

Noch einen Koffer in Berlin : |b a sense of place in Aras Ören's "Eine verspätete Abrechnung" & Emine Sevgi Özdamar's "Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn"

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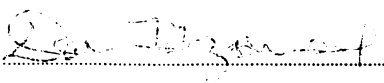
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. J. ...', is written over a dotted line.

Noch einen Koffer in Berlin:

**A sense of place in Aras Ören's 'Eine verspätete Abrechnung'
& Emine Sevgi Özdamar's 'Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn'.**

Dominic Fitzsimmons

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

University of New South Wales.

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Introduction: a foreigner forever ?

1. 423 bus via Marrickville, 140 bus via Kreuzberg

If you catch bus number 423 from outside Sydney's Central railway station, or the bus number 140 from Berlin's Hauptbahnhof, after a while you will find yourself passing through streets containing some initially extraordinary similarities, which at first glance are quite surprising. The high streets are filled with two-to-four storey buildings, retail below and residential above. The different functions of contemporary cities are combined at a high degree of intensity. These streets and buildings function as unexpected meeting places for many different types of people from different class, gender, ethnic and religious demarcations, who push up against each other, live beside each other, and to some extent unwittingly make sense of the place in which they live. The 423 bus winds its way along King St in Newtown, down through Marrickville, and then into the broader suburbia of Earlwood and Kingsgrove in Sydney's inner south-west. The 140 bus travels less distance, 22 kilometres, crosses a few canals, on its route through Kreuzberg and Neukölln. Both bus routes allow you to make a journey through a similar kind of urban space.

This journey - one I have made many times in different seasons and at different times of day as part of my everyday life in both Berlin and Sydney - takes you through a most extraordinary and lively society existing beyond both the incessant traffic and the expected tabloid stereotypes. Along this journey, sometimes arduous and irritating, but always compelling, you can sense something different; your eyes, ears, nose, fingers and tongue will alert you to different sights, sounds, smells, textures and tastes. A sensual feast combined in a quite different way to other parts of both cities.

In this work I will go in search of the stories behind this sensual feast, and explain how and why they seem different to me. Much of this work has been written in these areas of both Sydney and Berlin during long ponderings about what makes these spaces special to me and to the people who live there. My focus lies on Berlin, yet the experience of living in this particular area of Sydney has constantly informed and influenced my analysis, which is consequently an Australian perspective of a

German experience. However, many of the conclusions can be more generally applied.

These spaces respond to many dynamic pressures. As a result of both urban consolidation in innercity areas, fashion and political changes, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, the demographic nature of Kreuzberg has changed appreciably in the last decade. In many ways, both the novels under discussion, Aras Ören's *Eine verspätete Abrechnung oder der Aufstieg der Gündoğdus* and Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*¹, as well as this dissertation, record different perspectives of a community as it once was; it may well seem naive and passé in years to come. Ironically, the attraction of these innercity areas for money-rich and time-poor people is an indication of the success and health of the type of communities portrayed in the novels. This success, health and diversity betrays a paradox in that being able to 'buy' into a community is vastly different from contributing to or participating in maintaining what makes this community special.

2. The thesis

My thesis is drawn from a close analysis of two novels: Aras Ören's *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* (published 1988) and Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Die Brücke* (published 1998). I will argue that these two novels document how individuals, who are part of a migrant community, create a 'sense of place' in an unfamiliar urban space. This argument uses the fictional narrators as examples of these individual migrants and the Turkish community in Kreuzberg, Berlin as an example of a migrant community. In my analysis I will treat these novels as a type of social document from which some specific conclusions can be drawn about the way this community has grown in this particular geographic and demographic area.

One crucial concept at the heart of this thesis is recognising and then analysing the new and distinctive relationships which individuals experience in this situation. I will use the term, 'sense of place', a term current in human geography, urban studies

¹ Aras Ören, *Eine verspätete Abrechnung oder der Aufstieg der Gündoğdus. Roman*. (Aus dem Türkischen von Zafer Şenocak und Eva Hund) Dağyeli Verlag, Frankfurt/M 1988. Hereon referred to as *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*. Emine Sevgi Özdamar, *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn. Roman*. Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Köln 1998. Hereon referred to as *Die Brücke*.

and contemporary political debate, to convey those feelings which make a certain geographic space a special place for an individual. In this work I will focus on the individual because the thoughts and actions of the individual acting as part of the community are the foundation of a strong community; what creates a sustainable community has come under the microscope in recent years both in academic and political debate. My analysis builds on these current debates, particularly focusing on the idea that a strong community emerges from the community itself, rather than being imposed from above. Furthermore, as Philip Selznick argues with passion, the participation of the individual is crucial to the sustainability of a community:

Personal responsibility is most likely to flourish when there is genuine opportunity to participate in communal life. These conditions require substantial investment by the community and its institutions. At the same time, how much the community invests, and what kind of investment it makes, will depend on the prevalence of a sense of personal responsibility for the common good.²

Both novels can be understood as a way of mapping the creation, growth and maintenance of this community. They trace it from its beginnings as a form of *Notgemeinschaft* or 'community of necessity' to the contemporary healthy community integral to the official public image of Berlin.

Max Weber's well known distinction between *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* is important in this context because these terms highlight two different forms of social organisation that humans establish when living in the same space together. The terms *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft* are familiar points of reference when considering the interrelationship of the individual and the community in modern society. In this introduction I will briefly define some fundamental tenets of the debate about *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* which will be used in later chapters. Sociologists such as Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies, and Georg Simmel³ have used these terms for different

² Philip Selznick, "Social Justice: A Communitarian Perspective" in *The Responsive Community*, 1996 vol.6, no.4, p.14, quoted in Martin Krygier, *Between Fear and Hope, Hybrid Thoughts on Public Values*. ABC Books, Sydney 1997, p.153

³ Max Weber, *The theory of social and economic organisation*, (transl. by A.H. Henderson and Talcott Parsons), Free Press, New York 1947, and *The City*, (transl. and edited by Dan Martindale and Gerhard Neuwirth), Heinemann, London 1960; Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundbegriffe der reinen Soziologie*, Verlag Karl Curtius, Berlin 1926 and *Community and Society. (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)*, (transl. by Charles P. Loomis), The Michigan State University Press, Michigan 1957; Georg Simmel, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, Free Press, New York 1969, also

reasons, but each underlines the value of investigating the changing nature and intensity of this relationship between humans and the organisational structure, such as 'community' or 'society', in which they live. Their works reveal the contrast between the concept of *Gemeinschaft* – which I will refer to as 'community' –, and *Gesellschaft* – from hereon referred to as 'society'. The former is based on relationships built on the paradigm of the 'village' in which everybody is known and placed in certain immutable clan networks where the rights and obligations are assumed and rarely negotiated. On the other hand, the latter includes the former and is based on a generalised social will, in which the majority of people are strangers and indifferent to others, where rights and obligations are negotiated, posited in written form and are open to further change. The sociologists mentioned above focussed on social relationships as they developed in large cities, particularly Berlin, from the turn of the 20th Century. Weber and Tönnies analysed the role of social class in the building of social relationships, while Simmel focussed intently on the way that cities opened up the possibility of greater choice in identification with communities. Simmel argued that this rise in influence of 'interest groups' occurred at the expense of kinship groups or other similar groups based on compulsion or obligation, rather than choice. In this dissertation I will show that both forms of group identification can be found in the novels under discussion and argue that both can exist simultaneously and have a profound influence, particularly through active participation, on how an individual experiences a sense of place.

3. Why do this topic

There are a number of reasons why this topic is important. Firstly, the novels allow me to explain the various elements that make up a community. Secondly, this topic highlights the way in which diversity is an inextricable part of life in a modern city. Recognising this diversity of people, beliefs, sights, sounds, tastes, allows us to understand how a new sense of place can be created elsewhere. As a phenomenon this is hardly remarkable in a modern city, however, the paradigm of diversity is not

Georg Simmel. *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays*, (transl. by K. Peter Etkorn) Teachers College Press, New York 1968. See also Michael Peter Smith, *The City and Social Theory*,

uncontested, and therefore the playing out of this conflict between different conceptions of the same space means that urban space is contested terrain. By unlocking the various elements that go into making a diverse society, full of different communities, we can take a 'sidelong glance' at this conflict and understand it from other perspectives. In this process we would learn not only the meanings a place holds for other people of different backgrounds, but also how these meaning are created.

A basis of this work is that urban, contemporary Germany contains many diverse and complex communities. This seemingly innocuous statement provokes many vituperative responses, which seem to contradict what is actually happening in the streets. Indeed, this response is not limited to Germany. For example, in his novels Salman Rushdie, himself a member of several diverse communities, reveals a new and different kind of Britain: multiracial and multilingual, in which each generation of migrants begins new habits, opens up new ways of seeing themselves and the spaces where they live. Although Rushdie refers to contemporary Britain, his analysis can apply equally to any contemporary society, such as Germany:

It is a strange moment in the history of the world in which people seem to be dividing into smaller and smaller nationalist groupings and becoming more and more hostile towards diversity. And yet the experience of anybody, especially anybody that has been born in a big city in the 20th century, is that diversity is an inextricable fact of everyday life.⁴

This same process is under way in the works of Ören and Özdamar - the Germany they present in their works of fiction is a different kind of Germany from that of Grass, Böll or Brecht, or of more recent German fiction.

The new Germany depicted by Ören and Özdamar is a fascinating paradox that I have followed since my first stay in Berlin in 1988. Having observed Berlin as an outsider with insider knowledge, my work focuses on specific places which have become special over time, not only to me, but also to the community which lives there and is portrayed in these novels. This work then evolved from attempts like Rushdie's above to reconcile this paradox by concentrating on two closely related topics: how an individual creates links with a new space and how this process is recognised by other people. In following these ideas, many other points of analysis arose - considering

these influences while keeping this work within reasonable boundaries has proved a great challenge. In this sense, this thesis represents a contribution to a growing body of knowledge about literature concerned with the connection between people and places. By concentrating on the Turkish community in Kreuzberg in Berlin as an example of this connection, this work has both a narrow focus and offers specific and unique perspectives and insights to this body of knowledge. Simultaneously, this dissertation is a contribution to contemporary debates in German literature studies.

4. Why these books

An effective and evocative way of understanding the relationship between people and place is through literature. Literature is fundamental because it entails the telling of stories about a place and the events which happen there; the more stories are told about a place, the deeper the connection. Places are made familiar through the creation of fictional stories set in an existing and identifiable geographic space. These stories help to analyse and also to create an understanding that the relationship with this space is multilayered.

This dissertation is based in German literature studies. Two novels by separate authors are under consideration. However, there are limits to the analysis offered by literary theory, even though both novels are of great literary merit. To remedy this limitation, I have looked for ideas from further afield, particularly disciplines such as human geography, urban studies and migration studies. Ideas drawn from these areas offer necessary insights to understanding how a 'sense of place' functions in these novels. This choice simultaneously highlights the sociological merit of both novels.

Both novels offer valuable insights into the special type of community established in Berlin after the introduction of *Gastarbeiter* during the West German 'Economic Miracle'. I have chosen these particular novels for three reasons which can be summarised under the following headings: setting, theme and characterisation.

Firstly, the setting for both novels is primarily West Berlin, with particular emphasis on the inner southwest *Bezirk* of Kreuzberg. The first part of Özdamar's

⁴ Salman Rushdie, "The Last Sigh of Diversity. Interview" in *NPO* vol.3, no.2, Spring 1996, p.47-49, 48.

novel is set in Kreuzberg, the second part in Istanbul. (Comparing these two places would make a fascinating study, but unfortunately lies outside this current work!) Both novels are set temporally in the period between 1966-1983. The built environment and the community existing in this space at this time are crucial for my analysis. The spatial and temporal setting in both novels is readily identifiable, including many wellknown landmarks, such as the Anhalter Bahnhof facade, and events, such as the 1968 student uprisings, the social and historical meanings of these spaces is important to the telling of these stories.

Secondly, the themes of both novels reveal a reckoning with the past and the present. Both authors concentrate on the unifying theme of migration and the adaptation of the main characters to a new cultural environment. This theme is analysed through the 'habitus' of everyday life events that are connected to larger world events. In this context, both authors reveal and recognise that Germany has a Turkish history. Accordingly, both are complex novels that fit thematically and stylistically into the concerns of contemporary European literature.

Thirdly, the characterisation reveals a deepening attachment to place. Both authors employ first person narrators who are also the main characters and are unnamed. Both of these characters came to Germany as *Gastarbeiter*. One is male; one is female. Each of these elements plays a role in showing how a sense of place is created.

5. An overview of this dissertation

This dissertation works from the novels outwards. In order to understand these novels on a deeper level many theories from different disciplines will be drawn on. The outcome of this cross-disciplinary approach is to reveal the many different areas of overlap which add to the literary interpretation of these texts.

The first chapter begins with a summary of the two novels in order to acknowledge their position as the wellspring for the ideas developed in the following chapters. Then I will place the novels in a literary and social context; that is, as part of German literature, in particular, German literature from non-German authors in the post World War II period. (The term used here to cover this genre is 'migrant

literature' and will be discussed later.) This review of relevant literature includes primary and secondary source materials which suggest that understanding the specific social context in which this literature is written and read is crucial to my theory that both novels reveal how a sense of place has been created by the Turkish community in Kreuzberg. Furthermore, this framework can have a more universal application. By dealing with the theoretical framework in one chapter, the links between each of the disciplines covered can be clearly summarised and explained.

The creation of a sense of place can be investigated in many different ways drawing on different themes and methodologies, such as 'memory' or 'displacement' or 'search for identity'. However, in this dissertation I use an interdisciplinary framework of analysis in order to facilitate my interpretation which arises from a close reading of the novels. This close reading suggests four main points for analysis. Firstly, descriptions of the physical environment occur constantly and at important points in the novels. Secondly, one narrator is male, one is female, which suggests that gender is a crucial determining factor in how a sense of place is experienced. Thirdly, the connection between migrants and the space they inhabit is quite undervalued in the secondary literature. Finally, both novels can also be understood as 'forward looking', rather than primarily focussed on a lost homeland or home culture. Indeed, a simplistic 'primordial' connection to a space and its inhabitants is strongly questioned in my analysis. To paraphrase British literary critic, Paul Gilroy, 'where you come from' is important to a sense of connection, but 'where you're at' is fundamental.⁵ Gilroy's notion reflects well and succinctly the empowerment of the previously marginalised 'subaltern', in this case, the Turkish migrants to Germany. Both novels under discussion, therefore, reveal that Spivak's valuable formulation concerning the agency of the oppressed can be equally applied as a framework of analysis in German literature studies.

Having placed these novels in a literary and social context, I will then undertake an explanation and exploration of theories that form the framework of analysis utilised in the following chapters. In order to better analyse these theories, I have grouped them in the following thematic order:

⁵ Paul Gilroy, " 'It ain't where you're from it's where you're at.' The dialectics of diasporic identification", in *Third Text* vol.3 Winter, p.3-16.

chapter two: the built environment

chapter three: the community

chapter four: time

chapter five: gender

Each of these chapters stands alone, as well as building on ideas expressed in the preceding chapter or chapters. Each chapter includes material gathered from both novels under analysis.

The chapters are arranged in this order to reflect the relative importance of each issue in explaining a sense of place. This order also reflects the representation of migration in each of these novels; that is, the physical environment is the basis of any connection between a person and space. Yet, coming to terms with this physical environment does not occur in isolation; the community of people that lives in this area plays a crucial role in investing this physical environment with meaning. At a lesser level of importance, but also a compelling factor in this creation of a sense of place, is time because this connection or relationship does not occur immediately – it requires participation over a period of time. These first three factors apply to both female and male characters, yet a further distinction in this connection can be found by considering gender, particularly focusing on the woman's experience as more complex, contradictory and ambiguous.

6. Why this title

To conclude this introduction I will explain the origin of the title of this work: *noch einen Koffer in Berlin*. Sometime and somewhere during my stays in Berlin, I heard a song by Marlene Dietrich, which played in my mind as I wrote this work. The chorus of this song in some way reflects my own attachment to Berlin:

Und wenn ich Sehnsucht habe
dann fahre ich dorthin
ich habe noch einen Koffer in Berlin.

The word “Koffer” conveys a sense of movement between places, traditions and memories, and all that you can take with you is what you can pack into it. Such a

utilitarian object, however, also contains feelings connected to many different places, times and people. Aras Ören has also used the symbol of a “Koffer” in a poem to convey this constant building of relationships in the hope and need to find ‘somewhere’ to unpack your Koffer.

Plastikkoffer⁶

Zuerst kaufte ich mir einen Koffer auf dem Flohmarkt,
so einen billigen aus Plastik.
Wer weiß was der schon von der Welt
gesehen und wer den schon geschleppt hat,
erschöpft auf staubiger Landstraße.

Ich packte einen Umschlag mit Fotos,
einen Aktenordner Gedichte, ein paar Bücher,
zwei Hemden, dreimal Unterwäsche, Strümpfe,
Zahnbürste, Rasierzeug und Handtuch hinein.
Zwischend die Wäsche noch ein Sträußchen Lavendel,
die Reise konnte losgehen.

Jetzt ist mir, als hätte ich einige Dinge vergessen,
und die wären wichtiger gewesen
als Fotos, Gedichte, Bücher, Hemden, Wäsche,
Strümpfe, Zahnbürste, Rasierzeug und Handtuch.

Ich bin immer noch mit dem Plastikkoffer unterwegs,
aber ich bereue es nicht.
Wenn wir immer nur bereuen,
wie können wir da glücklich sein?
Woher dann das Lachen in unserem Gesicht?

The narrator speaks of regrets about leaving, but adds that such a feeling cannot be the basis of building new relationships somewhere else, even if this new relationship will always be somewhat ambiguous. And, however unlikely, Kreuzberg has become that somewhere for many migrants. Here my search started: what did this somewhere look like? How can we describe the connection or relationship between people and place which makes this somewhere special? By visiting these sites and listening to the stories of people, who individually and communally imbue this place with meaning, we can unpick this relationship.

Towards the end of 1996, on a cold and overcast November afternoon in fading light I visited the grave of Marlene Dietrich, who had died in early 1992. Her

⁶ Aras Ören, “Plastikkoffer”, *Mitten in der Odyssee. Gedichte*. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt/M. 1983, S.29-30.

carefully maintained grave in the Berlin suburb of Friedenau is only a few kilometres to the southwest of the overgrown grave of Adalbert von Chamisso, often considered the grandfather of 'migrant literature' in Germany. These graves - of two otherwise quite unrelated people - function as types of landmarks for my own connection to Berlin. They are symbols which trigger memories of people and feelings, and evoke a sense of belonging to this somewhere. Both of the novels to be discussed in the following chapters also function in a similar way and reveal why there is always a reason to unpack your Koffer in Berlin.

No longer marginal voices

Introduction

Recently the influence of frameworks of analysis adopted from cultural studies has been felt in the claustrophobic world of *Germanistik*. In the same way that minority – particularly migrant – communities shape and are shaped by the political, social, economic and intellectual environment in which they live, so too is *Germanistik* being reshaped by theories developed in such areas as cultural geography, postcolonialism and social ecology. This kind of multidisciplinary approach offers something appreciably different because it focuses on the areas of overlap otherwise unrecognised. Consequently, I have adopted this approach, which I have named ‘magpie picking’, in order to demonstrate more effectively these overlaps in interpretation, particularly in relation to a sense of place. In this context ‘magpie picking’ refers to the diverse and at first glance unusual way that ideas taken from different academic disciplines are woven together to create a theoretical framework. From each separate discipline and discourse important ideas are selected for analysis, but this is not a full and detailed analysis of each discipline or discourse. More specifically, the theorists and theories discussed in this dissertation focus on the importance of relationships between individuals, the community and the place they live. My main concern is to highlight the areas of overlap; that is, I will highlight those ideas which can be applied across different ways of thinking and therefore can offer different and valuable means of interpreting these novels.

These novels are not widely known. Therefore, this chapter will contain, firstly, a summary of both novels. Secondly, a review of appropriate literature will follow. As there is very little critical reception of these novels, this section includes a general overview of migrant literature in Germany in its social context. A crucial part of this section is entitled ‘a shift in focus’, which concentrates on the new and different approaches in the interpretation of migrant literature that have occurred in the past decade. This dissertation fits into these new approaches. Thirdly, this shift in focus will be developed through an explanation of a sense of place. The ideas explored in this section will then be applied throughout the following chapters. Since

these novels are primarily set in the city of Berlin, I will deepen my analysis of a sense of place to include the experience of being at home in a *Großstadt*. Fourthly, the approach of magpie picking requires an analysis of the theories and ideas derived from different academic discourses, which will be applied in subsequent chapters. This fourth section consists of an overview of each of the chapters in the order they appear in this dissertation. In this section based on the following chapters the analysis of these ideas will provide the general framework to be applied in the rest of this dissertation. Producing the novel can be seen as an example of how the relationships between person, place and community are fundamentally dynamic and occur in a specific time and space.

1. Summary of novels

Aras Ören: *Eine verspätete Abrechnung oder Der Aufstieg der Gündoğdu*

Aras Ören was born in Istanbul in 1939 and has lived in West Berlin since 1969. He has worked extensively as a journalist on radio and written extensively on the theme of migration and cultural adaptation. His various literary works, novels, short stories and poems contain many different threads which can be identified in this novel. For example, the naming of specific locations in Berlin, as well as the interweaving of characters from previous novels and poems, reveal that each work is self contained but can also be read as part of a larger, interconnected story. Although originally written in Turkish, this novel was simultaneously translated into German with the collaboration of Ören. (While this choice of language is an important issue, it is beyond the scope and intention of this dissertation.)

The title of Aras Ören's novel hints at many of the plot and character developments that take place in the setting of Kreuzberg, Berlin around 1982-3. The *Abrechnung* or reckoning of past events and decisions is delayed. However, the reckoning in the title represents one of many. Simultaneously, the novel is concerned with the rise in social status of one of the main characters, Ibrahim Gündoğdu, who is only described in the third person. The catalyst for this reckoning is the question asked by Ibrahim Gündoğdu of the unnamed narrator, a middle aged male, on the

very first page of the book: 'Erkennst du mich?' At this stage, the narrator is addressing the reader and expresses his bewilderment because he cannot recognise Ibrahim Gündoğdu. Perhaps a man - he recalls 25 pages later in narrative time, but actually only a few minutes in real time - whom he last met 15 years before on the train journey from Istanbul to Germany.

A major theme of the novel is the recognition not only of friends and acquaintances, but also of self, particularly of self as part of a community. The novel has two parts, and is framed by this first meeting and the meeting at the wedding reception two months later. In between these two events, the narrator undertakes an overdue reckoning of who he is, where he belongs and how he came to be there. Like flicking through haphazard memories all piled together in drawers, the narrator is drawn to recall incidents from childhood and adolescence in Turkey, as well as early adulthood in Germany. Dreams, prayers, dialogue, sights, sounds and scents are recalled and assessed according to the role they play in forming his character.

The theme of the journey is important to the narrator's reckoning. The first part is dominated by the description of the journey by train from Turkey to Germany. All related in flashback, the narrator describes the scene in the railway carriage, particularly focusing on his fellow passengers, their comments and actions and background. During this journey, other previous journeys are recalled. Piece by piece the character of the narrator is filled out.

Two other journeys by foot in Berlin frame the second part. The narrator makes his way from the U-Bahn station (after his chance meeting with Ibrahim Gündoğdu) to the apartment of Renate, a former girlfriend. He is delayed for this reckoning with her. This journey evokes memories of his life in Germany. People, places and events are recalled, which together present a picture of both the individual and the migrant community finding a way to feel at home in a new environment. The style of writing reflects this search; it is simultaneously experimental, playful and serious.

The other journey at the very end of the novel is analysed in depth in chapters two and three. Here the narrator walks from U-Bahnhof Kotbusser Tor to the wedding reception in a *Hinterhof* nearby in Oranienstraße, the heart of Kreuzberg Süd-Ost 36. (*SO 36* was the post code at the time.) The narrator meets a stranger

sitting next to him at the banquet table who explains all he knows of ‘the rise of Ibrahim Gündoğdu’. In these final pages the narrator recognises a further side to Ibrahim Gündoğdu, and in a marvellous piece of intertextuality, pieces together characters and incidents from previous novels by Ören. In this novel the theme of Turkish migration is the catalyst for the recognition of self, others and community.

Emine Sevgi Özdamar: *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*

Born in Malatya, Eastern Anatolia, in 1947, Emine Sevgi Özdamar initially worked in Germany as a *Gastarbeiterin* and later worked in theatre in both East and West Germany. Both written in German, her first play *Karagöz in Alania* (1982) and her first novel *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei* (1992) received critical and popular acclaim, and also stimulated debate within German intellectual circles about how the migration experience is represented in mainstream German society.

Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s novel is set between the years of 1966-70. The first part of the novel (*Der beleidigte Bahnhof*) is set in Kreuzberg, Berlin, the second part (*Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*) in Turkey, predominantly in Istanbul. Her narrative is linear, the language direct, with a consistent flow of short sharp sentences. The story is related in the first person by an unnamed narrator, an 18 year old woman, and contains occasional dialogue. The choice of the first person does not conflate narrator with author. However, ‘ich’ certainly creates an empathy in the reader, as well as a feeling that the narrator is anonymous, and her story reflects the story of many others in a similar situation.

The novel appears to be a sequel to her 1992 work *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*. *Die Brücke* begins with the young woman about to commence her journey to Germany. Her first year of life as a *Gastarbeiterin* is related, as well as a holiday trip to Paris. She returns to Berlin, becomes a translator in a *Frauenwohnheim*, and then becomes a theatre student and is involved in radical student politics in Berlin. An important theme is her path to adulthood. The second part of the novel set in Turkey is equally fascinating but generally lies outside the boundaries of this dissertation. The experience in the first part becomes the

measurement of the experiences in Turkey. Scenes from this part have been selected insofar as they shed further light on the narrator's experiences in Berlin.

Özdamar describes intimately, with humour and irony, the conditions of work and life of the narrator's role as *Gastarbeiterin*. The characters in this first part are predominantly women and of different ages and social standing. In their interactions with each other, the city of Berlin plays a major role. Berlin becomes the site of their learning about themselves, each other, and the challenges of being in a strange or different culture. Often this challenge comes through daily routines like catching the bus, or shopping, or seeking entertainment. Özdamar's choice of a woman as the main character is important because another side of the experience of Berlin as a migrant space is reflected. From the young woman learning German through newspaper headlines emerges the mature woman using the German language on stage and participating in street marches.

Indeed, in both novels the main characters experience a sense of wonder at what lies before them in their new environment. Both respond in a positive way and end up creating a sense of place in this new environment.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

Literary interpretation in Germany occurs on highly contested terrain. The terrain is broad and has many layers. In this section I will present a literature review limited to the primary and secondary material which simultaneously reveals some of these layers, as well as forms a vital part of my analysis of the novels under consideration. Additionally, this section also functions as a theoretical framework of this analysis. What I am setting out to do is show how a literature review can also be used to place the text within a specific theoretical context. I will concentrate on tracing various developments within a discrete area of German literature in the post World War II period. A central contention of my analysis is that both novels belong to what is popularly known as German literature. Additionally, both novels can be placed in the context of migrant literature, both as part of German literature, and part of a supranational migrant literature. Furthermore, my analysis shows that there has been an important shift in focus in the way literature by migrants to Germany has

been critiqued. A consequence of this shift in focus is a deeper and richer understanding of both the text and the context in which it is written and read.

Before beginning this review, it is necessary to outline the curious and compelling debate in Germany over the label 'migrant'. The social and political definitions and implications of this term are vital to understanding the battle over what constitutes migrant literature and in what way it belongs to German literature. The term 'migrant' requires explanation particularly because government policy still maintains that *Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland*, although recent debate generated by gradual reforms in citizenship and underlying economic necessity contemplates the idea of officially sanctioned migration. (Indeed, a number of official government publications designed for international consumption clearly regard migration as a fundamental part of German society.)¹ Historians Klaus Bade and Claus Leggewie argue that such changes would recognise the reality that Germany for many years has been an *Einwanderungsland*.² Migration generally implies a permanent move to another country and is the result of many diverse and interrelated factors; in the post World War II era Germany has accepted about 20 million migrants as a result of war and political change (*Volksdeutsche, Aussiedler, Umsiedler, Übersiedler*), as well as refugees (*Asylanten*) and migrant workers (*Gastarbeiter*).

In this work I focus on the Turkish community in Berlin and particularly on those who have migrated initially to fulfil work contracts, originally named *Gastarbeiter*. Out of these *Gastarbeiter* have become migrants. To recognise this reality, the term *Gastarbeiterliteratur* is inaccurate and focuses on a label seen as demeaning and belonging to a past time. *Ausländerliteratur* likewise focuses on a label derived from a legal status and is also too broad to be a useful tool of analysis. Even the term coined by Irmgard Ackermann and Harald Weinrich at the *Institut für Deutsch als Fremdsprache* is too clumsy, although more accurate: *deutsche Literatur*

¹ Stephan Burgdorf et al, "Einwanderung. Raum ohne Volk" in *Der Spiegel* 43/2000, p.42-54; *Deutschland. Zeitschrift für Politik, Kultur, Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft* no.6, 2000, p.38-61; Horand Knap and Christoph Mestmacher, "Zuwanderung. Jedes Steinchen umgedreht", in *Der Spiegel* 22/2001, p.22-25.

² Klaus Bade, *Vom Auswanderungsland zum Einwanderungsland? Deutschland 1880-1980*. Berlin 1983, also *Deutsche im Ausland. Fremde in Deutschland. Migration in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. Beck München 1992; Claus Leggewie *MULTI KULTI Spielregeln für die Vielvölkerrepublik*. Rotbuch Verlag, Berlin 1993.

von Autoren nicht deutscher Herkunft.³ I acknowledge that my choice to use the label 'migrant', although popular in contemporary literature criticism, is still limiting (and perhaps oppressing) and an example of further categorisation.⁴ However, my focus is on the quality and content of the literature, not a judgement on authenticity. My purpose is to show how interesting these novels are and to use them as a starting point of my analysis.

Immacolata Amodeo, poet and literary critic, contends that the effect of this categorisation of foreigners has led to their marginalisation as writers. Initially, foreign writers were placed with other marginalised groups, and Amodeo assesses with some insight, why this has occurred. According to publishers, literature from groups identified as marginalised such as migrants, homosexuals, women, communists-working class, is deemed marketable by attaching a special label to it, and consequently their work becomes catalogued in this one way. However, the writers themselves, Amodeo contends, as well as critics and publishers, have contributed to this narrow positioning. She finds it a dubious honour that once their transitional phase as *Gastarbeiter* is completed, they are accepted or incorporated into the mainstream of German literature, and thereby, she argues with some justification, sanitised.⁵

As indicated above, labels can be a form of tyranny and blindness, yet in the context of this literature review they can also serve to illuminate general tendencies which reinforce my overall argument. This literature review presents an overview of such general tendencies in migrant literature up to 1998 and is divided into four parts. The first three parts correspond to different periods in the history of the Federal

³ Irmgard Ackermann & Harald Weinrich (Hg.), *Eine nicht nur deutsche Literatur: Zur Standortbestimmung der 'Ausländerliteratur'*, Piper, München 1986.

⁴ Dieter Horn, "Schreiben aus Betroffenheit – Die Migrantenliteratur in der Bundesrepublik" in Alfred J. Tumat (Hg.) *Migration and Integration, Ein Reader*, 1986, p.213-33; Heimke Schierloh, *Das alles für ein Stück Brot. Migrantenliteratur als Objectivierung des 'Gastarbeiterdaseins'*. Peter Lang, Frankfurt/M. 1984; Monika Frederking, *Schreiben gegen Vorurteile. Literatur türkischer Migranten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Express Edition, Berlin 1985; Leslie A. Adelson, "Migrants' Literature or German Literature? TORKAN's *Tufan: Brief an einen islamischen Bruder*" in *The German Quarterly* vol.63 p.382-389; Helmut Heinze, *Migrantenliteratur in der BRD*.

Bestandaufnahme und Entwicklungstendenzen zu einer multikulturellen Literatursynthese, Express Edition, Berlin 1986; Thomas Wägenbaur, "Kulturelle Identität oder Hybridität? Aysel Özakins *Die blaue Maske* und das Projekt interkultureller Dynamik" in *LiLi*, Heft 97, Jg.25 März 1995, p.22-47.

⁵ For an intense discussion, see Immacolata Amodeo, *Die Heimat heißt Babylon. Zur Literatur ausländischer Autoren in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Westdeutscher Verlag, Opladen 1996, p.33-73.

Republic of Germany (or West Germany). The fourth part considers the recent shift in focus at some depth. However, to understand the implications of this shift in focus, I will use a framework initially suggested by Irmgard Ackermann, Heidrun Suhr and others⁶ to investigate how this tradition of migrant literature has been established. Specifically, there are three phases: (1) the *Gastarbeiter* phase (1955-73); (2) the *zwischen zwei Stühlen* phase (1973-85); and (3) the here to stay phase (1985-98). The demarcation of these phases is based on three different criteria: political and economic events; the type of work written and published; and the critical reception of this work.

The *Gastarbeiter* phase begins with the signing of the first *Gastarbeiter* treaties in 1955 providing the impetus for the type of mass migration that followed. The *zwischen zwei Stühlen* phase originates in the decision by the SPD-FDP coalition government in 1973 to halt recruitment of foreign workers, known as the *Anwerberstopp* policy. The here to stay phase is closely linked to the inaugural presentation of the *Adalbert-von-Chamisso Preis* awarded to writers of German literature of non-German background. In each phase the following factors will be discussed: the social context in which the authors wrote, the writing produced, and the response of critics, publishers and the reading public. Together these factors have a marked influence on my contextualisation of these novels, as both novels quite clearly belong to the third phase highlighted above. Moreover this overview will shift the focus towards the recognition that migrants write in a specific social context, rather than a postmodern nowhere; it is a space that in time becomes filled with shared experiences, longing, hopes, dreams, emotions and life.

(i) The '*Gastarbeiter*' phase 1955-73

Max Frisch made a perceptive comment about the policy of recruiting *Gastarbeiter* to work in German industry: "man hat Arbeitskräfte gerufen, aber es

⁶ Heidrun Suhr, "Ausländerliteratur: Minority Literature in the Federal Republic of Germany" in: *New German Critique* vol. 46, 1989, p. 71-103; Sabine Fischer and Moray McGowan, "From *Pappkoffer* to Pluralism: on the Development of Migrant Writing in the German Federal Republic" in David Horrocks & Eva Kolinsky (eds.), *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, Berghahn Books, Providence/Oxford 1996, p. 1-22; see Ackermann & Weinrich.

kamen Menchen”⁷. Frisch deftly highlights the tension between the expectations of this economic policy and its social outcomes. The agreements between governments (and German unions and business organisations) had decidedly economic aims: German industry was provided with cheap labour, and the governments of countries such as, Italy, Turkey and Greece, were given a political and demographic safety valve which released the pressure from rising unemployment. The *Gastarbeiter* themselves were recruited to work for a limited period, but they remained, and from their first moment in Germany, began to develop a culture quite distinctive from that of their homeland.

However, the legal status based on short term rotation which was applied to such foreign workers, did not anticipate this response. The first labour recruitment treaties were signed between West Germany and Italy in 1955, and with Turkey in 1961. (The building of the Berlin Wall, which permanently stopped the supply of cheap labour from East Germany, was not unconnected with the acceleration of the recruitment programs in the early 1960s.) Briefly these treaties emphasised the transitory nature of the *Gastarbeiter*’s presence in Germany: a two year period on rotation. Contracts laid down where and when people were to work and live. Their wider cultural engagement as *Menschen*, and therefore as participants in society, was hardly forseen.

The social context in which literature was written was determined by this economic policy and supported by the associated legal framework. The legal status, *Gastarbeiter*, then determined the social status. Indeed, it can be asserted that *Gastarbeiter* received special treatment; that is, the Germans even made extra laws for them! *Gastarbeiter* was initially a political label designed to distinguish this policy from the inhumane policies of past German governments which involved the recruitment of foreign labour. For example, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Poles were designated as *Fremdarbeiter*. Additionally, the word *Zwangsarbeiter* or *Kriegsarbeiter* described the prisoners of war from occupied

⁷ Max Frisch, “Überfremdung I” in *Öffentlichkeit als Partner*, edition Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M. 1967, and quoted in Anna Picardi-Montesando, *Die Gastarbeiter in der Literatur der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Express Edition, Berlin 1985, p.12-13. (Originally used by Frisch in a Foreword to *Siamo italiano – Gespräche mit italienischen Gastarbeitern in der Schweiz*, recorded by J. Seiler.)

countries who made up more than a third of the labour force in the Second World War. These terms were heavily burdened by negative and derogatory connotations.

So, what began initially as a political label intended to be at best neutral, began to take on negative connotations. Soon this label was attached to other objects which likewise took on connotations of lower social status: *Gastarbeiterwohnheim* referred to a generic and soulless building like a military barracks, and *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* became the stock description for language of less linguistic and communicative value. Emine Sevgi Özdamar comments that is an ambiguous and contradictory term: she sees two people, one who is a guest, and one who works.⁸ Whereas a guest is somebody who is honoured, and stays for only a short period of time, an *Arbeiter* not only works, but also works in a specific type of job, generally of lower status such as blue-collar work in factories or heavy industry, largely unskilled, monotonous, poorly paid and open to exploitation. This ambiguity and uncertainty about status is an undercurrent in the literature of this period, and continues to exert some influence.

