

Original citation:

Jordan, Jim. (2016) From guest worker to cultural cosmopolitan : evolving identities in Emine Sevgi Özdamar's short story cycle Der Hof im Spiegel. Oxford German Studies, 45 (3). pp. 330-348.

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Publisher's statement:

"This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Oxford German Studies on 25/08/2016 available online:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/00787191.2016.1208422>

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From Guest Worker to Cultural Cosmopolitan: Evolving Identities in Emine Sevgi Özdamar's Short Story Cycle *Der Hof im Spiegel*

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The title story of Emine Sevgi Özdamar's 'Der Hof im Spiegel' has received the most critical attention of any piece from the collection, leading to the neglect of the composition of the collection as a whole. Reading it as a short story cycle and examining the connections between the texts reveals that they track developments in migration and integration from before German unification into the 1990s. Through her narrator Özdamar comments on developments in social initiatives to promote integration and mutual understanding, as well as advocating direct individual contact as the basis for intercultural understanding. She also explores possibilities of identification for those with a diasporic background which look beyond social models such as multiculturalism and transcend national borders and citizenship. In particular, Özdamar explores the potential of an adaptive cultural cosmopolitanism for establishing new lattices of identification as the basis for a re-orientated subjectivity in migration.

Keywords: Özdamar, short story cycle, literature, identity, intercultural, multiculturalism, migration, diaspora, integration, citizenship

1. Introduction

The stories in Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Der Hof im Spiegel* were published in 2001 as 'Erzählungen'.¹ Normally this is rendered in English as 'short story collection', which can include formally disparate groupings of stories without consistent connections or any particular shared narrative perspective. This would seem on first consideration to reflect *Der*

¹ Emine Sevgi Özdamar, *Der Hof im Spiegel: Erzählungen* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch: 2001). Hereafter references to this edition will be given in the text abbreviated 'HS'.

Hof im Spiegel accurately: the pieces were almost all pre-published, some more than once; they vary in length from four to thirty-six pages; the sequence of the pieces is non-chronological; the nature and format of the stories is variable, some purely literary, others bordering on autobiographical or autofictional memoirs; and the collection concludes with the acceptance speech for the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize in 1999. Apart from the fact that the pieces were published in the 1990s, there is no apparent framework, let alone a consistent overarching or organizational principle.

Der Hof im Spiegel should, however, be considered as a short story cycle rather than merely a collection, not just for reasons of accuracy in form and genre but also to reveal structural and thematic consistencies which enhance our understanding. While resisting a comprehensive definition of the short story cycle, Susan Garland Mann identifies the need for the individual stories to be both self-sufficient and interdependent, and the need for a cycle to provide an understanding or experience which goes beyond the substance of the individual pieces.² Recasting the short story cycle as a ‘composite novel’, Maggie Dunn and Ann Morris identify ‘a structural aesthetic through which autonomous text-pieces, most often “short stories”, are interrelated in a coherent whole text’.³ Mann also points to the often demanding nature of short story cycles which, in contrast to many novels, feature ‘abrupt transitions’ of ‘view, time or location’.⁴ For the purposes of this essay, I see the relevant aspects of a short story cycle as a continuity of narrative perspective; an overall consistency of geographical referents, even if they are physically distant from one another; and a high degree of conceptual and thematic linkage and of development between the individual stories, even if this requires some unravelling to be made apparent.

² Susan Garland Mann, *The Short Story Cycle: A Genre Companion and Reference Guide* (Connecticut: Greenwood, 1989), pp. 11-12.

³ Maggie Dunn and Ann Morris, *The Composite Novel: The Short Story Cycle in Transition* (New York and Ontario: Twayne, 1995), p. xiii.

⁴ Mann, *The Short Story Cycle*, pp. 11-12.

There are indeed disruptions, dislocations and discontinuities in Özdamar's 'Erzählungen', but I will argue that these are part of a consistent strategy of disorientating and disconcerting the reader which has been a prominent feature of her literary and dramatic work, and which obliges the reader to recover and reconstruct the thematic and conceptual interrelations between the stories. This process of recovery is not one simply of re-sequencing or chronological reconstruction. While it is possible to relate individual stories to specific events and developments as they relate to the situation of migrants and postmigrants in Germany in the late twentieth century, this by itself is not the connective tissue of the cycle. Instead, Özdamar identifies trends and developments, indicates her stance towards them and uses them as a platform for an imaginative projection of the principles and attitudes which might shape the future experience of diaspora. To illustrate this, four clusters of themes will be examined which feature significantly in one or more of the stories: the demise of the emblematic usage of the figure of the *Gastarbeiter* to represent the range of migrant experience in Germany, and the development of a multicultural society; the reconceptualization of migration with regard to national boundaries, in part following German reunification; the question of multiple citizenship and its relation to identity needs in a world which no longer maps unambiguously onto the nation state; and the personal reconfiguration of cosmopolitan subjectivity. At each stage I will show that while Özdamar takes specific historical instances as her referents, as an author she constantly looks beyond the simplifications and the outdated and unhelpful binaries of political discourse and policy.

2. Goodbye *Gastarbeiter*, hello *Multikulti*

The reunification of Germany brought with it a growing number of xenophobic attacks, including the assault on a hostel for asylum seekers in Hoyerswerda in September 1991 resulting in its evacuation. *Die Zeit* contacted Özdamar to request a response to these

developments: by this time she had been awarded the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize in 1991 and was the author of the newly published and well received first novel *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*.⁵ She submitted ‘Schwarzauge in Deutschland’, later the second story in the collection *Der Hof im Spiegel*.⁶ As David Horrocks and Frank Krause observe, the piece does not appear to conform to the expectations of a reasoned political response to the rising xenophobia and social tensions of the time it was published; indeed, it might even be seen as inappropriate quirkiness, even flippancy, although they regard this as a misreading.⁷ Özdamar had in fact anticipated the bemusement her story would engender and had warned the newspaper: “‘Ich schreibe etwas’, hatte sie uns vorweg gewarnt, “aber es ist etwas völlig anderes, als Sie erwarten.””⁸

This story is based on the eventful rehearsals for her first play *Karagöz in Alamania*, which had premiered under her direction at the Frankfurt Schauspielhaus on 4 May 1986; it consists of three main elements.⁹ The first is a framing anecdote, in which the narrator’s discovery of a letter from a guest worker of the first post-war generation inspires her to write the play in the hope that she can invite him to the premiere to experience her creative reformulation of the guest worker experience. The guest worker playfully disaggregates the term *Gastarbeiter* into a guest who sits idly watching while someone else does the work. This deconstruction appears to invert the roles normally attributed: the Turk is now the worker, no

⁵ Emine Sevgi Özdamar, *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei hat zwei Türen aus einer kam ich rein aus der anderen ging ich raus* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1992).

