkey by the *Refah Partisi* has succeeded in using migration as a space for organising some steps of its reconquest of politics in Turkey. The first side of this statement is based on my explanation of how Islamic associations settled in Germany have been using some opportunities provided by the German context as compensation for a Turkish public sphere hostile to religion. The setting up of what I defined a transnational social space has made this capitalisation of resources possible. The other side of the argument is based on the idea that it is because of the cultural nature of the activities developed by the Turkish-Islamic associations in Germany, that the political repositioning is made possible in Turkey. Gaining political positions in Turkey is based on the investment in cultural field in Germany, then creating a certain number of limits especially in terms of symbolic recognition. At a concrete level, while governing Turkey from June

1996 until June 1997, as member of a coalition government, the *Refah Partisi* continued maintaining the sensitivity of the 'de-territorialised' audience (Turks in Europe) making various proposals I mentioned earlier, until the explicit quotation of these intimate ties in the 20-point list of measures written by the National Security Council was handed down to the constitutionally elected coalition government.

Legal constraints and opportunities defined by German institutional structures certainly affect the organisational methods and the level of the Turkish Muslims' mobilisation, the associations being obviously the principal vehicle for transnational dynamics, reducing the costs of the engagement for the recruited individuals and representing a certain guarantee of success (Klandermans and Tarrow, 1988). The transnationalisation of political Islam as embodied in the *Refah/IGMG* experience does not, however, signify the complete disconnection from Turkish politics at its ground level. Politics—being drawing boundaries, value-ordering matters and making symbols (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996), transnational empowerment of political Islam, even if mainly a matter of structure and material opportunities rather than intellectual and ideological work—'thus becomes a part of the interests-based struggle typical of any political arena' (Favell, 1999, 216). Indeed, transnational social space appears to enable some individuals to maximise an associative socialisation based on religious identity and to enter German or Turkish politics to a certain extent. The transnational space intervenes for the *Refah* as long process of reconstruction of a safe 'backstage' reservoir of finances, men, votes, which eventually can be called back to Turkey. While not having public recognition in Germany, Islam is organised and worked out in the private sphere with an implicit claim for reconquest of a lost public position in Turkey. The transnational social space appears here as the arena of this switch from cultural goods, produced for the private life of Muslims settled in Germany, to a political project articulated along religious discourses for Turks in Turkey. It could then be of interest to follow the evolution of those specific dimensions while Turkey is becoming a legitimate applicant to the European Union. The specificity of both Turkish and German histories as far as the relationship between religion and politics is concerned reminds us, however, of the heuristic need to place Muslim politics into multiple and shifting contexts, to historicise the national contexts in which this dynamics take place. With some obvious difficulties as far as the European Union is concerned: *Cujus regio, ejus religio?*

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