The use of the term *Gastarbeiter* is widespread in public debate in this period. It becomes the *Schublade* into which all people, ideas and opinions can be shoved – ignored and forgotten. A consequence of this type of approach is that anything associated with *Gastarbeiter* can be categorised as a problem or *Frage*. This categorisation becomes an effective way to shift blame for any ills (particularly economic such as unemployment, or social such as powerlessness) and this group is rapidly demonised. Clifford Geertz⁹ has pointed out in anthropological research how this demonisation strategy can profoundly influence the perspective not only of the dominant group in society, but also of the minority groups. According to this theory, the *Gastarbeiter* adapt their behaviour and their attitude about themselves to assimilate into the perception that the dominant groups or mainstream society holds of them. From the experience of the characters in the novels under discussion, this adaptation has occurred extensively in representations of contemporary Germany

⁸ Emine Sevgi Özdamar, "Schwarzauge und sein Esel" in *Die Zeit* 26th February 1993, p.90; Wierschke, p.261.

⁹ see particularly Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, Basic Books, New York 1973.

Seeing the *Gastarbeiter* as a problem needing to be solved, leads to the conclusion that these people were effectively socially marginalised. This social marginalisation had its legal equivalent: there was no provision for *Gastarbeiter* to be recognised as citizens, and therefore their role as active civic participants was effectively curtailed. Indeed, most debates about their status were conducted without their input. This lack of voice (or lack of recognition) and absence in social standing rendered them as objects in whose name decisions were taken.

Although marginalised socially and legally, the *Gastarbeiter* were also burdened with many competing expectations, particularly concerning behaviour in a public space. They were expected to be Turkish, yet not to transgress any (generally unspoken) German norms of behaviour. However, in this first period they were never encouraged to see themselves as German, or as having a right to use and belong to this public space such as parks, gardens and streets.

These social expectations are reflected also in mainstream West German literature of the 1960s and 1970s. Generally, the *Gastarbeiter* are absent, but in the few fictional depictions, Anna Picardi-Montesando argues,¹⁰ they are shadowy figures. These depictions are dominated by one-dimensional figures, quite consciously 'other', and evoke either fear or pity. Applying this insightful analysis then we see that the agency of *Gasytarbeiter* is substantially reduced, and one character is seen to represent all *Gastarbeiter* regardless of nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, or social and cultural status.

However, a contrasting result of this marginalisation was a vast number of social science research projects trying to outline and solve the *Gastarbeiterfrage*.¹¹ In

¹⁰ Anna Picardi-Montesando, *Die Gastarbeiter in der Literatur der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Express Edition, Berlin 1985; Brigitte Neubert, *Der Außenseiter im deutschen Roman nach 1945*, Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, Bonn 1977.

¹¹ For an annotated overview see Czarina Wilpert, "International Migration and Ethnic Minorities: New Fields for Post-War Sociology in the Federal Republic of Germany" in *Current Sociology/La Sociologie contemporaine* vol.32, no.3, 1984, p.305-352; Atilla Yakut, *Sprache der Familie. Eine Untersuchung des Zweitspracherwerbs der türkischen Gastarbeiterfamilien in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Günter Narr Verlag, Tübingen 1981; Hermann Korte & Alfred Schmidt, *Migration und ihre soziale Fragen*, Förderung der Gastarbeiterforschung durch die Stiftung Volkswagenwerk 1974-1981, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1983; R.K. Silbereisen and E. Schmitt-Rodermund, "German Immigrants in Germany: Adaptation of Adolescents' Timetable for Autonomy" in Peter Noack, Manfred Hofer & James Youniss (eds.), *Psychological Responses to Social Change. Human Development in Changing Environments*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin/New York 1995; Elçin Kürsat-Ahlers, "The Turkish Minority in German Society" in David Horrocks & Eva Kolinsky (eds.), *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, Berghahn Books, Providence/Oxford 1996, p.113-135.

particular, research focused on dislocation experienced as a result of discrimination constantly suffered in social settings such as in the work place, education, what to do in free time, and how to overcome distress from family separation. The discourses of dislocation became even more critical when the children of *Gastarbeiter* entered the formal education system. The debate centred originally on the assimilation of children into the German system, and only gradually in the 1970s did the concept of *Erziehung in zwei Sprachen* emerge as a significant focus of public debate and policy framework.

The response by *Gastarbeiter* to this initial public indifference and to the challenges of living in a new culture took on a literary form, as the sheet of paper became a space to express the frustrations of being unable to communicate in the dominant language.¹² Writing became the primary cultural focus owing to a number of interrelated factors. Unlike art, music, sculpture or photography, writing is an activity requiring few materials. As the first *Gastarbeiter* brought few material objects or capital with them other than their hopes and dreams, the simple needs of pen and paper make writing a favoured form of communication. Although the telephone functions as the most direct link, the writing of letters is a more tangible and lasting form of communication. However, in this process letters become a mask, as often the actual experience is hidden behind positive and polite words and phrases with the aim of comforting both the person writing the letter and the person or family receiving it. Also, many of these *Gastarbeiter* were men uncomfortable with communicating in a written form, so to avoid the feeling of being confronted, brave and reassuring words were used to convey a sense of being in control.

However, this letter writing encouraged the pursuit of other forms of writing to be pursued in order to find an outlet for repressed thoughts or feelings of isolation and loneliness. Writing, particularly in the form of poetry, became a space of reflection – not just communication – in which attempts are made to articulate deep emotions. It is important to note that only a minority of *Gastarbeiter* wrote in any form, but those who did meditated profoundly on the initial misunderstandings and

¹² Horst Hamm, *Fremdgegangen freigeschrieben. Einführung in die deutschsprachige Gastarbeiterliteratur*, Königshausen and Neumann, Würzburg 1988, p.29, 32-33, 40-42, 88-90; Franco Biondi, Jusuf Naoum, Rafik Schami (Hg.), *Zwischen zwei Giganten. Prosa, Lyrik und Grafiken aus dem Gastarbeiteralltag*, Edition Con, Bremen 1983, p.9.

confrontations of everyday life in a foreign culture. Words and phrases used to communicate in this everyday life became the lifeblood of this writing.

Gradually, this style of writing becomes known as *Gastarbeiterdeutsch*. (The German literary critic Horst Hamm maintains that *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* first becomes a word with some accepted literary meaning in the late 1970s.¹³) Although much of the original poetry is written in the home language such as Greek, Italian and Turkish, and published in this language (either for the home market, or for other *Gastarbeiter*), increasingly more is written in German. Additionally, there is a different and broader market for texts published in German. So, the use of *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* reveals a change, in that the first language is no longer adequate to express the feelings or experiences that occur in Germany. In this way, a new range of metaphors and phrases is developed.

In terms of linguistic structure *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* can be differentiated by vocabulary, sentence structure, images and voice. The style is bare, few words, short lines in free verse, in the form of poems and short stories based on events in everyday life. The language contains many concrete nouns and verbs which form part of a daily vocabulary, necessary for survival, rather than abstract nouns containing multilayered technical or philosophical meanings. The words and phrases are chosen for their resonance to feelings generated from everyday experience such as, the first words learned in a new context, or humiliation caused by commands barked out in the workplace, or legal words used to define status (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*), or the sounds and names of the machinery used in the workplace, or the lyrics of a remembered song. One of the most compelling techniques is the juxtaposition of simple words placed next to a compound word such as *Brot* and *Aufenthaltsgenehmigung*¹⁴. This juxtaposition reflects the imbalance in power between the *Gastarbeiter* and the officials working at different levels of the bureaucracy, who not only have broad administrative authority over the *Gastarbeiter's* fate, but who also employ words and phrases beyond the linguistic capacity of the *Gastarbeiter*.

¹³ Hamm, p.31

¹⁴ See for example Franco Biondi, "Niemand wird mich zum Metallstück machen" (written in 1971, first published in 1981; Pierre Blithikiotis, "ausländerbehörde" in Ackermann (Hg.) *Als Fremde in Deutschland*, 1982, p.135; Dragutin Trumbetas, "Arschsprache" in Christian Schaffernicht, *Zu Hause in der Fremde. Ein bundesdeutsches Ausländer-Lesebuch*, Verlag Atelier im Bauernhaus, Fischerhude 1981, p.21.

The result of this sparse language is deepened by the choice of free verse. Free verse suggests a feeling of a staccato rhythm to life – the rhythms of the homeland and of the home culture are no longer appropriate in this new cultural space. Furthermore, free verse is an effective technique to convey the harsh realities of lives in the factory, which coincides with a modern style adopted by German writers (sometimes called “konkrete Literatur”¹⁵). As the linguistic capacity of the *Gastarbeiter* writers deepens, certain influences can be detected from both literature from the homeland and contemporary mainstream German literature. A crucial overlap occurs here because German poets in the postwar period were also in search of a new language, since the Nazis had so destroyed their own language. For these poets such as, the *Gruppe 47*, a new language needed to begin with the words that could be trusted; that is, the simplest, concrete words. Günter Eich’s “Inventur”¹⁶ is a fine example – the soldier returning home to a destroyed Germany counts his possessions; like the *Gastarbeiter*, all the unnamed soldier possesses is what he can physically take with him. Free verse in this context was an attempt to create a new and direct means of communication, rather than another *Scheinwelt*, which presented an appearance of things, a world designed to veil the power relations in society, rather than to expose them.

An important technique which has been employed to reveal these power relations is the ‘Ich’ form of writing, often referred to as “Ich-Literatur”¹⁷. Although not a new technique, it attains a particular significance in this situation of feeling displaced and isolated. The voice of the narrator is presented in the first person, recording the objects surrounding him/her, as well as their thoughts. This technique has many important outcomes. Firstly, the poetry is understood as personal, autobiographical recollections and observations, creating an almost unmediated relationship between subject and object. Secondly, the author is then perceived as identical with the narrator and the work is evaluated according to its apparent authenticity. Although as the Australian literary critic, Sneja Gunew, has pointed out, all the ‘I’ form does is indicate that some form of narrative technique is being used.

¹⁵ See Heinz Gappmayr, “Was ist konkrete Poesie?” in *Text + Kritik* Heft 25, *Konkrete Poesie I* 1978, S.5-9; Hamm, p.52-54.

¹⁶ Günter Eich, *Gedichte*, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt/M. 1973, p.10-11.

¹⁷ Marilya Vteto-Conrad, *Finding a Voice. Identity and the Works of German-Language Turkish*

According to her, whether it is authentic is not an appropriate question.¹⁸ Thirdly, many literary critics have subsequently assumed that the 'ich' form is less a choice than a result of lesser lyric and imaginative capability. These outcomes lead to a literary marginalisation of *Gastarbeiterliteratur* as being solely a sociological document, and not worthy of aesthetic critique. Indeed, Immacolata Amodeo¹⁹ stresses that stories for anthologies were chosen according to their supposed authenticity, or owing to the background of the author, rather than the merit of the stories or poems.

These anthologies were a dominant form of publication of writing by *Gastarbeiter* authors in this period. Although this type of classification enabled many writers to be published for the first time, it also leads to a further marginalisation based on the literary market place, as *Gastarbeiter* becomes the *Etikett* attached by publishers, book sellers and literary critics. As a result, the concerns of these stories and poems are kept at a distance from wider social debate, and located only in this niche concerned directly with foreigners. A further unexpected consequence of these anthologies is a type of deracination: all foreign writers are coded *Gastarbeiter*, so all are bundled together in the same category, with only a subparagraph or two about their ethnicity. In this way their individual differences are reduced to the basic stereotypes (male, unskilled, working class or rural labourer, married with family in homeland), which to some extent becomes consolidated by the themes dealt with by the writers themselves. Writers were aware that a curious niche market had grown that read these works as sociological documents in which despair and dislocation were illustrated in a seemingly unmediated form. These anthologies then became a signpost of an emerging literary market for this work, an interest which simultaneously imposed its own limitations; that is, these works were expected to deal with *Betroffenheit*, and thereby evoke sympathy, rather than empathy or affinity, or a questioning of the social structure.

The expectations of these *Gastarbeiter* writers then are influenced not only by their reaction to their immediate surroundings, but also by what the literary

Writers in the Federal Republic of Germany to 1990, Peter Lang, New York 1986; Hamm p.53

¹⁸ Sneja Gunew, "Migrant Women Writers. Who's on whose margins?" in: *Meanjin* vol.42, no.1, March 1983, p.16-26, 17-20.

¹⁹ See for an indepth discussion, Amodeo p.12-32.

marketplace expects of them. Ota Filip, a Czech-born writer resident in Germany for more than twenty-five years, offers some critical and dissenting perspectives on the expectations evinced by these writers. Filip argued²⁰ that foreign writers reacted to their literary classification by declaring that they were unjustly treated and therefore victims, an attitude that then acquired currency in the marketplace, which in turn forced them to internalise this role of victim. They expected special treatment, which according to Filip, drew even more public attention to their authenticity, rather than to how well they wrote. For Filip an ideal counter argument was an insistence on being treated like German authors.²¹ The late Libuše Moníková intoned similarly that extra burdens fall on writers as a result of this classification: her readers were disappointed when the writer did not write about *Betroffenheit*. This expectation had such a limiting effect that she refused to answer questions after book readings because she was only ever asked two types of questions, which essentially were directed at ascertaining her authenticity: Why do you write in German? Is this work based on your experience as a foreigner in Germany?²²

The expectation that the literary work sets down the authentic experience of the author becomes an obsession. This obsession to document the authentic experience further consolidates the stereotype of the Turks in Germany as victims and unable to speak on their own behalf, which then leads to the odd conclusion that Germans must speak for them. Indeed, the best known example is Günter Wallraff's *Ganz Unten*.²³ Wallraff, a respected German writer and journalist, adopted the guise of a Turkish *Gastarbeiter* to report in the form of a *Protokoll* on the exploitation suffered by *Gastarbeiter* in contemporary Germany; in other words, Wallraff attempted to write down the authentic experience underlying *Wohlfahrts Deutschland*. However, the voice is that of the educated and socially engaged German who dissects the victim and the oppressed culture. Wallraff's work has been heavily criticised in the circles of migrant literature²⁴ because the *Gastarbeiter* once

²⁰ Ota Filip, "Keine Wehleidigkeit, bitte" in Ackermann & Weinrich, *Eine nicht nur deutsche Literatur*, p.82-86.

²¹ Filip, p.85-86.

²² Oral pers. comm. with the author 20th October 1996.

²³ Günter Wallraff, *Ganz Unten*, Kiepenhauer & Witsch, Köln, 1984.

²⁴ See Amodeo p.23-25

more are presented as objects without voice or agency, yet this work is valuable as reportage, and still finds a resonance among the German reading public.

A consequence of Wallraff's work is that the sociological value of migrant literature is further consolidated. This work is important in two ways: politically and personally. Firstly, leftwing literary and social critics understood this writing by migrants as part of their own broader struggle for power in which literature could be co-opted in order to highlight their contention that exploitation of labour was fundamental to the West German model of capitalist production. This link further limited the expectation placed on the *Gastarbeiter* about what they 'should' write. (Although lying outside this work it is worth noting that the experience in postwar East Germany suggests that much of the literature written by contracted workers or *Vertragsarbeiter* from 'brother socialist' countries such as, Angola, Vietnam, Mozambique and China, was similarly published according to political goals, rather than for aesthetic reasons.)

Secondly, the subjectivity or social positioning of the authors was further consolidated. The themes adopted in work in this period reflect their marginalised status in Germany; the work reflects the suffering as a result of loneliness and separation from family and culture, and that they do not see themselves as belonging in Germany, which is closely linked to a longing for a physically and culturally distant homeland. Their personal response to the theme of work is multilayered: 'work' and the 'workplace' are connected with physical, emotional and spiritual fatigue. Rarely is it seen as rewarding. They also express the difficulty of enduring many competing burdens. For example, they are the breadwinners for an entire family, and enjoy an exalted status in the homeland, although they work in dirty, physically demanding jobs which bring little status in Germany. The expectations from home put them into a difficult bind: they indulge in conspicuous consumption so as not to disappoint those at home, yet this hinders their long term goal of saving to return home permanently. This role of absent male breadwinner contributes to the males' feeling powerless, for example, when they are unable to fulfil traditional obligations as head and protector of the family, particularly in relation to teenage daughters.

Aras Ören's poem *Plastikkoffer*, quoted in the introduction, identifies well the major points of this period. The narrator has been assigned a legal label which quickly becomes a social label, and then becomes internalised. The narrator can only take a small number of basic possessions, expressed in a string of concrete nouns. The tone is filled with longing, and also hints at a number of expectations: those from the home country, the family and home culture, and those generated from the self. The poem too reflects the assertion that the only home for a worker is where there is work, echoing the Marxist orientation of many left wing literary critics and publishers.

(ii) The *zwischen zwei Stühlen* phase 1973-85

Like the 423 and 140 buses, a deepening recognition of the role of migrant literature occurs the longer the journey lasts. The journey of the *Gastarbeiter* in Germany takes a quite different point of focus from 1973, when the SPD-FDP coalition government decided on an *Anwerberstopp* in their policy of recruitment of workers. The immediate cause of this decision was the economic recession as a result of the four-fold increase in oil prices (the oil shock) by OPEC, leading to rising unemployment, and consequently, there was less need for the unskilled labour provided by the initial *Gastarbeiter*. A result of the *Anwerberstopp* policy was a tendency for workers to retain their current jobs, and to call on their families in the home countries to join them; the most accessible method of entry to Germany in this period was through the family reunion program. With their family also in Germany a greater need and desire arose to find a way of settling down in this new country. Additionally, a growing number of younger people spent their formative years in Germany, rather than in the home country. In this way, the *Anwerberstopp* policy encouraged these people to see Germany as a place to live, rather than a space to work (or to merely exist), a change in attitude which could not have been previously contemplated.

The idea of migration thus became a reality. For the *Gastarbeiter*, however, migration can be best understood as the result of a creeping acceptance, rather than a conscious decision that they would stay in Germany, as suggested by the Turkish-

born Kemal Kurt.²⁵ Yet this kind of migration was hardly encouraged by the Federal Government, nor by business or trade unions, and is quite different from the classical migration of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Migrants to countries such as Australia, USA, Argentina and Canada, generally made conscious decisions to leave for good. Indeed, the past two centuries witnessed the greatest numbers of mass migration. Classical migration is also experienced as a move *away* from Europe, yet *Gastarbeiter* were moving *to* Europe, and so this movement was seen as unexpected and difficult to understand.

Owing to these circumstances the response by migrant writers took many different forms. Public debate focused on the assimilation of these people into German norms of behaviour, while many migrants particularly the Second Generation (those born in Germany or those who arrived in Germany at a young age) were described as being *zwischen zwei Stühlen* ('between two stools'). The intention was to explain the difficult experience of growing up with or between two cultures, however, this expression soon took on negative connotations, implying that these people were *excluded* from both cultures. Here I argue that a better understanding is that this generation is living *within* different cultures and in different languages, and that this kind of multicultural influence should be seen as advantageous, rather than as a deficit.

Although there was little change in the legislation dealing with the acquisition of a more permanent legal status, a change in terminology did occur. *Gastarbeiter* became *Ausländerarbeitskräfte*, a term which still focused on work as a fundamental part of their status. However, by the 1980s the terminology in the debate had moved on again to *ausländische Mitbürger*. These words point to the participation of foreigners in mainstream society, not just limited to the sphere of work. This change is a crucial development and is reflected in the response of migrant writers in this period.

The response of migrant writers can be seen in three different ways: firstly, in the written work; secondly, the broadening of the category of who did the writing; and thirdly, the increased willingness of publishing firms and literary critics to engage seriously with this material.

²⁵ Written pers. comm. with the author 19th October 1996

Firstly, in terms of written work, there is a growing complexity in content, structure and source material. A prime example was Aras Ören's *Berlin-Poem* trilogy²⁶ published separately in 1973, 1974 and 1980, used free verse, multiple settings and multiple narrative voices to relate the story of the community in Kreuzberg, Berlin. What makes this work special is its mixture of dialogue and internal monologue which depict not only the expected view of the foreigner, but also of the local German. Consequently, what these characters share is highlighted and seen as a normal part of this community, which helps to break down the *Fremde/Eigene* dichotomy to be discussed later in this chapter. The first part of this trilogy, *Was will Niyazi in der Naunynstraße*, is acknowledged as the breakthrough into the German literary mainstream. The Turkish-born writer, historian and literary critic, Yüksel Pazarkaya described the effect of this work as a form of "literarischer Bahnbrecher"²⁷, in which Kreuzberg was an inseparable part of the story. Originally written in Turkish and simultaneously translated into German, it was translated into English and also made into a film, an event quite unforeseen a decade before.

Ören's work also presages the appearance of longer novels by migrant writers. Employing greater linguistic diversity than the short stories and poems previously written, these novels focus on coming to terms with this new place as the overpowering autobiographical perspective is broadened. Different types of relationships are examined as this new generation of writers explores broader themes. The search for identity occupies a central position, which compares favourably with a similar search being undertaken simultaneously by German writers: what is it to be German and to live in German society at this time? A consequence of this search by migrant writers is a critical engagement with both the cultures of Germany and of the homeland. The military coups in both Greece (1967) and Turkey (1970) are important thematic concerns for writers like Saliha Scheinhardt and Aysel Özakin. The coup represents not only a cause of exile, but is also portrayed in a literary form as an example of the injustice endemic in the foundations of modern Turkish society

²⁶ Aras Ören, *Was will Niyazi in der Naunynstraße? Ein Poem*. Rotbuch Verlag, Berlin 1973; Ören, *Der kurze Traum aus Kagithan. Ein Poem*. Rotbuch Verlag, Berlin 1974; Ören, *Die Fremde ist auch ein Haus. Berlin-Poem*. Rotbuch Verlag, Berlin 1980.

²⁷ Yüksel Pazarkaya, "Über Aras Ören", in Heinz Friedrich (Hg.) *Chamissos Enkel. Zur Literatur von Ausländern in Deutschland*, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München 1986, p.16; see also Michael Gott-Gill, *Migration, Ethnicization and Germany's New Ethnic Minority Literature*, diss., University

and as a catalyst for social upheaval requiring individual engagement in a collective form.

A key feature of Ören's work which reflects much of the migrant literature of this second period is humour. Dry humour, particularly in the form of bitter irony, is a literary technique applied frequently through much of this writing. This kind of humour functions as sharp social critique, emerging from a perspective of lower social standing, but informed by knowledge of more than one society. Humour then operates as a technique of survival, in that the author (and the reader) is able to distance him or herself from the often depressing social realities of *Betroffenheit*, discrimination, unemployment and "Identitätsdiffusion".²⁸ This humour then reveals a growing sense of coming to terms with this new culture. The German culture is no longer portrayed as bewildering and confronting leading to a sense of powerlessness, but as something which can be understood, utilised and compared. Satire becomes widely used, particularly effectively in the short stories of Şinasi Dikmen and Osman Engin.²⁹ Often their stories take the form of a close parody of formal social events where quite different social expectations and forms of social etiquette clash and cause humorous (and simultaneously profound) misunderstandings. The appeal of this literary technique lies in its apparent familiarity to many non-German readers, and in holding up a mirror to the host society to look at its own expectations from a fresh perspective.

Secondly, a critical feature of migrant literature is the publication of many women writers. As mentioned previously, Scheinhardt and Özakin, along with Özdamar, began to analyse the position of women in Turkish society, particularly as a result of the burgeoning feminist literary critique taking place in Germany in the 1960s and 1970s. Although not always operating as a strict comparison between Germany and Turkey, European critical approaches become a standard framework of analysis. Özakin, well known in literary circles in Turkey, underlines the inherent contradictions in a woman's position not only in Turkey in contrast to Europe, but

of California, Berkeley 1994.

²⁸ Eoin Bourke, " 'Die Bürde zweier Welten': Die Lyrik Nevfel Cumarts", in Sabine Fischer & Moray McGowan (Hg.), *Denn du tanzt auf einem Seil. Positionen deutschsprachiger MigrantInnenliteratur*, Stauffenburg Verlag, Tübingen 1997, p. 71-85, 80-81.

²⁹ Şinasi Dikmen, *Hurra, ich lebe in Deutschland. Satiren*, Piper Verlag, München 1995; Osman Engin *Deutschling. Satiren*. Express-Edition, Berlin 1985.

also in different social strata within Turkey. Additionally, she writes in an elegant and concise style about the position of Turkish-born women in Germany, suffering in a male-dominated migrant community, as well as typecast as the *Putzfrau*, an ill-educated and silent victim in wider society.³⁰ So, these women writers offer new perspectives; they are previously unacknowledged voices from the experience of de facto migration, and in the process their publications acknowledge a degree of access to a public culture, denied to them in Turkey. In this way they begin to create a 'bridging culture' which helps to link people to new ideas rather than to exclude them. Hülya Özkan and Andrea Wörle present a good example of such a 'bridge' for women writers in their 1985 anthology devoted to work by women writers from many different countries. (Luisa Costa Hölzl and Elena Torossi also present a similar type of anthology in the same year.)³¹

The idea of culture or, more specifically, language as a 'bridge' becomes a significant characteristic of this period particularly through the publication of many collaborations and anthologies like those mentioned above. Collaborations need to be distinguished from anthologies for the primary reason that collaborations refer to the work put together by migrant writers themselves, indicating a form of agency, while anthologies are compiled primarily by German academics. These anthologies are useful in that they show the breadth and depth of literary output, yet anthologies from Irmgard Ackermann, Harald Weinrich, Heinz Friedrich and Christian Schaffernicht³², amongst others, result in a collection of work published under a single label, *Gastarbeiter* or *Ausländer* or a similar formulation. However, this form of categorisation also fits neatly into traditions of mainstream German literature where anthologies are based on a single theme (*Arbeiterliteratur*, *Exilliteratur*, *Heimatliteratur*, *Stadtliteratur*) or timeframe (*Nachkriegsliteratur*, *Deutsche Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts*). Yet this single approach to contextualisation can hide the vital internal differences in these stories, and effectively push the focus away from aesthetics and on to authenticity.

³⁰ Aysel Özkan, *Deine Stimme gehört dir. Erzählungen*. Luchterhand Literaturverlag, Hamburg 1992.

³¹ Hülya Özkan and Andrea Wörle (Hg.), *Eine Fremde wie ich*. Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München 1985; Luisa Costa Hölzl and Elena Torossi (Hg.), *Freihändig auf dem Tandem*. Neuer Malik Verlag, Kiel 1985.

³² Heinz Friedrich (Hg.), *Chamissos Enkel. Zur Literatur von Ausländern in Deutschland*. Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München, 1986. Christian Schaffernicht (Hg.), *Zu Hause in der Fremde. Ein*

The more precise form of differentiation can be found in the collaborative works from the *Polynationaler Literatur- und Kunstverein* formed in 1980, and the journal series *Südwind Gastarbeiterdeutsch*. The *PoLiKunst* initiative set out to achieve many different goals: to be self funding; to link together work from different creative endeavours, for example, writing, music, drawing; and to publish together authors from different national and ethnic identities. *PoLiKunst* did not wish to undervalue the different ethnic traditions of each artist, but also worked to encourage greater crosscultural activity. The three yearbooks (1983-85) reveal a partially successful experiment, which folded owing to internal disagreement and lack of appropriate levels of funding. *Südwind Gastarbeiterdeutsch* pursued a markedly different ideological approach. In three volumes, 1980-82, edited by wellknown authors, Franco Biondi, Jusuf Naoum and Suleman Taufiq, poems and prose were published which linked discrimination suffered as a result of being a foreigner to that of being an *Arbeiter*. (Horst Hamm argues that this collaboration was the first time that the term *Gastarbeiterdeutsch* was introduced as a *Sammelbegriff*.³³) This connection highlights the link between the personal experience of *Betroffenheit* with the collective experience, as well as between the experience in Germany with that of the international experience of migrant workers.

Thirdly, publication came to be seen as a vital characteristic of this period. Many small publishing firms willingly accepted both these anthologies, as well as longer works by individual authors. Many of these firms were established in cities with large minority communities such as, Berlin (EXpress Editions, Ararat-Verlag, and later Elefant Press), Kiel (Neuer Malik Verlag), Bremen (Edition Con) and Frankfurt (Dağyeli). Further important small publishing companies included Klartext-Verlag and Verlag Atelier im Bauernhaus. Accompanying this trend towards greater market access were the above mentioned anthologies, published by the *Institut für Deutsch als Fremdsprache* in Munich. That this work was published under the auspices of DaF as early as 1981 suggests that literature was granted an important role as educator and community advocate, and can be used as evidence of the significant migrant presence in Germany. This kind of role is further enhanced by the

bundesdeutsches Ausländer-Lesebuch. Rowohlt, Reinbek 1984.

³³ Hamm, p31.

appearance of bilingual editions of poems and short stories by the Ararat Verlag from 1979. These editions featured stories and translations from Ören, Pazarkaya, Fakir Baykurt and the contemporary Turkish writer, Orhan Veli Kanık, and were reprinted more than three times in the early 1980s, including a print run of 10,000 in 1982.³⁴ Most of these stories drew on traditional themes with a modern interpretation. Both the market success and the choice of themes of these small books indicate that the target audience was significant in number, and included both Turkish and German speakers. Here literature is used as a bridge between languages, cultures and generations, and indicates the presence of a large enough community, who are not falling between two stools, but effectively choosing to sit on both stools.³⁵

(iii) The here to stay phase 1985-1998

The view from the 140 bus from the mid-1980s onwards reflects a society which has become both more established and differentiated. In other words, a migrant infrastructure has been built and rests on more stable foundations than at the time of the *Anwerberstopp* policy decision. Instead, as Stephen Castles argues, the *Gastarbeiter* had become migrants and were “here for good”.³⁶ The second and third generations, born in Germany, attending German schools, are acculturated Germans, even if the nationality in their passport is stamped otherwise. The exponential growth in the number of young *Ausländer* lifts the ratio of *Ausländer* to 7% of the population of Germany, and significantly higher in cities such as Frankfurt, Hamburg and Berlin. Public debate about Germany as *kein Einwanderungsland* reaches from the margins (such as a collection of essays published by the Ararat Verlag in 1981³⁷) to the national mainstream press, where it remains today. The changing face of Germany

³⁴ Aras Ören, *Alte Märchen neu erzählt/Yeni dille eski masallar*, Ararat Verlag, Berlin 1982; Fakir Baykurt, *Die Friedenstorte/Barış Çöreği*, Ararat Verlag, Berlin 1982; Orhan Veli Kanık/ Yüksel Pazarkaya, *Das Wort des Esels/Eşeğin Sözü*, Ararat Verlag, Berlin 1982.

³⁵ For some varied reactions see Claus Leggewie, *MULTI KULTI. Spielregeln für die Vielvölkerrepublik*, Rotbuch Verlag Berlin 1993, p.128-135.

³⁶ Stephen Castles, Heather Booth & Tina Wallace, *Here for Good: Western Europe's new ethnic minorities*, Pluto Press, London 1984.

³⁷ *Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland ist (k)ein Einwanderungsland. Eine Dokumentation*, Kongreß der Sozialdemokratischen Wählerinitiative am 14./15. November 1981 in Berlin. Memorandum, Referate, Thesenpapiere. Ararat Verlag, Berlin 1982.

cannot be ignored as the terminology in the debate shifts from assimilation to integration, and these foreigners become *ausländische Mitbürger*.

This change in terminology is a result of constant reexamination of German history. As Azade Seyhan notes, if there is a paradigm shift in the present, the way of seeing the past tends to change as well.³⁸ Klaus Bade's incisive work reveals that Germany has a long history of migration.³⁹ Germany was a source of emigration and immigration, and also functioned as a transit space for people from both eastern and southern Europe. The time in transit may last anything from only a few days to a few generations. Bade's example of Berlin⁴⁰ is relevant for my argument because it shows that the creation of a sense of place is less a new project than a new group of people participating in the same project. The type of migration is the same, but the names change. From the seventeenth century successive waves of migrants have made themselves at home in Berlin because their skills and capital were sorely needed. The Huguenots, for example, received official encouragement and fled religious persecution in France; in contemporary Germany they are acknowledged above all others as making an overwhelming contribution to the social and economic wellbeing of Berlin. One of the central tourist landmarks in contemporary Berlin is the *Gendarmenmarkt* containing the *Französischer Dom* built for the devotion of this community. In the nineteenth century, a labour shortfall demanded further recruitment, particularly of seasonal labour, on this occasion from Poland, as well as in a less organised manner from Russia and south eastern Europe. A particularly strong cultural and economic presence was created by Russians, Hungarians and Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe in Berlin into the 1920s. The accession to power of the Nazi party and the political outcomes of its ideology introduced a brutal new form of social engineering which profoundly changed the prevailing perception of foreigners and migration in general.

³⁸ Azade Seyhan, "Lost in Translation: Re-Membering the Mother Tongue in Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*" in *The German Quarterly* vol.69, no.4, 1996, p.414-426, 415.

³⁹ See for example, Klaus Bade, "From Emigration Country without Emigration Law to Immigration Country without Immigration Law: German Paradoxes in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" in Gerhard Fischer (ed.), *Debating Enzensberger. Great Migration and Civil War*, Stauffenburg Verlag, Tübingen 1996, p.155-168.

⁴⁰ Klaus Bade (Hg.), *Auswanderer – Wanderarbeiter – Gastarbeiter: Bevölkerung, Arbeitsmarkt und Wanderung in Deutschland seit der Mitte des 19.Jahrhunderts*, (2nd ed.) Ostfildern, 1986.

Reassessing and revising this history in the past twenty years has become an ongoing project, and a consequence of this process was a necessary reevaluation of contemporary German society. This paradigm shift lays the groundwork for seeing immigration to Germany as normal and not as aberrant, and that as Leggewie, Cohn-Bendit and Nirumand argue passionately, Germany is a *de facto* multicultural society.⁴¹ Rafik Schami offers a curious assessment of this debate and particularly the rhetoric of cultural integration. Schami⁴² together with Franco Biondi, argues that integration is the “Wolf im Schafspelz”⁴³; what is really expected, however, is assimilation into the dominant North American / North European system⁴⁴, not some form of intercultural borrowing in which cultures are accorded equal levels of respect. Assimilation for Schami is nothing less than a “Identitätsverlust”⁴⁵, a process in which both the cultural worth of the migrant, and of the host culture, are reduced to a set of simplistic dichotomies, which in this period became ever more distant from everyday experience.

This third phase begins to break down these dichotomies with some success, yet these same activities can also further consolidate the existing dichotomies but in a different guise, as Schami points out. One example of this kind of ambiguity is the inception in 1985 of the *Adalbert-von-Chamisso Preis für Literatur von Autoren mit nichtdeutscher Muttersprache*. Like Aras Ören’s *literarischer Bahnbrecher* of the previous period, this literature award represents a recognition by the literary mainstream of the quality of work being published, as well as of the existence of a tradition of new type of literature. In addition, this prize recognises that these migrant writers are part of a social context in which a certain type of literature can be produced; they are not *parteilos* individuals working in a vacuum. Adalbert von Chamisso, as noted in the introductory chapter, has become unwittingly the symbolic grandfather lending canonic legitimacy to migrant literature in contemporary Germany, but for his background, rather than for the themes he pursued. (Indeed,

⁴¹ Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Herterich, Frank & Schmid, Thomas (Hg.), *Frankfurt – Bürgerstadt im zivilen Europa*, copy of MS. 1990; Bahman Nirumand (Hg.), *Deutsche Zustände. Dialog über ein gefährdetes Land*, Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, Hamburg 1993.

⁴² Iman O. Khalil, “Zum Konzept der Multikulturalität im Werk Rafik Schamis” in: *Monatshefte* vol.86 no.2 1994, p. 201-217, 202.

⁴³ Khalil, p.204-206

⁴⁴ Khalil, p.204-206

⁴⁵ Khalil, p.205

contemporary authors were nicknamed *Chamissos Enkel* in the anthology that accompanied the prize-giving.)

Other universities, institutes and research centres in Bielefeld, Osnabrück and Berlin, pursue similar endeavours, and consequently foreign-born writers began to receive literary rewards. Although the Chamisso Preis cannot be seen as the sole cause of such greater recognition, it stands as a landmark in this flowing tide. In 1984, Aysel Özakin was awarded the status of *Stadtschreiberin* in the Hamburg district of Altona – while this is a notable and laudable achievement, Altona is well known as a district in which foreigners form a significant minority, so the choice of a Turkish-born writer is less significant and unexpected than, for example, the choice of Özdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserai* as the winner of the 1991 *Ingeborg Bachmann Preis*. (The significance of this decision will be analysed in the following section.⁴⁶) Additionally, in 1985 Saliha Scheinhardt received the literature prize from the city of Offenbach. A consequence of the attainment of these prizes has been a greater marketability. Accordingly, large publishers such as Fischer (1981), Rowohlt (1984) and Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag (1985), begin to publish new work, as well as re-issuing work previously appearing in small print runs by small firms.