⁶ This story has appeared three times under different titles but in versions bearing only minor typographical and paragraphing variations: ‘Schwarzauge und sein Esel’, *Die Zeit*, 26 February 1992, pp. 90–94; a version with a parallel English translation and an introduction and commentary by David Horrocks and Frank Krause, “‘Black Eye and his Donkey’: A Multi-cultural Experience”, in *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, ed. by David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky (Providence and Oxford: Berghahn, 1996), pp. 55–70; and the version under discussion here, ‘Schwarzauge in Deutschland’, in *Der Hof im Spiegel* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2001), pp. 47–53.

⁷ Horrocks and Krause, “‘Black Eye and his Donkey’: A Multi-cultural Experience”, p. 64.

⁸ Özdamar, ‘Schwarzauge und sein Esel’, *Die Zeit*, 26 February 1992, p. 90.

⁹ The script of the play was published by Özdamar as *Karagöz in Alamania* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Autoren, 1982). She published a short story version of the play script as ‘Karagöz in Alamania / Schwarzauge in Deutschland’ in her collection *Mutterzunge* (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1990), pp. 47–101.

longer in any real sense a guest, while the person benefiting from his labour is clearly intended as the German. Thus the figure of the guest worker is transformed into one of economic exploitation. As the guest worker remarks: 'Ein Arbeiter hat keine Heimat, wo die Arbeit ist, da ist die Heimat' *HS* 47). This looks beyond the Marxist view of the worker as the labour element in a process of production of surplus value: the migrant worker is doubly estranged from the product of his labours through the additional process of geographical displacement. The idea of home becomes a subordinated function of the need to find labour and points to the loss of belonging resulting from the capitalist process embodied in the *Gast/Arbeiter* contradiction.

In order to meet the guest worker in question Özdamar travels from Germany to Turkey by train. It gradually fills with Yugoslavian construction workers who have injured their hands with hammers so that they can return to see their wives, and old Turkish men collecting in coffins sons and daughters who have died in road accidents travelling between Turkey and Yugoslavia.¹⁰ The passengers share their laughter and sorrows in an atmosphere of solidarity arising from the risks and privations accompanying the experience of labour migration. This commonality is underlined by the intentional pluralization of the characteristics of the passengers: all the Turks have dead children, all of the Yugoslavians have harmed themselves to spend time at home. Another feature of this commonality is German as the lingua franca. But importantly the loss and physical degradation suffered by both national groups of guest workers transcends a Turkish-German binary and reveals the system of rotational labour migration as an exploitative one for all participating nationalities.

The second element of the story consists of a brief resumé of the play and an explanation of the adaptation of the Karagöz tradition. The original shadow puppet shows

¹⁰ The E5 highway was notorious for the high number of accidents and fatalities, and was even the subject of Güney Dal's novel *Europastraße 5* (Munich: dtv, 1983).

stem from the Ottoman period, and in them the wily peasant Karagöz frequently bests his noble but condescending superior, friend and counterpart Hacivat. The show normally culminates with Hacivat berating Karagöz for his misdeeds, while the latter pleads – often with tongue in cheek – for divine forgiveness for his actions. Özdamar’s transposition of Karagöz into the situation of a *Gastarbeiter* restores a voice to the economic migrant marginalized in German society.

Özdamar both contests the political appropriation of the label ‘*Gastarbeiter*’, for example by the Polynationaler Literatur- und Kunstverein (PoLiKunst) initiated in 1980 by Italian migrant writer Franco Biondi, and challenges its unreflected use as a kind of shorthand to describe either labour migrants and their families or often even foreigners in general. In 1973 the Federal Government had halted its labour recruitment in response to the oil crisis, but the overall population of guest workers and their dependants grew during the 1970s as reunited families settled in Germany and expanded. Furthermore, individual guest workers remained in Germany as they were uncertain of being able to acquire work permits if they returned to their country of origin. The members of this growing subsection of the population were in no sense ‘guests’, as they were either long-standing residents in the Federal Republic, had chosen to settle there, or had in the meantime even been born on German soil; and yet in political discourse and even in academe the term ‘*Gastarbeiter*’ persisted as a de facto legitimate ascription.¹¹

The third element of the story is an account of the growing fractiousness in the multinational cast Özdamar had assembled for the play. As Horrocks and Krause note, the national affiliations of the cast in most cases intentionally fail to correspond to their roles in the play.¹² National identities and their presumed characteristics are depicted in the piece as

¹¹ A suitable example of this is the themed volume on ‘Gastarbeiterliteratur’ published in the *Zeitschrift für Literatur und Linguistik*, 14.56 (1984).

¹² Horrocks and Krause, “‘Black Eye and his Donkey’: A Multi-cultural Experience”, p. 65.

performative and thus non-essential. Lizzie Stewart sees the use of a multinational cast as ‘countering the arguably Orientalist conception [...] in which the Turkish figure is unable to represent himself.’¹³ It is, however, also possible to see the use of such a multinational cast as breaking the bilateral conception of Turkish migration to Germany, which can only be ‘performed’ either by Turks or Germans.

The initial reverence of the cast towards each other and the project as a whole begins to break down during rehearsal under the strain of competing egos and petty personal rivalries. In the course of this the actors deploy stereotypical national characteristics and prejudices against each other. The production none the less succeeds in taking place and in a brief concluding passage Özdamar describes how in the intervening six years the cast have maintained personal contact and developed genuine friendships with one another. In terms reminiscent of her description of their initial mutual respect, she claims: ‘Sie verfolgen sich wie die Liebenden’ (HS 53). This process of mutual accommodation is of course central to the development of a genuine multicultural society which seeks to combine the integrity of cultural and ethnic identities with a harmonious public space which assures individual rights and respect. Academic philosophers of multiculturalism such as Charles Taylor or Will Kymlicka pursue the fulfilment of these twin objectives in social mechanisms such as provision for group cultural rights, which absorb difference.¹⁴ Özdamar however emphasizes the centrality of active intercultural encounter rather than passive multicultural regulation and, while expressing confidence in its ultimate effectiveness, she warns not only that social friction is inevitable but even that it is an essential part of the process. In this respect, Özdamar’s approach to interculturalism is much closer to that identified by Martha

¹³ Lizzie Stewart, ‘Counter-memory and the (Turkish-)German Theatrical Archive: Reading the Documentary Remains of Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s *Karagöz in Alamania* (1986)’, *Transit*, 8.2 (2013), 1–23 (p. 14), <<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0fq2m874>> [last accessed 5 November 2015].

¹⁴ See Charles Taylor and others, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. by Amy Gutmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011) and Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: a Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995).

Nussbaum, who notes both ‘the recognition of common human needs across cultures’ and ‘dissonance and critical dialogue’.¹⁵ Özdamar’s intercultural approach also reinforces the importance of personal responsibility as a vital element in attempts to arrive at multicultural understanding, rather than subscribing to a top-down, systemic process.

