

Foreign in Two Homelands

What happens when migrants are rejected by the host society that first invited them? How do they return to a homeland that considers them outsiders? *Foreign in Two Homelands* explores the transnational history of Turkish migrants, Germany's largest ethnic minority, who arrived as "guest workers" (*Gastarbeiter*) between 1961 and 1973. By the 1980s, amid rising racism, neo-Nazis and ordinary Germans blamed Turks for unemployment, criticized their Muslim faith, and argued they could never integrate. In 1983, policymakers enacted a controversial law: paying Turks to leave. Thus commenced one of modern Europe's largest and fastest waves of remigration: within one year, 15 percent of the migrants – 250,000 men, women, and children – returned to Turkey. Their homeland, however, ostracized them as culturally estranged "Germanized Turks" (*Almanci*). Through archival research and oral history interviews in both countries and languages, Michelle Lynn Kahn highlights migrants' personal stories and reveals how many felt foreign in two homelands. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

Michelle Lynn Kahn is Associate Professor of Modern European History at the University of Richmond. Her research examines post-1945 Germany and Europe in a global and transnational frame, focusing on migration, racism, far-right extremism, gender, and sexuality. She was awarded the 2019 Fritz Stern Dissertation Prize of the German Historical Institute and the 2022 Chester Penn Higby Prize of the American Historical Association.

Publications of the German Historical Institute

Edited by

Simone Lässig

with the assistance of Kelly McCullough

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*Racism, Return Migration, and Turkish-German
History*

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University of Richmond



and



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UNIVERSITY PRESS



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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi - 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

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a department of the University of Cambridge.

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education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009486712

DOI: [10.1017/9781009486682](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486682)

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An online version of this work is published at doi.org/10.1017/9781009486682
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When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI [10.1017/9781009486682](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009486682)

First published 2024

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Kahn, Michelle Lynn, author.

TITLE: Foreign in two homelands : racism, return migration, and
Turkish-German history / Michelle Lynn Kahn, University of Richmond.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge
University Press, 2024. | Series: Publications of the German Historical
Institute | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2023057629 (print) | LCCN 2023057630 (ebook) |
ISBN 9781009486712 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009486682 (ebook)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Turks – Germany (West) – Social conditions. | Foreign
workers – Germany (West) – Social conditions. | Racism – Germany (West) |
Turks – Migrations. | Germany (West) – Ethnic relations. | Germany
(West) – Race relations. | Germany (West) – Emigration and immigration |
Turkey – Emigration and immigration – History – 20th century.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC DD78.T87 K346 2024 (print) | LCC DD78.T87 (ebook) |
DDC 305.894/350430904-dc23/eng/20240327

LC record available at <https://ccn.loc.gov/2023057629>

LC ebook record available at <https://ccn.loc.gov/2023057630>

ISBN 978-1-009-48671-2 Hardback

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