The prominence generated by these prizes and reissues prompts many questions about the phenomenon of migrant literature. This alerted editors of literary journals to investigate further the value of this work and to offer appropriate theoretical frameworks to explain the phenomenon. Journals based in the field of German literature and culture, such as *New German Critique* (1989), devoted a special issue to social and literary analyses of various aspects of migrant literature. The more widely focused English-language journal *World Literature Today* (1995) also devoted an entire issue to an examination of this literature as a way of understanding migration in contemporary society. However, the appearance of these special editions has ambiguous results. On one hand, the special editions reveal that Germany has a Turkish history. This understanding of the past has only emerged through analysis of the present situation from a different and more honest perspective; that is, not seeing foreigners as a problem, but rather an indication that

⁴⁶ Karen Jankowsky, “ ‘German’ Literature Contested: The 1991 Ingeborg-Bachmann-Prize Debate, ‘Cultural Diversity’ and Emine Sevgi Özdamar” in: *The German Quarterly* vol. 70 no.3 1997, p.261-

Germany is in a process of great transformation, and all Germans are affected by this transformation to some extent. On the other hand, these editions focus once more on the perceived exotic nature or otherness of these writers and their themes, but at least these concerns become available to a wider audience and treated with respect and considered worthy of analysis. The German-language journal *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* also devoted an entire issue to migrant literature. Indeed, the question of terminology which is traced through many of the articles is neatly encapsulated by the title of Helmut Kreuzer's lead article: "*Gastarbeiter-Literatur, Ausländer-Literatur, Migranten-Literatur? Zur Einführung*".⁴⁷ These three terms can be seen as indicating a type of movement in the status of foreign-born writers that I have traced in this literature review.

The articles in these special editions reveal a change in genre; that is, a trend towards prose writing by migrant writers. The greater output and recognition of prose writing in the form of analytical essays, newspaper articles and commentaries, contributions to conference proceedings by authors such as, Yüksel Pazarkaya, Bassam Tibi, Bahman Nirumand and Zafer Şenocak, reflect a broadening in style and a willingness of the German publishers and reading public to listen to the migrant voice more or less unmediated. In particular, their writings from 1992 onwards became key parts of wider public debate (from which they had been ignored or excluded in the *Gastarbeiter* phase) about multiculturalism and the growing existence and subsequent apprehension of *Ausländerfeindlichkeit* after the violence in Hoyerswerda, Mölln and Rostock in 1992-93. In Nirumand's work, clear and unambiguous positions are taken⁴⁸, while Şenocak adopts a more inquisitive approach based on drawing out the images of the other from a historical context⁴⁹; that is, questioning the validity of the stereotypes based on the dichotomy of Orient/Occident. Both authors' works induce a feeling of catharsis, as well as a type of 'history of today' in which they are conscious players, similar to Timothy Garton

276.

⁴⁷ Helmut Kreuzer, "*Gastarbeiter-Literatur, Ausländer-Literatur, Migranten-Literatur? Zur Einführung*", in: *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*, Heft 56, 1984, p.7-11.

⁴⁸ Bahman Nirumand (Hg.) *Angst vor den Deutschen. Terror gegen Ausländer und der Zerfall des Rechtsstaates*, Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1992; also Nirumand, *Deutsche Zustände. Dialog über ein gefährdetes Land*, Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1993.

⁴⁹ Zafer Şenocak, *War Hitler Araber? Irreführungen an den Rand Europas. Essays*. Babel Verlag, Hund & van Uffelen, Berlin 1994.

Ash's writings on Eastern Europe.⁵⁰ The writers mentioned above also reveal the diversity of opinions and experiences of migration and go some distance to breaking down the monolithic term *Gastarbeiter* and show a more differentiated society. As Eberhard Seidel-Pielen ironically notes in his book, *Unsere Türken. Annäherungen an ein gespaltenes Verhältnis*, there are seventeen types of *Türke* in contemporary Germany, including *Der Wirtschaftstürke*, *Der innovative Türke*, *Der eingebürgerte Türke* and even *Der Private-Dancer-Türke!*⁵¹

An effect of this recognition of the differentiated nature of this community is a greater freedom gained by writers to explore topics other than the experience of 'otherness'. No longer are authors seen primarily as representative of their community in which they are perceived as the acceptable role models. For example, Aras Ören places a topic which many German writers dealt with, the fall of the Berlin Wall, into the general context of the West Berlin cultural milieu in his 1996 novel *Berlin Savignyplatz*.⁵² The title quite significantly points to acknowledgement of a long tradition of city novels in which the city is a character in the narrative.

A younger generation also takes up the challenge. Male and female writers of the second and third generations are more often published, and many achieve some mainstream success without a need to focus on migration and otherness. Akif Pirinççi, for example, in his detective novel *Felidae* draws on a quite different heritage and wins wider acclaim, and a conscious consequence is that he appears to be excluded from analysis as a migrant writer, even though he has enjoyed the most commercial success.⁵³ Zehra Çirak, a Berlin poet, has also achieved some success and taken part in many reading tours through both Germany, other parts of Europe, North Africa and Turkey. Her sparse style and themes appeal as much to anybody in Germany of her generation, not solely those of migrant background.⁵⁴ In an interview she revealed that migration is less of an issue for her because she grew up in Germany, yet she still feels a strong sense of belonging to an ethnically defined

⁵⁰ Timothy Garton Ash, *The File. A Personal History*, HarperCollins, London 1997, and *We the People, The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague*, Granta Books, London 1990, and *In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent*, Cape, London 1993.

⁵¹ Eberhard Seidel-Pielen, *Unsere Türken. Annäherungen an ein gespaltenes Verhältnis*. Elefanten Press, Berlin 1995, S.41-44.

⁵² Aras Ören, *Berlin Savignyplatz*, Elefanten Press, Berlin 1995.

⁵³ Akif Pirinççi, *Felidae*, Goldmann Verlag, München 1988.

⁵⁴ Zehra Çirak, *Fremde Flügel auf eigener Schulter. Gedichte*, Kiepenhauer & Witsch, Köln 1994.

group, even though it is a definition that she has little power to change.⁵⁵ So, for both migrants and Germans what was initially absurdly foreign is now absurdly familiar.

(iv) A shift in focus

Having outlined these three phases in migrant literature, I would now like to place my own work in this context. In the past decade there has been a shift in focus in the academic analysis of migrant literature. This shift can be defined as the movement from analysis based on authenticity to analysis based on aesthetics. The noted American literary critic, Leslie A. Adelson, pointed out that literary works are now analysed using a wide variety of theoretical frameworks, rather than “categorised according to the passport of the author.”⁵⁶

The work of Immacolata Amodeo is a good example of this shift in focus. In her work four major elements can be identified which are typical of this shift:

- (1) the introduction of a theoretical framework, which is then applied to an individual writer, or a small number of writers;
- (2) an obvious link into a wider tradition of both German and international literature;
- (3) the move from analysis based solely on group belonging, to an analysis based on the author as an individual functioning as an autonomous member of a community and a wider society; and
- (4) the reappropriation and inversion of standard or stereotypical motifs.

The effect of each of these techniques is to question the accepted ways of reading literature and to propose a more dynamic and integrated reading.

Amodeo's work *Die Heimat heißt Babylon* is as much a *literarischer Bahnbrecher* as Aras Ören's *Berlin Trilogie* was a generation before. Her work is an insightful and passionate analysis of the literary and social contexts of the reception of migrant literature from the inside – she is herself a well published poet belonging to the Second Generation. Additionally the importance of this work also lies in her subsequent analysis of the writing of Aysel Özakın, Franco Biondi and Gino

⁵⁵ Oral pers. comm. with the author 18th October 1996.

⁵⁶ Leslie A. Adelson, “Minor Chords? Migrants, Murder, and Multiculturalism” in Robert Weininger & Brigitte Rosbacher (Hg.), *Wendezeiten Zeitenwenden. Positionsbestimmungen zur deutschsprachigen Literatur 1945-1995*, Stauffenburg Verlag, Tübingen 1997, p.115-129, 118.

Chiellino because she clearly takes up her own challenge by establishing a new framework of analysis. She describes these writers with the deft and significant phrase: "Autoren ..., die keine Regel bestätigen sollen."⁵⁷

Importantly, Amodeo does not argue for the complete separation of author from work. Rather, she wishes to relocate the emphasis of analysis towards the aesthetics of the work, which is informed by the background of the author, rather than being dominated by it. Her opening chapters are a detailed summary of the critical reception of migrant literature, in which she argues that migrant writing was read exclusively for its "social function".⁵⁸ Her fundamental point is that this social function dictated the choice of creative works published, particularly in the anthologies mentioned previously.

In response, Amodeo grounds her work in a theoretical framework drawn from Michael Bakhtin, Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari and Antonio Gramsci. Her discussion of the rhizomatic theory of literature is located in the "Mehrsprachigkeit" of the text⁵⁹; that is, the ability of the works she discusses to contain or respond to many languages, voices and interpretations. There are many important consequences of this successful fusion of postmodern or poststructural literary theory. Firstly, her work links migrant literature to the current thinking in both German literary criticism, and to contemporary world literature, for example, postcolonial theories of literature presently used to great effect in the studies of other European languages such as, English, French and Spanish.

Secondly, she draws on Yüksel Pazarkaya; this choice indicates an acknowledgement of the existence of a tradition of migrant writers having their own critical voice as mentioned above. Amodeo supports Pazarkaya's contention that analysis of migrant or minority communities is generally focused on a group, rather than an individual functioning as part of a group.⁶⁰ Literature produced by individuals from this community, therefore, is set within prescriptive boundaries which act to enclose and deprive this writing of broad and in depth analysis. Pazarkaya, in reaction to this prescription, stresses that there is a clear distinction between a "soziologisches

⁵⁷ Amodeo, *Die Heimat heißt Babylon*, p.11.

⁵⁸ Amodeo, *Die Heimat heißt Babylon*, p.12-73.

⁵⁹ Amodeo, *Die Heimat heißt Babylon*, p.107-136, 111.

⁶⁰ Pazarkaya in Amodeo, p.58-61.

Dokument” and literature.⁶¹ His point, emphasised by Amodeo, is that literature is not a mirror of reality, but can offer a window through which reality can be viewed and interpreted. For example, Amodeo analyses the poems of Gino Chiellino by drawing out the many nuances of meaning in words relating quite specifically to the experience of being a *Gastarbeiter* and migrant, but they are not the only interpretations.

Three other writers also typically embody this shift in focus. In a compelling collection of essays published by the Stauffenberg Verlag in Tübingen entitled *Denn du tanzt auf einem Seil. Positionen deutschsprachiger MigrantInnenliteratur*, the *Germanist*, Wolfgang Braune-Steininger⁶² employs a model similar to that of Amodeo. Firstly, he establishes a theoretical framework, then, secondly, applies it to two writers of the First Generation, Cyrus Atabay and Gino Chiellino. Braune-Steininger builds on the theory that postwar German writing can be analysed according to the following dichotomous framework: either following the style of Gottfried Benn, or that of Bertolt Brecht. He describes Benn as representing the more experimental form of poetry, while Brecht is associated with the underlying usefulness or utility of the poem, in short, its message. Although this theory appears to fit all too neatly into the dichotomy of form versus content, Braune-Steininger’s decision to apply this theory to previously marginalised migrant literature is indicative of a shift in focus.

Braune-Steininger’s analysis of Chiellino’s work is a compelling example of how migrant literature draws on German literary traditions, such as intertextuality, and how in this process traditional notions of migration and *Gastarbeiter* are appropriated and inverted. Chiellino is shown to belong to the Brechtian approach, while Atabay is more influenced by Benn’s work. Furthermore, Braune-Steininger reveals how deeply Chiellino has been influenced by canonic German writers, for example, Goethe, Hölderlin and Gryphius. More than just honouring or restating themes of these writers, Chiellino presents the other side of the picture, which

⁶¹ Pazarkaya in Amodeo, p. 58; also Pazarkaya, “Die Fremde hat sich an uns gewöhnt, ich habe die Fremde überwunden”, in Carmine Chiellino (Hg.) *Die Reise hält an. Ausländische Künstler in der Bundesrepublik*, München 1988, p. 103.

⁶² Wolfgang Braune-Steininger, ‘Themen und Tendenzen von Migrantenlyrik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland’ in: Sabine Fischer & Moray McGowan (Hg.), *Denn du tanzt auf einem Seil. Positionen deutschsprachiger MigrantInnenliteratur*. Discussion Band 2, Stauffenberg Verlag, Tübingen, 1997,

perhaps only a person who has experienced the other side can address at some depth. Braune-Steininger illustrates how Goethe presents an exoticised image of Italy in his *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* – a blooming and healthy land in contrast to the cold and oppressed Germany. However, in Chiellino's ironic lyric this northern European picture of Italy becomes an "ästhetische Sehnsucht nach Armut"⁶³ in which the expectation of a rural idyll is sustained by mass tourism making the local culture dependent on the whim of the wealthy northern Europeans. Through this thematic inversion, Braune-Steininger concludes, Chiellino is reflecting on a deeper understanding of the physical and psychological effects of migration, which belongs to the rich tradition of German literature, rather than standing outside of it. Like Biondi's novels *Die Unversöhnlichen* and *Passavant's Rückkehr*,⁶⁴ migration is not a one-way street, but a complex roundabout where the cultural traditions of home and host country are constantly interchanged at different levels of intensity.

A second example typical of this shift in focus is Annette Wierschke's 1994 dissertation which appeared two years later in book form carrying the title *Schreiben als Selbstbehauptung: Kulturkonflikt und Identität in den Werken von Aysel Özakin, Alev Tekinay and Emine Sevgi Özdamar. Mit Interviews*.⁶⁵ Similar to Amodeo, Wierschke focuses on the aesthetics of these works, and initially sets up a theoretical framework based on, amongst others, Homi Bhabha, James Clifford and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. She finds that contemporary Germany is a "differenziertes Bild"⁶⁶ in which authenticity of identity can never be a fixed position, but remains an ongoing search. This idea is then applied to the work of perhaps three of the best known female migrant writers, Özakin, Tekinay and Özdamar. By using this theoretical framework migrant literature, particularly that written by women, is incorporated into broader European and international discourses concerned with the positions of minorities, hybrid identities and women.

p.87-99.

⁶³ Gino Chiellino, *Mein fremder Alltag*, Neuer Malik Verlag, Kiel 1984, p.68; Braune-Steininger, p.90.

⁶⁴ Franco Biondi, *Die Unversöhnlichen oder Im Labyrith der Herkunft. Roman*, Heliopolis Verlag, Tübingen 1991; Biondi, *Passavant's Rückkehr. Erzählungen 1*, Verlag Atelier im Bauernhaus, Fischerhude 1982.

⁶⁵ Annette Wierschke, *Schreiben als Selbstbehauptung: Kulturkonflikt und Identität in den Werken von Aysel Özakin, Alev Tekinay and Emine Sevgi Özdamar. Mit Interviews*, IKO, Frankfurt/M. 1996.

⁶⁶ Wierschke, p.80-99.

The inclusion of long interviews with these authors is a curious decision and is also emblematic of this shift in focus. These interviews indicate the importance of the individual author's voice in the act of interpretation, yet perhaps an unexpected outcome is that the critic's voice is raised to the same level as the primary work. Once more the primary work and the voice of the author are being mediated through the categories established by the critic, editor and publisher. Wierschke acknowledges this shortcoming in her summary of Özdamar's work: that is, there are multiple ways of reading and understanding Özdamar's work, and we assume, Wierschke's is one.

Wierschke's work on the construction of identity is useful, even if she presents many of these issues within the dichotomies she wishes to avoid, for example, Orient/West, intellectual/peasant, Turkey/Europe.⁶⁷ However, her interview with Özdamar reveals how identity can break out of these static dichotomies when it is seen as dynamic, and that identity acts in response to a multitude of different influences with each carrying a different weight according to context. Özdamar is a skillful interviewee; she continually searches for a story or anecdote to repudiate any simple explanation or categorisation of identity. She refers to a review of her 1992 novel *Das Leben ist eine Karawansera* by the respected Turkish poet and literary critic, Can Yücel. Yücel maintains that the search for identity is a different kind of search in the diaspora; this type of search can be likened to those periods of life in which the blueprint of identity is open to the greatest influence: infancy, childhood and puberty: "[w]o der Mensch Mensch geworden ist."⁶⁸ According to Yücel, migration as presented in Özdamar's work initiates a form of rapid identity development, in which development is not one way but multiple:

Jeder Mensch ist Teil seiner Kultur, der kulturellen Errungenschaften seiner Zeit, aber gleichzeitig schafft dieser Mensch auch Kultur.⁶⁹

Here Özdamar reveals that her response to the surrounding cultural environment is less one of powerlessness, than one of using the linguistic tools at her disposal. This

⁶⁷ Wierschke, p.44-62.

⁶⁸ Wierschke, p.254.

⁶⁹ Wierschke, p.254.

response, she maintains, will change over time as different generations of migrants both react to and change the cultural environment in which they live.

Özdamar illustrates this change in agency with a striking metaphor. She asserts that what binds each generation is that they no longer wish to be “Diener”.⁷⁰ Wierschke’s reply is quite intriguing – she asks for clarification: *who* orders them to be “Diener”? Wierschke here conveys an attitude somewhat similar to Günter Wallraff: that even for the best of motives, Wierschke opines that Özdamar’s sentiment falls outside the expected categories. Wierschke questions whether this attitude of creating “Diener” applies to any dominant group in society. Özdamar answers with an incisive metaphor about the effects of categorisation: a title or label is ‘stuck on’ (“kleben”) to the head and body of the foreigner, and, as a result, their way of thinking, external behaviour and appearance, adapt in order to conform to this label. However, the mind and the soul (“innere Prozesse”) remain outside this categorisation, yet are difficult to communicate.⁷¹ The younger generation, according to Özdamar, recognises changing circumstances and is able to think outside these labels.

In a migrant community this labelling emanates from two different sources. The younger generation born in Germany is influenced not only by the labels applied by the mainstream of German society, but also by the elders of their own community. Özdamar highlights this dilemma by explaining the expectations embedded in folklore.⁷² Such traditions produce dilemmas relatively unknown to younger Germans, who view these intercultural encounters with curiosity, as the younger German-born Turkish-Germans negotiate these demands, particularly when their eyes and ears have been attuned to different means of cultural expression.⁷³ While Wierschke sets up the framework for Özdamar’s response, Wierschke uses this technique of providing interview transcripts to significantly add to *her* interpretation of these literary texts.

⁷⁰ Wierschke, p.253

⁷¹ Wierschke, p.253-254.

⁷² Wierschke, p.254-258.

⁷³ Dursun Tan and Hans-Peter Waldhoff, “Turkish Everyday Culture in Germany and its Prospects” in David Horrocks & Eva Kolinsky (eds.), *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, Berghahn Books, Providence/Oxford 1996, p.137-156, 142-147.

The final example of this shift in focus is Monika Fischer's 1997 doctoral dissertation (as yet unpublished), which compares the experience of women writers from the Hispanic community in the USA (*Chicana*) and from the Turkish community in Germany (*Almancilar*).⁷⁴ Her work, like that of Amodeo and Wierschke, draws on current themes in literary criticism and suggests that there are some unexpected similarities between the literature of Chicana and Almancilar writers. That this comparison is being made is an extraordinary change from a generation ago when it could not have been contemplated.

The title of Fischer's dissertation, *Intercultural Alterity or borderland experience. Minor Literatures of Germany and the United States of America?*, underlines some key terms which indicate an important change in the way migrant literature is being considered. The words 'intercultural' and 'borderland' suggest an exchange of ideas and literary resources occurring between people or cultures equally respected. Borderland also hints at a specific geographic space; that is, these exchanges take place in a real world situation and not in a physical or cultural vacuum, in which many different influences are exerted. Fischer argues correctly that while borderland and border crossing – terms common in postcolonial literary analysis – can be applied to Chicana writers owing to the shared political frontier between the USA and Mexico, they do not apply so well to the *Almancilar* writers. In response, Fischer proposes the metaphor of the bridge, a metaphor which influences elements of my own analysis of Özdamar's *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*. The term 'alterity' connected to 'minor literatures' again suggests analytical frameworks common to poststructural and postcolonial analysis, for example, Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of the otherness of Kafka,⁷⁵ who today is recognised as an intrinsic figure of the German literary canon. So, Fischer deliberately places her analysis of migrant literature in a *Germanistik* framework, as well as applying theories more often encountered in cultural studies. Additionally, Fischer's work is important because she shows that the themes pursued in migrant literature are not unique to Germany but fit into broader international patterns of writing and

⁷⁴ Monika Fischer, *Intercultural Alterity or borderland experience. Minor Literatures of Germany and the United States of America?* diss., University of Oregon 1997.

⁷⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, "What is a Minor Literature?" in: *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, (transl. Dana Polan), University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1986.

interpretation. Therefore, these other interpretative frameworks can be used fruitfully when dealing with the novels under question.

In summary, this shift in focus can be understood as shifting the debate about the migrant literature away from the discourse of enrichment.⁷⁶ As the Australian sociologist and anthropologist, Ghassan Hage, indicates, such discourses still position the concerns of the mainstream or dominant culture in the centre, and still effectively marginalise these enriching voices. This discourse, however, is not occurring in a cultural vacuum – the recent debate about the roles of *Germanistik* and German Studies, particularly in English-speaking countries, has had a vital influence upon the debate about the position of migrant literature. In the same way that cultural studies has caused debate about the definition and value of teaching canonic literature in English Literature programs, journals such as the *German Quarterly* have devoted much space to similar debates about methodology in German Studies and *Germanistik* programs. The nomenclature alone suggests that German Studies includes a broader array of theoretical frameworks than *Germanistik*. Within this debate the position of migrant literature has often been discussed by literary scholars such as, Nina Berman, Ülker Gökberk and Azade Seyhan.⁷⁷ Their insightful work shows how the presence of migrant literature in contemporary Germany places in question existing methods of evaluation and status of literary work in German. So, the literary works under discussion in this dissertation compel the readers to question their assumed knowledge and to tolerate their uncertainty; in this process the readers will see the city of Berlin from a quite different perspective and be able to acknowledge that the term a sense of place can be accurately applied to describe the experience of individuals belonging to the migrant community in this city.

⁷⁶ Ghassan Hage, "Locating multiculturalism's other: A critique of practical tolerance", in: *New Formations* no.24, p.19-34, 31-32.

⁷⁷ Nina Berman, "German and Middle Eastern Literary Traditions in a Novel by Salim Alafensich: Thoughts on a Germanophone Beduin Author from the Negev" in: *The German Quarterly* vol. 71 no.3 1998, p.271-283; Ülker Gökberk, "Culture Studies und die Türken: Sten Nadolny's *Selim oder Die Gabe der Rede* im Lichte einer Methodendiskussion" in: *The German Quarterly* vol.70, no.2, 1997, p.97-122; Azade Seyhan, "Lost in Translation: Re-Membering the Mother Tongue in Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei*" in: *The German Quarterly* vol.69 no.4 1996, p.414-426; Ülker Gökberk, "Encounters with the Other in German Cultural Discourse: Intercultural *Germanistik* and Aysel Özakin's Journeys of Exile" in: Karen Jankowsky & Carla Love (eds.), *Other Germanies. Questioning Identity in Women's Literature and Art*, State University of New York Press, Albany NY, 1997, p.19-55.

3. (i) A 'sense of place' explained

What I have argued in the previous section about a shift in focus can be examined through a discussion of a sense of place. To recognise this sense of place as a theme pursued by migrant writers requires a reorientation by both German literary critics and by the migrant community. This recognition implies an acceptance that these former *Gastarbeiter* are now migrants, and that their stories contribute to a new way of seeing German society. So, these stories are part of the process of developing this new sense of place. Accordingly, this section is devoted to a discussion of theories outlining various meanings of a sense of place, which will then be later applied to the novels under consideration. (It is important to note that the focus of this thesis lies on the migrant community, not on the longstanding German community. Although the Germans also experience a sense of place, they appear as *Randfiguren* in *Die Brücke* and *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*. Therefore, I acknowledge their presence, but this presence is not analysed in any depth.)

According to Eugene Victor Walter whose 1988 work *Placeways*⁷⁸ is a fundamental source for ideas about space and place, the ancient Greeks had two methods of referring to place: 'chora' and 'topos'. Paul Devereux, a prolific writer in the field of social ecology, builds on Walter's ideas and describes 'chora' as a "holistic reference to place".⁷⁹ In this sense, place is experiential, "a trigger to memory, imagination and mythic presence."⁸⁰ On the other hand, 'topos' refers simply to location and position rendered objectively.⁸¹ These two understandings of place are still present in contemporary society. In this work I will focus on 'chora' in order to show how a sense of place functions as an aid to understanding the novels under discussion.

A sense of place can best be described as an emotional connection that people feel for a certain geographic place, or more particularly for its built and natural environment. Feeling a sense of place is a relationship which evokes a feeling of

⁷⁸ Eugene Victor Walter, *Placeways*, University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

⁷⁹ Paul Devereux, *Re-Visioning the Earth. A Guide to Opening the Healing Channels Between Mind and Nature*, Simon & Schuster, New York 1996, p.82.

⁸⁰ Devereux, p.82.

⁸¹ Devereux, p.83.

belonging, or familiarity, or feeling at home, in a specific “cultural landscape”⁸² in a specific geographic space. Crucially, a sense of place is experiential and is conveyed through the senses: sight, smell, hearing, touch, taste. This definition fits more into the meaning of ‘chora’, yet as I will show, it is precisely the juxtaposition with ‘topos’ that gives ‘chora’ so much vitality.

If ‘chora’ can be understood as place, then topos has its modern equivalent in the concept of space. Both concepts can be seen as two ends of a spectrum in which there is constant movement. Space, according to the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, is unfamiliar and unknown, whereas place is familiar and known.⁸³ Space also implies an endlessness, unexplored and unnamed, and a related powerlessness, while place connotes limits which can be surveyed, explored and named. While space in contemporary English needs to be personalised (for example, ‘give me space’), place is already associated with possession, for example, ‘my place’. So, space needs to be defined, such as the need to assert personal space in a city. Feeling a sense of place can be seen as the outcome of this process. Both concepts exist simultaneously - they do not exclude the other - and reveal a constant dynamic as an individual constantly responds to new objects in the immediate surroundings.

The best way of understanding this movement from space to place is through a process of mapping. Mapping ideas or characters or theories has become popular over the past decade as geographic terms assume a dominant position as a metaphor to explain a form of theoretical analysis. Yet there are different types of mapping. For instance, conventional mapping maps the topos or natural topography of an area supplying the need for physical orientation, yet this form of mapping is inadequate for the process undertaken in this work.

Cultural mapping, on the other hand, differs in both aims and practice. David Engwicht, Brisbane-based cultural planner, describes cultural mapping as a way of understanding how people are experiencing their place or culture.⁸⁴ In terms of this thesis, cultural mapping is the way in which a sense of place can be measured and

⁸² Saadi Nikro, “Antigone Kefala: Translating the Migratory Self” in *Southerly* vol.58, no.1, 1998, p.151-58.

⁸³ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*, Edward Arnold Publishers Ltd, London 1977, p.3.

⁸⁴ David Grogan, Colin Mercer & David Engwicht, *The Cultural Planning Handbook. An Essential Australian Guide*. Allen & Unwin, Sydney 1995, p.74.

analysed in these novels. Indeed, both novels, as well as this present work, can be identified as examples of cultural mapping.

A sense of place has been the focus of wide ranging academic debate and public pondering in the past two decades in fields as diverse as theology, social ecology, indigenous studies, political science, feminist and critical theory, quantum physics, as well as literature studies. The Australian sociologist, David Tacey, contends that the concept of a sense of place has become prominent recently because there is a general movement under way in contemporary society towards a deeper connection and relationship between people and the space they live in.⁸⁵ Many academic writers contend that this desire for a deeper connection is a response to countervailing trends towards greater individualism, isolation and placelessness, which ironically is partly a consequence of social mobility and migration. A sense of place is seen as inclusive, and concerned with making sense of the surroundings. In each of these fields of academic endeavour, a sense of place is noted as subjective, differing not only in form from individual to individual, but also according to disciplinary framework.

The next step is to show how a sense of place functions in the literary context of these novels. A fundamental aspect of both novels is their setting; that is, the city, predominantly West Berlin, and more particularly the inner southwest district of Kreuzberg. The city as a focus for a study about a sense of place is a relatively controversial topic, particularly as here it is limited to the migrant experience in post World War II Germany. Although the city as a theme and setting has been utilised in many canonic novels of the 20th century, in this work the city of Berlin will be considered as providing a home for Turkish migrant workers. More radically, I will explore how the German sense of *Heimat* can be extended to include the sense of place felt by Turkish migrants to Germany, who are generally excluded a priori from this debate. This exploration of the city and 'home' is important for my work because it is a fundamental step to recognising and appreciating the many different factors that influence an individual's sense of place.

⁸⁵ David Tacey, *Edge of the Sacred: transformation in Australia*, HarperCollins, Blackburn North, 1995.

A further step needs to be detailed here; that is, the idea of being ‘at home’ need not only be applied to a rural idyll, provincial towns or related to the natural landscape, but can also be appropriate to life in a big city, or the German expression of *Großstadt*.

(ii) Home in a *Großstadt*

The concept of ‘home’ is important because feeling at home is an expression of a sense of place. In these novels home has many meanings and functions. Home refers both to a specific geographic area, such as a town or province or city, as well as to a feeling of belonging or well being. Home also refers to the conjunction of a past time in this space. However, my main concern is to show how the deep emotional connections embedded in the word ‘home’ are expressed in a modern city.

To understand how home functions in the Germany documented in these novels, I turn to an analysis of *Heimat*. Discussions of *Heimat* take up reams of paper, yet my interest is not to restate the myriad of positions taken on this topic. For my purposes I will limit this investigation to some thought provoking ideas on the meaning of *Heimat* to Turkish migrants to Germany, as expressed in fiction and prose writing. Again, this selection is deliberately limited in order to advance my arguments about an individual’s sense of place. In this section, alternative approaches to *Heimat* will be offered. It will be considered as a tradition which can only be established over a period of time, and like each tradition, it is open to change, appropriate to the social context in which it is used. Then I will show how this tradition can be adjusted to city life, in particular, how new forms of *Heimat* flourish in the migrant communities in German cities.

Rafik Schami, German author of Syrian background and winner of many literature prizes, notes in an interview with author and academic, Iman Khalil, that *Heimat* is about emotional connections.⁸⁶ Emotional connections are based on interaction between human beings, rather than exclusively determined by ethnicity, place of birth or political allegiance. For Schami the practice of mutual respect and

⁸⁶ Iman O. Khalil, “Zum Konzept der Multikulturalität im Werk Rafik Schamis” in: *Monatshefte* vol. 86 no. 2 1994, p. 201-217, 202.

responsibility is the core of *Heimat*.⁸⁷ Moreover, this form of practice, which cultural planners such as Engwicht or sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu and Robert Putnam would name commitment or participation in building social capital, is not a result of the binary either choice or compulsion. Rather, this practice is based on the everyday 'habitus' generated by living in a certain space as a member of that community. By setting *Heimat* in everyday practices Schami is able to retrieve *Heimat* from fixed categorisation and avoids the *Eigene/Fremde* dichotomy.

The result of these everyday practices is the creation of a tradition; that is a tradition that *Heimat* is to be viewed in a particular way. Schami reveals how he shares much common ground with longstanding German concepts of *Heimat*.⁸⁸ However, he does not focus on a static, monocultural or exclusive tradition, rather on a dynamic tradition. For example, he points out the long heritage of non-German authors contributing to German literature and being accepted as part of the canon. French-born Adalbert von Chamisso is often noted as a founder of this heritage. (The choice of Chamisso is to some extent appropriate. Solely his background as a French-born writer who lives in Germany and writes in German link him to contemporary migrant writers. Once more, the emphasis is on the author's background, rather than the aesthetics of the work.) Indeed, the Adalbert-von-Chamisso Prize for literature, as mentioned in the previous section, was created in 1985 to acknowledge and publicise the quality and existence of these authors and their writings. Furthermore, in a recent paper, Loon Wong, from the School of Business at the University of Newcastle, draws on Eric Hobsbawm to explain that traditions are invented, and this is done for quite specific purposes. Hobsbawm shows how traditions were invented to create and strengthen the concept of the modern nation. Wong reveals in great detail how the image of Australia was "strategically crafted"; that is, the past has been "manufactured, sanctified, formalised, and ritualised".⁸⁹ This meaning of tradition

⁸⁷ Khalil, p.209.

⁸⁸ Doris Rosenstein, "Heimat-Bilder" in Helmut Kreuzer (Hg.), *Pluralismus und Postmodernismus. Zur Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte in Deutschland 1980-1995* (4.Auflage), Peter Lang, Frankfurt/M. 1989, p.59-97; see also Gisela Ecker (Hg.), *Kein Land in Sicht. Heimat-weiblich?* Wilhelm Fink Verlag, München 1997; Elisabeth Moosman (Hg.) *Heimat. Sehnsucht nach Identität*, Berlin 1980; Metin Gür, *Meine fremde Heimat. Türkische Arbeiterfamilien in der BRD*, (transl. Elif Lachauers) Köln 1987; Helfried Seliger (Hg.), *Der Begriff Heimat in der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur*, München 1987.

⁸⁹ Loon Wong, *Can the 'Immigrant' Speak? Immigrants, Identities and Constituting Australia*, paper delivered at annual School of Modern Languages conference, University of Newcastle, June 2001, p.2

can also be applied to Germany, where tradition has been utilised to both exclude and to include. As a result, migrant communities can empower themselves by creating their own traditions, which may contest the dominant tradition, for example, about what constitutes *Heimat*. Tradition, according to the Australian legal philosopher, Martin Krygier, is ultimately an “interpretive activity.”⁹⁰ He describes this process of creating tradition in the following manner:

Traditions ... are typically racked by interpretive disagreements, where different people, at different times, seek to show that different interpretations both fit and illuminate the complex traditions with which and about which they speak. Traditions only live when such interpretive disputes thrive.⁹¹

A deeper stage of this tradition then is reflecting upon it; Yüksel Pazarkaya, writer and academic of Turkish background, wrote his doctoral dissertation on the work of 18th Century German drama.⁹² In other words, the theme and methodology of his work was well within the *Germanistik* tradition. An outcome of this choice by Pazarkaya is that he has bridged the gap of time and established a further level of engagement with the surrounding cultural landscape.

Manning Nash, a cultural anthropologist, adopts a different focus and explains that tradition also has a “forward, future dimension”⁹³. This notion questions the backward looking meaning of tradition and rightly considers that tradition is dynamic. According to this theory, tradition can function as a type of memory bank of knowledge, beliefs and actions (both communal and individual) which can be transferred to the next generation not as something static and unchanging, but as a living relationship between past and future.

A crucial part of this tradition is that the migrants themselves transfer knowledge, beliefs and actions through writing their own stories. Rather than having

⁹⁰ Martin Krygier, *Between fear and hope. Hybrid thoughts on public values*, ABC Books, Sydney 1997, p.147

⁹¹ Krygier, p.146; also see Aleksandra Ålund, “Ethnicity and modernity: On ‘tradition’ in modern cultural studies”, in John Rex & Beatrice Drury (eds.) *Ethnic Mobilisation in a Multi-cultural Europe*, Avebury, Aldershot 1994, p.57-68.

⁹² Yüksel Pazarkaya, *Die Dramaturgie des Einakters: Der Einakter als eine besondere Erscheinungsform im deutschen Drama des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Diss. Kümmerle, Göttingen 1973.

⁹³ Manning Nash, *The Cauldron of Ethnicity in the Modern World*, University of Chicago, Chicago/London 1989, p.15.

home foisted upon them, the migrants themselves create their own sense of home. Indeed, Schami indicates that tradition also includes his Syrian heritage; the critical and public success of his publications and public readings reveals an acknowledgment and acceptance of the existence and strength of this tradition.

Moreover, Schami, like Özdamar, maintains that this individual (or personal) sense of home is inextricably linked to a public engagement. He notes that home is bound together with concepts such as identity, *Heimat* and multiculturalism, and best understood when the relationship between these concepts is analysed, rather than treating them as separate compartments.⁹⁴ Schami sees the existence of many cultures and many ways of seeing home, and that there are boundaries between them. Yet these boundaries do not mean *Stacheldraht* and confrontation, but rather the continual challenge of practising active and mutual respect of heritage.⁹⁵ The existence of boundaries also implies that edges exist in which considerable overlap and dialogue occurs. Being marginalised socially means ironically being placed in that space where cultural interchange is likely to happen.

Immacolata Amodeo broadens this concept of *Heimat* in her insightful analysis of the poetry of Gino Chiellino. Amodeo shows how Chiellino breaks down this dichotomy of *Fremde/Eigene* by using the concept of a *Bruchstelle* as a central theme.⁹⁶ A result of this concept is the existence of fragmented space in which home is never “absolute”⁹⁷; that is, home is continually a *Baustelle*. To further underline this concept of home being continually created and not geographically fixed, Amodeo presents another metaphor often used by Chiellino: “die Reise hält an”.⁹⁸ Chiellino employs the metaphor of the journey to explain the movement which is an inherent part of being a migrant, and this movement through time and space also involves by necessity a change in the way home is conceived. This classification then suggests a process of hybridisation⁹⁹ is underway which links this debate about home into postcolonial literary critique undertaken by Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Minh-ha Trinh amongst many others. The result then is that home loses its fixed connection to

⁹⁴ Khalil, p. 202, 209-213.

⁹⁵ Khalil, p. 202.

⁹⁶ Amodeo, p. 131.

⁹⁷ Amodeo, p. 192.