3. Shifting Boundaries

In the stories ‘Mein Berlin’ (*HS* 55–61), ‘Ulis Weinen’ (*HS* 63-5), and ‘Franz’ (113–16), all set in either divided or reunified Berlin (or both), Özdamar uses the partition of Berlin and by extension of Germany as a whole to demonstrate the arbitrariness of borders and takes the opportunity through her narrator to inscribe the Turkish and foreign presence into the events of the time. Liesbeth Minnaard describes this narrator as ‘Sevgi’, a faux naïf figure whose deceptively simple questions and observations bring the logic of the situations she observes into question.¹⁶ At times the simplistic observations of the narrator in all three of these stories appear simply crass, for example when in ‘Mein Berlin’ she tells her GDR actress landlady who dreams of travel beyond the confines of the Eastern bloc, something not possible until after she retires, that even ‘Karl May ist in seinem Zimmer auf die Reise gegangen’ (*HS* 59).

More often than not, though, the narrator provides perspectives on the internal logic of the Cold War of which those immersed in it had lost sight. Her mental map of Berlin is not restricted by its divisions, featuring sites of personal, historical, and cultural significance in both sides of the city. When in ‘Mein Berlin’ she refers to ‘Ost-Berlin’, a GDR border guard corrects her, emphasising that it is the ‘Hauptstadt der DDR’, a distinction which lacks any relevance for her beyond the restrictions it imposes on travel in the divided city (*HS* 58). The

¹⁵ Martha C. Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 82. Nussbaum’s observations stand in contrast to the views of, for example Gerard Delanty, who describes interculturalism as a ‘soft kind of multiculturalism’: Delanty, *Community* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 103.

¹⁶ Liesbeth Minnaard, *New Germans, New Dutch: Literary Interventions* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), p. 72.

narrator's frequent expressions of surprise at the fact that the two parts of Berlin experience the same weather becomes an ironic running joke about the ability of people to create artificial borders. When in 'Ulis Weinen' a female GDR citizen, able after the fall of the Wall to enter West Berlin for the first time, remarks on 'diese wunderschöne Sonne hier' (*HS* 63) the reader is forced to reflect on the extent to which Cold War propaganda and counter-propaganda have permeated and distorted the perceptions of GDR citizens. These distortions even affect the mental map of Europe created by the GDR state: in a conversation with an East Berlin boy she meets, the narrator describes Turkey, a country he is unable to place, as '[i]n der Nähe von Bulgarien' (*HS* 61), being the nearest Communist Bloc reference point with which he is likely to be familiar.

The narrator's translation of the geographical position of Turkey is one of a number of interventions and comments she makes which insert the Turkish presence into the narrative of German division and reunification, normally viewed as an inter-German phenomenon. In a range of interactions and observations the narrator aligns the Turkish presence with the events which are unfolding. The opening of 'Mein Berlin' refers poignantly to the military coup in Turkey which the narrator is fleeing and the torture and killing of opposition protestors, foreshadowing the political repression in the GDR with that in Turkey. This alignment in 'Mein Berlin' is a preparation for the participation of the narrator in the following story, 'Ulis Weinen', in the influx of curious and excited East Berliners into the Western part of the city following the opening of the border crossings on 9 November 1989. Noting the wonderment of East Berliners towards the fabled Western part of the city, the narrator applies a directly translated Turkish proverb to describe the inadvertent conditioning of its population by the GDR state to view all aspects of life in the West as superior: 'Der Nachbar glaubt, das Huhn seines Nachbarn sei eine Gans und die Ehefrau des Nachbarn sei noch eine Jungfrau' (*HS* 64). She becomes both a privileged observer of events through her

non-German status and an object of deference for East Berliners as an established resident of West Berlin, in stark contrast to her status as member of the Turkish minority in West Berlin. When the narrator enquires in a kebab house whether there is a seat free, an East Berlin woman at the table springs up to offer one 'als ob alle Stühle mein Eigentum wären' (*HS* 65). In this instance the narrator is doubly privileged in relation to East Berliners both as a resident of the West and as a Turk in the Turkish space of the kebab house. The presence of the narrator inverts the normal situation of the host and the foreigner, and she becomes the lens through which we observe the strange behaviour of both West and East Berliners.

In both 'Mein Berlin' and 'Ulis Weinen' the narrator makes frequent use of the theatrical in order to emphasize both the artifice and constructedness of the Cold War division of Berlin and the performative nature of relations between citizens from both sides of the reunited city. In the canteen of the Volksbühne in East Berlin the narrator hears of a man who fled to the West by swimming across the Spree under a fake swan's head and who succeeded in making it to the western bank despite the real swans pecking at his disguise the whole way. The natural behaviour of the swans contrasts both with the artifice of the escapee's disguise and of the unnatural border which fails so dismally to assert itself. As a student of Brecht's theatre, Özdamar through her narrator uses the trappings and ruses of the border situation to expose the unnatural Cold War division and the arbitrariness of national borders more generally.

Özdamar extends the notion of theatricality and performance to move beyond the critique of geopolitical borders and to call into question the authenticity and fixity of the identities the Cold War has given rise to. The curious Easterners exploring West Berlin and the material icons they have been denied by the austerity and self-abnegation of the GDR participate in a kind of circus, 'Kapitalismus als Zoo, KDW in der Hauptrolle' (*HS* 64). The (for the West) retro appearance and clothing of the Easterners casts them as misplaced

players from a Socialist Realist drama injected into an unfamiliar and to them sophisticated environment they do not comprehend: ‘Die Menschen aus dem Osten sahen aus wie Schauspieler aus einem Maxim-Gorki-Stück, die plötzlich ihre Bühne verloren hatten und auf einer anderen Bühne, in der ein ganz anderes Stück gespielt wurde, gelandet waren’ (*HS* 63–64). Having lost the clarity and fixity of their Cold War roles, both East and West Berliners are trying on new ones in scenes which rely on farce, mime, and the emotional exaggeration of silent film. The narrator uses the figure of the beggar, the lowest in Western society (and unknown in the GDR), to embody supercilious haughtiness towards the uncouth and unsophisticated Easterners who in turn play the role of submissive supplicants in the materialist Aladdin’s Cave of the capitalist West. A West Berlin tramp delicately picks one of the fresh banana skins – the embodiment of the new consumerist future for the GDR – out of a rubbish bin, making ‘eine große Stummfilmgeste der Verachtung’ (*HS* 64), while another mistaken by a bus driver for an Easterner exclaims: ‘DDR-Bürger? Seh ich vielleicht so aus?’ (*HS* 65). When other Westerners perform exaggerated versions of Western ‘decadence’ and free speech in order to shock the Easterners, the narrator remarks: ‘Es entstanden Gespräche, wie bei Auftritten im Theater’ (*HS* 63).