⁹⁸ Gino Chiellino, *Die Reise hält an. Ausländische Künstler in der Bundesrepublik*, Verlag C.H. Beck, München 1988.

one specific space or country and begins to be recognised as dynamic and multilayered.

Amodeo rightly points out that home is a canonic theme for migrant writers. However, in general, home is also an absorbing theme in German literature. Günter Grass and Siegfried Lenz explore many different ways of experiencing home, and the search for *Heimat* has played some role in the search for German identity since reunification. Amodeo locates a difference in approach; for migrants home is less connected to a specific geographic space, than used as a metaphor in order to produce a “semantisches Gemisch”¹⁰⁰. This “semantisches Gemisch” then produces a feeling that the setting is strange, different and unknown. However, in Ören and Özdamar’s work, the choice of Berlin as the setting produces not only an initial sense of disorientation and unfamiliarity, but also of something knowable and able to be transformed into a place of comfort. Home then has moved beyond being connected with the past, longing and the possibility of future return, as well as being freed from the negative connotations of *Anpassung* and *Verfremdung*, *Ausländerrecht* and *Arbeitserlaubnis*. Home can be located in the city and arise from new forms of engagement and social interaction.

Locating home in the city requires a crucial change in thinking. Home, and particularly *Heimat*, is generally linked with a rural landscape and ways of life, such as hills, streams, villages with bunting, farms held in families for generations, yet as the Australian urban historian, Susan Thompson, states, home for most migrants is located in the built environment of urban areas:

To begin to be a home, the physical qualities of the dwelling and its wider setting take on cultural and psychological significance. Its inhabitants have a sense of belonging, a feeling that this is where they can seek refuge from the dangers and uncertainty of the outside world.¹⁰¹

Thompson brings the concept of home back to the immediate physical surroundings, and importantly, by stressing culture, her ideas can be seen in a similar

⁹⁹ Amodeo, p.193.

¹⁰⁰ Amodeo, p.131.

¹⁰¹ Susan Thompson, “Suburbs of opportunity: the power of home for migrant women”, in Katherine Gibson & Sophie Watson (eds.) *Metropolis Now: Planning and the Urban in contemporary Australia*, Pluto Press, Leichhardt 1994, p.33-45, 35.

light to those of Schami; that is, the interaction between people gives meaning to space. Again, home is not necessarily a given, but something created out of interaction. Thompson adds a further point: the continual retelling of stories in and about their space underlines the importance of time as repetition in developing a “sense of permanence”¹⁰² and depth in this relationship.

The experience of home as it emerges from the work of Ören and Özdamar is more than a site of harmony and safety. A further change of thinking is needed to see home as a site of conflict and compromise. Urban areas are sites of intense and necessary interaction for survival and then living. Home, therefore, when located in a city must include such challenges. Migrants recognise these challenges as part of everyday life, and acknowledge that home has many facets. The existence of these facets points to an inbuilt mutability as individuals find different parts of home in different spaces. African-American literary theorist, bell hooks, sees recognition of mutability and plurality as a necessary part of contemporary ideas of home in urban areas:

home is no longer one place. It is locations. Home is that place which enables and promotes varied and everchanging perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference. One confronts and accepts dispersal and fragmentation as part of the constructions of a new world order that reveals more fully where we are, who we can become.¹⁰³

bell hooks’ challenging definition emphasises the ability of home to create fresh perspectives. This ability is predicated on the willingness of the individual to develop a strong sense of self; that is, an ability to feel comfortable when surrounded by constant and intense interaction. The act of migration encourages the sense of self to develop through unexpected tribulations, whilst always being a potent reminder that the position of the individual is firmly tied to global events. hooks does not deny the importance of links generated by static conceptions of home, but finds them limiting and unable to deal with the reality of life in modern cities.

The role of the city in facilitating this plurality and creation of fresh perspectives is examined in anecdotal form by the Berlin writer and social

¹⁰² Thompson, p.35.

¹⁰³ Massey, p.160-161.

commentator, Kemal Kurt, whose 1995 book carries the provocative title *Was ist die Mehrzahl von Heimat?*¹⁰⁴ Kurt is an *eingebürgerter* German of Turkish background and has lived and travelled in many different countries. He uses a metaphor of unpacking his books after moving to describe the process of understanding home.¹⁰⁵ This metaphor connects him to a long literary tradition. Analysing the books that we own can be seen as a technique to examine personal and communal cultural baggage. In Aras Ören's poem mentioned in the introduction, a *Plastikkoffer* may contain few material belongings and be a fragile container, yet these simple objects are symbols of deeper emotional connections. Some baggage is lost, discarded and forgotten along the way and some takes on new and surprising meanings in a new space.

These new meanings intrigue Kurt. He contemplates the order in which to place the books as each book reminds him of places, events, objects, people, fictional characters, as well as decisions made and their consequences. Kurt enjoys the humour of his yoking together of characters, themes, traditions, styles and languages. The books may initially sit awkwardly and in confusion next to each other, yet together this intense interaction can inspire and stimulate new ideas and perspectives.

Many of Kurt's novels belong to the rich tradition of 20th century literature about cities. (This theme is taken up in Kurt's latest novel, part homage, part satire, *Ja, sagt Molly*.¹⁰⁶) The city, particularly the German *Großstadt*, is the space of intense interaction where home has many different meanings to many different people. The term *Großstadt* is somewhat different in meaning to merely 'city'. Germany has few major cities that provide the dynamic cultural impulse for the rest of the country, such as Paris, London or New York. These cities to a great degree set the tone for cultural expression. This sense of being the urban hub of activity has in Germany mainly been associated with Berlin. Marrying *Heimat* with *Großstadt* seems an odd exercise, but fruitful in the case of the novels under analysis. For migrants the *Großstadt* provides safety, employment, inexpensive accommodation, accessible infrastructure, as well as anonymity. Curiously, the indifference of a

¹⁰⁴ Kemal Kurt, *Was ist die Mehrzahl von Heimat? Bilder eines türkisch-deutschen Doppellebens*. Rowohlt, Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1995.

¹⁰⁵ Kurt, p. 144-149.

¹⁰⁶ Kurt, *Ja, sagt Molly*, Hitit, Berlin 1998.

Großstadt like Berlin allows migrants to exist and create their own support networks; a process which makes West Berlin of the Cold War era inclusive.

Berlin has a rich tradition as a *Literaturort*.¹⁰⁷ Both prose and fiction have been set in the city or used the city as a point of analysis in the past century. Theodor Fontane set parts of *Effi Briest*¹⁰⁸ in Berlin a decade after Berlin's establishment as the capital of unified Germany. In that novel Berlin is represented as bureaucratic and unemotional, as well as a space where a young woman could seek refuge from a loveless marriage. The tradition of the many faces of Berlin is thus set early. Alfred Döblin's monumental *Berlin Alexanderplatz. Die Geschichte vom Franz Biberkopf*¹⁰⁹ again taps into this tradition, but with a quite different use of style, themes and setting. Döblin uses the built environment of 1920s Berlin in a remarkable manner to bring the city alive. The city itself becomes a character in his novel.

More contemporary work from Bodo Morshauser, *Die Berliner Simulation*, and Sten Nadolny, *Selim oder Die Gabe der Rede*, also pay homage to this rich tradition, a tradition in which Kreuzberg too has a role, and where it often appears as a compelling setting. Each time Berlin can be remade as a setting with quite different themes. These themes often overlap, intersect, run parallel and then veer off at quite different and disturbing angles. The space is presented as dynamic and contains a rich seam of stories to be mined for their historical and social meanings.

Home in a *Großstadt* therefore occurs on contested terrain in a space of intense interaction. Turkish migration to Berlin provides Ören and Özdamar with the material source to explore home in a new way as the migrants occupy centre stage. So, if *Heimat* draws on feelings of safety, comfort and mutual understanding, it can also connote something fixed, unchanging and perhaps overdetermined. Ören and Özdamar work to free home from these ideas of compulsion and make home a storehouse of living, expansive, challenging and inclusive feelings.

¹⁰⁷ See Günther Rühle (Hg.) *LiteraturOrt Berlin*, Argon Verlag, Berlin 1994; Ruth Greuner, *Berlin, Stimmen einer Stadt*, Buchverlag Der Morgen, Berlin 1980; Gültekin Emre, *300 Jahre Türken an der Spree*, Berlin, 1978. Ingrid Grimm (Hrsg.) *Berliner Geschichten*, Wilhelm Heyne Verlag, München 1988; Derek Glass (Hg.), *Berlin: eine Großstadt im Spiegel der Literatur*, Berlin 1989.

¹⁰⁸ Theodor Fontane, *Effi Briest*, Ullstein, Frankfurt/M. 1979.

¹⁰⁹ Alfred Döblin, *Berlin Alexanderplatz. Die Geschichte vom Franz Biberkopf*, Deutscher

4. chapter overview

(i) chapter two - mapping out a migrant space

The built environment has an imposing influence on an individual's sense of place. The size, shape, design, colour of buildings, or the openness of urban landscaped space affect the quality and depth of feelings an individual experiences in this specific urban area. The built environment is a storehouse of ideas and images which trigger memories and allow an individual to tell stories about what occurred in this space. So, if the built environment were different, the stories would be as well.

Over the past two decades, the idea that space matters to configurations of social relations has become a compelling theme in the field of human geography. In this section I will examine theories which attempt to explain the way in which space influences (and is influenced by) the social interaction of the individual. More particularly, I will show how the structures (or the built environment) in this space play an essential role in the way an individual makes sense of the surrounding cultural landscape.

Trying to define how space matters has become a compelling theme for a number of reasons. In this dissertation I will focus on two reasons, which characterise the experience of many postwar European cities like Berlin: the transformation in physical structures, and the equally expansive changes in the demographics of inner city areas. Contemporary inner city areas, such as Kreuzberg, have experienced extraordinary changes owing to the decay and demolition of older apartment blocks, the building of motorways and modern sterile highrise residential blocks, and a substantial reduction in the quality of public space. A high level of migration of people of quite different ethnicities has accompanied this physical transformation, so the way in which an individual (especially an individual who is a migrant) builds a relationship with the unfamiliar physical objects or structures must be reevaluated.

The first step in this relationship is to make contact with this new thing. This initial and sometimes tentative contact produces a 'sense of wonder' to adapt a statement used for the theatre by the Shakespearean scholars, T.G. Bishop and

Stephen Greenblatt,¹¹⁰ a feeling which can be somewhat likened to Kant's idea of the sublime. The first critical reaction to this feeling is to categorise this new thing, particularly through the process of naming, a process which simultaneously names and establishes the power relations between the individual and the surrounding objects. The Australian poet and novelist, David Malouf, has eloquently and persuasively related how this process begins for children – a situation which is similar to the experience of the migrant.

Set loose in a world of *things*, we are struck by their terrible otherness. It drives us to fury. For a time, when we are all mouth, we try to swallow them, then to smash them to smithereens – little hunters on the track of the ungraspable. Till we perceive at last that in naming and handling things we have power over them. If they refuse to yield their history to us they may at least, become agents in ours. This is the process of our first and deepest education.¹¹¹

Here the family house is the space the child inhabits. It is an interior space which he gradually understands intimately, and as he searches room by room objects are named and fit into an unfolding story of the physical structure of the house. Each story becomes a point of connection between the child and this space.

Malouf's approach recalls Gaston Bachelard's inspirational work *The Poetics of Space*.¹¹² Bachelard delves into the smallest spaces, the nooks and crannies of human dwellings in order to ascertain the spiritual and emotional basis of an individual's relationship with space and the objects in that space. In effect, Bachelard is telling stories about these spaces, which is the same process that Ören and Özdamar undertake in the novels under discussion.

This process of naming and establishing initial connections occurring in the smallest private spaces is the same process that occurs in the public space. In the public space the scale is greater, so there are many more objects to which to relate. As a result the sense of wonder is greater. In this initial phase uncertainty is tolerated, as the meaning of each object is tentative and transitional. This meaning making process is dynamic, and human agency is at work. This process can be seen as intense

¹¹⁰ T.G. Bishop, *Shakespeare and the theatre of wonder*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1996; Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions: the wonder of the new world*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1991

¹¹¹ David Malouf, *12 Edmonstone Street* Penguin, London/Melbourne 1986, p.9.

¹¹² Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, (transl. Maria Jolas), Beacon Press, Boston 1992.

social interaction, which, as the French social theorist, Henri Lefebvre, points out, occurs in a public space and, he argues, imbues space itself with some form of social power.¹¹³ Lefebvre contends correctly therefore that it is the everyday social practices which produce space, in other words, space is a social product. In his exciting crossdisciplinary research, Lefebvre particularly focused on the role of capitalism in producing a certain type of space, in which the power relations of the dominant and the subordinate are replicated.¹¹⁴ Urbanisation and the accompanying decay of the innercity areas populated by migrants is a good example of these power relations: in Kreuzberg, the *Gastarbeiter* is an economic migrant living in a space which has been long neglected and the result is an economic, political and social marginalisation.

Lefebvre's work complements Edward Soja's assertion that there are no "aspatial social processes". Soja, who has contributed many groundbreaking theories about space to human geography, means that the way an individual makes sense of place is based on concrete experiences, which occur in a specific geographic space.¹¹⁵ Soja develops the idea of 'spatiality' to explore how these kinds of concrete experiences contain both temporal and spatial elements; that is, as explained by the geographer, Robert Dodgshon, such experiences make sense as an accumulation of spaces and moments.¹¹⁶ Therefore, these experiences can be analysed in terms of the relationship which is formed between the individual and this space when experienced over time. By focusing on the everyday social practices, Soja explains clearly that his concept of spatiality is "simultaneously the product of a transformative process and transformable itself".¹¹⁷ In this sense the individual possesses agency both as an individual, and as part of a functioning community. This transformation can be seen in both novels under analysis. The characters are transformed, and this results in a transformation of their perception of this place. Yet, as many theorists working in the intersection between human geography and social theory point out, the social

¹¹³ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Basil Blackwell, London 1991.

¹¹⁴ Also see for a good overview, Eleonore Kofman & Elizabeth Lebas, *Writings on Cities. Henri Lefebvre*, Blackwell, Oxford/ Cambridge, Massachusetts 1996, p.86-93.

¹¹⁵ Edward Soja, "The Spatiality of Social Life: Towards a Transformative Retheorisation", in: Derek Gregory & John Urry (eds.), *Social Relations and Spatial Structures*, Macmillan, London 1994, p.90-127, 90.

¹¹⁶ Soja, "The Spatiality of Social Life", p.90-99; Robert A. Dodgshon, *Society in Time and Space. A geographical perspective on change*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998, p.2.

¹¹⁷ Soja, "The Spatiality of Social Life", p.94

structures existing in that space exert a level of agency more powerful than the individual. For example, Soja and Barbara Hooper contend that these structures built along lines of differences in gender and ethnicity are not just metaphorical, but grounded in everyday social practices, and determine to a significant extent how space is experienced. By drawing on theories of gender and ethnic difference new perspectives are gained on this collective experience of space.¹¹⁸

Derek Gregory's work throughout the 1990s expands on this theme by focussing on the outcomes of the human geography projects of the 1960s to "repeople" the landscape.¹¹⁹ Gregory analyses the interplay of structure with everyday social practices, and emphasises the uniqueness of each individual's response to each particular setting. In this analysis the crucial element is the role played by knowledgeable human beings.¹²⁰ His geography is not a wilderness idyll, but a landscape bustling with people, who all have various different, and therefore competing, ways of seeing and functioning in the same space. All social life is negotiated within this context, and not controlled by forces outside of an analysis of time and space.

Allan Pred adds to this debate (heavily based on Anthony Giddens' structuration theory) by emphasising that people negotiate their ways of seeing or interacting in a particular social space. This interaction has been described by Pred as a crossing of paths, or for the purposes of this dissertation, as a succession of meetings¹²¹. This crossing of paths and the subsequent negotiation can then be described as constituting everyday social practices, which in turn create, according to Pred, the existing social structures. Yet if social life is contingent, these social structures too must be in a state of constantly 'becoming', or dynamic. Here, Foucault's notion of the power relations operating between people can be seen as decisive because the way people act and think in this space is how they make sense of it.

¹¹⁸ Edward Soja and Barbara Hooper, "The Spaces that Difference Makes. Some notes on the geographical margins of the new cultural politics" in: Michael Keith & Steve Pile, *Place and the Politics of Identity*, Routledge, London/New York 1993, p. 183-205.

¹¹⁹ B.L. Berry, "Comparative Geography of the global economy: cultures, corporations and the nation state", in *Economic Geography* vol. 65, 1989, p. 1-8.; Dodgshon p.3.

¹²⁰ Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*, Blackwell, Cambridge MA & Oxford UK 1994.

¹²¹ Allan Pred, *Placing Practice and Structure: social and spatial transformation in southern Sweden*, CWK Glierup, 1984.

The influence of the economic system, especially that of capitalism, on these power relations has been well articulated by David Harvey. Harvey analyses space through a framework created from his critical engagement with capitalism in theory and practice, focussing particularly on how the demands of mobile capital affect the way city space or urban areas are used.¹²² In this analysis, an individual's experience of space is dependent on processes which value space in quite a different way from that of the individual. For the characters in both novels as part of their communities make an economically deprived urban space function for their immediate needs, which subsequently establishes the long term infrastructure. Harvey argues further that time should also be viewed as dynamic or variable, so that it too can be seen as a social product.¹²³ Harvey has lucidly identified a vital component in understanding how the individual's relationship with space is formed and changes.

Doreen Massey concentrates on the outcomes of the influence of capitalism on the production of space. Her main point, which will be dealt with in greater depth in the overview of Chapter Five, is that the outcomes are discriminatory, particularly towards women. So, by thinking of space as "constructed out of social relations" and not an "absolute independent dimension",¹²⁴ Massey shifts the focus to how this space, and an individual's relationship to it, is originally constructed. Further she notes, like Harvey, that space and time need to be analysed together because "social relations are never still"¹²⁵ – they are in constant change and always fundamentally influenced by gender.

The above theories have been built on by Robert Dodgshon who investigates the impact of geography on social change. Like Massey, whom he quotes at the very beginning of the first chapter in his book *Society in Time and Space. A geographical perspective on change*, he argues persuasively that the way space is used "matters fundamentally to the very nature of society and its constitutive processes."¹²⁶ However, Dodgshon emphasises that structure is a more important factor in social change than the agency of reflexive human beings. On a world systems level, Dodgshon's analysis is convincing, particularly when comparing different systems of

¹²² See particularly, David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1988;

¹²³ Dodgshon, p.9.

¹²⁴ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, Polity Press/Blackwell, Cambridge 1994, p.2

¹²⁵ Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, p.2

seeing space across different times, yet an analysis of the space of Kreuzberg in the postwar era reveals a quite remarkable story in which human agency has had a profound influence. Additionally, Dodgshon points out that these new social structures also become entrenched over time and establish their own cultural inertia; this approach can be equally applied to the migrant infrastructure in Kreuzberg.

In order to explain how these theories of space can be applied to the geographic and cultural space of Kreuzberg, I will focus on the idea of the city as a meeting place. Meetings can be seen as an example of everyday social practices which form the way space is experienced. Richard Sennet, a sociologist and historian, points out that an original function of cities or urban areas was to facilitate exchange.¹²⁷ This exchange takes many forms: trade in products, services, finance, ideas, information of all sorts, yet both novels reveal that more is happening. Both Özdamar and Ören describe settings in which the building of networks of exchange is under way and importantly happens in a specific space, in which the built environment responds to these changes. In effect, both novels document the creation of a migrant infrastructure, which itself produces its own traditions. Initially, these networks of exchange encompass a desire for survival in this new built environment and then increasingly for a “rich diversity of exchange opportunities.”¹²⁸

Sennett’s focus on what is happening in the streets of the city (empirical observations) is complemented by William H. Whyte’s analysis of the behaviour of people meeting on the streets of New York City. Whyte, a historian, sees the meeting of people as an integral part of city life.¹²⁹ The space of the city street is structured in some sense to allow this activity; like a mixture of the public and the private, people meet in the middle of a crowd and, according to Whyte¹³⁰, feel comfortable enough to stay there while they talk, rather than move out of the flow of pedestrians. People stream around them without disturbing or interrupting them; indeed, this is part of the function of city streets.

¹²⁶ Dodgshon, p.2.

¹²⁷ For a historical analysis see Richard Sennett, *The conscience of the eye: the design and social life of cities*, Faber & Faber, London 1993.

¹²⁸ David Engwicht, interview, 3rd September, 1991, quoted in Tony Collins, *Living for the City. Urban Australia: Crisis or Challenge*. ABC Books, Sydney 1993, p.6.

¹²⁹ W.H. Whyte, *City. Rediscovering the Center*, Doubleday, New York 1990.

¹³⁰ Whyte, *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, The Conservation Foundation, Washington DC 1980, p.16-23.

This function as a meeting place occurs on the opening page of Ören's novel, and the interpretation of this meeting can be taken deeper. The cultural planner, David Engwicht, argues passionately and in an innovative manner that meetings can take two forms: chance (or spontaneous) meetings, or organised meetings.¹³¹ Chance meetings indicate the level of interaction or participation in a community and how comfortable people feel in that space, which implies that the more people they meet, the more they must know. The greater the number of chance meetings, the greater the sense of place. A chance meeting occurs unexpectedly and is the catalyst towards seeing events and relationships from a quite different perspective. The result of this process is understanding that a relationship becomes deeper and the experience of this space becomes multilayered. Engwicht notes in his books,¹³² which function both as a type of do-it-yourself guidebook to creating a sense of place and as critical contemplations on social interaction, that chance meetings are essential to a city's sustainability. The population density encouraged by the urban design of innercity areas like Kreuzberg ensures a high number of chance meetings of people acquainted at different levels and through different types of networks. Space becomes an essential factor in allowing these connections to be made.

From another perspective the American urban historian, Jane Jacobs, emphasises that the diversity of city life depends on the structure of the buildings in the urban environment. In her monumental work *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*,¹³³ published in 1961 as a concerted attack on the inadequacies of purely functional urban planning, Jacobs examines how the apartment-lined streets in a certain borough of New York influence the behaviour of people in quite marked ways. She sees this behaviour as a type of ballet because of the way each individual's life weaves in and out of the life on the street¹³⁴, yet this image also suggests an idealised harmony which ignores life's rough and chaotic edges as well as the omnipresent conflict based in class, gender and ethnicity. However, her analysis is valuable because she focuses on what is actually happening in the street, rather than what was proposed by the urban planners. This type of analysis alerts us to different

¹³¹ David Engwicht, *Towards an Eco-City. Calming the Traffic*. envirobook, Sydney 1992, p.29-34.

¹³² See Engwicht, *Towards an Eco-City*, and et al. *The Cultural Planning Handbook. An Essential Australian Guide*. Allen & Unwin, Sydney 1995.

¹³³ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Penguin, New York/London 1961.

ways of seeing this activity, which can be described further as different forms of mapping a city. This point refers back to Gregory who underlined the importance of mapping the human experience of space, which acts as a crucial point of intersection between human geography, social theory and literature; in this light both novels under discussion are examples of mapping the migrant experience in Berlin.

Literature about a specific space is a means of telling stories which have a profound influence on the connection between an individual and space in two ways: firstly, literature can *create* this connection; and secondly, literature can *describe* this connection. Simultaneously, literature creates, disturbs and consolidates these intangible feelings about a specific built environment. As discussed above, this form of mapping has been termed cultural mapping. Cultural mapping entails a search for the stories behind the objects: how they came to be there, and what different kinds of meanings they hold. Telling these stories depends on where an individual is situated in this space. Therefore, meanings will differ according to context and individual identity. As Walter Benjamin states, “knowing oneself was an exercise in mapping where one stands”¹³⁵, thus underlining the link between place and identity. An individual does not stand in a vacuum, but in a real physical space in which people exist and through telling multifaceted stories construct competing meanings for the same space.

Mapping these constructed and competing meanings produces edges. Structuration theory proposed by the British sociologist, Anthony Giddens,¹³⁶ and Critical Theory based on social interaction, argued by Stuart Hall,¹³⁷ can be drawn into this debate because they show how cultural or social edges are created; in this sense an edge on a topographic map equates to a social margin. Cultural mapping illuminates these edges and begins an analysis of how existing power structures turn these edges on a map into social margins, and the people who live there as the marginalised. Kreuzberg is a good example because in the Cold War time of the setting of both novels under consideration it was an edge of West Berlin, and by

¹³⁴ Jacobs, p. 60-65.

¹³⁵ Michael Keith and Steve Pile, *Place and the Politics of Identity*, Routledge, London/New York, 1993.

¹³⁶ Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1984.

¹³⁷ Stuart Hall, *Questions of Cultural Identity*, Sage, London 1996.

extension of Western European society, and became effectively marginalised. However, as will be explained in the next section, this marginalisation also provided the space for alternative centres or forms of social interaction to take place. So, as the human geographers Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose point out, the dominant culture recognises that a different type of behaviour and language belongs to this marginal space, which is effectively 'othered' and seen as disruptive.¹³⁸ Consequently, this process creates resistance to dominant meanings ascribed to this space, yet the marginalised people who resist can be ignored or suppressed or even tolerated because they are needed, generally for economic reasons, according to Blunt and Rose.¹³⁹ A result of this process is that a certain type of valorisation occurs, primarily in the case of Kreuzberg, as exoticisation, which too can create a space in which other systems of value or forms of connection to space can be created. What this means is that the built environment in Kreuzberg can offer both a sense of dislocation and deprivation, as well as opportunities for the development of new and different types of connections.

(ii) Chapter three - Mapping out a migrant community

... it is the city which provides the space in which emergent identifications and new social movements of the people are played out...¹⁴⁰

The second influence on an individual's sense of place is the community of people who inhabit this space. The community is more than a group of individuals; by the word 'community' I mean that there is a relationship of some form existing between the people living in this space, a relationship which is more than a 'group'. The words 'community' and 'group' are not interchangeable, yet many of the ideas about the formation of groups can supply important clues to understanding the function of the community in the novels under discussion. How an individual belongs to a community is a crucial question in this analysis of a sense of place. In this

¹³⁸ Alison Blunt & Gillian Rose, "Introduction: Women's Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies" in Blunt & Rose (eds.), *Writing Women and Space. Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, The Guildford Press, New York/London 1994, p.15-16

¹³⁹ Blunt & Rose, p.15-16.

¹⁴⁰ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London/New York 1994, p.170

section I will put forward the idea that belonging is based on a kind of *ius participari*. This form of belonging is informed by Benedict Anderson's concept of the imagined community or nation.¹⁴¹ A nation can only be imagined because it is too large to actually know. Therefore, for the concept of the nation to have some potency, it needs to be invented and, according to Anderson, there are very specific political, social and economic reasons why, how and for what purpose this act of invention occurs. A community, on the other hand, is smaller in numbers and generally geographically based and consequently more readily able to be perceived and experienced, such as the nascent community in the Turkish diaspora located in Kreuzberg in Berlin as described in both novels.

The community formed in these novels is undergoing profound change. In this section I will detail some important ideas about how this change can be described and analysed. I have divided this analysis into two different sections: the *Notgemeinschaft* and the 'mature community'. The initial formation of this community can be described as a *Notgemeinschaft* or 'community of necessity'. At the end of Ören's novel there is a different type of community: a mature community, comfortable in its new physical and cultural surroundings. This change in the way the community sees itself and the way it is seen by others has important implications for an individual's sense of place. To undertake this analysis, in Chapter Three I will first look at the way in which the journey in both novels is presented as a fundamental part of the process of this initial formation of this community in Kreuzberg, Berlin. The journey from Turkey to Germany is the first occasion when signs of a new community emerge. Then I will describe the mature community, which functions in narrative terms as both the point of departure and destination.

In this literature overview and theoretical framework I will outline the important ideas about how communities form. In this section I will focus on the influence of migration on this process of community formation. As mentioned in the literature review, much of the debate surrounding migrant literature focuses almost exclusively on ethnicity, rather than seeing the influence of migration in changing this understanding of ethnicity. In many studies ethnicity, predominantly referred to

¹⁴¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London 1983.

as Turkish, is understood as fixed and unitary. By contrast, my argument is that ethnicity is dynamic and plural. This way of understanding ethnicity allows a quite different view on the community formed as a direct result of migration, and, therefore, a deeper understanding of the individual (as part of this community and of wider society) and his/her sense of place.

In both novels this mapping of a migrant community begins as a series of questions about how an individual fits into a community. On the opening page of *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* a deceptively simple question about recognition sets the stage for a reckoning of the individual's identification with a community: "Erkennst du mich?" This question is the catalyst for the narrative development and implies that individual and communal identity is neither clear nor easy to identify. This question is asking for recognition of both the individual and of the community in which the individual lives. Yet, in the words of French structuralist Jean-Paul Vernant, as appropriated by Paul Cartledge in his book on identity in ancient Greece, there exist "overlapping sets of dynamic interrelations, complex transformations and shifting tensions,"¹⁴² which are located in the social, political and economic context of that time and space. An individual's sense of place is not solely self generated, but is the result of these complex and intense social interactions.

There are many theories about why and how groups and communities form; great importance is placed on common or shared ethnicity. In the literature review the influence of legal terminology and categorisation was emphasised. Legal terminology will once more be drawn on because it is an important factor in the way communities form, and consequently belonging can be expressed in a legal sense. Indeed, much debate focuses on the assumption that ethnicity is the fundamental criterion of citizenship. For example, those who can claim German ethnicity possess an immediate right to citizenship, whereas those of non-German ethnicity, must apply to make a claim for this citizenship.¹⁴³ This process has been simplified in previous

¹⁴² C.P. Segal, "Afterword: J-P. Vernant and the Study of Ancient Greece" in: *Arethusa* vol 15, p.221-234, 232, quoted in Paul Cartledge, *The Greeks. A Portrait of Self and Others*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York, 1993, p.16.

¹⁴³ Stefan Senders, "Laws of Belonging: Legal Dimensions of National Inclusion in Germany" in: *New German Critique* no.67, 1996, p.147-176; Stephen Castles, "A German Dilemma: Ethnic Identity and the Debate on Citizenship" in: Fischer, *Debating Enzensberger*, p.169-186; Czarina Wilpert, "Ideological and Institutional Foundations of Racism in the Federal Republic of Germany" in John Solomon & John Wrench (eds.), *Racism and Migration in Western Europe*, Berg, Oxford/Providence

years, but is still long, detailed and costly, and leaves many applicants with the impression of being unwanted. So, it appears from the legal framework, that community formation in Germany is based on the theory of primordiality; that is, an inherent and immutable belonging to a clan or ethnic group. The importance of understanding primordiality is the way in which it underpins the legal concept of citizenship, and then is translated further into political decisions about how rights to participate are accrued or denied. According to the principles enshrined in the *Grundgesetz*, citizenship is acquired through a blood link often termed *ius sanguini*, or clan belonging, rather than through the principle of *ius soli* or birth in a nation's sovereign territory or allegiance to its political ideas. However, my term *ius participari* is based on recognition of participation in the community and society in which an individual lives.

Curiously enough, Michael Ignatieff,¹⁴⁴ points out that the law on citizenship derived from a 1913 *Reichsgesetz* finds its immediate forebears in the 1848 Frankfurt National Assembly liberal views on citizenship and being German. The purpose of these laws was to include those who considered themselves German, rather than to exclude; that is, all those in the myriad of German states, each with a differing type of government and level of social responsibilities and obligations, could at least claim an umbrella, almost supra-national, citizenship. This notion was at the time both hopelessly romantic and revolutionary, particularly in the eyes of Rome, Vienna, Paris and Berlin. These centres of political power fiercely contested the idea of a German nation. A German nation needed to be distinguished from a *Vielvölkerstaat*. In order to create this distance the idea of nation conflated the concepts of ethnicity and citizenship. Germany was forged through military force against foreigners or others. This process of establishing the German nation followed closely a narrowing of German culture, and thereby a sense of who belongs, which ultimately was posited in legal form in the above mentioned 1913 law. This law, based on a clan-type belonging sets up a vision of the nation dictated from above, rather than based on the participation inherent in everyday social practices.

This act of expressing and then narrowing citizenship also contributed to the

1993, p.67-81.

¹⁴⁴ Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging. Journeys into the New Nationalism*, Farrer, Straus &

conflation of ethnicity with citizenship. Linking these two themes has been an insistent and bedevilling theme in modern Germany. Many critiques, particularly from the multiculturalist and cosmopolitan edge of social science, have been mounted against this peculiarly resilient and simplistic notion.¹⁴⁵ The simplistic attraction of pure or unmixed ethnic identity is based on a form of exclusive belonging; that is, that if you belong here, then others do not. All these ideas are predicated on the understanding that in international law the state or nation chooses its citizens, not the reverse.

According to legal definition then being German is based on the amorphous concept of cultural affinity. An important element of proving cultural affinity is language, which is intimately bound in with notions of culture. In Germany the term *Kultur* also lives on contested terrain, for another unifying factor of 'Germanness' is the idea of the *Kulturnation*. Here the emphasis on something shared lies in the cultural. The term *Kulturnation* is monitored with such passion and rigidity that the cultural is rendered as static and exclusive. Conversely, that language ability has been accepted as the primary legal criterion is also fundamental to developing an approach based on *ius participari*. Özdamar wrote her novel in German, so the act of writing, as well as the content of the work, become a means of expressing cultural affinity with the German nation, but this expression of affinity does not exclude affinity with other cultures. (Writing in German would arguably help in the process of acquiring citizenship, but is perhaps less effective than football skills!) Aras Ören, on the other hand, wrote his novel mostly in Turkish, which was simultaneously translated into German, and marketed for the German reading public. Both authors then are breaking this narrow mould of cultural affinity expressed in the rules of citizenship of both

Giroux, New York 1994, p.87.

¹⁴⁵ Karl-Heinz Meier-Braun, "Auf dem Weg zur multikulturellen Gesellschaft?" in *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* vol 1 1991, p.9-26; see also Omar Osman Mohammed, "Akkulturation, Integration und Isolation" in: *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* vol 1 1991, p.75-79; Shahnaz Nadjmabadi, "Identität, Integration und Integrität von Ausländern" in *Zeitschrift für Kulturaustausch* vol 1 1991, p.137-141; Michelle Matson, "Refugees in Germany: *Invasion or Invention?*" in *New German Critique* no.64 1995, p.61-85; Frank-Olaf Radke, "The formation of ethnic minorities and the transformation of social into ethnic conflicts in a so-called multi-cultural society: The case of Germany" in John Rex & Beatrice Drury (eds.), *Ethnic Mobilisation in a Multi-cultural Europe*, Avebury, Aldershot 1994, p.30-37; Werner Weidenfeld, "Zwischen Einwanderungsdruck und Zuwanderungsbedarf. Zusammenleben in der multikulturellen Gesellschaft" in *Merkur* Heft 11, 47.Jg, November 1993, p.940-950; Wolfgang Benz, *Integration ist machbar. Ausländer in Deutschland*, Beck'sche Reihe, Verlag C.H. Beck, München 1993.

Germany and Turkey. As Eberhard Seidel-Pielen argues, while Germany is moving away from a strict combination that ethnicity determines citizenship, Turkey in this century is moving towards it.¹⁴⁶

Both novels under discussion also reveal that the ability to speak confidently in another language is a touchstone to a feeling of belonging in this culture. The process of learning a language is itself a kind of journey with distinct signposts. Jim Lantolf,¹⁴⁷ a linguistics expert in the area of migrant communities, identifies a movement from first language loss to second language gain, which he applies particularly to the experience of migrant writers.¹⁴⁸ This movement, which Lantolf groups into five stages of both loss and gain, seems to reflect the experiences noted by the narrators in both novels. While perceptive, this analysis can be broadened to reflect the level of participation in this new and growing community because participation implies a greater familiarity with the language of the new society, as well as recognising that the first language changes when spoken in the migrant community. However, the ability to maintain the first language through different generations also shows a strength in the migrant community, so that the culture need not be totally isolated nor assimilated, and simultaneously it also recognises that the culture in a migrant community is in a constant process of hybridisation.

However, dealing with hybridisation, particularly in terms of identity and culture, reveals one of the great problems with primordial notions of group formation; that is, its immutability. Immutability belies the experience noted in these novels where “historically evolving patterns of belief and action”¹⁴⁹ determine the formation of a group. However, these patterns of behaviour do not deny the existence of the “inexpungeable” link between an individual and the community.¹⁵⁰ The analysis of these novels will show that while an inexpungeable connection exists, this connection is open to change in form and quality, particularly as the process of

¹⁴⁶ Seidel-Pielen, p.32.

¹⁴⁷ Jim Lantolf, “Second language theory building: Letting all the flowers bloom!” in: *Language Learning* vol.46, p.713-749; Lantolf & G. Appel (eds.) *Vygotskian approaches to second language learning*, Ablex, New Jersey 1994.

¹⁴⁸ Jim Lantolf, “Voices from the margin: The reconstruction of the self in a second language”, keynote address at conference, ‘VOICES. Literary and Linguistic Interpretations’, Melbourne University, 24-26 April 1996.

¹⁴⁹ Steven Grosby, “The verdict of history: the inexpungeable tie of primordiality - a response to Eller and Coughlan” in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* vol.17 no.2 1994, p.164-171.

¹⁵⁰ Grosby, p.164-166.

migration requires a new type of community to form which is in turn influenced by a different cultural landscape.

Belonging based on participation encourages questioning about ways of identifying. A consequence is seeing that belonging is based more on participation, rather than being seen as necessarily pre-ordained. This alternative idea is based on the individual response as part of a community; that is, that the beliefs and actions of the individual create relationships and these relationships are the basis of group formation. In the process of migration, these relationships are based initially on necessity, a *Notgemeinschaft*, in which individual and cultural survival are predicated on the group holding together. Yet this *Notgemeinschaft* assumes a different form from the home society and so the identity is not “self-perpetuating” but, as Jack Eller and Reed Coughlan maintain, “continuously negotiated, revised and revitalised.”¹⁵¹ According to this perspective, group formation then is the result of “creative effort and investment”,¹⁵² which can be understood as the beliefs and actions of an individual, acting as a vital part of this community.

Measuring this creative effort and investment is difficult. However, an investigation of social capital can offer us some clues. Social capital is a term pioneered by Robert Putnam in his 1993 book *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*¹⁵³ and extensively theorised by Pierre Bourdieu whose work on ‘cultural capital’ reveals with great insight how our everyday cultural practices (‘habitus’) contribute to the wealth and health of our society.¹⁵⁴ In Australia activist and feminist academic, Eva Cox, has argued passionately for the inclusion of social capital in the national accounts as a better measure of all the work undertaken in a civil society.¹⁵⁵ In this work I refer to social capital as the sum of all the formal and informal activities that individuals undertake alone and together to effectively promote trust and co-operation in their community. Trust, as philosopher Martin

¹⁵¹ A. Hobner & R. Hefner, “The integrative resolution revisited” in: *World Development* vol.19 no.1 1990, p.18; Jack Eller & Reed Coughlan, “The poverty of primordialism: the demystification of ethnic attachments” in *Ethnic and Racial Studies* vol.16 no.2 1993, p.187-192, 199-201.

¹⁵² J. Nagel, “Constructing ethnicity: creating and recreating ethnic identity and culture”, in N. Yetman (ed.), *Majority and Minority: The Dynamics of Race and Ethnicity in American Life*, Allyn & Bacon, 1993, p.2; Eller & Coughlan, “The poverty of primordialism”, p.187-192, 199-201.

¹⁵³ Robert Putnam, *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1993

¹⁵⁴ See for example Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Polity Press, London 1991.

¹⁵⁵ Eva Cox, *A Truly Civil Society*, ABC Books, Sydney 1995.

Krygier points out, is essential for (in Adam Smith's words) "cooperation and assistance of great multitudes."¹⁵⁶ Trust and the capacity for selforganisation¹⁵⁷ is vital to a community of necessity. Interactions based on trust are of greater depth and occur more frequently than grudging interactions, and create their own dynamic and hasten the movement to a mature community. As maintained by David Engwicht and Richard Sennet amongst many others, the level of social interaction, particularly chance meetings, indicates the level of trust in that community.

Trust depends on how a community sees itself. Trust can be a crucial factor in the development of a new identity. As Edward Said maintains identity is fragile. In his many groundbreaking works on identity and literary theory, particularly his 1978 book *Orientalism*, Said posits that the fragility of identity to change is a natural state.¹⁵⁸ This fragility can be traced back to the constructed nature of identity; that is, identity depends on an individual's relationship with a group. By understanding this notion the formation of a community can be seen as proceeding from the individual need and will, rather than only primordial notions of belonging.

A further important influence on group formation is how others see that group. In the case of Turkish migrants to Germany from the early 1960s onwards, they are forming a community in a space which has existing cultures of great strength and tradition. Gillian Bottomley, Australian historian of migration and multiculturalism, contends that change in one community reflects the strength of the other:

The ability to choose or to challenge an identity, therefore, is a measure of available spheres of freedom, requiring, not just celebration, but also eternal vigilance.¹⁵⁹

Bottomley's note of warning applies equally to the migrant Turkish community in Berlin as well as to the resident German community, particularly as the migrant community becomes a mature community. The way a community is seen, also influences the way an individual who is part of that community is seen. The

¹⁵⁶ Krygier, *Between faith and hope*, p.60.

¹⁵⁷ Nature Conservation Council, 'A capital approach to sustainability' in: *Environment NSW* vol.3, no.4, Summer 1998, p.12.

¹⁵⁸ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* Penguin, London 1995, p.332.

¹⁵⁹ Gillian Bottomley, "Identification: ethnicity, gender and culture" in *Journal of Intercultural Studies*

individual is associated with the qualities of that group, which at best can often be tokenistic representations of food, handicrafts or music, rather than reflective. Sneja Gunew finds that there are two levels of acceptance: firstly, the obvious signs of a different culture, such as cuisine or music; and then a more reflective sign, such as literature, or complex philosophical and cultural traditions.¹⁶⁰ Yet embedded in this second level is the ability to observe the change in a community over time. Both novels then are good means of seeing the process of hybridisation that is underway. There is a yoking together of cultural traditions that the city in particular helps to facilitate through the intense social interaction with other people's beliefs and actions. Abner Cohen, a distinguished anthropologist and specialist in African ethnic politics, has underlined this intense social interaction as a fundamental component of a new way of looking at identity, particularly identity based on ethnicity, and is a constant process:

“contemporary ethnicity is the result of intensive interaction between ethnic groupings and not the result of complete separatism.”¹⁶¹

Often this relationship is built on the ties of compulsion rather than choice. As mentioned in the introduction, Georg Simmel makes the important point that the generation of interest groups as examples of ties of choice is predominant in the city. However, ties of compulsion, such as ethnicity based on birth, can still dictate to a greater extent the level of identification to the community. Yet, as the analysis in the following chapters will show, this identification is the result of a very complex interplay between compulsion and choice, which has a marked influence on how individuals make sense of the space in which they find themselves.

(iii) Chapter four - The time it takes to know a place

The type of relationship which is at the heart of a sense of place takes time to

vol.18, no.1, p.41-47, 44.

¹⁶⁰ Sneja Gunew, *Framing Marginality. Multicultural Literature Studies*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne 1994, see introduction.

¹⁶¹ Abner Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1969, p.198; also Cohen, “Ethnicity and Politics”, in: John Hutchinson & Anthony D. Smith, *Ethnicity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York, p.83.

create. Such a deep and resonant relationship cannot be acquired instantly, but is created as a result of participation which in turn requires residence over a period of time. Therefore, the time spent participating in this community in this space must also be examined in order to evaluate how a sense of place can be defined and then applied to the novels under discussion. So, the effect of time is to supply a further and essential context of how an individual experiences a sense of place. Assessing change over time, therefore, can be used as another form of measuring the connection between an individual and place.

Yi-Fu Tuan's idea that it takes time to know a place¹⁶² appears selfevident. However, in a society in which instant gratification has a dominating influence over human behaviour, there is a tendency to take short cuts. Tuan's attempts since the 1970s to explore the relationship of time and space are firmly based on Henri Lefebvre's idea of the *durée*; that only in the duration of time can sustainable relationships be formed. In this section I emphasise the role that time plays on an individual's sense of place, and so the focus lies on time being experienced individually. In particular, my argument is that time is experienced by the individual who is a migrant in a quite different way from mainstream society. Additionally, the way the migrant community perceives time also influences the individual's perception of time.

The underlying idea of this discussion is that time is a process; it is not an end product. Time is what allows material objects to be created, but it cannot be created or become material in itself. So, my focus lies on how we use time – what acts or events do we initiate or participate in which make us perceive time differently. So, participation in various acts or events occurs within time and is the impulse for the change in spatial relations. Time and space, in this sense, are intimately connected.

This analysis derives from many different ways of seeing time. The most fundamental division in ways of seeing time is that between sacred time and profane time. Although well understood by Ancient Greek philosophers and historians, such as Xenophon and Herodotus – the founding parents of the study of history – perhaps this distinction is best explained in a modern context by Mircea Eliade. Eliade's

¹⁶² Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1977, p.179.

research into mythological stories and patterns of religious belief, particularly those retained by indigenous peoples, points to the relationship between sacred and profane time,¹⁶³ while maintaining they are both very different practices. Sacred time is an eternal time, when rituals of creation are reenacted, and, for the believers, infinite. It is a time outside of profane or secular time. Eliade also explains that this use of time also depends on a sacred space¹⁶⁴: the power of one derives from the power of the other. Eliade also spoke of this kind of time being circular, somewhat similar to Yeats' idea that time is a constantly moving spiral, and so it operates quite differently from the linear conception of time adopted by historians. From this fundamental difference in the perception of time, time can be understood as something in motion and changeable, rather than something fixed. For an individual migrant the initial cultural shock can be linked to these different experiences of time.

This division appears very similar to Rene Descartes' meditations about what could be known through experience and what is unable to be known because it belongs to the divine sphere. Kant's explanations of time begin at this point of individual experience.¹⁶⁵ However, Kant also recognised that other things could be represented objectively and time could be understood as an inner sense to which all things must conform. For example, any thought or sensation would have to occupy a moment of time, which forms part of a temporal sequence.¹⁶⁶ For Kant the idea of a connected series or sequence is vital to understanding that time is "the succession of causally related things, unified in a single chronological sweep."¹⁶⁷ This approach gives us the important idea of the causal connection between acts or events occurring in time.

An approach which has dominated the analysis of time and space stems from Hegel's emphasis on the primacy of history. This analysis needs to be illustrated because it has framed an understanding of migration, which does not take into account the migrant experience of the *Gleichzeitigkeit des Ungleichzeitigen*. From Hegel's viewpoint, a basic framework of analysis would focus on the meaning of

¹⁶³ Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion*, (transl. Willard R. Trask) Harcourt Brace & Company, San Diego/New York 1987.

¹⁶⁴ Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, p.20-67.

¹⁶⁵ Robert Cummings Neville, *Eternity and Time's Flow*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York 1993, p.24

¹⁶⁶ Neville, p.32.

“sequential development”.¹⁶⁸ For each event causes and outcomes could be investigated and then highlighted in order to show that profane time contained the idea of progress. The difficulty with this approach, later adopted by Husserl, Heidegger and Sartre, is its idealism.¹⁶⁹ Time is isolated from its immediate social context to see how it works in “pure consciousness”, according to Husserl.¹⁷⁰ This temporal idealism reduces the agency of humans, and also focuses primarily on the present. Heidegger’s fundamental concept of *Dasein* provides a locus to investigate past and future acts or events, but understanding the present remains the dominant paradigm.¹⁷¹ However, this approach does not appear to fit the circumstances of the characters in either novel under discussion, for whom the past is a constant influence on their identity in the present. Even for Özdamar’s at times existential narrator, the past and the present are not easily distinguishable: when she is in Germany, her memories exist of a continuing present in Turkey, and similarly when she is in Turkey, she carries her knowledge of Germany with her as an alternative present.

As noted above, my focus lies on how time is used, rather than what we suppose it is. Robert Cummings Neville relies on Allan Whitehead, whom he calls a process philosopher, to explain that the present can be understood as the idea of becoming concrete, what Whitehead names “concrescence”: “a present moment is to be conceived as an actual occasion in which something happens.”¹⁷² This idea can also include the act of remembering something from the past such as a conscious reckoning of past time as occurs to Ören’s narrator.

Only when this event or act has finished can it be identified as having spatial and temporal dimensions. In other words, there is a movement from possibility to actuality. What is important for my argument is that change can be seen as the generation of something new, which includes both willingness and the need to make decisions – time in this theory allows human agency to be exercised. The perception of past, present and future are “distinguished according to different possibilities of

¹⁶⁷ Neville, p.24.

¹⁶⁸ Neville, p.37.

¹⁶⁹ Neville, p.33-35

¹⁷⁰ Neville, p.p.36.

¹⁷¹ Neville, p.37.

¹⁷² Neville, p.39-44

entering into one another as causal prehended elements,”¹⁷³ rather than as inevitable outcomes, or as part of the eternal return. In an analysis of migration this is an important aspect because it points to an empowerment often denied by the locals to the new arrivals.

In her work on time Elizabeth Grosz takes this point of possibility further by focusing on the randomness of time.¹⁷⁴ Basing her work on thinkers as diverse as Charles Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze, Grosz shows how chance is a fundamental part of how we conceive of time.¹⁷⁵ All these thinkers question the centrality of determinism and predictability, and instead, according to Grosz, place some form of chance or random occurrence at the centre of their work. She summarises this in the following way. For Darwin, chance plays a crucial role in his concept of natural selection. An organism must have the ability to adapt to unpredictable changes in the environment. Nietzsche relies on chance as the random event which constantly repeats. Time makes history possible, but the interpretation of history is open to constant invention. Grosz’s reading of Bergson sees chance as an obstacle which causes a “creative evolution”¹⁷⁶ in which each entity is open to change. For Deleuze, chance can be seen as the ‘motor’ which drives the constant generation of the new. A common element underlying all these approaches for Grosz is that there is a multitude, excess or profusion of causes, for which there is no single predictable outcome. The distillation of these infinite causes produces unforeseen outcomes, which in turn influence the “endless unfolding of the new.”¹⁷⁷

Grosz’s emphasis on time as ‘becoming’ (or as a type of *werden*) can be appropriately applied to my argument that time should be seen as a process. While agreeing that time is not just a passive agent, it cannot be made into a material object: in Grosz’s words, it is a force which is “always materialising.”¹⁷⁸ Accordingly, time can be seen as the force which allows space to change. For example, investment in fixed capital is something made material and therefore valuable through the passing

¹⁷³ Neville, p.40

¹⁷⁴ Elizabeth Grosz, “Becoming ... An Introduction”, p1-12, and “Chapter one. Thinking the New: Of Futures Yet Unthought”, p.15-28 in Grosz (ed.), *Becomings. Explorations in Time, Memory and Future?*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca/London 1999.

¹⁷⁵ Grosz, p.4-5.

¹⁷⁶ Grosz, p.5.

¹⁷⁷ Grosz, p.5.

¹⁷⁸ Grosz, p.4.

of time. Grosz's emphasis on becoming is similar to Whitehead's term, 'concrecence', but without Whitehead's focus on locating an identifiable causality.

A method of locating how this idea of time as becoming functions in the novels under discussion is by considering the *durée* of the narrative. Both Yi-Fu Tuan and Henri Lefebvre have developed this idea of duration in their multidisciplinary work. *Durée* is defined as the way in which time consists of a series of moments which are constantly changing, or in other words becoming; what they are becoming depends on the perspective taken. Lefebvre drew on the ideas of George Gurvitch and Gaston Bachelard in his work *La somme et la reste*,¹⁷⁹ initially published in 1959, in order to show how conceiving of time as a sequence of moments has a profound impact on how individuals use time. For it is time that allows social networks to develop, in which an infinite number of differing views need to be recognised and, if possible, synthesised. Only through these social networks can the experience of time as a series of moments be understood:

The moments that an individual can experience are elaborated by the society in which the individual participates or the practices which a social group diffuses more widely.¹⁸⁰

Lefebvre was aware of the political outcomes of how time is perceived and used. For him a "multiplicity of moments"¹⁸¹ could indicate the presence of possibility for action which would convince people that future outcomes were not inevitable but could in some way be influenced, constructed or constrained.

Seeing time as socially constructed is one of the approaches taken in my analysis in Chapter Four. Socially constructed refers to how humans are able to change the way time is used and that this change has been done for a purpose, for example, electricity, allows both greater productivity, as well as more flexible work hours. So, the human input into the production process can be minimised to lower short term production costs, and lift profit margins, and simultaneously cause acute unemployment. Hours of work and leisure, therefore, can be fixed according to the interplay of ideology, social power and technology. As Richard Sennet has pointed

¹⁷⁹ Henri Lefebvre, *La somme et la reste*, Meridiens-Klincksieck, 1959

¹⁸⁰ Kofman and Lebas, p.30; Lefebvre, p.651

¹⁸¹ Kofman and Lebas, p.30

out, the introduction of the town clock disturbed and ruptured the previous segmentation of a day's labour.¹⁸² In the same way that buzzers, bells and time sheets demarcate contemporary division of tasks, the town clock brought in a rigid, reliable and predictable organisation of time. This rigid organisation of labour time laid the foundations for a system whereby greater value was given to some parts of the day than to others. For example, time spent on religious devotion or familial obligations (both pre-industrialised segmentations of time) could be seen as wasted time because in this time no wage, therefore, no value had been earned or generated.

A further approach taken in Chapter Four is the diurnal perception of time. How time is used depends frequently on the season and its accompanying weather, or whether it is day or night. Technology has severely curtailed the influence of diurnal time, but there are still notable changes in thinking and behaviour during the evenings, and particularly at the arrival of Spring. Curiously absent from both novels is festal or festival time. According to Eliade, festivals conjoin both diurnal and sacred time,¹⁸³ and act as a time of celebration, when traditionally the existing power structures are inverted. For the *Gastarbeiter* in the novels, there is little time for festivals when they first arrive. Their traditional festivals are recognised in a superficial way, but occupy no significant place in the calendar of German festivals. Only after a significant period of time has passed do they begin to celebrate traditional festivals. For the workers the major breaks in their work routine are weekends, holidays or the end of their contract.

A final approach adopted is the theory that time is linear. However, in a time of migration there is a major difference. The incidents analysed cannot be neatly distinguished as past, present or future. For the migrants the past is not finished, of less value or actualised. – it too is constantly becoming, open to change and reinterpretation. Each holiday the past is able to be revisited, but each time it becomes something different. The past self is seen through new eyes. Similarly, the present takes on more complex hues and layers than in the mainstream society. The present is quite curiously linked with geographically separate spaces – Germany and Turkey – and each country has quite separate ways of measuring the present, so that

¹⁸² Richard Sennet, *Flesh and Stone. The Body and the City in Western Civilisation*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York 1994.

the narrator can return to the past or to the present.

As Özdamar has commented on a number of occasions – and as discussed in Chapter Five - time is perceived differently in Turkey.¹⁸⁴ The past is never quite past; the dead are never quite dead; the pace of life moves according to different social, religious and economic imperatives. A different form of repetition or routine is established in the diaspora as a result of the host country's routines, which in turn affects the way individuals see themselves in the new community and society.

One's identity at a moment is never exhausted in the elements that are datable by that moment; at the present moment one is also one's past and one's future.¹⁸⁵

The journey itself can be seen as contributing to a different perception of time. Aras Ören's novel is a journey through time. Like the wedding guest in Coleridge's 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' the narrator by chance meets an acquaintance and then recapitulates his own story, and after this process, accepts the invitation and finds himself at the wedding feast of the daughter of the acquaintance. Yet the duration of time between these two events takes 334 pages and the narration travels both rapidly and slowly in a rough chronological order through his own life. The novel begins in the narrative present, then moves into the past, resumes in the narrative present at the beginning of the second part, back into a more recent past, than is completed in the narrative present, a few days after the beginning. Although this retelling of the tale takes the form of an internal monologue, the reader is taken on a journey through time and space. This narrative technique renders time flexible and malleable conveying an impression that past time is endless, and the present is limited. The conclusion to the novel also suggests a measure of agency has been assumed by the narrator. His life is defined as a movement in time between two meetings, each mark out different stages in the reckoning of his life, so understanding time as duration is necessary for grasping how an individual can build up a relationship with a place over time.

¹⁸³ Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, p.85-91.

¹⁸⁴ Horrocks & Kolinsky, p.53-4; also see Wierschke, p.255-257.

¹⁸⁵ Neville, p.48.

(iv) Chapter five – From *Wonaym* to *Wohnheim*: a woman's space

The previous chapters focussed on the influence of the built environment, the community and time on an individual's sense of place. Özdamar's novel suggests a further influence that can deepen our understanding of a sense of place; that is, gender. More specifically, I will argue that a woman's experience of space, particularly of public space, is different from a man's experience. I will concentrate on public space because this is where the interaction between the *Fremde* and the *Eigene* occurs and so is more heavily contested. Furthermore, that being both a woman and a migrant affects to a greater extent this experience of space. While this experience is different from a German male and female experience, it is also different from a male and migrant experience, yet within this rich complexity there are also shared experiences. In Chapter Five I will map out this relationship between a migrant woman and space by concentrating on the lived social practices as abstracted from *Die Brücke*. As there are few female and migrant characters in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, the focus of the analysis in Chapter Five will lie on Özdamar's work.

In recent years there has been a convergence of both feminist theory and human geography in discussing space and its effects on human relationships. The focus of both approaches has been to question existing notions of human relationships, and in particular, the relationship of women to space. Using the term woman and migrant as a category for analysis presents the same problem of categorisation as mentioned previously. However, much can be gained by focussing on this category while always understanding that it is a construction for the purpose of this analysis and that the relationship is something dynamic and linked into wider and deeper networks. My intention is to map this relationship and suggest it is one interpretation, rather than to essentialise, exclude or marginalise.

The geographer, Doreen Massey, whose work was briefly outlined earlier in this chapter, has been at the forefront of critical theory dealing with gender and space. Massey, who is both delighted¹⁸⁶ and uneasy¹⁸⁷ by the belated recognition of

¹⁸⁶ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, Polity Press/Blackwell, Cambridge 1994, p.249

space as worthy of analysis, borrows Ernesto Laclau's terminology and argues "for a dynamic and politically progressive way of conceptualising the spatial" ¹⁸⁸ Her aim is to show how the way we conceive of space has concrete political outcomes, one of which is the way women use or are denied use of space. Massey sees that space is part of and also constitutes social relations ¹⁸⁹ and therefore the way space is viewed also influences the position of women in society. Massey's work is important because the conceptualisation of space is "one of the axes along which we experience and conceptualise the world." ¹⁹⁰ To explain this point she draws on the connection Lefebvre establishes between "lived practices and the symbolic meaning and significance of particular spaces and spatializations." ¹⁹¹ Assigning meaning to these particular spaces is also a process in which the discourse of gender, in terms of dichotomies, plays a major role.

A central feature of Massey's argument is to analyse the discourse of gender as it relates to space, particularly how some spaces are seen as 'male', others as 'female' and many spaces as neither. An outcome of a discourse of space based solely on dichotomies is that one concept necessarily dominates the other. In the case of space: public space is generally read as being subject to male power, while the female is relegated to private space. In order to undertake radical change in the way we conceive of and then use space, these dichotomies need to be questioned and broken down. However, such dichotomies tend to be resistant. Massey draws on the work of Nancy Jay in order to explain that the strength of this resistance lies in the fear that any alternative is threatening and would encourage disorder. ¹⁹² A great challenge for this project is that many of the dichotomies about the use of space are hidden, so that space is often seen as value-neutral or gender-neutral.

A migrant woman finds herself in a completely unfamiliar environment, so it is important to consider how these dichotomies initially emerge. A short article by the *Germanistin*, Sigrid Weigel, in a collection of essays focussed on both East and West Germany, outlines the literary-historical background of the way in which space

¹⁸⁷ Massey, p.250.

¹⁸⁸ Massey, p.250.

¹⁸⁹ Massey, p.253; see also Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*, Blackwell, Cambridge MA & Oxford UK 1994, p.224-227, 309-310.

¹⁹⁰ Massey, p.251.

¹⁹¹ Massey, p.251.

has been conceived of and gendered.¹⁹³ This historical background complements Massey's theoretical framework and focuses on the representation and the experience of the female in the city. Weigel argues that while cities are represented as female, for example, Venice is known as the *Königin der Meere*, or Athens, as the city of Athena, not Poseidon, or the negative motif linked to a city, such as 'Whore of Babylon',¹⁹⁴ but the control of space is 'male'. Weigel explains that these "Bilderreservoir für Stadtdarstellung"¹⁹⁵ neglect the crucial question of who has the social power.

An example of how the female has been traditionally represented in a public space to further enhance male-female dichotomies is the memorial statue. In 1993, Käthe Kollwitz's sculpture "Mutter mit totem Sohn" was unveiled with solemn ceremony in the *Neue Wache* in the centre of Berlin.¹⁹⁶ The symbolic use of a feminine figure embracing and surrounding a male figure as an act of consolation and condolence was installed as an act of remembrance for all victims of war and injustice. The choice of a female figure to function as a point of unity for the nation reveals some powerful contradictions about women's use of public space. Although used as a symbol of the need and power to console after horrific events, women have little input into the public discourse about the prevention of such acts. So, while this figure symbolises sacred and emotional power, it also underscores the lack of power exercised by women in a public space.

Weigel looks to the foundation stories of cities for clues to this apparent contradiction about the representation of women in and use of public space. The foundation of cities was made possible by the building of city walls. (A delicious irony exists in Kreuzberg's fate insofar as both novels under discussion were set in a time when Kreuzberg was surrounded on three sides by the Berlin Wall.) Outside the city wall was inscribed 'female', chaos, disorder and nature, while inside the city

¹⁹² Nancy Jay, "Gender and Dichotomy" in *Feminist Studies* vol.7, no.1, 1981, p.38-56; Massey, p.256.

¹⁹³ Sigrid Weigel, "Zur Weiblichkeit imaginärer Städte. Eine Forschungsskizze" in: Inge Stephan, Sigrid Weigel & Kerstin Wilhelms (Hg.), *Wem kummert's, wer spricht. Zur Literatur und Kulturgeschichte von Frauen aus Ost und West*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln/Wien 1991, p.119-127; see also Katharina von Ankum, "'Ich liebe Berlin mit einer Angst in den Knien': Weibliche Stadterfahrung in Irmgard Keuns *Das kunstseidene Mädchen*" in *The German Quarterly* vol.67 no.3, 1994, p.369-388.

¹⁹⁴ This point was suggested to me during general discussions with Dr. Olaf Reinhardt.

¹⁹⁵ Weigel, p.120.

¹⁹⁶ Silke Wenk, "Die Mutter in der Mitte Berlins: Strategien der Rekonstruktion eines Hauptstadtzentrums" in Gisela Ecker, *Kein Land in Sicht*, p.33-55.

wall was inscribed male, order, rationalism and control. Indeed, this fits neatly into Freud's declaration that the female was the enemy to the male concept of civilisation. The 'inside' females were domesticated, or tamed, and thereby politically and culturally disempowered by the male. Consequently, in much pre-modernist literature the city represents the male and civilisation. Questioning the basis of this dichotomy is one process which lays bare the male dominance in the use of public space.

However, the dichotomy of 'male to culture' and 'female to nature' is always somewhat blurry and never clearly demarcated, as Katie Trumpener shows in her critical analyses of the work of Libuše Moníková.¹⁹⁷ Trumpener draws on an influential 1974 essay by Sherry Ortner to underscore the inherent instability in this dichotomy: "for women's traditional roles [are] both a challenge to culture and society from below and a mediation between the categories of nature and culture."¹⁹⁸ In her many novels, Moníková, Czech-born German author, continually disturbed the neat categorisations of the canonic template of German literature. For example, her work was often based in the Czech and Bohemian lands, yet written in German. Also the themes and style of her writing paid homage to the folkloric 19th century Czech nationalist literature, such as Božena Němcová's *Babicka*, while also being consciously postmodern. Trumpener refers to the theme of socialisation of children to investigate Ortner's point about the instability in our conception of traditional roles.¹⁹⁹ In pre-First World War Austria-Hungary older village females cared and reared younger children as nannies and communicated the oral traditions of the village, the world outside the city walls. Formal education focussing on a rational and indifferent bureaucratic system in the hands of males only occurred later. Trumpener here is showing how the dominant discourse of the rational male is constantly undermined through memory, yet this memory is also constantly subjugated and rendered inferior.

However, in 20th century literature, the disorder and chaos of outside is now

¹⁹⁷ Katie Trumpener, "Is Female to Nation as Nature is to Culture? Božena Němcová, Libuše Moníková, and the Female Folkloric" in: Jankowsky & Love, p.99-118.

¹⁹⁸ Trumpener, p.103; see Sherry B.Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" in: Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo & Louise Lamphere (eds.), *Woman, Culture and Society*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1974, p.67-87.

¹⁹⁹ Trumpener, p.102-104.

located in the city or *Großstadt*,²⁰⁰ for example, Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz*. The role of women is then categorised as disturbing, along with other minority groups, such as 'workers', 'foreigners' and 'children'. Elizabeth Wilson's landmark work on the female and the city, *The Sphinx in the City*,²⁰¹ reveals that contemporary city culture is encoded as an area of male control. However, this control is not absolute, according to Wilson,²⁰² because women use city space to pose questions of patriarchal social control and form strategic alliances with other marginalised groups – any such activity is therefore profoundly disturbing to the dominant forces. In this move to chaos inside the city, previous "Lebensart und-formen"²⁰³ have broken down, and women are able to see the city as liberating. Massey and Liz Bondi²⁰⁴ argue that breaking down dichotomies allows new forms of behaviour and cultural expression to emerge. In effect, women act to reclaim space and, consequently, build a new relationship with it.

This new way of seeing the city, however, needs to also deal with the inscription of the city as a female body. For example, Walter Benjamin uses the archetypal image of the female body to describe the facades and decorations on walls, doorways and passages.²⁰⁵ This type of inscription can illuminate the city as a living organism with which it is easier to build a relationship, but it is also an objectification of the female, similar to the representations mentioned above of the whole city as female. Benjamin's form of mapping hitherto unknown areas, such as passages and arcades in the shadow or womb of more outwardly dominating structures, can also be seen as a further means of conquest by the male. In this way, activity occurring in these areas also becomes subject to male order and control.

So, a new form of mapping is required, mapping which aims to empower, rather than disempower. The need for this new type of mapping takes us back to cultural mapping discussed earlier in this chapter. This cultural mapping of the

²⁰⁰ Weigel, S.124.

²⁰¹ Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban life, the Control of Disorder, and Women*, Virago, London 1991.

²⁰² Wilson, p. 87, 157, quoted in Doreen Massey, p. 258.

²⁰³ Weigel, p.126.

²⁰⁴ Massey, p.255-260; Liz Bondi, "Gender, Class and Urban Space: Public and Private Space in Contemporary Urban Landscapes" in *Urban Geography* vol.19, no.2, 1998, p.160-185,161-166.

²⁰⁵ See Sigrid Weigel, "Passagen und Spuren des Leib- und Bildraums in Benjamins Schriften" in Weigel, *Leib- und Bildraum. Lektüren nach Benjamin*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln/Weimar 1992, p.49-64.

female presence would allow new voices and patterns of behaviour to emerge, particularly for migrant women who may experience more cultural freedom in the diaspora. The geographer, Shirley Ardener, proposes a social map to investigate new ground rules for social interaction and suggests that this new form of mapping would be based on social relationships²⁰⁶, which in turn would emphasise that public spaces have many different and contradictory meanings. By using this kind of mapping Ardener can focus on the social context and see how power shifts in the culturally determined social roles which are generated by societies to determine the limits or boundaries of behaviour.²⁰⁷ Therefore, important questions arise from this mapping: how is space used and who controls how space is used.

Gill Valentine, the geographer and feminist theorist, notes that mapping can also be a useful process in locating how a space is created or designed for control.²⁰⁸ Valentine draws on the dichotomy of adult/child to locate this exercise of control which effectively demarcates boundaries for who can use an area and how it is to be used. Control can be exercised in terms of the 'stranger danger' campaigns in which the racialised male is seen as asserting power over this space. Even if this power is exercised only in perception or apprehension, it effectively maps these spaces as dangerous. For females this sense of danger is the flip side of perceiving the city as liberating. Space, in this way, can also be demarcated according to gender, as well as class, ethnicity, ability, yet mapping this exclusion is complex. A place can be perceived as safe, familiar and comfortable by day, but can be quite unfamiliar, shadowy and fearful by night. Many urban shopping areas reveal this dualism; the activities that take place as part of shopping can only occur during certain times, and different kinds of relationships emerge in this process. For the migrant women in *Die Brücke* shopping becomes spatialised as a place of fear, frustration, and humiliation, and occasionally solidarity and triumph.

Liz Bondi, a geographer who undertakes extensive qualitative research about perceptions of gendered urban areas, takes up this point and shows how certain types

²⁰⁶ Shirley Ardener, "Ground Rules and Social Maps for Women: An Introduction" in Ardener (ed.) *Women and Space. Ground Rules and Social Maps*, Croom Helm, London 1981, p.11-34.

²⁰⁷ Ardener, p.11-15.

²⁰⁸ Gill Valentine, "Children Should Be Seen and Not Heard: The Production and Transgression of Adults' Public Space" in *Urban Geography* vol.17, no.3, 1996, p.205-220.

of activities are privileged over others.²⁰⁹ Shopping as consumption is linked to the female and is seen to occupy a space of less value, than the space of production, which is linked to the male.²¹⁰ Bondi's fundamental concern is to show that dichotomies are better understood as constructs of ideologies, rather than as an expression of what is really happening in this space. Bondi highlights that class is an essential element to an analysis of change in the use of space. For example, from earliest planning stages suburbs were seen as spaces for the middle class female. An accompanying development appears to be that the 'feminisation' (and, I would add, 'migrantisation') of a public space is often linked to a perceived decline in public space, which reinforces the comment above that public space is not gender-neutral, but masculine.²¹¹

An outcome of this understanding, is that any demand for equal access to the public sphere would require women to become more like men, particularly in terms of behaviour.²¹² However, Bondi's suggestion of an alternative form of mapping shows that the actual situation is more subtle. Different urban localities create different patterns of behaviour: where women show a high degree of familiarity with the area, as well as a feeling that the space is being looked after, their behaviour in these areas is more emancipatory. The benefit of Bondi's approach is that she can see how women reinterpret this space and the factors which influence their reinterpretation. A result of this work is that space can be seen as contestable and ambiguous, and therefore "tendencies already operating" can be observed more readily which in turn will hasten the demise of dichotomies based on domination.²¹³

This focus on analysing what is already happening is taken up by Linda McDowell's 'performative' approach.²¹⁴ McDowell's poststructural framework of analysis is embedded in effecting change in the way space is conceived of and used. She makes very clear links between theorising space and the political outcomes: for

²⁰⁹ Liz Bondi, "Gender, Class and Urban Space", p.161, 164-165.

²¹⁰ Liz Bondi and Mona Domosh, "On the Contours of Public Space: A Tale of Three Women" in: *Antipode* vol. 30, no. 3, 1998, p.270-89, 285.

²¹¹ Bondi and Domosh, p.285.

²¹² Bondi, "Gender, Class and Urban Space", p.164.

²¹³ Bondi, p.166.

²¹⁴ Linda McDowell, "Spatializing Feminism. Geographic Perspectives" in Nancy Duncan (ed.) *Bodyspace. destabilizing geographies of gender and sexuality*, Routledge, London/New York 1996; also see Bondi, "Gender, Class and Urban Space", p.166.

her “spatial patterns are the outcome of social processes.”²¹⁵ This link is crucial to understanding how migrant women act in a new space because the way they act is conditioned by the community and society in which they live. The appearance of migrant women in the streets of Berlin reveals the need to draw different social maps, which take into account their participation, rather than othering these women and the space they occupy.

However, these maps need to acknowledge that initial experiences of urban city spaces are confronting and filled with fear. As will be shown in Chapter Five, the access of migrant women to public space is even more circumscribed than for German women. Mirjana Morokvasic²¹⁶ argues that patriarchal policies enacted by home governments in the home country dictate when and how women can travel and work in the host country. Their labour conditions are poor, sometimes informally arranged as for domestic workers, and result in their social isolation. They suffer two-fold: they are victimised as women in the host society, and also victimised as migrants. Furthermore, linking these two types of victimisation can also lead to an assumption that it is their “own cultural heritage”,²¹⁷ and therefore they are seen as partly to blame for their situation. According to Morokvasic this becomes an impulse for writing. In the act of writing these migrant women are able to make sense of and reinterpret their situation. This initial form of performance allows them to inscribe the new space in which they live with different kinds of meanings, and in turn, new relationships can be created. Going beyond the traditional dichotomies noted in the discussion above is one of the results of writing, and as in *Die Brücke*, leads us to see that gender has a crucial influence on an individual’s sense of place.

So, in migration the social roles are open to redefinition. The city of Berlin functions as a space of liberation, a space of learning, as a space of group formation, of work and leisure, and of *Heimweh* and feeling out of place. For the women this redefinition of social roles as a result of migration occurs in a situation that compels the formation of new types of relationships, which in turn also lay out possible paths

²¹⁵ McDowell, p.29.

²¹⁶ Mirjana Morokvasic, “Fortress Europe and Migrant Women” in *Feminist Review* vol. 39, Winter 1991, p.69-84, 71-72, quoted in Gisela Brinker-Gabler & Sidonie Smith (eds.) *Writing New Identities. Gender, Nation, and Immigration in Contemporary Europe*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis/London 1997, “Introduction”, p.15-16.

²¹⁷ Morokvasic, p.79, quoted in Brinker-Gabler & Smith, p.16.

to adulthood, different from their male counterparts, and from their experience in Turkey. Through the creation of these new types of action and relationships individuals are able to develop a profound sense of place.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has set up a framework of analysis, which draws on many different academic disciplines. These academic disciplines provide a method of analysis, which sheds further light on the literary interpretation of these novels.

The focus of this work lies on the concept of a sense of place, which is defined as a sense of belonging, and of feeling at home. In both novels there are many manifestations of a sense of place. Crucial to this argument is acknowledging that a sense of place is subjective, so the focus lies on the individual experience, particularly as mediated through four factors that form the basis of the following chapters: the built environment, the community, time and gender.

These four factors are connected because they are all significant influences on a person's sense of place. As noted previously, a sense of place emerges from the idea and practice of relationships between people, place and community. The analysis of the texts under discussion in this dissertation will reveal how and why such relationships are constructed, and further the ability and need for these relationships to change and adapt, particularly during, and as a result of, migration.