While in ‘Ulis Weinen’ Özdamar and her narrator playfully deconstruct the trappings of the Cold War, the sense of real threat and historical contingency surfaces from time to time. In ‘Mein Berlin’ the mother of one of the narrator’s hosts refuses to have central heating installed in case the Russians come (*HS* 55) and her fears have clearly been transmitted to the next generation when the narrator is accidentally locked out of the apartment by her friend Kati, who confesses ‘auch ich habe manchmal Angst vor den Russen, wie meine Mutter’ (*HS* 58). The ‘Uli’ of the following story is the narrator’s neighbour, a rich but mentally disturbed old man who is in a state of extreme distress when she returns because

he misunderstands the talk of reunification and fears that Erich Honecker is about to move in to his Dahlem villa.

In the final story of this group, 'Franz', Özdamar explores the legacy of authoritarianism and fear in German twentieth-century history and connects it firmly both with the question of identity formation or affiliation and with her developing argument about genuine intercultural relationships. In the narrator's kitchen the retired Franz tells of the cruelty he had suffered during the Second World War at the hands of his own Wehrmacht officers, and how he was helped by a Russian woman. When he is visited by the narrator he is about to give a copy of the notice of death of his former employer to the son of his guest worker friend, who had worked for twenty years for the company and had been dismissed 'unter ungeklärten Umständen' (HS 113). The passing on of the death notice is a gesture of closure or even revenge which allies Franz with his Turkish workmate against his German employer. In both instances Franz's 'normal' lines of national affiliation are disrupted by the harsh behaviour of his compatriots and redrawn according to either humanitarianism practised across national boundaries or personal and political solidarity along class lines, which we have previously seen in 'Schwarzauge in Deutschland'.

As a German growing up in the National Socialist period and as a West Berliner with immediate knowledge of the conditions in East Berlin and the GDR more generally, Franz is particularly sensitized to the possibility of being under surveillance, for example switching off the television in his apartment in case it can be used to monitor his conversations. The history of state surveillance and its use to control citizens is represented as a constant feature linking National Socialism with the Cold War, GDR authoritarianism and, in a final twist, the socially directive tendencies of the Federal Republic. At the conclusion of the story the faux naïf figure of the narrator has heard from her television that '[w]ir müssen unsere ausländischen Mitbürger vor Ausländerfeindlichkeit schützen' (HS 115). Her concern is,

however, not for herself or other foreigners but for the German passengers in a passing tram because from her perspective they are being compelled to protect foreigners. This compulsion, which she sees as making them fearful for themselves, is linked implicitly to the ruthless authoritarianism which Franz had to endure in the Wehrmacht and the still acute fear of surveillance which causes him to lower his voice when talking to his Turkish former colleague's son. This provides a historical dimension to Özdamar's instinctive distrust of the proposition that successful intercultural relations can be brought about by social injunction or by the application of systemic social templates such as multiculturalism. As we have seen in 'Schwarzauge in Deutschland', Özdamar's starting point is the centrality of intercultural experience and encounter which, while it may initially result in friction, is the basis for authentic relationships based on shared experience and enduring insights into the values and attitudes necessary for successful interpersonal accommodation.

4. Multiple Belongings, Plural Citizenships

Having considered identity and belonging in relation to borders in the previous group of stories, Özdamar extends this in the next three stories I will explore here to include the relationship between belonging and citizenship, and the inadequacy of singular citizenship or nationality to describe identity affiliations in cities and countries whose past and present have been characterized by migration, colonialism, and intercultural contact. Özdamar points to inadequacies and incongruities in the nexus between belonging and citizenship in the stories 'Mein Istanbul' (*HS* 67–76) and 'Fahrrad auf dem Eis' (*HS* 77–112). However, in the final piece in this cluster 'Die neuen Friedhöfe in Deutschland' (*HS* 117–24) she casts doubt on the capacity of the administrative expedient of dual citizenship to describe the complexity of transnational migration. When viewed within the cycle this serves as preparation for her exploration of cosmopolitan possibilities of self-identification in the opening and closing two

pieces of the cycle, the title story 'Der Hof im Spiegel' and the speech 'Meine deutschen Wörter haben keine Kindheit'.

As Minnaard observes, 'Mein Istanbul' can be seen as the final story in a sequence of three which begins with 'Mein Berlin', which provide a range of parallel reflections on the division of the two cities between East and West and in some ways the geographical poles of global East and West, Europe and Asia and the German-Turkish axis. The intervening story 'Ulis Weinen' functions in this cluster as a kind of structural caesura or fulcrum between the two substantive stories.¹⁷ This grouping is indeed convincing and revealing, and supports the view that *Der Hof im Spiegel* is a cycle rather than merely a collection, but it also shows that these groupings are not discrete or singular but rather indicative of a lattice of thematic continuities which connects the individual stories in the collection in multiple ways. However, for the purpose of following the thematic clustering we have established, 'Mein Istanbul' will be considered in conjunction with 'Fahrrad auf dem Eis' and 'Die neuen Friedhöfe in Deutschland'.

Berlin features both explicitly in 'Mein Istanbul', through the opening and closing reference to an Istanbul philosopher friend who has visited the city, and implicitly through its alignment as another divided city. However, this characterization of the city is set swiftly at odds with the narrator's descriptions of the relations between its majority Muslim population and the range of faiths and nationalities which had gathered there during its Roman and Ottoman histories. The story of the narrator's Greek family friend Madame Atina challenges the notion of Istanbul as a Muslim, monocultural city, and the narrator's mother refers to the Istanbul Greeks as 'das Salz und der Zucker der Stadt' (HS 70). Atina sees herself rooted in the Byzantine, pre-Constantinople, Greek and Christian histories of the city.

¹⁷ Minnaard, *New Germans New Dutch*, p. 79.

The idea of harmonious religious co-existence is continued in the story of the plans to construct a bridge over the Golden Horn to bring the two parts of Istanbul's European side together, the Muslim part of the divide and the non-Muslim, consisting predominantly of Jews, Greeks, and Armenians. Michelangelo is obliged to withdraw his interest in the project because, while the Sultan assures him he would not have to convert to Islam to be involved in the project, the Pope threatens to excommunicate him. When the later Sultan Mahmut II's Bridge of the Golden Horn is finally built, difference becomes performative, echoing the theatrical description in 'Ulis Weinen' of the scenes following the opening of the Berlin Wall and the presence of East Berliners in the West: 'Die Brücke wurde wie eine Bühne: Juden, Türken, Griechen, Araber, Albaner, Armenier, Europäer, Perser, Tscherkessen, Frauen, Männer, Pferde, Esel, Kühe, Hühner, Kamele, alle liefen über diese Brücke' (HS 71). National, religious and ethnic belonging dissolve down to the level of individual human beings and then to caricature by continuing the list into the animal kingdom. This lighthearted treatment of religious, national, and cultural affiliations is, however, balanced in the story by the persistent reminders and locations of death where the usual facetiousness of the narrator gives way to genuine empathy, for example in the narrator's comments that the winter flights to Istanbul are normally initiated by family deaths while the passengers are in their country of migration. Death becomes the ultimate leveller of socially, religiously and historically constituted identities.

While the narrator is reacquainting herself in 'Mein Istanbul' with her own city, she is displaced in 'Fahrrad auf dem Eis' to Amsterdam where she is spending a brief period as writer in residence, representing Germany for the 'Stiftung Kulturaustausch Niederlande-Deutschland' as a resident of reunited Germany possessing – to use official German terminology – a 'Migrationshintergrund'. This resident who thus far in the story cycle has considered the place of migrants in Germany from a variety of fresh perspectives, is now

displaced as an endorsed representative of her adopted nation to the Netherlands, a country which has points of comparison and contrast both in its history and its current social formation.¹⁸ This advances the discussion of migration and integration from an internal German issue, a bilateral Turkish German issue, or an issue between Germany and its sending countries, to one where it can be explored in a comparative context which reveals the contingent aspect of the social and historical development of countries of immigration.

The narrator becomes a German observer and reporter of life and customs in the Netherlands. The Dutch are shown to demonstrate an openness towards foreigners and an egalitarian frankness when they continually ask her where she is from. At some stage most of the narrator's interlocutors in Amsterdam either say things which they think will be of interest to her because, although a German speaker, she is none the less identified as having a non-German, immigrant background; or they reflect critically either on the colonial history of the Netherlands or on aspects of the social integration of migrants. For example, a Dutch friend who has married an Indonesian suggests that she visits Belmer, a district of the city with a high immigrant population (*HS* 80), and her first contact during her stay is a young Dutch woman, Christany, who is a member of a Turkish ladies' football club in the city and speaks fluent Turkish (*HS* 83). The narrator compares Amsterdam positively with New York as cities which are constantly renewed by the stream of immigration and which have perhaps become 'süchtig [...] nach den Fremden' (*HS* 84). Towards the end of the story she suggests that 'Amsterdam könne eine Miniatur der Arche Noah sein. Wenn die Sintflut kommt, gibt es hier alle Rassen und Sprachen' (*HS* 101), depicting the city as an idealized cosmopolitan microcosm. The descriptions of the positive multicultural attitudes of the Dutch are, however, frequently punctuated by unprompted references by her Dutch interlocutors to their colonial past. A young woman in a juice bar remarks that while her city is beautiful there is a lack of

¹⁸ See also Minnaard, *New Germans, New Dutch*, pp. 99-103.

awareness among young people of the role of colonial exploitation in the creation of its wealth (HS 84), while Christany's father is highly critical of Dutch colonialism (HS 87).

In conversation with Christany, the narrator explicitly connects Dutch colonialism and German National Socialism: 'Christany, weißt du, du bist heute der dritte Mensch in Amsterdam, der mir von der Kolonialzeit erzählt. Manchmal passiert das in Deutschland auch. Ich höre dort auch manchmal dreimal an einem Tag von meinen Freunden "Scheiß Nazis"' (HS 89). Both countries share a dark dimension to their history but, while Germany's National Socialist past and the Holocaust it gave rise to constantly inflect contacts with non-Germans – for example in the reluctance of the Dutch to speak German to her – the colonial past of the Netherlands is a kind of recovered history. This may affect positively in the present the attitudes and reactions of the Dutch themselves, but it is overshadowed by the scale and relative recentness of Germany's past, and by the fact that the Dutch themselves and the Jewish community they sought to protect under German occupation are the victims of German actions.¹⁹ Christany's Jewish best friend is the first in a series of Jewish characters encountered by the narrator who form a link between National Socialism, the implementation of the Holocaust, the victim status of the Netherlands, and its support for its Jewish population, many of whom like Anne Frank's family had fled from Germany.

The narrator also connects Dutch colonial history with the history of post-war labour migration to Germany, depicting the latter as part of a wider process of economic imperialism. In a conversation with Rudi from the Goethe-Institut she continues with the alignment of German and Dutch colonial history, remarking of Dutch men:

Sie haben am Meer gestanden und haben gesehen, daß die Welt groß ist. Und Deutschland ist ein Wald. Bis sie [die Deutschen] den Weg raus gefunden hatten, war

¹⁹ Cf. Minnaard, *New Germans, New Dutch*, p. 99.

die Kolonialzeit vorbei. Man sagt, deswegen haben die Deutschen die Kolonien im Land selber geschaffen, die Gastarbeiter (*HS 95*).

This suggests a complex argument whereby the process of German economic power functioning as the attractor for guest workers could be seen as an inverted imperialism, under which the exploitation of the quasi-colonial Other takes place within the borders of the nation state. On this view, and expressed in terms of postcolonial theory, the native German population and its institutions become the centre in a process of internal colonization which removes the guest workers as the colonial Other to the social and economic margins, a parallel to the colonial periphery.²⁰ The narrator's subsequent remarks on the difficulty experienced by guest workers in acquiring adequate German reflect the disparity in social access which for so long denied guest workers and their families social and economic advancement, an internal analogue of the dominance of the colonizer's language in colonized societies.

The apparently simple premise at the outset of the story – that a German has come to observe and comment on life in the Dutch capital – has given way to a progressive erosion of assumptions about the coherence of nationality. The 'Dutch' turn out to be just as non-unitary as the Turkish narrator from Germany. National borders are represented as arbitrary and porous, for example in an anecdote about an elderly Dutch marquis whose younger German wife slips over the border at night to go dancing before returning to their castle (*HS 104*).

Forms of colonialism and occupation re-occur in different forms and with different associations, and historical cross-currents connect Germany and the Netherlands both

²⁰ Kien Nghi Ha also points to the importation of aspects of colonial power structures into the recruitment of migrant labour in the Federal Republic of Germany: 'In modifizierter und partiell abgeschwächter Form findet sich [ein] hierarchisches Verhältnis auch im Umgang der bundesrepublikanischen Gesellschaft mit den Gastarbeitern wieder.' Kien Nghi Ha, 'Die kolonialen Muster deutscher Arbeitsmigrationspolitik', in *Spricht die Subalterne Deutsch? Migration und postkoloniale Kritik*, ed. by Hito Steyerl and Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez (Münster: UNRAST, 2003), pp. 56-107 (p. 65).

bilaterally and through the histories of Jews and immigrants which the narrator writes into national narratives. Furthermore, while the darker areas of national histories are acknowledged, they are shown to be the stimulus for the development of more positive attitudes and awarenesses. This is certainly the case for the Dutch, mindful of their colonial past, but equally for the Goethe-Institut representative Rudi: he is attuned to Dutch sensitivities towards Germany and, as a homosexual, a member of a community subjected to persecution under the National Socialists. National histories, and particularly their more disturbing aspects, are shown to be dynamic in their capacity to generate positive social change reflecting the increasingly heterogeneous nature of social formations. In this complex web of interconnections citizenship becomes just one formal possibility in a range of potential avenues of belonging and identification.