Mapping out a migrant space

Introduction

The Australian historian, Peter Read, coined the term ‘lost place’ to describe the emotional loss to a person caused by the physical loss of objects.¹ Read focuses on the way a change in landscape, such as buildings, trees, graves, parks can make a ‘space’ feel unknown and lacking. A fundamental part of Read’s idea is that human beings invest meaning in the objects in the built environment, and thereby imbue a space with meaning. Read’s point is that often only in the ‘loss’ of this object does this meaning become palpable, felt rather than observed.

This loss of meaning then implies mutability in the way a space is perceived and experienced. Drawing on the theories of space and the spatiality of social relations discussed in Chapter One, I will now turn to the objects that exist in this space; in this case the objects in the built environment of Berlin as they appear in the two novels of Ören and Özdamar. These objects function as ‘landmarks’: not only are they points of orientation, but also, according to Paul Evans, a writer on the interaction between human society and the environment, landmarks are “holders of cultural resources.”² Evans here refers specifically to the oak trees of England, but according to the theories of cultural mapping set out in Chapter One, streets, buildings, shops, trains, bridges may function in a similar way.

In this chapter I will draw on a number of passages from both Aras Ören’s *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* and Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*. I will provide a full transcription of one of these passages from *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*. This passage occurs towards the end of the novel and is a turning point in the narrator’s recognition of his relationship to this space. As the narrator walks, he notes the objects, such as buildings, shop windows and products for sale, and people who make up this scene. This passage then forms a basis for discussion in this chapter, as well as in the following chapter, ‘Mapping out a migrant community.’

¹ Peter Read, *Returning to Nothing. The Meaning of Lost Places*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/Sydney 1996.

² Paul Evans, ‘Landmarks of the Future’, in *The Guardian Weekly* 7th November 1997, p.30.

Aras Ören's *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*³

Ich stieg an der Möckernbrücke in die Linie 1, Richtung Schlesisches Tor, um. Es war kurz vor sechs Uhr.

Auf dem Weg zum Hochzeitssaal in der Oranienstraße, der auf der Einladung angegeben war, fiel mir auf, daß dieser Stadtteil eine andere Atmosphäre hatte, eine vertraute Stimmung, die kein [284] Gefühl der Fremdheit aufkommen läßt. In den Verlauf der Straßen, die zerfallenden alten, sowie die monströsen neuen Gebäude, in die gesamte Architektur, die der unsrigen so wenig ähnelt, ist die Vertrautheit eingeflossen. Dieses heruntergekommene Viertel erlebt vielleicht so drastisch wie noch nie zuvor in seiner Geschichte den Prozeß einer grundlegenden Umwälzung. Gleich, als ich von der U-Bahn hoch kam, lief ich auf einen mit einer Plane überdeckten Gemüsestand zu, der mit Gaslampen schwach erleuchtet wurde. Ein jüngerer Verkäufer rief – halb türkisch, halb deutsch, obwohl die Kundschaft fast ausschließlich aus türkischen Männern, die, mit Taschen in den Händen, von der Arbeit heimkamen, und türkischen Frauen, die bunte Kopftücher trugen, bestand: “muza gel, muza gel, muza auf zu den Bananen, Bananen, es ist Abend, alles billig heute, bugün herşey ucuz, akşam pazar...” Ich blieb stehen und schaute eine Weile zu. Es kam mir vor, als würde ich alle von irgendwoher kennen, aber ich erkannte niemanden.

Durch die Adalbertstraße schlendernd, kam ich an einer Reihe türkischer Geschäfte vorbei. Mir war, als wachte ich aus einem jahrelangen Schlaf auf. Ich bekam Lust, in die Läden zu gehen und die Waren zu betasten. Alles war vertrauenserweckend, am richtigen Platz, all dieser Krimskrams, dieser Schnickschnack, diese Plastiksachen. Mir kamen sie nicht einmal mehr kitschig vor. Meine ganze Seele wurde von einer tiefen Begeisterung ergriffen.

Als ich in die Oranienstraße einbog, schoß mir blitzartig ein Traum durch den Kopf, den ich vor geraumer Zeit geträumt hatte:

Ich bin mit dem Auto ins Meer gestürzt, mein Kopf ist weit zurückgekippt, wodurch das Rückfenster in mein Blickfeld kommt. Der Wagen schlingert leicht, wie im Strom hin- und herschwebende Algen. Das Meer ist völlig dunkel, erstreckt sich in eine beängstigende Endlosigkeit. Aber ich bin ganz ruhig, öffne [285] die Tür, wobei ich keinen Widerstand spüre, gelange leicht hindurch, tauche auf und rette mich. Ich schaue mich um, es ist niemand zu sehen, der mir helfen könnte. Ich habe ziemlich viel Wasser geschluckt. Mein Bauch ist angeschwollen und gluckert. Ich mache einen Handstand, worauf das Wasser aus mir heraussprudelt. Jetzt fühle ich mich sehr erleichtert.

³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.283-287.

Ich kam an einem türkischen Süßwarenladen vorbei. Im Schaufenster lagen Bleche voller Baklava, Revani, Tulumba. Vor der Tür des Ladens traf ich auf ein Mädchen und einen Jungen. Der Junge spielte auf einer Balaleika eine einfache, bekannte Melodie, die an die alten, ihr Los beklagenden Muschiken von der Wolga erinnerte. Er sah auch so verwahrlost wie ein Muschik aus, Haare und Bart zerzaust, nur seine trüben Augen waren zu sehen. Konzentriert, flink und rhythmisch schlug seine Hand, in der er ein Plektron hielt, das Instrument, so daß es aussah, als zappelte ein flügelschlagender Vogel in den Saiten. Sie hatten eine Schachtel vor sich gestellt, in der – verloren und fern – ein paar gelbe Zehn-Pfennig-Münzen lagen. Das Mädchen stand hinter dem Jungen und drehte sich eine Zigarette. Ich glaubte es zu kennen. Da, siehst du, auch es erkennt mich wieder. Es schaute mich an, das bedeutet noch nicht viel, aber dieser Blick spricht eine stumme Sprache, die mir sagt, daß es mich kennt. Da ist keine Fremdheit der allerersten Begegnung, sondern die weiche Nähe derer, die sich bereits kennen... Nein, wir kennen uns doch nicht. Es sieht nur aus wie eine frühere Bekannte von mir, als wir noch jung waren, das ist alles, darum überkam mich dieses Gefühl, es zu kennen. Nein, ich will nun weder Personen begegnen, die ich von früher her kenne, noch will ich irgendeine Beziehung zu ihnen aufrechterhalten. Wenn es in meiner Hand läge, würde ich mein altes Leben wie eine Tätowierung von meinem Körper schaben, es auswischen und auslöschen, auch wenn der Schmerz in meinem Fleisch zu spüren wäre. Dieser Gang zur Hochzeit ist der Anfang eines Endes und der Beginn eines Anfangs. Ich warf [286] ein Fünf-Mark-Stück in die Schachtel. Das Mädchen starrte mich erstaunt an, der Junge streckte den Kopf noch etwas weiter vor und schlug noch schneller über die Saiten, so, als lausche er dem eigenen Spiel, jetzt war seine Hand nicht mehr wie der Flügelschlag eines Vogels, sondern wie der einer ganzen Vogelschar... Ich schaute noch einmal in das Gesicht des Mädchens. Es sagte mir nichts mehr. Die schmutzig verklebten Haare des Jungen und sein zerzauster Bart erinnerten mich an eine Spinne, eine langbeinige, haarige Spinne, die, von der Decke herab, plötzlich in mein Bett fiel. Vorsichtig faltete ich das Bettlaken zusammen und schüttelte es am Fenster aus. Das Fünf-Mark-Stück strahlte zwischen den gelben Zehn-Pfennig-Stücken ein ganz anderes Licht aus. Ich entfernte mich langsam, während ich leise die Melodie piffte, die der Junge spielte. Während ich mich entfernte schnappte sich das Mädchen das Fünf-Mark-Stück und stürzte in den Süßwarenladen. Ich ging rascher, entfernte mich eilig.

Der Hochzeitssaal mußte dort drüben sein. Da kamen auch schon andere Gäste, alle herausgeputzt.

Ich hoffte lachenden, vergnügten und glücklichen Menschen zu begegnen, einer anderen Welt, einer anderen Geräumigkeit, einer Anmut und Weite, die jeden umfinge, der Summe des Glücks, von dem sich jeder einen Anteil verspricht. Freude, Fröhlichkeit, fern aller Sorgen...

Ich ging durch ein Hoftor, über dem in grellroter Neonschrift "Aile Düğün Salonu" und ein Neonpfeil, der sich zackenförmig nach unten wand, prangten. Im Hof roch es nach Feuchtigkeit und Urin. Genau in der Mitte stand eine verdorrte Roßkastanie, in deren Ästen bunte Lichterketten hingen. Diese Szene irritierte mich, aber die anderen Gäste, die mit mir gekommen waren, bemerkten mein Zögern nicht. Wir gingen auf die Tür des Saals, am anderen Ende des Hofes, zu. Zu beiden Seiten des Eingangs hingen beleuchtete Schaukästen. In einem war den Worten "Aile Düğün Salonu", welche in geschwungenen großen Buchstaben, die [287] an die vertrauenerweckende alte Schrift erinnerten, geschrieben waren und suggerierten, daß die Familien wirklich bedenkenlos kommen könnten, um zu feiern, das Adjektiv "sauber" hinzugefügt. Dann folgte eine Selbstdarstellung des Salons.

Sie können hier jederzeit unbesorgt mit ihrer Familie feiern. Unser Lokal steht ihnen mit reichhaltigen Tanz-, Saz-, Jazz-, und Show-Programmen zu Diensten./ Jeden Sonntag nachmittag ab 15.00 Uhr Matinee nur für Frauen./ Kommen Sie, sehen Sie und urteilen Sie selbst!/ Empfehlen Sie uns auch Ihren Bekannten!/ Gute Nachrichten! Jetzt Familienvideovorstellung auch während der Woche.

Darunter klebte ein gedruckter Handzettel:

Die Möbel unserer in die Türkei zurückkehrenden Landsleute werden, mit einer Garantie unserer Firma, bis an ihren Wohnort in der Türkei geliefert. Für die bei uns gekauften Radios, Fernseher, HiFi-Anlagen, Wasch- und Geschirrspülmaschinen, Nähmaschinen, Knopflochmaschinen und Kühlschränke gelten Exportpreise. Mehrwertsteuer wird zurückerstattet.

Während ich die anderen Anzeigen überflog, waren die Gäste, die mit mir angekommen waren, schon längst hineingegangen. Aber auch der andere Schaukasten zog meine Aufmerksamkeit auf sich. Unter Anzeigen wie *Krämerladen und Transporte mit Lastzügen in Stahlcontaineranhängern/ Orgel, Klavier, Synthesizer – Marke Steinway & son's...* hing auch ein politisches Plakat: Auf rotem Grund war ein weißer Halbmond mit Stern und ein strammstehender Soldat zu sehen, der ein Gewehr mit aufgeflepptem Bajonett präsentierte.

Die Nationalisten unterstützen alle Maßnahmen, die dem Schutz des Vaterlandes dienen!

Darunter in Türkisch:

Milliyetçiler vatanı koruyacak tedbirlerin yanındadır!

Das Plakat mußte schon längere Zeit hier hängen, denn das Papier war bereits vergilbt und die Farben ausgebleichen. Wie auch immer, es war nicht abgehängt worden, mit Reißzwecken [288] waren hier und da kleine Anzeigen angeheftet worden.

Von deutschen Behörden genehmigt, mit den modernsten medizinischen Methoden: schmerzlose ambulante Beschneidungen, ohne auch nur einen tropfen Blut zu vergießen. FACHMÄNNISCHER BESCHNEIDER...

Unser Fleisch wird nach islamischem Ritus von moslemischen Metzgern geschächtet. Alle Lebensmittel in unserem Geschäft sind nach islamischen Gesetzen rein...

Ich war neugierig hierhergekommen, den Bedingungen, die mich verstört hatten, entfliehend, in der Hoffnung, eine Tradition widerzufinden, die vor mir entstanden war und nun außerhalb meines Lebenskreises weiterexistierte. War ich etwa nur verwirrt? Klopfte ich an einer falschen Tür?

A first comment about this passage is its function as a guidebook. A guidebook is a handy and efficient way in which to begin to recognise various objects or structures and learn about their broader social and historical context. There are many different types of guidebooks, some superficial overviews, some deeper explorations of one topic, yet they all share a common concern for detail. Facts, figures, names and dates are given in order for one building or statue to stand out from all the other objects. Ören attempts something similar in this novel. The narrator takes us on a journey through ‘his’ Kreuzberg. All senses are engaged as the narrator describes the objects that help him make sense of this space.

At the very beginning of this passage, a sense of place is called to mind by the author’s use of the phrase “eine vertraute Stimmung”⁴ to describe that special atmosphere that the narrator feels exists in this *Stadtteil*. This feeling of confidence, ease, being at home, and having knowledge, is here related to an urban area – and not just any part of the city, but a particular part of Berlin, which is easily identifiable both through the specific place names, and directly mentioned, as Kreuzberg. Kreuzberg is identified through the landmarks of the U-Bahn stations, Möckernbrücke, Schlesisches Tor, and the streets Oranienstraße and Adalbertstraße. These names themselves link the narrator into a long tradition because they carry deep and overlayed social and historical meanings. These stations and street names

⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.283.

in this district, in the Cold War or West Berlin period known as *SO 36*, will be analysed in greater depth later.

Vertrautheit is an important concept for exploring the relationship between the narrator and this built environment. Yet, as he explains, this feeling of *Vertrautheit* “fiel [ihm] auf”. Capturing or searching for this feeling was not his reason for being in this space, rather it just occurred to him as he was on his way to somewhere else. Indeed, the narrator is on his way to a wedding reception to which he had been invited only a few days before. The feelings of deep commitment expressed in this reception are of course quite the opposite of *einfallen*. Furthermore *einfallen* conveys a feeling that all the events that have occurred to push him in this direction are random, such as the chance meetings that occur throughout the novel. However, a feeling of *Vertrautheit* is, according to my thesis, not something that occurs solely by chance. It is created through a sustained commitment to actively imbue the built environment with meaning, for example, by the telling of stories about this place. By physically walking through the streets that he knew well when he lived here previously, the narrator begins to take notice of these buildings and subsequently recognises and reinterprets the relationship he has with them.

The word ‘vertraut’, or a variation, occurs often in this passage. The buildings themselves, both the “zerfallenen, alten” as well as the “monströsen, neuen”, are linked to this *Vertrautheit*. The author uses the term “einfließen” to describe the connection between the narrator and these buildings. These terms convey much about this connection: it is active, fluid and moves akin to water, and that both the character and buildings transform each other. Further on, everything he sees becomes “vertrauenserweckend.”⁵ These words reveal a joy in reconnecting to a space, and finding it now as he left it many years ago when he moved out of this area: “... als wachte ich aus einem jahrelangen Schlaf auf.”⁶ This image conjures up folkloric representations of ‘Sleeping Beauty’ and ‘Rumpelstilzchen’ where wisdom and love can be gained through the perspective created by time. Sleep conveys restfulness, and a space outside the bounds of the physical world, a world with magical powers of transformation. It can also imply that everything that happened in between for the narrator was merely a dream and now he is back where he started. On the other hand, he also finds himself in a position to reassess the events of this previous life having

⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p. 285.

⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p. 285.

acquired the benefit of hindsight. Accordingly, there is an acceptance that the self has changed.

Vertrautheit and its related terms establish a framework for all the analysis of landmarks and objects in this built environment that follows in this chapter. The narrator conducts a narrative that occurs internally through memories triggered by those outside objects. He walks - another form of journey to be discussed in the next chapter - through a space that is thoroughly familiar and attempts to make sense of this feeling of *Vertrautheit* after an absence of so many years. There are four features of this built environment in this text which influence a sense of place. My analysis of them is based on two interrelated questions: What role does this space play in the history of human activity in this area? How does this human activity contribute to a feeling of connection between humans and the built environment?

1. Kotbusser Tor

As mentioned above, the streets named Oranienstraße and Adalbertstraße can be located on a Berlin *Stadtplan*, and these streets point the reader to Kotbusser Tor U-Bahnhof. Here the narrator begins his journey by foot. Placing the narrator here is quite deliberate. Arriving by train and walking on foot situates the narrator in a public space where he is surrounded by people and he has time to pause and observe the people and objects in the square surrounding the station. This space has many special and overlapping meanings that lead to a better understanding of the work as a literary text. The short journey by foot here suggests that the narrator is on a search that will have profound implications for how an individual perceives the connection with the surrounding environment.

There are some clues given by Ören in the opening paragraphs of this passage about the physical appearance of the square around Kotbusser Tor. A mixture of old and new buildings in markedly different condition and style line the streets. The narrator makes the acute observation that this architecture, a term which in his eyes is too grand, bears little similarity to 'ours.' 'Ours' is a possessive term and denotes some form of ownership, and here alludes to a connection to somewhere else. The preceding events in the novel suggests strongly that 'ours' here means Turkey, yet as the narrator walks on, he describes an interior architecture that has been 'Turkified'.

The observations of the narrator hint at deeper knowledge of this space, and effectively locates this space in history:

Dieses heruntergekommene Viertel erlebt vielleicht so drastisch wie noch nie zuvor in seiner Geschichte den Prozeß einer grundlegenden Umwälzung.⁷

Ören here sets up a description of the whole *Bezirk*: a poor, dilapidated area which is undergoing fundamental transformation in two forms: the built environment and the community living here. Curiously, as he walks further, the narrator discovers streets full of life, in contrast to the impression conveyed by the description as a “heruntergekommenes Viertel.” However, to appreciate this setting fully, the history of this *Viertel* needs to be laid out. This information concerns social and historical events lying outside the text, but they enhance understanding of the text.

The area around Kotbusser Tor is known colloquially as ‘das kleine Istanbul’. This marginalised “heruntergekommenes” district is the heart of Turkish Berlin. Other districts in Berlin, such as Wedding and Neukölln, which share a similar history to Kreuzberg, also have a strong and distinctive Turkish community, yet SO 36 is acknowledged as the heart. (The role of this community in the “grundlegende Umwälzung” will be discussed in Chapter Three.)

However, the Turkish presence, along with that of other foreigners is only the latest layering of history. Kreuzberg has often played the role of the gateway, the edge or the margin. The underground (which in this part of Berlin lies overground) known infamously as *Linie 1* is constructed on top of a previous city wall originally built in 1734. The names ‘Kotbusser Tor’ and ‘Schlesisches Tor’ indicate the site of customs barriers or gates through which roads led out to and from the town of Cottbus, and the province of Silesia. The tradition of this area as a centre of commerce, trading of goods, exchange of knowledge and information, as well as the immigration of people, developed from this point.

The street names used deliberately by Ören also reveal a similar multilayering of history. Both streets named, Adalbertstraße and Oranienstraße, reveal an aristocratic heritage. Indeed, in Kreuzberg many of the streets are named after military and aristocratic figures prominent in 19th century German history, and also reflect the presence of many military barracks in this area until the First World War.

The diplomatic link is found in the name *Oranien* referring to the rulers of the Orange province of the Netherlands, who sought political protection and economic favour with the rulers of Prussia and Brandenburg. The town of Oranienburg lying to the north of Berlin also derives its name and prestige from this time. A further layer of history is revealed in the location of a Nazi concentration camp in Oranienburg, thus ensuring a bitter and enduring connection. These names suggest that there have been many “grundlegende Umwälzungen” in this part of Berlin, which are also connected to events outside Kreuzberg.

The buildings the narrator describes need further explanation. The layering of history and the many transformations are evident in their structure. As in much of 19th century Berlin, the effects of industrialisation in Kreuzberg were felt in terms of an increasing population and poor quality housing. The Hobrecht Plan of 1862 had a major influence on the built environment around Kotbusser Tor. Building on the Lenné Plan of a few decades earlier, the Köpenicker Feld was divided into blocks for residential quarters along street axes with transportation links such as roads, canals and railways. However, the filling in of these blocks with residential, educational and small industrial and commercial buildings was left in the hands of private speculators and builders. This decision had marked consequences for the streetscape that Ören and Özdamar were later to describe. Even the results of bombings in the Second World War have not diminished the high person-building ratios of this area where five-storey buildings known as *Mietskasernen* are divided into small rooms, with tiny courtyards, leaving little space for light, private space or ventilation. On the other hand, when the Berlin Wall was built ‘around’ Kreuzberg in 1961 these buildings became inexpensive owing to their decrepit condition. Although uncomfortable and unhealthy, these buildings became rapidly populated with the first generation of *Gastarbeiter*.

The building of the Görlitzer Bahnhof in 1865 played a significant role in the built environment of Kreuzberg. Görlitzer Bahnhof is located one station to the west from where the narrator alights at Kotbusser Tor. (The goods and long distance station suffered serious damage in the Second World War – now there is a huge park on this site, which through a mixture of civic pride and local activism has become a focus of family and community gatherings.) The building of the Görlitzer Bahnhof is

⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.284

significant because it acted as a focal point for immigration into Kreuzberg and Berlin. The buildings around this station reflected its role as the point of disembarkation into a new and unknown life. To house this influx of people (over 108,000 people settled in Berlin in 1871-72) barracks were constructed on the spot where the narrator stands. So, this area has a long history as the space where the memories of 'home' are confronted with a new cultural environment.

The fundamental transformation noted by the narrator is built on a history of change, especially that which occurred from the 1950s to the 1970s. In this period the condition of these buildings had declined to such a point that a 1979 study found that 15,000 apartments (about two-thirds of building stock) in Kreuzberg were "dringend erneuerungsbedürftig".⁸ The plans from local and state government officials, banks and building construction companies foresaw a *Kahlschlagsanierung*, not unlike similar soulless redevelopments in European, US and Australian cities, where complete neighbourhoods of old building stocks would be demolished and replaced by larger and sterile new blocks serviced by freeways. Here Peter Read's argument that the loss of a physical structure causes a corresponding emotional loss is relevant because the destruction of these buildings, first undertaken in the late 1960s in the immediate surroundings of Kotbusser Tor, destroyed the physical space inhabited by the community that lived here.

However, this form of transformation was countered by a different form of *Stadterneuerung*. Groups of local community activists, initiated by local religious leaders, formed networks to exchange information. With the help of direct action from idealistic young German *Hausbesetzer*, a new program called *Strategien für Kreuzberg* was agreed between government and community groups. In this new set of planning strategies of the late 1970s, involving the *Internationale-Bau-Ausstellung*, community groups had substantial input into the design and construction of their living environments. These different visions and plans for the renovation and rejuvenation of the physical environment reflect quite different conceptions of how space is used. In this sense, Kreuzberg can be considered to be a contested terrain. As the visions of various groups and individuals clash, the concept of the spatial is seen as vital to each group trying to secure the social, political and economic outcomes

⁸ Raimund Thörnig, "Die Ausgangssituation" in Verein SO 36 (Hg.), ...*außer man tut es! Kreuzberg Abgeschrieben Aufgestanden*, Oktoberdruck, Berlin 1990, p.28.

they see as desirable. In turn, the social relations taking place in this space are determined by the playing out of these different visions.

Consequently, this history of spatial transformation affects the connection between individuals and the space they inhabit by eliciting an emotional response based on a memory of how things once were or may have been. The narrator lived in this area when he first arrived as a *Gastarbeiter* and the appearance of the buildings and their relationship to the streets is etched in his memory. In the transformation he recognises a transformation in himself. Yet in this transformation he appears to be an outsider or an observer, rather than a participant. Moreover, he is an outsider but with insider knowledge. This knowledge consists of being able to measure the value of the built environment to an individual's sense of place and how this can be changed when the built environment is changed:

Der Wert der Wohnungen im Hinblick auf das, was man
'Beheimatung' nennt, steigt in dem Maße, wie sie eingebettet in
Nachbarschaftsbezüge. Die Fensterfronten dieser Häuser verbinden
Innen und Aussen. Die Kreuzung und die Strassen sind durchgehend
und vielfältig belebt; Voraussetzung zu dieser differenzierten
Lebendigkeit ist die hohe Bebauungsdichte, die enge Mischung von
Wohnen und Gewerbe, die dementsprechend hohe Zahl kleiner
Geschäfte, die Konstanz der Bevölkerung und die daraus
resultierende relativ geringe Anonymität; wer aus dem Fenster schaut,
sieht immer etwas, sieht Bekanntes und Neues.⁹

Klaus Duntze, pastor of the Emmauskirche in Lausitzerplatz, one of the community activists, here provides examples of this fundamental connection between the built environment and the people in this community. The architectural design of the buildings creates a short physical distance between people. Daily interactions are, therefore, more intense, particularly as residential and commercial premises are neighbours. Life, then, is localised as these buildings fulfil many different functions, not just economic activity, but also providing a sense of proximity to others leading to a form of *Vertrautheit*. However, as noted above, such proximity can also lead to vitriolic debate about how this space can be used, and so even the smallest spaces can become contested terrain.

⁹ Klaus Duntze, "Die Bewohner des Stadtteils – 1977" in Verein SO 36, p.33.

2. Retail shops

Klaus Duntze's *Plädoyer* for Kreuzberg also underlines a second element of the built environment that can be drawn from this passage from *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*. These buildings also function as commercial or retail premises. As the narrator strolls ("schlendern") down Adalbertstraße, he observes a row of Turkish *Geschäfte*. The word "schlendern" indicates a relaxed feeling connected to a form of *Vertrautheit*. This attitude separates him from the daily pressure experienced by the people hurrying home from work laden with shopping and more home tasks to complete. This perspective or distance also allows him to observe the shopfront in detail.

In this passage, three types of retail shops or *Geschäfte* are mentioned: the *Gemüsestand* in the open square, the shop selling "Krimskrams" and the Turkish sweets shop. The *Gemüsestand*, selling fresh fruit and vegetables, is described in terms of sound, colour and form. At the beginning of this passage the narrator notes the time as about 6 o'clock on a November evening; the gas lamps provide only dim light and this scene conveys the early darkness and cold of this time of year in Berlin. However, the energy of the young man selling fruit and vegetables, the colour and vital appearance of the produce, the colourful headscarves of the women customers, and the urgency of the language (previously described as a "türkisch-deutsch Kauderwelsch"¹⁰) draw the attention of the narrator. The style of the narration suggests that these people, described as predominantly Turkish, and the products they buy, have established a presence and fit in with this built environment.

Next it is necessary to place this scene into a historical setting. The young man speaks German and Turkish and interchanges them. He can be located in the 'Second Generation' of Turkish migrants and he has command of and gives equal respect to each language. His use of language and behaviour is not seen as unusual. Also the products he sells include bananas, a fruit which cannot be grown in Germany owing to the climate and seen as one of luxury until relatively recently. Bananas, with their bright colours and high sugar content, present a great contrast to the darkening

¹⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.283.

evening and the coming of winter. Like many other fruits from Mediterranean and Equatorial regions, to northern Europeans they also represent the warmth and ease of summer, as well as the more sensuous life of the exoticised tropics; indeed, bananas represent something quite ‘other’ and not-European. The regular appearance of fruit such as bananas and pineapples is linked to the *Wirtschaftswunder* experienced in West Germany in the 1950s and 1960s. This ‘economic miracle’ is unthinkable without the *Gastarbeiter* who undertook all the dirty jobs and created a base for the innovative production methods and export-oriented economy that later flourished.

The appearance of these men and women in the Kotbusser Tor square is also important for understanding the historical setting of this space. The women wear headscarves of different colours that illuminate the scene. Headscarves of this sort signify a form of ‘Turkish’ culture, or what is seen as linked to Islamic and Turkish culture. The wearing of headscarves has prompted intense debate in the last decade, particularly in France and Germany. Generally this debate has focussed on the intersection of gender and power relations with the meaning of culture.¹¹ Yet the presence of women wearing headscarves is accepted in this setting, and belongs as much to this setting as the men returning home from work laden with shopping bags. Language too belongs to this setting. The ingenious mixing of Turkish and German which occurs in Berlin demands greater attention than can be given here. My intention is merely to highlight that this “türkisch-deutsch Kauderwelsch” is not unusual or *fremd*, and for the retailer this mixing of words is the best way to convince his customers of the worth and quality of his produce:

Niemanden befremdete mehr, daß die türkischen Läden in gebrochenem Deutsch, die deutschen Läden in gebrochenem Türkisch warben.¹²

Reflecting the produce, this language is neither ‘this’ nor ‘that’, but something original, the narrator explains at the beginning of the novel.¹³

For the narrator, this scene has enough impact to make him stand there and watch for a while. Once more, something is engaging his attention. A result of the description of the younger male retailer, the produce and the clothing of the

¹¹ Ruth Mandel, “Turkish Headscarves and the *Foreigner Problem*: Constructing Difference Through Emblems of Identity” in *New German Critique* no.58, 1993, p.27-46.

¹² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.26

¹³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.26

customers, is that the narrator feels a sense of connection awakening. He even looks for known faces and objects and slowly begins to recognise their growing familiarity, and the deep effect it has on him:

“Meine ganze Seele wurde von einer tiefen Begeisterung ergriffen.”¹⁴

The narrator's soul is further awakened by passing a row of Turkish *Geschäfte*. The word *Geschäfte* implies a variety of activities being undertaken, and often in odd combinations. The layout of the shops and their products act as a ‘siren’ luring the narrator inward. The shops form a series of temptations drawing him further into this reckoning of himself, which occurs here by compelling him to make sense of his surrounding environment. (My use of the siren metaphor dovetails aptly with Ören's collection of poems ‘*Mitten in der Odyssee*.’¹⁵ The journey that is implied here is spiritual and psychological as well as physical.) Entering each shop is a type of *Odyssey*. Packed with “Krimskrams” and “Schnickschnack” made of plastic and considered of little exchange value, each has some aesthetic value and, according to the narrator, is in its rightful place. Yet, simultaneously these products evoke associations with a distant land, culture and memories. At one earlier part of his life, the narrator reveals, he even found these types of things “kitschig”! Now, however, these cheap machine-produced, imitation goods reach down to feelings of comfort in his soul. He has recognised them and bestowed on them a rare dignity.

A further description of this type of retail shop is found at the very beginning of the novel. The description of this shop occurs in the scene immediately after he finally recognises Ibrahim Gündoğdu.¹⁶ These two things are linked: this first act of recognition sharpens the focus of the narrator and he begins to recognise the objects and the people around him to which he also feels a sense of belonging. At this first stage of his recognition of self, the narrator is an acute observer, but not yet an aware participant.

The description of this shop follows the movement of the eye. Always in motion, each object is picked out, described and the gaze moves on, for example, the window advertising is written down verbatim hinting at a modernist style of literature. The window, as Klaus Duntze noted earlier, is the link between inside and outside. Here the narrator ponders the effect of the muted lights in the window and

¹⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.284

¹⁵ Aras Ören, *Mitten in der Odyssee. Gedichte*. Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, Frankfurt/M 1983.

¹⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.25-30.

the standardised “Schlichtheit” of the presentation. The view from inside is fringed by so many objects and hurdles standing in the way, and the view from outside is obscured by the internal darkness. Only by picking out one object at a time can the narrator orientate himself in this culture, which at the same time is also his culture.

The variety and quantity of objects bemuses the narrator. To articulate his surprise he lists them: carpets, photographs of John F. Kennedy (a special meaning in both Berlin and Turkey), videos, travel agency brochures, jewellery, produce in tins and jars imported from Mediterranean countries, as well as fresh fruit and vegetables. To add to the depth of this shop as a space of exchange, signs for driving instructors and travel insurance hang near the narrator’s line of vision. The space this shop occupies also extends outside. Boxes and baskets of goods spill out on the footpath, nominally a public space, which suggests chaotic order in which everything has equal value. Life and the culture from inside, particularly the family “mit Kind und Kegel” who serve behind the counter, is brought out on to the streets, making the presence of this culture emphatic.

To show the different way in which the narrator interacts later with his community, I will now consider a passage about another retail shop towards the very end of the novel after the wedding reception scene.¹⁷ At this point, the narrator is trying to establish the deeper identity of Ibrahim Gündoğdu, who appears to represent the shadow of the narrator, or in other words, who the narrator may have been. He feverishly seeks a *Kelimgeschäft* (a *Kelim* is a traditional Anatolian handwoven carpet and its design contains spiritual meanings) in the Oranienstraße run by the old man he meets at the wedding reception who seems to know much more about Ibrahim Gündoğdu. This description of Oranienstraße is clear. He has a purpose. He knows his way around and notes each shop not with surprise, but with precision: from goldsmith to bookshop, office for an association of the blind, a Turkish mixed business, which offers services ranging from selling secondhand goods to operating as a halal butcher! This detail about the butcher almost seems an afterthought to the narrator, yet the juxtaposition of all these services reveals a community adept at adapting to changing needs and circumstances. Each space can be changed to suit the purpose at hand.

¹⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.326-327.

Having not been able to locate the *Kelimgeschäft*, he despairingly enters a *Trödler* and asks for information about the possible location of this shop. Yet within the collection of pre-loved secondhand products, bits and pieces of other people's lives, he finds an original *Kelim* from Anatolia. Next to the other objects bundled on top of each other, the *Kelim* appears hopelessly exotic with its orange, red, black and "giftgrün" coloured pattern. The brusque conversation with the owner of the shop (she can be identified as a German) emphasises that this object is an item of exchange, while the reaction of the narrator shows that it is also a trigger for memory and, like Evans' oak trees, a 'holder of cultural resources.'

Returning to the passage discussed earlier another type of retail shop influences the narrator's relationship with the built environment in a different way. The Turkish sweets shop works on the senses of the narrator: his sense of sight, smell and taste. He does not enter the shop but merely stares inside and notes in detail the types of sweets and how they fill and overflow the trays in the windows. This abundance suggests richness both in the product and also in the business, or at least a marketability. Here the windows are clean and unencumbered in order to entice the customers to come in and select the product they wish to buy. These sweets have a different sweet taste from European style sweets in colour, form and texture. For the narrator they are familiar; for the German passerby they are as exotic as the *Kelim*, yet their presence here is acknowledged.

Information about this type of shop can help our interpretation. In contrast to the mixed business and secondhand goods shops, the sweets shop represents luxury, rather than necessity. While sweets are an after dinner treat, handmade sweets also occupy an important position in celebrations in which the community participates. The sweets shop then belongs to a commercial venture of a different phase where customers are primarily Turkish, but also become a point of attraction and cultural contact for Germans. To underline this point, the historical setting of these shops can be summarised in the following way. In the initial phase of migration, shops reflect necessity; that is, they provide essential services for the migrant community. For example, banks are needed to send remittances back to Turkey, and also funeral companies are needed to transfer the bodily remains back to Turkey with appropriate ceremonial rites. These businesses had specific aims, catering solely to this community and these types of businesses were first established in the streets around Kotbusser Tor.

These types of businesses and the objects in them add much to appreciating and connecting with the surrounding environment. The objects, the kitsch, the *Kelim*, and the sweets, exist in this space and time as part of an important cultural context. Their presence not only recalls a past time and an ‘othered’ culture, but also something that is neither Turkish nor German. Recognising the breakdown of this dichotomy is the starting point for being able to understand this new hybrid. The kitsch conveys an emotional attachment, and presents the irony that in this setting these worthless objects become priceless. They function as a point of connection for the narrator with the surrounding environment. The sweets have value in their delicate taste, their handmade quality and their sense of reward, which together is a connection to feelings of wellbeing, rest and celebration.

The *Kelim* provides a fascinating example of how this connection is achieved. The *Kelim* appeals to the sense of sight and touch. The finished product is a source of permanent value owing to the craftsmanship and design employed in its production, as the *Kelimehändler* explains bitterly to the narrator at the wedding ceremony, there are many poorly made, cheap imitations, particularly being bought and sold above all by Turkish people in Berlin.¹⁸ Like the kitsch and the sweets, value also lies in the evocation of tradition. The design of the *Kelim* reminds the narrator of the various sacred and secular meanings of the *Kelim*. He recalls unwittingly a declaration or explanation he has heard about the meaning of the *Kelim*.¹⁹ In the novel they are printed in italics to reinforce the impression that these words are from somebody else. Firstly, the *Kelim* is connected to a profound tradition of belief in God or Allah as the creator of all things. Hidden in these words is the curious irony that such a powerful meaning can be found in an object lying forgotten under so many other unrelated objects in a dusty shop with an unfriendly owner in a “heruntergekommene” district of Berlin. This irony also points out the strength of the connection between an individual and how they view with great subjectivity the objects in the surrounding environment. The depth of this connection lies in values other than inscribed by economics and sociology. This connection is highly personal and memories are located in the most ordinary of objects.

Secondly, the *Kelim* recalls in the narrator that the will and belief of the community is being expressed in its design and production. The *Kelim* is a symbol in

¹⁸ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.316-317.