The final story in this thematic cluster, ‘Die neuen Friedhöfe in Deutschland’, is very different from the previous stories in structure, format, and tone, but is connected in pursuing perhaps less allusively the question of the integrity of citizenship and its failure to describe individuals in an era of global travel and migration. Two developments provide the context for the piece. The reference to ‘Friedhöfe’ in the title is consistent with the frequent references throughout the cycle to either death while abroad or the death of loved ones while in migration. However, it also reflects the ‘double home’ experience of migrants whereby the homeland is the country of origin or descent but the actual home – and final resting place – is the country of migration where they have made their lives. The stimulus for the publication of the story though is clearly the debates conducted in the late 1990s about the proposal of the SPD/Green Party coalition for the introduction of dual citizenship, under which those applying for naturalization would be permitted to retain their original citizenship.²¹ The story

²¹ Marc Morjé Howard discusses the political negotiation of dual citizenship in detail in ‘The Causes and Consequences of Germany’s New Citizenship Law’, *German Politics*, 17.1 (2008), 41–62.

is, however, by no means a tactical intervention in support of dual citizenship, but rather a sustained critique of the arbitrary nature and inadequacy of nationality, citizenship and the passport and visa bureaucracy.

The first of the series of short anecdotes and mini-commentaries which deliver this critique is a direct reference to the deconstruction of the term *Gastarbeiter* in the earlier story ‘Schwarzauge in Deutschland’, whereby in ironic inversion the indigenous German becomes the *Gast*, relaxing while the immigrant worker performs his labour. At first sight, this might form a reference point by which we could measure progress from a time when the application of the term guest worker was for majority society unexceptionable to one when dual citizenship could be seriously discussed in the German public sphere. This, though, is far from Özdamar’s intention, as the rest of the story shows that despite progress in access to naturalization and the development of the discussion surrounding the proposed introduction of dual citizenship, underlying insecurities and bureaucratic capriciousness are as prevalent as ever. A German-Turk who has naturalized to avoid military service in Turkey is still afraid of returning there because he is not confident that his German passport will protect him (*HS* 119). The narrator goes on to describe how, despite the declared inflexibility of Germany towards dual citizenship, tacit complicity between Turkish and German authorities allows Turks to renounce their original citizenship, naturalize as Germans, and then quietly reinstate their Turkish citizenship (*HS* 119). Significantly, the narrator describes this as a ‘Spiel’ (*HS* 119) echoing the description of national identity as theatrical and performative in previous stories in the cycle. This farcical element also underpins anecdotes where identities are switched in order to attempt to fool border guards. The narrator tells for example of a Turk who places his Turkish passport in a Swiss passport holder but is asked immediately by the border officer whether he is in fact a Turk, while his Swiss friend who presents with his

Swiss passport in a Turkish passport cover is waved through with a 'Grüezi' and no further ado (*HS* 123).

The narrator's experiences as a woman also expose both the arbitrariness of the visa process. Her attempts to acquire a work permit for the West Berlin Schaubühne take her on an extended journey through bureaucratic instances both in Germany and in Turkey. At the Turkish consulate in West Berlin she profits from the distraction of the official who is attempting to seduce another visa applicant (*HS* 120), and she is the object of the same unwanted attention from an official of the passport authority in Istanbul. When she finally acquires German citizenship she is approached in a bar by a young German woman who has been observing her talking and drinking with two male Turkish friends (*HS* 121–23). The girl lives in Kreuzberg and professes her love of the colour and liveliness of the Turkish-dominated district but then immediately raises the issue of the headscarf as an indicator of female oppression and the dual lives of young Turkish girls there, apparently conforming in the domestic sphere to family and Islamic expectations but then shedding the headscarf as soon as they are out of sight. This dominant conception of the split worlds of Turkish girls in Germany could be taken straight from Hark Bohm's film *Yasemin* in which Özdamar played the mother of the protagonist.²² The narrator's initial reaction is to mock the young woman by claiming that she has her headscarf in her handbag, that she is subject to violence from her 'brother' and that he forces her to commit incest with him. When the narrator admits that she has only been joking, the young woman responds: 'Ach so, du wolltest mir zeigen, daß wir Deutsche zu viele Vorurteile über Türkische Frauen haben!' (*HS* 123). The incident prompts the narrator to conclude that in this situation dual citizenship would have made no difference.

The cumulative questioning of the integrity and authenticity of a sense of belonging based on the procedural foundations of citizenship culminates in one last anecdote in which

²² *Yasemin*, dir. by Hark Bohm (Impuls-Film Hans-Joachim Flebbe and Warner Home Video, 1988).

the narrator asks a Turkish cleaning lady about the prospect of dual citizenship. She replies that she would of course apply for it for practical reasons and the sake of her family, but remarks: ‘[...] wir sind alle nur Gast auf dieser Welt [...] Alle sind Fremde in dieser Welt letztendlich. *Ein Paß für alle ist am besten. Der Weltpaß*’ (HS 124, italics in original). Her down-to-earth approach contrasts starkly with the irony and playfulness of the preceding anecdotes, but in the indication of a cosmopolitan perspective looks forward to the final two stories in the cycle.

5. Cosmopolitan Futures

The final piece in the cycle *Der Hof im Spiegel* is the text of Özdamar’s acceptance speech for the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize in 1999, ‘Meine deutschen Wörter haben keine Kindheit’ (HS 125–32). In it she tells of how her move to Germany to avoid the repression and violence following the military Putsch in Turkey in 1971 allowed her to regain personal happiness through her theatre work in German: ‘Ich drehte meine Zunge ins Deutsche und plötzlich war ich glücklich – dort am Theater, wo die tragischen Stoffe einen berühren und zugleich eine Utopie versprechen’ (HS 129). The liberation of the regaining of free expression and the opportunity to work creatively once more enable her to rekindle also her pleasure in the use of Turkish which, over time, becomes less associated for her with the horrors she has witnessed. In one sense, this piece could be viewed as the culmination of a cycle which has taken us from the decline of the concept of the guest worker through critiques of systematic multiculturalism, national identities, borders, and citizenship to a positive personal statement concerning her work as an artist in migration operating in her second language. This apparent linearity is disrupted, however, by the positioning of the cycle’s title story ‘Der Hof im Spiegel’ (HS 11–46) at the very start of the volume, which in

many ways is the most complex articulation of the issues which the cycle goes on to raise and explore.