¹⁹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.327-328.

this sense of the communal, as well as the personal, search for the universal truth of humanity that is forever being repeated. Thirdly, there appears to be adherence to a dogmatic view of the essence of this community. These comments concur with the attitudes of the *Kelimehändler* at the wedding ceremony. The transformation, particularly expressed in terms of secularisation and westernisation, of the community then is expressed in the design of the *Kelime*; this transformation can be considered a disturbance from outside the community and therefore affects the *Stilisierung* leading to a degeneration of form. These words are drawing a clear analogy with the perceived degeneration of Turkish culture in Germany, as interpreted by conservative elements in this community. Yet, Ören's point is that far from seeing the disturbance from the *ansässig* German community as being a degenerating influence, the implication from the context of this passage (and the novel as a whole) is that the tradition is neither German nor Turkish but something else. These objects provide a touchstone for Ören's narrator who in trying to recognise the real Ibrahim Gündoğdu, is also recognising a new community and sense of place in Berlin.

3. The buskers

As the narrator passes the Turkish sweets shop, he encounters a pair of buskers. A young man plays a balalaika looking as bedraggled as a "Muschik" from some part of Eastern Europe, "Haar und Bart zerzaust, ... trüben Augen."²⁰ He is accompanied by a young woman who stands behind him and rolls a cigarette. An analysis of these two characters may seem incongruous in a chapter about the built environment, yet buskers owe their status and identity to the space provided by the built environment. They belong to these spaces in the built environment, rather than having some form of ownership over it. In this passage, the buskers have a similar literary function to the buildings and objects discussed above; that is, they stimulate the author's senses and connect him to a network of memories about Kreuzberg that propel him to a reckoning of his relationship with this place.

Buskers and other types of street performers have many functions in urban areas. The street provides a convenient venue for spontaneous and creative activities,

²⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.285.

which may earn a small financial reward. Also street performers may indicate the lack of opportunities for such alternative creative acts in mainstream culture, as well as be a barometer of social and economic inequality. In the view of social and urban planners buskers bring aural and visual variety and vitality to the street activities. W.H. Whyte argues lucidly that a combination of street performers and street stalls (or the *fliegende Händler* of Rafik Schami's stories) attract the senses of passers by.²¹ The narrator pauses for a moment, as if caught in suspended animation. Instead of just striding purposefully to his destination, his focus is distracted by the spontaneous activity of the buskers. These buskers then have created a stimulus, a reason for the narrator to slow down and share a common time and space with them and other passers by.

In the historical setting of Cold War Kreuzberg, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, the presence of the buskers indicates deeper meanings. In Kreuzberg the strength of the alternative community encouraged street performers to take to the streets not only as part of organised festivals, but also as participating in the everyday life of this particular urban environment. In this way the built environment can be planned to take into account the function of the busker and the creative and spontaneous activities they provide. These activities are then more likely to influence the individual passer by to imbue meaning into a place and feel comfortable there.

There are a number of important points in this description of the buskers that warrant examination. Firstly, the narrator thinks he recognises the young woman. Staring at her, he feels the "weiche Nähe" that he has met her somewhere before, or perhaps she reminds him of somebody in his past. However, after a moment's contemplation he convinces himself that he does not know her, nor – he convinces himself - will he encounter anybody else from his "altes Leben". In fact, he is determined to 'scrape' it off his skin, even wash the pain of knowledge away. These images are powerful because they locate the identity in the body, as if experiences are like tattoos that provide immediate identification and to extend the metaphor, can scar for life. Yet humans have many layers of skin, which are continually being peeled and replaced, a continual process of growth and decay. Indeed, the narrator contends that this walking to the wedding feast – itself the symbol of a new beginning – is both the beginning of an ending and simultaneously the start of a beginning.

²¹ William H. Whyte, *City. Rediscovering the Center*, Doubleday, New York 1990.

Secondly, the narrator throws in a monetary reward for the music performed by the buskers. The 5 DM coin represents a generous donation, something of worth glistening next to the dull pennies. This act also recognises the legitimacy of the buskers to be in this space and perform; that is, he acknowledges that although their status is temporary, they fulfil a worthwhile role. Curiously, the narrator is revealed later to be on unemployment benefits and borrowing money from friends, a situation probably not unlike that of the buskers. Initially this money is less a donation from a person of higher status bestowing generosity, but rather from somebody of equal status. This socio-economic situation then provides a point of connection between the narrator and the buskers.

Thirdly, the reaction of the buskers is humorously noted in some detail. Both are astonished. Surprised, the young man shows his thanks for the donation by playing the balalaika even faster, which appears quite absurd owing to the frenetic activity and the high pitched sound emanating. As the narrator slowly departs the young woman grabs the coin and runs directly into the sweets shop. This act appears to awaken quite abruptly the narrator from his romanticised vision of the couple, whom he had humorously described as birds and spiders, and disappointed, moves off quickly. He reveals a sense of betrayal. He cannot see himself in the young woman's face: "Es sagt mir nichts mehr."²² He may feel connected to this space through sights, smells, and sound, yet he is no longer one of those who live here; he is a different form of hybrid and from a different vintage. For the young woman busking facilitates exchange, and is one part in a series of transactions: performance, reward, trade. The buskers have performed by stimulating the memory of the narrator and he rewards them. He then has no control over how they exchange what he has given them, but thinks it was worth more than the sweets. What the narrator had seen as providing for a necessity, is spent on what he considers a luxury.

4. The community hall – *Aile Dügün Salonu*

The wedding reception takes place in a hall at the back of a *Hinterhof* off Oranienstraße. The narrator, apparently peeved by the buskers, hopes to meet laughing, happy people enjoying themselves and living in a space quite different from

²² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.286.

the narrow confines of poverty, work and sad memories. In this “andere Geräumigkeit”²³ there would be a sum of happiness from which all could draw. A spatial metaphor is employed to convey the sense of being distant from all worries as if problems and distress could be spatialised and thereby rendered meaningless. The buildings in this sense are imbued with a metaphysical connection that helps the narrator to transcend the limits of time and space. Space can mean here an endlessness of vision and possibility in contrast to the confined spaces of everyday life.

However, this utopian vision (and ‘u-topos’ in Greek means ‘no place’) is abruptly interrupted by the sights and smells confronting the narrator. A *Hinterhof* in Kreuzberg is generally small and narrow, poorly lit and with little ventilation. The sign above the door is neon and “grellrot”, as well a neon light arrow indicates the way. These symbols convey a feeling of cheapness and gaudiness. In the shops such displays appeared in the right place, but here they are irritating. The grandeur and celebration of a wedding ceremony is spoiled in his mind by such gaudiness, as well as by the smell of urine and dampness; far from being special and unique, the *Hinterhof* is like many others, isolated and neglected. The narrator is also irritated by the appearance of the chestnut tree. Its lifeless limbs are hung with colourful party lights giving an impression of a superficial gaiety imposed on to a dying tree. The other guests, all “herausgeputzt”, pass by without noticing this setting. While he can stand outside these decrepit signs of “Alltagsleben”, they cannot, and perhaps they have long since adapted to the sights, sounds and smells of such spaces. Their everyday lives are not made of utopian visions but of the reality of a built environment over which they have little control.

The name of the hall *Aile Düğün Salonu* indicates much about the connection between the characters and the built environment. Firstly, the name is printed in Turkish, which shows both that there are enough people in this area who understand Turkish, and that the culture of this part of Berlin is tolerant enough to allow and encourage these external signs of another culture. Secondly, the presence of such a hall for hire presupposes that there is private and communal patronage to ensure its economic viability. The posters and notices declare in a “vertrauens-erweckende alte Schrift”²⁴ that all the family is welcome. A derivation of the word *vertraut* is once

²³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.286.

²⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.287.

more used but for a different purpose. Here the writing links the narrator to his earlier life in Turkey, rather than his experiences in Kreuzberg. The narrator notes ironically that the word “sauber” was added as an afterthought in order to distinguish this hall from many others and indicates the traditional tendency of the owners. The purpose of their hall is to maintain and reinforce traditional cultural gatherings, particularly in a family setting, not to dilute the community by promoting challenging programs that encourage a questioning of traditional family values.

Attached to the walls of the corridor leading to the hall where the reception is taking place are many noticeboards filled with posters, mainly advertising goods and services specifically for this community. These objects belong to the built environment and reveal more about the connection between this community and the district of Kreuzberg. Five different types of posters catch the narrator’s eyes and he pauses and reads them.

The first poster outlines the activities that take place in the hall. Important for the hybrid nature of this community is that this poster is written in German. The variety of performances caters for a wide range of wishes: from the traditional Turkish saz performance evenings, to the Western jazz and video nights, and the curious mixture of dance lessons. This unacknowledged hybridisation is a marked symbol of Kreuzberg, where songs in mixed Turkish/German are common, particularly in popular music. The plea to spread the word amongst family and friends presupposes a functional community in which both chance and organised meetings occur with a high frequency, and also reinforces the commercial nature of the hall; that is, it needs a loyal following to be economically viable.

A second type of poster highlights the prevalence of the mixed business shop mentioned above. However, the advertised businesses operate with a greater turnover of products which are of greater monetary value than the retail shops mentioned above. Here the products are signs of conspicuous consumption, energy expending technology and modern daily necessities: electrical appliances and white goods. Another factor that places these businesses on a different level is the capacity to act as an import and export business. Not only do they act as retailers, but they can also organise transport of goods for “zurückkehrende Landsleute.”²⁵ The quantity and quality of goods being transported must be of such intensity that this business is

²⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.287.

sustainable. The competitive nature of this commercial operation is underlined by the claim to offer “export prices” on their goods.

The third type of poster that draws the attention of the narrator has an overt political message. Linguistically the author has woven political messages into the text of the novel, but mainly expressed in the form of citing newspaper headlines or a story relating one person’s experience of a corrupt bureaucracy. However, the political message in this poster is direct and relates to the public sphere of political violence and ideological intimidation, and although the militancy it contains seems distant from Kreuzberg on this November evening, the threat of violence is real. The message is directed at the Turkish people living abroad. The symbol of the white crescent moon and star on a red background is accompanied by a soldier with rifle standing to attention, presenting an unsheathed bayonet. Underneath a polemical slogan praising the *Nationalisten* is written in both German and Turkish. This choice of simultaneous texts implies that some of their target audience may not be fluent enough to understand the message in Turkish.

The historical background of this poster reveals much about the links between Kreuzberg and Turkey. In the 1970s and 1980s military coups paralysed and polarised Turkish society. (The military coup in 1970 is a pivotal event in *Die Brücke*.) The clashing traditions of ‘Europeanisation’, ‘Democracy’, ‘Workers Rights’, and ‘Ataturkism’ amongst other issues were the catalyst for the continuing conflict over Turkish identity. Violent clashes erupted, predominantly provoked by extreme rightwing factions in both military and society, and put the stability and unity of the Turkish nation in peril, and led to the assaults on many democratic institutions and outspoken individuals. In Berlin, many dissidents and other persecuted minorities, such as the Kurds, found shelter and sympathy to some extent in the existing migrant community as well as amongst the many alternative political groupings existing in the more tolerant atmosphere of Kreuzberg. This space can accommodate a new form of political solidarity which acts as a point of connection between sections of German (or the dominant) society and sections of the migrant community. However, this poster also represents the power of the connection between conservative political forces in Turkey and their supporters amongst the conservative elements within the migrant community in Berlin.

The narrator’s comment about the state of the poster is revealing. Instead of the poster occupying the central position as demanded by the intensity of the political

message, it is merely stuck on like the other posters. In this context, the message becomes just one of many advertising different ideologies as products in the marketplace of ideas. The fading colour and the worn edges indicate neglect and disinterest. From these small clues the *Nationalisten* appear to have acquired little resonance with their campaign, but they are not denied the space to raise their points of view.

The fourth poster reveals a curious crosscultural practice: circumcision. Once more, this intensely personal practice is advertised like all other products, and the words used to grab a person's attention are worthy of analysis. For example, the process has been certified by the German (medical) authorities, is undertaken with the most modern methods of (Western) medicine and the doctor performing the operation is described as a "Fachmännischer Beschneider". These details convey an impression of maintenance of standards, quality, credibility and precision, and also that the traditional methods will be applied, emphasising a hybrid of traditions and knowledge – all of which can be certified. Also an element of advertising bravado creeps in with the claim: the operation will be "schmerzlos" and without spilling one drop of blood! (A guarantee which subtly recalls Shylock's bargain for a 'pound of flesh' in *The Merchant of Venice* and perhaps is also an appeal to the aspirational Turkish who wish to become more German or in this sense seen as more civilised.) So, this poster is directed at the Turkish-speaking community, and those who stand firm on traditional rites of passage practices, relying on both a rational appeal to quality, and an emotional appeal to prevention of pain.

The juxtaposition of the fifth poster with the preceding poster is quite comic. In this poster all cutting of flesh is done "nach islamischem Ritus". The step from human flesh to animal flesh in the context of the narrator's vision is small and this chance placement of these posters produces unexpected consequences, presumably completely unforeseen by these businesses. In this fifth poster the food is prepared according to halal requirements, and even the butchers are Muslim. Once again, this poster appeals to both quality and the maintenance of public health and religious standards. Religion plays only a minor role in this novel and in *Die Brücke*. Islam operates more as a point of connection with the past through the rhythm and words of remembered prayers, as well as of communal ceremonies that served to bring the different members of that community together. Yet the difference that religion makes can be an important dividing factor in the status of migrant communities in Europe,

and particularly in Berlin. Regular debates break out around the siting of mosques, yet a curious anomaly survives in Neukölln where a mosque has stood since 1889, a gift from the Ottoman sultan in recognition of the developing diplomatic, economic, cultural and military ties with Germany. In return, a fountain was constructed in Istanbul, a diplomatic exchange of material and symbolic objects revealing mutual recognition. Additionally, a mosque has many functions. It is a sacred space where religious rituals can be practiced, as well as a cultural and educational institution for this community. Furthermore, it becomes the recognisable symbol for the Germans of the existence of other faith and cultural practices. Nevertheless, the existing symbols or landmarks in Berlin are also open to reevaluation and reinterpretation.

Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*

In the following sections I will consider the functions of the built environment in *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*. I have deliberately chosen different objects for analysis from the preceding sections in order to show that the connection between individuals and the space they live in is complex, dynamic and subjective. The objects chosen are identifiable landmarks, and also public spaces: the bridge, the streets and buildings of Berlin, the Anhalter Bahnhof, the *Wohnheim* and the Hebbeltheater. All possess both an officially endorsed set of meanings, as well as those imbued by the narrator, so a close reading of the novel will identify a layering of stories and history. Another fundamental part of this section is that Özdamar's characters are discovering this city for the first time. In contrast, Ören's narrator is undertaking a process of rediscovering the city that is full of many layers of his own stories.

5. The bridge

The bridge is a significant metaphor in migrant literature, as well as being an easily recognisable landmark in many cities. The title of Özdamar's novel emphasises both the centrality of this metaphor (as explained earlier in the analysis of Monika Fischer's dissertation) and the importance of the actual structure in Istanbul. The effect of this metaphor is to connect these concepts. Indeed, the final act of the narrator is to cross over the bridge spanning the Golden Horn in Istanbul. This act has

many different meanings: a walk to freedom after being held in prison for a short time after the military coup in 1970; a connection between the Asian and European sides of Istanbul, and by implication, the link between Asia and Europe which her life represents; and an assertive step in claiming public space. Symbolically, at the end of the novel after being released from prison she crosses the bridge from the Asian side of Istanbul to the European side in a train heading for Berlin.

Another kind of bridge can be found in the journey from Istanbul to Germany. On the express train all the countries outside the window merge into a blur of unknown names and landscapes. Only on one return journey from Berlin does she pause and investigate the countries and cultures she is travelling through. Germany and Turkey do not share common borders, so the connections need to span a great distance over distinctive cultural landscapes. The journey also bridges two divided cities: Berlin and Istanbul, both participants in a larger ideological struggle, in which contested terrain needs to be bridged; that is Berlin was divided politically into East and West, and Istanbul into European and Asian. Berlin can also be seen as a type of border crossing, yet the city is also associated with a *Luftbrücke* representing an economic and political lifeline. In this way, a bridge can connect in different ways both similar and different cultural landscapes, as well as have aesthetic and architectural value, and be a conduit for the transport of goods, people and ideas.

6. The streets and buildings of Berlin at first glance.

The narrator in *Die Brücke* reveals some crucial insights about the way that the buildings and streets in a new city are first perceived:

In den ersten Tagen war die Stadt für mich wie ein endloses Gebäude.
Sogar zwischen München und Berlin war das Land wie ein einziges
Gebäude.²⁶

Here the built environment is completely unknown and appears the same. She cannot pick out any distinguishing features; it is an endless space filled with objects that have no meaning and all seem to be part of the same building. Her first experience of Germany is dominated by an intimidating built environment, quite unlike any previous experience. Curiously no people are mentioned, nor the natural

²⁶ *Die Brücke*, p.18.

environment; that is, no landscape, just cityscape. In these first days the buildings blur and merge together conveying a sense of being caught in an unreal space which is endless, and in which the narrator has no sense of power or belonging.

The first distinguishing points in these first days are the doors. Doors delineate inside from outside, and offer a way into (and out of) new experiences. The narrator and her fellow passengers are shifted from one door to another, a remorseless surge of toing and froing. Each door represents a different building, even though they all appear to belong to the same type of building: train, *Bahnhofsmansion*, aeroplane, bus, *Türkische FrauenWohnung*, *Kaufhaus Hertie*, *Telefunken Radiolampenfabrik*. Precise locations are named in quick succession, yet the narrator reveals nothing about the experience of being there. (The door is one of Özdamar's favourite metaphors, which she uses to emphasise the sense of expectation and excitement as a character crosses the threshold from the inside to the outside, or from a lack of knowledge to an abundance of knowledge. This threshold is a space that can be occupied, even if only momentarily.) The women are moved by some unnamed force from one location to another without pause; the only feature which marks out each door as different is the reason for the women being there. They are directed to collect the necessary items; they have no choice, and all treated similarly in a bureaucratic and brusque manner.

However, gradually the women pick out features of the built environment of Berlin as they walk along the streets and become familiar with what they see, hear and smell. The *Wohnung* and the *Radiolampenfabrik* are the two spaces they first encounter, and these spaces of living and working become a type of comfort zone. The younger women then begin to recognise the streets of Berlin. With her friends, Gül, Rezzan and Engel, the narrator starts to note the many hidden stories in these streets, for example, they note the many "Lücken" in the footpaths in these residential areas.²⁷ "Lücken" is a handy metaphor: the narrator refers to the holes in the footpath, as well as the vacant lots between buildings, which were caused by Allied bombing during the Second World War. As the narrator notes, trees and bushes grow over the brick walls and provide a different type of landscape, particularly as buildings untouched by the war stand next to these *geschützte Grünanlagen*. These holes also represent the young women's lack of knowledge, holes in her knowledge. In this 'not

²⁷ *Die Brücke*, p.59.

knowing' the young women feel lost and attacked by the darkness of these "Lücken". Deliberately discovering these "Lücken" functions as a parallel to their decision to find out about this 'unknown' city. This decision to move from a known space to an unknown space is also an adventure that acts to bind these women together.

The streets of Berlin also function as a conduit of memory, particularly of family and everyday life in Turkey.²⁸ The streets create the space for deeper attachment, yet these women are outsiders, so they need to reach back to something they know. The narrator is described as turning around as she walks and expecting to see her father following her. His physical absence is accompanied by a psychological presence. As the young women walk through the dark streets after their work, they stand under illuminated windows and listen to the everyday sounds of people eating dinner. They hold their breath as they listen intently to the noise from cutlery and conversation, and each is reminded of family. These sounds impress upon them the absence of their families in a direct and painful way. The structure and function of these buildings then can evoke deep memories of other times, spaces and the social interaction that took place.

In these walks these young women are searching for affection and the assurance of feelings of wellbeing. In this environment they see and hear other relationships, which reinforces their status as outsiders to this city. They find other outsiders to share and halve these feelings: the monkeys at the zoo. To further this connection to living creatures, the narrator and her friends each adopt a monkey. The monkeys express and act in ways that create an emotional support network, which the young women lack at this point. The actions of the monkeys are everyday acts of affection: scratching, checking for fleas in the other's fur, and laughing without fear of humiliation. For the young women such selfless and unstructured acts of love are not in their surrounding environment; only through familiarity will this occur. The word "nachäffen" means to ape or imitate, and points to the need for imitation when learning a new language. The women too as foreigners live as if confined to special cages, and are either invisible or expected to conform to certain stereotypes of behaviour.

²⁸ *Die Brücke*, p. 55-56.

Each night adventure represents a discovery of another part of Berlin. Even the failed attempt to move into a “Kreuzberger Wohnung” belongs to this voyage of discovery:

Das war Berlin. Dieses Berlin hatte es für uns bis jetzt nicht gegeben.
Wir hatten unser *Wonaym*, und dieses *Wonaym* war nicht Berlin.
Berlin begann erst, wenn man aus dem *Wonaym* herausging ... ²⁹

Here the separation between the *Frauenwonaym* and Berlin is made explicitly, implying that the narrator is recognising the different and complex spaces that constitute Berlin. Discovering this Berlin requires a positive decision to step out of the comfort zone (*Wonaym*) and into the street, a physical environment filled with different sounds, sights and smells, where it is easy to become disorientated. In the “Kreuzberger Wohnung” the narrator and her friend, Engel, sit forlorn, cold, warmed only by the mute light emitted from a dirty 40 watt light bulb. This space is filled with trauma for the young women; surrounded by strange sounds from the wintry night outside, and the ticking of a watch inside, they are horrified by the poor condition of this apartment. (The poor condition of apartments is not unusual in this part of Berlin.) The previous tenant, an old woman, had died there, a pan lies covered in fat and tea leaves, the electricity cables are open, the oven does not function, and countless dead insects cover the light bulb and other parts of the apartment. This side of Berlin is like a film to the narrator, yet the harsh reality of the physical and emotional coldness of this room makes this film “gefroren, stehengeblieben.”³⁰ This attempt at coming to terms with Berlin is deterred; the built environment and the climate combine to force the narrator and Engel to return to their zone of comfort, the *Wonaym*. The opportunity to interact with the other Berlin was not seized. Certainly, gender plays a role; both women are unable to adapt to the need to do the repairs, and so find themselves still confined within their traditional roles. From this scene a conclusion can be drawn that the movement from the unknown is not linear, nor inevitable, and follows no particular pattern, neither is it easy, but rather fragile and challenging.

²⁹ *Die Brücke*, p.63

³⁰ *Die Brücke*, p.63.

7. The Anhalter Bahnhof

The narrator and her young friends bestow an affectionate nickname on the Anhalter Bahnhof, the “beleidigter Bahnhof”: the ‘hurt’, ‘broken’, ‘injured’ or ‘offended’ station.³¹ This personification of the building and the alliteration of the soft ‘b’ sound evoke an emotional response; feelings of sympathy are aroused when the young women talk about “unser beleidigter Bahnhof”. The building is like them in need of care and attention and has much unexplored terrain. The façade of the station stands directly opposite the *Wonaym*, and so also acts as a point of orientation.

The Anhalter Bahnhof was completed in 1882 in the grand style of late 19th century railway stations often following a cathedral-like design. Part of the grand public structures built after the founding of Berlin as the capital of the *Kaiserreich*, the Anhalter Bahnhof fulfilled many functions: an imposing structure giving an impression of wealth, engineering prowess and power; a large point of arrival and reception for passengers from the south and west of Germany and Europe and; an important link in the transport network of Berlin and hinterland. The Anhalter Bahnhof fell into decay and disuse after severe damage from bombing in the Second World War and then the building of the Berlin Wall lessened its importance in the regional transport networks. The remains of the platforms and other buildings were cleared away in the 1970s, and the façade is the only structure still standing that indicates former glory. At the time of the setting of the novel a jungle of saplings, bushes, rubbish, and piles of stone and bricks confront the author as she explores this rare bit of wilderness in the city. In contemporary Berlin this area behind the façade is parkland, an open space highly valued by the migrant community living in this area. Over time this neglected part of the built environment has been reclaimed and renamed showing the ability of this space to be adaptable and open to new connections.

Initially, however, the public telephone booth and the *Imbißbude* located in the small square in front of the ruined station are the focus of the narrator’s attention. The telephone booth is a physical representation of the link with her parents in Turkey. During the early conversations with her parents this sense of sadness, absence and distance is imbued into the physical structure of the station.³² Ironically,

³¹ *Die Brücke*, p.28-29.

³² *Die Brücke*, p.34.

these conversations occur in a public space, so that the maintenance of private relationships occurs in a space where all can hear. As the young women spend more time in the Berlin outside the *Wonaym*, the station becomes a physical reminder of their previous communication to their parents and the way in which their parents exercised control over their behaviour even from a distance. They scurry past the telephone booth and whisper to themselves as if their words would be magically transmitted back to their parents.³³ The telephone booth has moved from a passive role as a conduit of communications to a humorous and active role, a Sphinx-like mythical being which knows all. Even further on, the women have become comfortable with their surroundings that they walk past confidently and talking loudly enough so that their parents will be able to hear.³⁴ Later still the Anhalter Bahnhof plays no more significant role than other places the narrator now knows. It fits into a network of known places, rather than being the only known place.

The narrator establishes a further connection by making the Anhalter Bahnhof a meeting place for the younger women who want to explore Berlin. This function as a meeting place is aided by the location of the *Imbißbude*. Hardly glamorous, yet this location becomes their first point of encountering Berlin, particularly the night life: “[die Frauen] die ihre Abende in die Länge zogen und dabei von der Nacht etwas klauten... .”³⁵ The night too can be understood as time stolen from the employer, which enables them to have some life of their own, something which is not part of their contract. The young women have the space to spend time alone and converse without the older women overhearing. The prohibitions associated with young single women being in a public space at night are being gradually broken down. In turn, a process is under way in which the buildings are separated and imbued with quite different characteristics by these different groups of women.

8. The *Wohnheim*

The *Frauenwohnheim* building is a crucial part of the built environment as experienced by the narrator. She spends initially a significant period of her time outside of work hours in the *Wohnheim* with the other women. The first *Wohnheim*

³³ *Die Brücke*, p.39.

³⁴ *Die Brücke*, p.55.

³⁵ *Die Brücke*, p.38.

she lives in is located in Kreuzberg between the Anhalter Bahnhof and the Hebbeltheater, the two points which become a point of geographic and cultural orientation. The physical structure of the *Wohnheim* affects the way the narrator experiences this space. The building like many built in this area in the 1960s is functional, angular, cold and built for nameless groups, rather than for people who possess many different characteristics; importantly, the design of the building hardly seems to encourage the fostering of permanent connections.

Internally, the *Wohnheim* is designed to accommodate a group of people who will cook, eat and clean quickly, rather than an intimate setting where people feel comfortable to pause and engage in deeper conversations. Here cooking, eating and cleaning need to be a shared activity, yet owing to the narrow space, negotiation is required. This negotiation mediates misunderstandings about ingredients, utensils, and cleaning, and often requires the intervention of a supervisor, such as the *kommunistischer Heimleiter* or the narrator herself, when she later works as a translator. The bathrooms are similarly designed to hinder privacy and individuality. This space then compels activities to be undertaken collectively and that conflicts be carefully and publicly resolved.

The dormitories play a similar role. They have six beds, so again personal space is quite unknown. Dressing, reading, talking all occurs in a space which is accessible and transparent to all. Here there is a blurring between public and private space – private space does not mean individual privacy, which can only occur in the thinking and remembering of the women.

The *Fernseherzimmer* becomes the first point of entertainment for the women. At first all gather around the television and watch without comprehending any of the words and images.³⁶ The programs appear out of any kind of social context. The room is functional in design and only the actions of the women make it comfortable. This common gathering place is also used for musical entertainment by the *kommunistischer Heimleiter*, who introduces the women to the German language through romantic images gathered from folk songs. The narrator ironically remarks that the women knew how to pronounce “Ach die Weiden der Smyrna, ihre Blätter regnen runter” before they could understand a simple word such as “Tisch.”³⁷ In this way the room becomes filled with poetry, both meaningless in terms of everyday

³⁶ *Die Brücke*, p.27.

³⁷ *Die Brücke*, p.36.

language, but also important because it conveys the emotional force of language. Memories are painted in soft memories and these initially strange sounding words become known, and in turn transform the hard angles and sterile interior of the *Wohnheim*.

The space can always be infused with a different atmosphere. In the second *Wohnheim* the narrator works as a translator and has a different experience, yet the space is similar because the internal design is the same. Located on a main road, the rooms in this building are open to the noise of traffic and the conversation of passersby. The harsh lighting in the corridors and the illfitting doors also make this space unfriendly and anonymous. An effect of the internal design is that everybody knows each other's business. This point becomes acute when the married couples move into a separate floor of the *Wohnheim*. The floor that is only occupied by women functions as a kind of safe haven where they can avoid the male gaze. The lift between the floors becomes a shared space of social interaction occurring on quite different terms from what occurs in Turkey. The building of the *Wohnheim* in this way provides a space that encourages certain forms of social interaction, which then influence the way an individual experiences this space.

9. The Hebbeltheater

One final landmark that has significant meaning for the young woman is the Hebbeltheater, located in Stresemannstraße, opposite both the Anhalter Bahnhof and the *Wohnheim*. Stresemannstraße, named after the leader of the SPD who proclaimed the first democratic republic in Germany in November 1919, was a dead end street in the Cold War times. The Berlin Wall ensured that it generally remained on the periphery of German cultural and political power. However, a major exception was the Hebbeltheater, which is a significant part of the cultural scene in Berlin, completed in 1903 with an impressive *Jugendstil* interior. Hebbel was himself concerned intensely with the changing nature of male-female relations in the 19th Century – a major concern for the narrator as we shall see in Chapter Five. The building was remarkably hardly damaged by the Second World War, and so became one of the few functioning theatres in Berlin during the first months of Allied occupation. However, the theatre lost this prominent role and in the 1970s various groups of actors, writers and other interested community groups took over the

management. Here this role as a cultural icon, appealing for both its content and its structure, reflects its early history, as noted by Eugen Robert in 1908:

Der erste Eindruck ist befremdend. Das Haus gleicht keinem bekannten Gebäudetyp: keinem Palast, keinem Tempel, keinem Wohn- und keinem Geschäftshaus. Ernst, gedrungen fast düster steht der Vorbau auf der Straße. Doch verletzt diese Fremdartigkeit nicht. Im Gegenteil, sie erweckt Interesse, sie zieht an, wie alle Geheimnisse.³⁸

This description appears to fit quite well to the narrator's experience of this building; that is, the theatre is at first strange, alluring and the outside lights impact physically on the narrator's experience of this Berlin. So close is the Hebbeltheater building to the dormitory of the *Wonaym* that the flickering neon sign lights up the whole room, as the women are trying to sleep. The narrator also hears and listens to noise of people's footsteps and conversation as they leave the theatre. The conversations are animated, yet in a language she does not understand, even though she can 'feel' the vitality of their talking.

The lights from the theatre also illuminate the events in the *Wonaym*. The women are never alone, but from all windows open to the influence of the environment outside. The flickering light allows the narrator and her friend, Rezzan, to read and to discuss which roles they would like to play. Yet, by day the Hebbeltheater loses this magic of illumination and becomes an ordinary building, as only the bodies of the women make shadows on the new snow. This building then belongs to the *Abend* and by bathing in its reflected light, the young women are slowly drawn into this world beyond the *Wonaym*. The people who attend theatre are also different from those in other parts of Berlin and this change in status is reflected in patterns in behaviour:

Wenn wir aus dem Verein herauskamen, kamen auch die Zuschauer aus dem Hebbeltheater. Vor dem Hebbeltheater trennten sich Menschen, machten ihre Regenschirme gegen den Schnee auf, vor dem türkischen Arbeiterverein machten wir noch die letzten Zigaretten an, Schnee in unseren Mündern.³⁹

The contrast between the status of the two buildings is reflected in their possessions. Those who attend the theatre can afford umbrellas, while the narrator and her young

³⁸ Eugen Robert, www.hebbel-theater.de 1st February 2000.

³⁹ *Die Brücke*, p.50.

friends can only light cigarettes and allow the snow to gather on them. The theatre building then is a space which is connected with a greater level of socioeconomic power and stands in contrast to the crowded and congested *Arbeiterverein*.

Conclusion

In both of these novels the narrators undertake journeys by foot through the streets of Berlin. They record their feelings and observations, and over time these feelings and observations become clearer and fuller as the narrators become more familiar with the built environment in these spaces. Both narrators are undertaking a mapping of this space; this is a special kind of mapping because each of these buildings, streets and landmarks plays a significant role in the creation of a migrant infrastructure in Berlin.

This mapping also links past events with the present, as well as allowing a past self to be seen through the eyes of the present self. In this process the buildings and streets of Berlin are imbued with a different kind of meaning, a code, which triggers memories, some long held in the subconscious. In this sense, this kind of mapping is not just of terrain and objects, but also how they are used, by both individuals and the community – as we shall see in the following chapter. It is within the individual that a sense of place is experienced and created, and, as argued in this chapter, a crucial influence on this sense of place is the built environment in which the individual lives. More particularly, the objects of the built environment of Kreuzberg analysed in this chapter play a distinctive role in creating a sense of place for a migrant of Turkish background.

Both novels provide many examples of the way in which space influences a sense of place. The fulcrum of this chapter was a passage selected from Aras Ören's *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*. Four elements of the built environment were chosen: Kotbusser Tor, the retail shops, the buskers and the community hall. For each of these elements a description was provided of its setting in the novel, and then the following analysis includes further historical information, which adds a deeper level of understanding to my interpretation. This expansive act of interpretation can be described as cultural mapping and is useful for the purposes of this work because this form of mapping reveals the connections between human beings and the environment in which they live.

In analysing the connection between the built environment and the individual narrator in *Die Brücke* I focused on landmarks. A landmark functions both as a point of geographic orientation, and as a holder of cultural resources. The landmarks noted are the streets of Berlin, the Anhalter Bahnhof, the *Wohnheim* and the Hebbeltheater, as well as a brief discussion of the bridge as noted in the title. These landmarks are employed as headings and under these headings I have analysed the role that these landmarks play in the novel, and placed them in their historical setting in order to offer a deeper level of interpretation.

Mapping out a migrant community

Introduction

In his book *The Comedy of Survival: Literary Ecology and a Play Ethic*¹ Joseph W. Meeker describes a basic form of group formation. Using his observations of animal behaviour and his research into social ecology, Meeker interprets the sounds of birds as a type of call and response conversation: “I’m here; where are you?”² Encoded in this call and response is a recognition by each creature of their counterpart as an individual, and as part of a community. The call and response then is a connection between different creatures, and a recognition of self, and of that self as part of a wider community. Meeker’s idea affirms John Donne’s well known and equally bold assertion that “all are connected to the main”. Investigating this form of connection to each other is crucial for understanding how an individual makes sense of the space in which he or she lives. The question on the opening page of *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* – “Erkennst du mich?” - is a human form of Meeker’s formulation.

The purpose of this chapter is to shed further light on an individual’s sense of place as experienced in the two novels under analysis. Chapter Two focussed on the effect of the built environment, and in this chapter I consider how the community influences a sense of place; in effect this chapter will map this migrant community as it moves from a *Notgemeinschaft* to a mature community. This movement both transforms the individual sense of place, as well as being transformed by the individual through their patterns of behaviour and social interactions.

To map this movement, this chapter is divided into two sections. Firstly, I will consider the formation of the *Notgemeinschaft* or community of necessity. Here examples will be drawn from the leaving from Istanbul, the journey to Germany and the arrival and initial phase of settling in to this new environment. Secondly, I will consider the mature community as it emerges from a close reading of both novels, again drawing on the passage transcribed at the beginning of Chapter Two, as well as

¹ Joseph W. Meeker, *The Comedy of Survival: Literary Ecology and a Play Ethic*, The University of Arizona Press, Tucson 1997.

² Meeker, p.108.

the immediately following scene. After each section I will draw some conclusions about the influence of the community on an individual's sense of place.

1. The formation of the *Notgemeinschaft*

The term 'community' here refers to the migrant community, rather than the already existing 'German' community. As previously mentioned the Germans in both novels are marginal figures, so I have focussed less on them. This marginalisation of the Germans underlines my thesis that the migrants have created their own infrastructure despite official indifference. However, the success of the migrant community in Kreuzberg also reveals a deeper sense of mutual co-operation practiced by German and migrant communities. Aras Ören draws out this sense of living beside each other as a creeping tolerance or acceptance in his *Berlin Poem Trilogie*. Each community is at a very basic level dependant on the other.

In previous chapters I have outlined the political, economic and social contexts in which both narrators have made their journey to Berlin. The journey represents both a physical and psychological transformation as individuals in the process of migration move between cities and different patterns of behaviour. In this special transient environment, the narrators meet with other characters in a similar situation, and begin the process of building a new community. This process starts with small and meaningful steps such as sharing things like food, drink and cigarettes, as well as stories and future goals. At this point the community is based on necessity and chance because none of these characters has organised to sit in a specific carriage compartment, nor does an established or mature community to which they belong exist in their destination. This journey is also a story to be retold, and each retelling reinforces the centrality of this story in the lives of these individuals as a shared experience in a period of profound change. Like the original work contracts this journey is of fixed duration and one of compulsion. They are not on the train for the sake of travelling but as the only affordable means of arriving in Germany.

This first section on the mapping of a *Notgemeinschaft* has three parts: the leaving; the journey; and the arrival and settling in. The leaving reveals the immediate grieving process and is a physical representation of separation from home, family, friends, community and culture. Certain rituals, particularly at the railway

station, portray that this act of separation to some extent prepares the individual for something new and unknown. The journey is an iconic theme in migrant literature. Time and space are measured quite differently and require different behaviour. The arrival represents that first meeting with the new space and cultural environment, and first impressions can have lasting impact. The settling in phase is a process of constant renegotiation as individuals adjust in different ways to the space and community around them. In these first days and weeks the fundamental aspects of this new community are laid down.