Since its publication in 2001 'Der Hof im Spiegel', though not a long piece at thirty-six pages, has been the subject of several extensive studies. Both Margrit Frölich and Azade Seyhan stress the transnational and transcultural dimensions of the story, the latter seeing it as an important text in the development of a German-Turkish transcultural literature.²³ Focusing on the centrality of the mirror and its connection with folk and fairy tales through its capacity for re-imagination, Meral Oraliş sees the potential of a desire for 'eine neue Identität der Diaspora'.²⁴ In her analysis of the story among other recent works by Turkish-German authors, Leslie Adelson argues for a conception of the literature of migration as a historical formation which both comments on and interacts with the environment in which it is produced. In this sense the story presents a 'dynamic ethnoscape' reflecting new forms of belonging in a society learning to accommodate permanent migration.²⁵ Dirk Göttsche uses the story as a test case for assessing the limits and the possibilities of the application of postcolonial theories to diasporic literature and seeks to make productive links to Anglophone and other postcolonial studies.²⁶ Enlisting Deleuzian reading strategies, Margaret Littler examines the oblique and unsentimental exploration in the text of loss and mourning through the allusive potential of the description of objects and body parts and the deployment of

²³ Margrit Frölich, 'Aufbrüche in geteilten Welten: Emine Sevgi Özdamars transkulturelle Spurensuche', in *Migration als biografische und expressive Ressource: Beiträge zur kulturellen Produktion in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft*, ed. by Margrit Frölich, Astrid Messerschmidt, and Jörg Walther (Frankfurt am Main: Brandes & Apsel, 2003), pp. 45–65; Azade Seyhan, 'From Istanbul to Berlin: Stations on the Road to a Transcultural/Translational Literature', *German Politics and Society*, 23.1 (2005), 152–70.

²⁴ Meral Oraliş, 'Der Spiegel als Wunsdraum oder Das literarische Schreiben als "Provinz des Fremden" bei E. Sevgi Özdamar', in *Interkulturelle Begegnungen: Festschrift für Şara Sayın*, ed. by Manfred Durzak and Nilüfer Kuruyazıcı (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004), pp. 49–60 (p. 57).

²⁵ Leslie Adelson, *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature: Toward a Critical Grammar of Migration* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 39–77 (p. 76).

²⁶ Dirk Göttsche, 'Emine Sevgi Özdamars Erzählung *Der Hof im Spiegel*: Spielräume einer postkolonialen Lektüre deutsch-türkischer Literatur', *German Life and Letters*, 59.4 (2006), 515–25.

intertextual references.²⁷ In the most recent study Monica Shafi approaches the story by examining the domestic and public spaces it offers and the developing relationship between the two, identifying performativity as the basis for the diasporic individual to establish connections and interrelationships in a new environment.²⁸ The range of interpretations of the story reflect its complexity and provide a range of constructive and productive perspectives on the text. While all point to the new set of relationships and associations established by the narrator, few apart from Littler consider fully either the function which these new configurations have for the personal situation of the narrator and none the way in which these relate to the questions raised in the other stories in the cycle as a whole.

The story opens with the narrator's fears that an old nun living across the courtyard from her in a Düsseldorf tenement building may have died. These fears flow associatively into her childhood memories of her mother and thence to the revelation that her mother has died and, as we learn later, her father too shortly after. It becomes clear that these losses have destabilized the narrator's life in migration. The loss of the familiarity of Istanbul had been compensated for to some extent by her mother's willingness to engage in long telephone calls, in which they exchange details about the happenings in their respective locations, helping the narrator to align her experiences in Düsseldorf temporally and spatially with the life continuing in Istanbul. This permits the narrator to avoid the common feelings of disjuncture experienced by migrants whose memories and understandings of their previous home are frozen in time while their life in migration progresses.

This is in effect a process of stabilization allowing the narrator the opportunity to adjust fully and in her own way to her new environment. The information she has been

²⁷ Margaret Littler, 'Intimacy and Affect in Turkish-German Writing: Emine Sevgi Özdamar's "Der Hof im Spiegel"', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 29.3 (2008), 331–45.

²⁸ Monika Shafi, *Housebound: Selfhood and Domestic Space in Contemporary German Fiction* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012), esp. chapter 5 'Open Houses: Emine Sevgi Özdamar's "Der Hof im Spiegel" and *Seltsame Sterne starren zur Erde: Wedding-Pankow 1976-77*', pp. 140–68.

relaying to her mother about the old nun and the other tenants, and her use of mirrors in the apartment which enable her to imaginatively interact with them while facing away from the courtyard, have been an important part of this process of adjustment. With the death of her mother and the severing of the immediate link with Istanbul, her life is pitched into crisis and the figure of the nun and continuation of her life gain increased importance. The loss of her mother is also compounded as other tenants with whom she has formed more or less remote relationships of familiarity, come and go. In her attempts to come to terms with her feelings of grief, the narrator tends towards seeing these elements predominantly in the lives of the people around her, whether that be her neighbour Herr Volker's failed relationship with his partner or the female butcher's loss of her son and daughter-in-law in a car accident.

As Littler remarks, this is no generalized case study of migrant or even specifically Turkish-German experience, but rather a personal response to an individual set of circumstances, requiring 'a reading of Özdamar's story which opens up the text to the possibility of new becomings, rather than seeing in it the depiction of a known world of Turks in Germany.'²⁹ In order to cope with these various forms and degrees of loss the narrator develops a range of strategies to achieve an individual understanding of the new interrelationships she is forming and to provide avenues for her continued personal and creative development. She establishes parallels with her experiences in Istanbul to create familiarity by analogy between her previous life in Turkey and her still relatively new existence in Germany, for example by imagining that Herr Volker who is using a sewing machine in the apartment above will be biting through the thread when he is finished as her mother used to do (*HS* 11). In due course more frequent telephone calls with the Turkish poet Can Yücel come to fulfil a similar function to her conversations with her mother in re-establishing immediacy with Istanbul and providing guidance for her, for example when her

²⁹ Littler, 'Intimacy and Affect in Turkish-German Writing', p. 342.

fragility causes her to overreact to what is evidently a minor racist incident but which prompts her to consider leaving Germany completely.

The mirror provides an element of continuity in this process. Prior to the death of the narrator's mother, it had been used for observation and for playful experimentation in imaginary relationships with her co-habitants. Subsequently it becomes a device which enables her to align not only her current and previous lives but also the living and the dead in order to overcome the discontinuities of personal loss. The death of the narrator's mother makes the task of committing to her life in migration and to the formation of authentic new relationships more urgent. The role-playing which the narrator conducts through the mirror is a confidence-building process which constitutes the necessary precursor to real contact and the development of genuine relationships in her new environment.

Another key strategy in the narrator's reorientation to her new realities is the establishment of a range of cultural reference points which provide both continuity in her intellectual development and a lattice of connections which transform her act of migration from a bilateral transnational Turkish-German experience to one with cosmopolitan underpinnings and potential: what Adelson terms 'a postnational world of affinity'.³⁰ Throughout the story the narrator mentions a wide variety of cultural referents, some German (Goethe, Heine, Beuys, Brecht and Weill), some Turkish (Can Yücel), but mostly from cultural contexts beyond the Turkish-German binary: Oriana Fallaci, Glenn Gould, Lewis Carroll, Greta Garbo, Baudelaire, Chopin, and the Marx Brothers. Some of these form part of her 'persönlicher Stadtplan' (*HS* 17) of Düsseldorf, the establishment of points of personal and cultural identification in her adopted city. In 'Fahrrad auf dem Eis' Özdamar uses this idea in a more limited sense to refer to points of familiarity required in cities by the foreign visitor as he or she becomes acquainted with unfamiliar surroundings (*HS* 85–86). In 'Der

³⁰ Adelson, *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature*, p. 59.

Hof im Spiegel' the creation of this personal map is not only an act of taking possession of her new environment and re-establishing control over her new life, but also one of establishing a new range of connections which remove her from a binary of migration predicated on loss and gain. This gives her access to a life in which she is free from that restriction to create new associations and explore an identity untrammelled by the confines of borders and questionable national cultures.

This is in essence a form of cultural cosmopolitanism which provides a correlative to the political and internationalist cosmopolitanism of the 'Weltpaß' proposed in 'Die neuen Friedhöfe in Deutschland'.³¹ Distinguishing between cultural and other more political forms of cosmopolitanism, Gerard Delanty sees cultural cosmopolitanism as going beyond vague notions of familiarity with and acceptance of other national cultures and involving 'major changes in the cultural fabric of society leading to the erosion of the very notion of a bounded conception of the social'.³² The cosmopolitan reformation of the narrator's cultural world is a continuing process as she establishes new cultural connections and interrelations. As Pollock, Bhabha, Breckenridge, and Chakrabarty point out, 'As a practice, [...] cosmopolitanism is yet to come, something awaiting realization.'³³ The cultural cosmopolitanism which Özdamar adumbrates in 'Der Hof im Spiegel' is contingent on the individual's environment, but also dynamic and adaptive.³⁴ For Samuel Scheffler, 'cosmopolitanism about culture emphasizes the fluidity of individual identity, people's

³¹ Littler also distinguishes between political cosmopolitanism and the potential of diasporic writers, amongst them Özdamar, to explore a 'cosmopolitanization' leading to a 'more fundamental transformation of people's values and sensibilities'. Margaret Littler, 'The Fall of the Wall as Nonevent in Works by Emine Sevgi Özdamar and Zafer Şenocak', *New German Critique*, 39.2 (2012), 47-62 (p. 62).

³² Gerard Delanty, 'The Cosmopolitan Imagination: Critical Cosmopolitanism and Social Theory', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 57.1 (2006), 25-47 (p. 31).

³³ Sheldon Pollock, Homi K. Bhabha, Carol A. Breckenridge, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Cosmopolitanisms', in *Cosmopolitanism*, ed. by Carol A. Breckenridge, Sheldon Pollock, Homi K. Bhabha, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2002), pp. 1-14 (p. 1).

³⁴ While acknowledging that Özdamar's work 'embodies a critical cosmopolitanism', Cheesman is dismissive of what he sees as the elitism of her cultural cosmopolitanism. Tom Cheesman, *Novels of Turkish German Settlement: Cosmopolite Fictions* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2007), p. 74.

remarkable capacity to forge new identities using materials from diverse cultural sources, and to flourish while so doing.³⁵ This positive potential, which is predicated none the less on the relinquishing of old identities and points of reference, is reflected in the end of the story: ‘Ich sah im Spiegel ein paar Vögel, die suchten auf der Erde, dort, wo früher immer die alte Nonne ihr Küchentuch ausgeschüttet hatte, Brotkrümel und flogen wieder hoch zum Himmel’ (HS 46). Just as these birds have, the narrator has realized that she must free herself from old dependencies in order to seek new horizons.

6. Conclusion

While the publication dates of the stories in the cycle all fall within the 1990s, the texts also look back to aspects of migration before German unification and forward to the challenges which face migrants and postmigrants in an increasingly postnational and globalized world. It is also clear not only that they reflect a specific period in Germany’s adaptation to an unprecedented level of migration, but that they can be re-ordered to produce a linearity in the underlying social, political, and historical events. The cycle thus traces the changes in conceptions which these produced, from multiculturalism to the threshold and eventual limitation of dual citizenship.

In formal terms the stories comprise a cycle, potentially free-standing but at the same time consistent in narrative perspective, self-referential, and containing strands of preoccupation and thematic development which interlink them and enhance the collection as a whole. This is an instance where the establishment of the appropriate genre helps to reveal more clearly the lines of development in the cycle’s consistent preoccupation with migration and integration. As these social and personal concerns are clear and substantial in the texts, it is necessary to move beyond recent critical tendencies to de-emphasise questions of diaspora

³⁵ Samuel Scheffler, ‘Conceptions of cosmopolitanism’, *Utilitas*, 11.3 (1999), 255–76 (p. 257).

and the social adjustment to migration in works by writers with diasporic backgrounds in favour of other aspects of the text.³⁶ Such approaches can produce stimulating readings of the texts and provide a welcome corrective to the tendency in much critical work of the 1980s and 1990s to approach texts by such authors almost as documentary evidence of social change.³⁷ Sometimes though, diasporic writers, as in this instance, do write about the migrant experience, multiculturalism and the nature of intercultural encounter. That is not to say that in *Der Hof im Spiegel* these matters are Özdamar's sole preoccupation, for the stories support a range of themes; but ignoring this dimension can sometimes lead to reading over important aspects of the texts.

It is worth considering finally why the texts are not ordered chronologically and with greater consistency, given their evident connections. The reason may lie in the texts themselves and their rhizomatic quality, which is equally evident in Özdamar's novels such as *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*. The author consistently casts doubt on proposed systemic and theoretical solutions to social and fundamentally human problems, and emphasizes the importance of personal encounter, particularly in multi-ethnic contexts, even with the difficulties and frictions it may bring. This intercultural understanding is something which is not delivered to the reader but which must be actively sought, even if that requires leaving one's cultural comfort zone in order to begin to genuinely engage with the Other.

³⁶ See for example Margaret Littler's exploration of the Romantic elements of Feridun Zaimoglu's novel *Liebesbrand* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2008): Littler, 'Between Romantic Love and War Machine: *Liebesbrand*', in *Feridun Zaimoglu*, ed. by Tom Cheeseman and Karin E. Yeşilada (Oxford, Berne, Brussels, Frankfurt a. M., New York, Vienna: Peter Lang, 2012), pp. 219-37.

³⁷ For more detail on this argument see Gerd Bayer, 'Theory as Hierarchy: Positioning German "Migrantenliteratur"', *Monatshefte*, 91.1 (2004), 1-19.

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