(i) The leaving

The narrators of both novels leave Istanbul by train to travel to Germany, firstly to Munich then onward to Berlin. Although the leaving or leavetaking only occupies two or three pages, some important clues can be gathered about the later building of relationships, particularly how the individual will adapt to new roles in a new type of community. Leaving also entails a celebration, or a series of celebrations, which mark out stages in a person's maturity and responsibility in a community. In this way the journey to another country becomes a rite of passage. The term leaving is more appropriate than departure because leaving connotes some form of activity and also has a more poetic edge, which lends a greater depth to the emotional experience of migration.

The leaving is intensely emotional because the individual is not only leaving family and friends and the wider support network, but also departing from a familiar culture, including language, way of behaviour, built environment, sights, sounds and smells. The leaving can also be a point of cultural gathering; a reason is provided for friends and family to travel and meet each other, a chance to converse, retell stories, discuss ideas and engage in conversation with those who share a similar sense of cultural background. This form of celebration as cultural gathering can be constantly refocussed from national culture to ethnic group, to region, town, suburb, friendship circles, family. Each link between these groups has many layers and connections. These cultural gatherings are also a method of offering thanks, as well as farewells, prayers and wishes of safety, security and wealth; such moments are signs of cultural strength which remain with the individual leaving and enable them to survive and then live in an unfamiliar culture.

Such signs of the deep relationships underpinning these cultural gatherings can be located in language used to bid farewell and objects which express this emotion. The formulation of words used on such occasions has strong religious underpinnings. These blessings call on spiritual powers to protect the individual on their journey through cultures whose spiritual and material facets are seen as threatening. Other objects given as presents play a similar role; they are symbols of belonging and holders of cultural memory of persons, places, things, shared moments in which the senses are fully engaged. Flowers with certain colours or textures or which grow in certain special places or seasons can also carry such meanings. Food plays a dual role: both as a source of nutrition on the immediate journey and also cultural sustenance over a longer period of time. The texture, the ingredients, scent, colour and taste convey associations with people and the feelings of previous shared experience.

The leaving described at the beginning of *Die Brücke* is brief.³ The narrator is too excited about the journey ahead to detail the departure from Istanbul railway station. This concise style of writing also is a favourite literary technique used by Özdamar. This technique suggests the influence of Brecht, as well as the intention of conveying deep and complex social meanings in simple language. The process of making the decision to work in Germany is dealt with in a similarly perfunctory style.⁴ The character's rapid contemplation of this decision reveals her firm intention to leave one cultural space for another and settle for a period of time in this unknown space.

The reasons for her leaving lie in the constant conflict with her parents over her future.⁵ She intends to become an actress and she speaks to them in a form of theatre language where words and phrases from plays she has learned are recited in response to her parents' questions. They complain that knowledge of this kind is useless, and she should finish her schooling. This intergenerational conflict then poses a different reason for leaving than the stereotype of impoverished peasants and marginal city dwellers. As she is an eighteen year old unmarried woman – which she tells the recruitment agency, but she is still at school so she is probably a year or two

³ *Die Brücke*, p.14.

⁴ *Die Brücke*, p.14.

⁵ *Die Brücke*, p.12-14.

younger - she has fewer ties to this culture than the other woman with whom she shares the railway compartment.

However, other types of words are the catalyst for her decision. These words are contained in a newspaper headline: more Turkish workers wanted in Germany. Her age and her health are enough to secure her a visa and a one-year work contract. For her this process is simple and unhindered; she experiences no anxiety or endless evenings worrying about absence of family, friends or future plans. Only after telling her parents are doubts set in the mind of the narrator. Her mother smokes incessantly, and her father lays down his views concerning the reality that she cannot poach eggs, let alone work in a factory and put together “Radiolampen”. He intones seriously and from experience: “Ich will nicht, daß meine Tochter Arbeiterin wird. Das ist kein Spiel.”⁶ These parting comments indicate that her parents resist her leaving and they prefer her first to finish school, but will not physically stop her. Additionally, her father’s comment reveals his dismay that she is *choosing* to shift her social status, in his opinion downwards. He has accumulated some wealth as a builder, and no longer connects himself to the poverty and powerlessness of work as a manual and unskilled labourer. This ambivalent blessing from her parents on her leaving presents a mixed message. For the narrator, the leaving appears a simple process, yet also emotional because her leaving results in and from conflict. The final conversations with her parents reveals a mother too overcome with sorrow to speak. This reaction is a part of the leaving most regretted by the narrator, whose desire to be close to her mother is repeated constantly throughout the journey, as well as during the year that follows in Berlin.

A far different perspective of the leaving is conveyed in the scene describing Istanbul railway station in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*.⁷ The description moves from the narrator and his fellow passengers craning their heads out of their window, to a wider picture of Istanbul on a hot, sticky summer’s afternoon, and then back to the last minute preparations of the passengers and those who are farewelling them on the platform. In these few pages, the narrator posits many ideas about the process of leaving, particularly focussing on the acute experience of the senses in picking out the abundant stimuli of this wellknown place, and then storing these memories for the time ahead in a markedly different environment:

⁶ *Die Brücke*, p.14.

⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.47-49.

Uns war, als dürften wir kein Geräusch, keine Stimme verpassen, um sie mit allen Einzelheiten in unser Gedächtnis einzugraben. Dies waren die letzten Bilder, die wir von dem lange ersehnten Abschied mitnahmen.⁸

Here the narrator notes the centrality of the leaving. The amount of time and energy generated by looking forward to this event marks it out from everyday events. Even though trains leave daily on this journey, for each individual the event is intensely personal but shared with other unknown individuals. The use of the term “mitnahmen” is especially evocative. Like their luggage, their memories also can and must be carried with them.

The leaving is presented from the perspective of the narrator and has two levels: the individual is leaving the community, and also a community is leaving. The narrator recognises himself as one of many passengers making a similar journey as shown by the repeated use of “wir” and “unser” in this scene. He sees himself as bound together with the other passengers. Yet, he does not relate his own farewelling of friends and family. He notes this scene as applicable to all, a community farewelling its members on their journey to a new space. This farewell is described as causing “Bewunderung” and “Neid”, as well as dreams, regrets and excitement. The occasion holds intense emotion: “Der Expreszug nach München war ein verheißungsvolles Versprechen.”⁹ The passengers carry dreams, doubts and expectations in equal measure and belong to a group separated from those left behind. So, the leaving is simultaneously a moment of connection and then separation between these two groups: the *Zurückbleibenden* return to a familiar routine, while the *Reisenden* approach with some trepidation the challenge to adapt and adjust to the new strategies demanded by an unfamiliar environment. One of these strategies is an ability to remember the details of leaving in order to maintain the connection with a home country.

With intent to reveal the connections between a community and the environment in which it lives, Ören has cleverly placed the narrator in the position of recording this event. Almost as if with the eye of a camera, the narrator’s gaze moves from a general setting of Istanbul on a hot, windless July afternoon, to the particular details of people, animals and machines. These objects engage the senses of the

⁸ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.47.

⁹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.48.

narrator as he builds the picture of the community being left behind. The general setting inverts the stereotypical image of the Mediterranean. Here the warmth is an unsettling and irritating heat, a “Luftdecke” that gradually strangles any kind of will to activity:

Es war, als würde über dem Chaos und der Geschäftigkeit des
Hafenviertels ein Schleier liegen, so leblos and verwischt, unwirklich
und fern, fast bewegungslos.¹⁰

The narrator’s description conveys a dreamlike atmosphere, as if the narrator is placing himself outside of this city and capturing its likeness in a photograph to keep safe in his memory. Yet the effect of the weather is to blur the edges of people and objects, so that they melt into an amorphous mass; even the buildings, including the “zahlreichen” domes of the mosques merge together and appear old, tired and neglected, far more than they are in reality. However, owing to the emotions stirred by this leaving the narrator sees the buildings in a new and unexpected light; that is, they belong to an old world which is being replaced by a new and unknown world where the buildings represent modernity and urbanity.

The particular details that the narrator picks out are equally noteworthy in conveying the emotions embedded in this scene. The smell of burnt fat from the fish shops mixed with “cooked” asphalt from the overburdened roads, rotting food, salt, iodine and soot is mindnumbing. Each alone is a strong and distinctive smell, and together they assault the senses and make a permanent memory of the city. The olfactory sense is a more direct means of experience and easily recalled. Here the narrator describes smells so potent that they create a haze almost able to be touched, which then settles on each object and fuses into the skin and fabric. This smell then becomes something etched into the skin as well as the memory.

The atmosphere of leaving is established by further details of particular objects that are connected to this Istanbul afternoon. For example, the horses, reined to carts carrying coal, fish and other produce, are listless. Under the hot sun they hang their heads looking for some relief from the pounding light and heat reflected from the streets and buildings. Sweat glistens from their bodies as they try to conserve energy. The appearance of horses in a city performing haulage work stands in stark contrast to the mechanised and industrialised cityscape in which the narrator finds

¹⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, S.47.

himself at the end of the journey, and over fifteen years later at the conclusion of the novel. The horses represent another type of urban area and another time, yet fit into this context as just one element of the noise of people and machines. These are not organised or ordered sounds of voices that can be readily deciphered, rather the sound is a “Stimmengewirr”¹¹ in which single words and phrases of individuals merge into a chaotic cornucopia of sound. The noise of motors and car horns also merges into this cacophany and the sense of oppressive heat. This constant interaction of people, animals and machines makes the marketplace a fixed point in the memory as the senses are totally engaged in attempting to distinguish these overwhelming and connected stimuli.

From this view of the city, the narrator’s gaze returns to the railway station. The intensity of activity despite the heat outside the station is reflected inside the station, and particularly on the platform. As the narrator becomes accustomed to the situation, he begins to pick out various individuals. Initially he notes the train drivers, conductors and mechanics undertaking their customary inspection of the train. Their behaviour stands in contrast to the *Reisenden* and the *Zurückbleibenden*; for the *Reisenden* this journey is a unique experience forming a crucial marker between quite different routines. However, the railway employees carry out their regular routine, almost oblivious to the intense emotion swirling around them, yet this routine job is necessary so that the unique experience of the *Reisenden* occurs. Nevertheless these railway employees recognise the importance and status of their position – and let everybody else know - as they close the carriage doors “voller Stolz.”¹²

The leaving is also a celebration, a moment that marks the rite of passage of leaving a community. The narrator breathlessly describes this whirlwind ceremony as the minutes and seconds before departure stretch unbearably. In this short period of time there is frenetic activity. Travel provisions, such as food and drink, particularly raki, are presented to the *Reisenden* with ceremony in between kisses, hugs and words of advice. These exchanges of wishes are filled with insistence, as each person tries to calmly convey both to him/herself and to the others all that is in their heart and head in these few moments, hoping that each detail will be recorded. However,

¹¹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.47.

¹² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.48.

the internal anxiety cannot be hidden as all recognise that the leaving reaches deep into the hearts of each person and needs to be both celebrated and mourned.

A final act of this ceremony of leaving occurs just as the train is about to depart. This act is both official and commercial. The official act of leaving is the checking and stamping of passports and luggage by the customs and police officers. (This process continues as long as the journey proceeds across Turkish territory.) They are described by the narrator as “hochnäsig” and “angeberisch”¹³ implying that their power is exercised in an arrogant and demeaning manner. Passing through customs barriers is a situation in which an individual surrenders control to both the unwieldy and unyielding regulations of the bureaucracy, as well as to the possible capricious interpretation of these regulations by individuals working in an official capacity. In this situation the state recognises that it too plays a role in the leaving: not only to prevent those it sees as undesirable from leaving, but also as confirmation that the state approves entry and exit. This action can also be interpreted as the official farewell by the state on behalf of the community.

The commercial side of this ceremony of leaving can be located in the narrator’s description of the *fliegende Händler*. These quasi-legal individual salesmen swiftly move amongst the carriages, imploring the *Reisenden* to buy their undeniably useful goods. Even in this moment of intense emotion, the *Reisenden* are less convinced of the quality of these goods than the *Händler*. Indeed, the type of goods offered presages the mixed business retail shops of Kreuzberg discussed in the previous chapter. These goods are a mixture of useful and useless, sacred and profane, perishable and durable, even site-specific such as “Sprachlehrbücher für Deutsch in zehn Lektionen”, but which together connect all the people to this railway station at this specific moment of leaving.

A singular moment then brings together all those present on the station and in the train. The train’s whistle is blown, as if the train itself is bidding farewell in the name of all the *Reisenden*. This whistle marks a definitive point that will separate the *Reisenden* from the *Zurückbleibenden*. Similarly, this point also binds together those travelling to a partially similar fate. At this point the people and objects standing on the station become indistinguishable, just a “Wald von winkenden Händen, Armen und Taschentüchern.”¹⁴ This phrase evokes well the movement of individual arms

¹³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.48.

¹⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.48.

and hands merging into a disembodied mass. The tone also adds to this sense of movement: the repetition of the ‘-en’ sound conveys a sense of constant vertical and horizontal movement. Even in this mood of intense group excitement, the emotions also draw out the sense of self, and even those who would otherwise act with restraint find the self confidence to call out “Vergiß mich nicht.”¹⁵ Ören’s point is to emphasise that the emotions generated by leaving can lead to an honest appreciation of self in a relationship about to undergo a transformation, particularly in terms of physical separation. Appreciating this transformation, these last memories are treasured and will be the most quickly recalled:

Alle bemühten sich außerordentlich, jedes einzelne Wort aufzuschnappen und im Gedächtnis zu behalten.¹⁶

This process applies both to individuals and to the community. The great detail included in this leaving scene and the use of “wir” and “unser” reveal that the narrator sees himself as part of this community and that the emotional tumult influences his connection to this space. The leaving is moreover both the point of separation from the cultural environment of Istanbul, and in the first few moments of the journey the silence becomes a significant shared moment for the *Reisenden*. After the overstimulation of the leaving, the *Reisenden* sit alone with their thoughts, each contemplating the life left behind, the forty hour journey ahead of them and the challenges of a new life in Germany.

(ii) The journey

The journey is a time and space of transition. Yet during this journey the first steps to creating a new community are taken. These first steps can be identified in the things shared by the *Reisenden*. As the narrator in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* acknowledges they had all drawn a ticket in the same lottery (“... das gleiche Los teilten.”¹⁷) In this sense the narrator acknowledges that they all share the same fate, a fate which at this point is quite unknown.

¹⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.49.

¹⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.49.

¹⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.49.

The first thing shared on this journey is the prayer-like silence mentioned above. In the depth of their own thoughts, they search for something known to them on which to fix their vision. In a space where everything is unknown, safety lies in being able to identify with something or somebody. This silence appears to bind them together, as well as to separate them in a permanent fashion from the world they have left behind:

“... in diesem Moment jede Beziehung zur Außenwelt abgeschnitten.”¹⁸

In this silence, they are also creating some distance between each other in this carriage as it becomes their present world. For the next forty hours, their experience of the world will be mediated through the spatial and temporal context of this railway carriage. This physical space is not vacant but filled with unknown people, their stories, hopes and expectations.

Aras Ören poignantly expresses the challenges of adapting to a new system of social norms or obligations and behaviours. Just before the train crosses the Turkish border into Bulgaria the narrator muses about the other characters and the challenges ahead of them, and in particular, he contemplates the power of social conventions:

Dennoch standen die üblichen Konventionen und traditionellen Umgangsformen weiterhin im Weg. In unsere neuen Rollen hatten wir noch nicht hineingefunden. Es war eine befremdliche und etwas gezwungene Situation.¹⁹

Although this passage is situated in the immediate scene of the train journey, the feelings can also be expressed in the form of a metaphor about the process of migration. The narrator expresses the idea that each culture and situation in that culture has its own conventions of appropriate behaviour. He reveals his frustrations that these conventions still apply in the railway carriage, and influence his own behaviour. Words such as “üblich” and “traditionell” standing alone do not suggest such annoyance, but combined with the spatial image of “weiterhin im Weg stehen”, they underline the power of intransigence attached to traditions. These forms of behaviour are seen as restrictive and fixed, or as occupying the same position, as opposed to the dynamic impulses of people in a situation of intense change like migration. A further interesting element in this image is that the setting, the

¹⁸ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.49.

¹⁹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.81.

compartment, is fixed, whereas the train moves at a constant, faster than human, motion.

On a wider scale this scene focusing on the train journey raises the question of appropriate behaviour. Is the compartment an extension of Turkey? Or is it already Germany? Or is it the beginning of the creation of new forms of behaviour? As the narrator notes, these characters have not yet found a way into their new roles, partly because these roles have not yet been decided, although ironically their new roles are fixed under the socio-legal definition, *Gastarbeiter*. Yet if we assume these roles are dynamic, the characters will always be adapting into new roles and the expectations of these new roles. With embarrassment, and slowly, the characters move into different modes of behaviour. This time of change will be experienced as “*befremdlich*” and “*gezwungen*”. These phrases convey a feeling of being fraught and tense, as these changes demand new modes of behaviour within a life still determined by economic decisions over which they have little power.

The long railway journey is a setting in which many different roles are played out: the traditional duties and expectations are performed; the new roles in Germany, including dreams and ambitions are discussed; the uncertainty of how to behave; and over time this space becomes transformed through this interaction. The space becomes a site of storytelling, and a space which inspires confidence and trust, which in turn allows the characters to move from a “*gezwungen*” feeling to one of feeling relatively comfortable with the other passengers despite the physical discomfort. Indeed, the physical discomfort of being in this space at the end of the journey sometimes is momentarily preferable to the fear of the unknown experience awaiting the characters outside this space that has become known.

The journey allows the narrator the space and time to undertake an intense reckoning of the past and how the past is linked to the future. Through the words and actions of the other characters, the narrator is struck by the power of the past to determine the behaviour in the present. These memories of experiences set out the signposts for the narrator’s knowledge of his past. Telling or recalling such stories are also part of the process of making sense of the place where he is in the present. A different way of seeing past experiences also opens up a different reckoning of his current position:

Nicht nur, daß er [Tefvik Çiçek, one of the passengers] das friedliche Bild, das ich mir von meiner eigenen Vergangenheit gemacht hatte, zerstörte, er brachte auch meine Gedanken über die Zukunft durcheinander und versetzte mich in Unruhe. Mir erschien es paradox, daß ich mich mit demjenigen identifizierte, dem ich das zu verdanken habe.²⁰

This uncertainty about the past - in the narrator's mind, previously settled - places his future plans or dreams into question. This connection or influence leads us to the dilemma that the comments of the other passengers, with whom the narrator shares a common fate, influence him in two main ways: it either relaxes him so that he feels comfortable or it so disturbs him that he feels confused and fearful about his future. From this observation we can see that the views of a community, in general, have a profound influence on feelings experienced by an individual.

Within these extensive, complex and interwoven musings by the narrator the paradox is laid bare with an amusing sense of irony. The narrator describes, as a paradox, the feeling that those with whom he shares so much and with whom he is identified, are also those who cause him such uncertainty, tension and selfdoubt. Such a paradox underlines how the physical, emotional and cultural closeness of people can lead to anxiety and fear of the world outside the community, as well as the joy of shared experience. So, this train journey is a formative experience for the creation of the diaspora. And in the diaspora such a paradox can lead to conformist behaviour and even more rigid adherence to or interpretation of traditional custom than in the home country. Another effect is that this tension and closeness can lead to many and effective creative solutions drawing on the energy and ideas generated from different cultures, such as these two novels. This paradox then lies at the heart of the special type of *Gemeinschaft* or community present in these novels, and in turn, influences the sense of place felt by the individual.

In such a situation built on paradox, there are many choices about ways to adapt, and the approach to the present ("das Jetzt") lies very much in the individual. The response of the narrator, both in this scene and throughout the story, indicates one way in which individuals can assert their sense of self and lessen their tie to the community or group. In this scene the narrator chooses to distance himself from the talk of frustrations at home and fear of the new country by focussing on positive or friendly thoughts ("freundlichere Gedanken"). Indeed, by being accompanied -

²⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.89.

perhaps in the form of a guide or mentor - this transition period would 'bridge' the gap between the past and the future, and metaphorically between the individual and the community.

Das Jetzt war lediglich ein Übergang zwischen dem Gestern und dem Morgen; so sollte es für mich sein. Freundlichere Gedanken sollten mich bei diesem Übergang begleiten, Pläne, Hoffnungen.²¹

The use of the word "Übergang" is insightful. Not only does it contain the meaning of temporal transition, but also spatial transition, and furthermore "Übergang" indicates a movement through space; that is, a literal passing or 'going over' from one (cultural) space to another. (This image reflects the usage identified in Monika Fischer's dissertation discussed in the first chapter. Fischer effectively contrasts the analogy of the 'border crossing' of Chicanas in the United States with that of the 'bridge crossing' of the Alamancilar, Turkish women migrants, in Germany.) This *Übergang* is a dynamic space, in which a different kind of activity occurs, and has no past, but a future in which the future is not yet played out. All that the passengers have is the present and a position of passing from Blake's 'old world dying' to 'the new world yet to be born.' The *Übergang* is a further description of the movement from rural community to industrial society like in early 19th Century Europe, and illustrates the deep ruptures in feelings of belonging caused by and inherent in such physical and psychological movement.

However, the narrator's reflections offer more. By reflecting on this journey, its uncertain conversations, the actions and reactions of the characters and the effect each has on the other, the narrator pieces together his relationship to these other people and the common things they share which make up a community. This process can be seen as a remembering of various fragmented and interconnected events that enable him to make sense of these new surroundings. Each of these events is loaded with emotions that form crucial points of connection between each remembered event.

There are two other terms in this quotation which reveal much about the thinking of the narrator at this point in the process of migration. "Lediglich" suggests that there is merely a singular reason or purpose for the present, as if the present is a temporary phase through which the characters must pass, and as quickly as possible.

²¹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.90.

This constellation of the present appears highly structured and restrictive and a curious usage in the light of contemporary chaos theory where every thing is in a dynamic state, not static, and every thing is affected and constituted by the multilevel relationship with other things. Ironically, this dynamic theory of time also reflects theories of identity formation in a migrant community. Owing to the revelation of many different and new influences on an individual, a continual process of adjustment and orientation to the new space in the form of everyday social practices occurs, as outlined by Pierre Bourdieu and Michel de Certeau.²²

Complementary to this usage of *Übergang* is the attached indefinite article “ein”. Instead of providing a definite way, the narrator brings across an idea of pluralities; that is, there are many ways of going over from past experiences to the future. Each individual experiences this *Übergang* differently. The author slowly recognises these different experiences later in the novel as he recalls more recent meetings with others who travelled on this journey, or with whom he worked in his first job, or with whom he first lived in the *Gastarbeiter* hostel. All these people and these different types of experiences reveal the ways people make sense of the space where they find themselves. This recognition contributes to the different type of *Gemeinschaft* that has grown in Berlin-Kreuzberg.

In *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* there are many types of journeys. Indeed, these journeys, either by foot or by train are important because they form a framework for understanding the novel. The description of the journey from Turkey to Germany is iconic in modern German and Turkish literature and reveals much about how this diaspora community in Germany develops. The setting of the train is also crucial for the sharing of experiences insofar as these contribute to the building of relationships.

An important element of the journey as a rite of passage is developing a sense of self. This sense of self grows not only from the separation anxiety from parents, friends and culture, but also an acknowledgement of responsible participation in another society. These journeys provide not only a space for the telling of stories, but the journey itself becomes a source of stories wherein each individual has a special and unique role, yet can only be fully encountered through a shared experience. This

²² see Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* Polity Press, London 1991, and also Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (transl. Steven Randell) University of California Press, Berkeley 1984.

process involves creating new relationships as individuals move from being nameless, unfamiliar and unknown to being named, familiar and known. In the journeys described by both Ören and Özdamar the shared experience produces a sense of equality as each passenger is subject to the same physical conditions, and each has at least temporarily the same goal.

The train journey also functions as a meeting place in the same way as the street, as suggested in Chapter One. The space is designed to enable a given number of people to travel in relative comfort. Also the seats are set opposite to each other, allowing passengers to turn easily and talk with the person near them. As well the situation of travelling is shared which gives the passengers an initial theme of discussion. In this way many things can be shared: conversation about personal history and ambitions, as well as food and drink, shoes and cigarettes.

(ii) (a) Conversation

Conversation brings these characters together. The spatial and temporal setting of the railway carriage on a long journey into another country for an extended (or indefinite) period of time plays a crucial role in the type of conversation that takes place. This setting also accelerates the process of conversation; that is, the small space, the intimacy of sitting next to someone unknown, always physically in contact with another human being creates a sense of being connected to this person. This sense of being connected becomes a default mechanism and to refrain from participation is unusual, and this refraining marks out Nilgün and Ibrahim Gündoğdu for speculation and observation by the narrator. The physical intimacy encourages a sense of trust as a number of the characters reveal their deeply held hurts, regrets and hope for the future. This form of conversation represents both a metaphor of this community, as well as a necessary element for building this community. This conversation is also dynamic. Each comment or way of telling a story provokes a reaction from other characters - all of which is unexpected.

Conversation between the characters is one of the small, meaningful and interrelated events which indicates the building of relationships. In these conditions on the train journey, some of the characters shine and some only become noteworthy through later connections. Each character plays a distinctive role. Tefvik Çiçek, for example, becomes the catalyst for conversation. He is willing to share his past

experiences, and similarly Muharrem, another passenger, is willing to express his future hopes. The reaction of the other characters to Tefvik Çiçek's words reveals an acknowledgement that they all share a common fate. This acknowledgement through silent nodding or through the expression on their faces or words relaxes the other passengers enough to share in some part their own dreams, however extravagant such dreams appear in the mind of the narrator.

Conversations during the rail journey from Istanbul to Munich occur as a central feature of Aras Ören's novel. The journey becomes an initial example of the *Notgemeinschaft* which develops further into the migrant community in contemporary Germany. These attempts occur through both conversation and silence - both can be understood as the initial process through which the characters let go of their old lives and begin to take on new 'skins' or 'masks' or 'identities'.

There are six passengers in the compartment scene described by the narrator. For the first period of time - perhaps an hour, but it is never clearly defined - each character is lost in their own thoughts and they are scarcely described by the narrator, as the late afternoon sun on the familiar landscape and the rhythm of the train, draw him deeply into his own memories. This initial journey to Germany is recorded in flashback and is the narrator's way of unlocking the identity of Ibrahim Gündoğdu, whose life experience can be understood as a parallel or shadow of the narrator.

As usual in such contrived settings, the silence is broken by a set piece formal request²³. Nilgün, a young woman sitting next to the narrator and by the window - the only female in the compartment - asks for the window to be closed, ostensibly, according to the narrator, to avoid her hair being blown out of place. Or, he contends, to draw attention to herself.

This request acts like a magnet to Cavit, a young man on the opposite side of the compartment. In the narrator's eyes, Cavit is trying to impress the young lady, but unsuccessfully ("unerfahrener Cavalier"); Cavit remonstrates that they had not considered the lady's wishes. However, the narrator is closer and shuts the window (to his own annoyance); Cavit, who had quickly sprung to his feet in an awkward chivalrous manner, is left standing. However, he quickly recovers the situation by introducing himself to each of the passengers. This introduction breaks the ice and the other passengers start speaking with each other. Almost as if they had all been

²³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.66.

waiting for just such a situation to arise. In effect through conversation they begin to make sense of their surroundings and these strangers slowly become known and recognised.

These scenes of introduction in the train are important for this work because each character has the time to learn something about the other characters. The narrator notes that these introductions make the atmosphere of the carriage “lebhaft”. Each character experiences a slow winning of confidence - enough to feel able to tell their story to the other passengers. However, each character relates their story differently; some speak with authority (such as Tefvik Çiçek), others little or not at all (such as Ibrahim Gündoğdu or Nilgün). The narrator then interprets their stories from their appearance, how they behave, and the few words they do speak.

Through the words of Tefvik Çiçek, the experience of leaving is expressed. Tefvik ‘Bey’ (“Bey” is a sign of respect, and in this case is given by the other passengers) relates a tale which finds accord with the experience of the other passengers. In a style described as clear and precise, Tefvik Çiçek notes the illegal bargaining and complex negotiations that are required to obtain a passport and relevant visas. Such is the demand for these travel documents, he exclaims despairingly, it is as if all of Turkey wanted to apply.

Man könnte meinen, die ganze Türkei hatte sich versammelt, um sich Pässe für eine Reise nach Deutschland ausstellen zu lassen.²⁴

Tefvik Çiçek’s role is important because his story embodies many of the reasons that the passengers in the compartment have for leaving Turkey. He is respected, knowledgeable, a bank executive (therefore middle class) who is daily confronted by small acts of corruption and prejudice. He resigns - and adds that his relationship with his wife had broken down; and the rumours that his wife had a lover and the effect on his reputation, more than the truth, affects his sense of selfworth. It seems that his reason for leaving Turkey is a response to a lack of any form of belonging in either work or personal relationships.

Tefvik Çiçek’s words also reflect to some degree the life experience of each of the characters. The ability to empathise becomes an important way to establish a connection and then a relationship with another person, and in turn lightens the

²⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.67.

burden of others and awakens in them the sense of belonging somewhere. Empathy also allows a person, like the narrator, to see himself as part of a community. The space where stories are told, such as this first train journey to Germany, also contributes to the measuring of the first steps in establishing a feeling of connectedness - this journey becomes something shared in this community.

Was er [Tefvik Çicek] erzählte, glich mehr oder weniger dem, was wir alle erlebt hatten, aber als wir es aus seinem Mund hörten, erleichterten uns seine Worte, versetzten uns in die gemeinsame Aufregung darüber, die gleichen Sorgen zu teilen, und bereiteten uns eine zu-[69]sätzliche Freude. Auf einer solchen mit vielen Erwartungen verbundenen Reise berührte uns jedes gesprochene Wort, und alles, was erzählt wurde, ließ uns verletzlich erscheinen, band uns mit unsichtbaren Fäden noch fester aneinander. Jeder von uns war frei, an jedes Wort zu glauben, die unmöglichsten Dinge zu tun.²⁵

This passage offers many clues to the development of the *Gemeinschaft* or community we find in Kreuzberg as depicted in the novel. Through this passage we note many of the things that occur on this type of journey of migration. Firstly, there is conversation, true conversation where one person relates a deeply felt story to another. Secondly, one character speaks of common experiences to which the other passengers can relate. Thirdly, relating (or listening to) these stories can relieve the burden of being the only one who feels this way. Fourthly, a type of energy is spread through those listening (as if they were saying these words) which is transformed through sharing into a positive energy of feeling comfortable and confident. Fifthly, the journey is filled with hopes and expectations and therefore more able to affect those in the carriage. Sixthly, each event - the more difficult is also the more powerful - ties them together with “unsichtbaren Fäden” of memory. Finally, this process of listening actively or speaking honestly allows them to believe that their dreams, hopes and expectation, however impossible, can be realised. This conversation then becomes an unexpected or chance meeting place for them at the beginning of their journey of migration.

Yet at one point the conversation is broken as the characters fall into their own thoughts. The narrator’s “Gedankenspiele” place all the *Reisenden* into an imagined setting. The conversation needs to reach a deeper level of communication in order to continue. However, once Tefvik Çicek fails to return to the train at

²⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.68-69.

Belgrade railway station this possibility of deeper conversation is lost. None of the others is keen to reveal more about themselves. And this static or stagnant situation becomes too much for the narrator who prefers to remain in his own thoughts, rather than dare to reach out to his fellow passengers. In this sense, these small shared steps of conversation depend on the individual. Here, they proceed a few steps, but then stutter. At this point then the level of trust lies at a superficial level, not immediately at a deeper level. Consequently, Tefvik Çiçek's disappearance is an important reality check for the passengers because they cannot supply much information about him to the railway guards; they realise they really do not know each other at all.

(ii) (b) Hopes, dreams and expectations

The hopes, dreams and expectations that these characters carry vary from escaping personal difficulties or institutional corruption, establishing new boundaries, acquiring wealth and prosperity to display at home, and as a way out of poverty. In this sense their expectations are focused on Turkey rather than Germany. Their expectations are directed towards what can help them at home rather than establishing themselves in Germany. These hopes indicate many things not only about these characters personally, but also about the migrant experience. Their hopes range from the short term to the long term, from the achievable to the unachievable, from the silent to the spoken, from the spiritual to the material, from the restrictive of the known to the lure of unknown or mythic Europe. A major factor affecting these dreams is the time limit set for their stay in Germany, often set in the conditions of their contract of work. Accordingly their dreams are adjusted to fit this timeframe. As well this time frame affects the depth and breadth of their participation in this new community. If their stay is temporary, transitional or contingent, their connections to the community will chiefly be elsewhere and the connections they make in the new culture will be ones that will help them in their home country, rather than the ones that will support them in Germany.

However, for these characters who have grand dreams of establishing a new and materially prosperous life, this new space and culture represents something quite different. Importantly, the gulf between their dreams and the reality of the jobs they are initially assigned is huge. Muharrem, 35 years old, travels to Germany for "business" reasons, and his plans for agriculture must wait, as he heads to work in the

mines at Oberhausen. The assumption is that he will be on the lowest level. Similarly, Cavit is sent to Köln to work for Ford, and Nilgün to work for Sarotti in Frankfurt. These characters leave a culture which did not want them and being exported to Germany solves many problems for the Turkish government, such as, a reduction of unemployment in Turkey, as well as gaining greater foreign currency reserves through remittances sent from Turkish residents abroad. As well, these characters continue a search for dignity and selfrespect. They have a difficult role: their home culture is partly oppressive, yet also forms a strong spiritual and physical link, a centering point. Such people were originally seen as ideal *Gastarbeiter*; they would fulfill their work contracts based on two years in rotation and then leave. Curiously, and perhaps ironically, these people have stayed and become de facto migrants; behind and beyond the official indifference they have found a culture which nurtures their cultural links, and begins to celebrate their skills and talents. These skills and talents are reinvested into this community yielding a greater prosperity, as well as a stronger and deeper sense of belonging in this new place. The goals they achieve may not necessarily be those they set out with, as underlined by the narrator's melancholy musings at the end of *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, but the journey has enabled them to locate other paths leading to dream and hopes hitherto unseen when they set out from Istanbul.

(ii) (c) Food, drink and cigarettes

Another part of sharing is that of travel provisions as social lubricants. Each represents a way into a conversation with others. Again, the young man, Cavit, begins this sharing, by offering cigarettes, principally, to be able to engage in conversation with Nilgün. However, his attempt is stymied by a conflict in social obligations: should he offer a cigarette to the young woman first, or to the older man, Tefvik Çiçek, who seems to have greater social status than she. Underlining his obedience to a patriarchal and age-based hierarchy, he offers first to the older man. This act indicates that Cavit has a tendency to retain these traditional links, however, his initial hesitation suggests that he will be open to newer systems of behaviour, particularly if they appear to benefit him.

Curiously, Nilgün appears slighted by this ranking of obligations - she knows that she is the object of Cavit's stumbling attempts at conversation. Her reaction

conveys a feeling that she belongs to another part of the urban social hierarchy, in which women themselves can look after their needs, and need not rely on men to offer them cigarettes; they can have these cigarettes in their own right. Yet, Nilgün also retains another sense of power, leaving the cigarette unlit between her lips, and Cavit scampers “hochrot” to light her cigarette.²⁶

So, this offering of cigarettes acts as a conduit and also an indicator of the way in which these characters begin to interact with each other. The senses are engaged in smoking, in taste, touch and smell - smoking is also an acceptable form of social interaction, which helps the characters make sense of this transitional environment. Smoking can also be a sign of nerves, and this movement of the hands can act to calm the senses. Smoking ‘Western’ cigarettes also indicates an assumption of higher social status. For Nilgün, smoking cigarettes in a public space is also a clear assertion of her role as a modern woman. Yet, other conventions prevail because she is excluded from the male-only activity of drinking raki.

Smoking then forms an example of a kind of binding between these characters, particularly between the narrator and his fellow *Reisenden*. For example, Ören uses the “wir” form extensively, even if the narrator also appears hesitant in locating himself as part of this group. The narrator tries to create a distance between his experience and that of the typical migrant, but throughout the novel each character he meets asks questions which lead him to a recognition of his own part in this community.

Cavit also introduces the sharing of food and drink. This act draws him more into the circle of attention and binds the group of men through a ritual of drinking raki shared from the same bottle. Likewise, each brings food to the makeshift table of upturned cases (food resting on all their belongings and memories): cheese, bread, Köfte, honeymelon, nuts and sweets - some of these foods retain a Turkish name even in German. Like the food served at the wedding reception discussed later, the rituals of gathering to prepare and eat food together are integral to rituals of celebration that focus those present on what is shared in common.

Together, the four men (excluding Ibrahim Gündoğdu) enjoy a meal which none could have provided separately. This act of sharing builds a relationship based

²⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.72.

on common needs and a common respect for each person able to provide something valuable for the physical and cultural nutrition of all.

Further the rituals surrounding food occur at significant moments of recognition and selfidentification by the author. For example, the meeting between the narrator and Ibrahim Gündoğdu, takes place outside a mixed business selling food and drink, as well as functioning as a point of social contact and cohesion. The wedding ceremony at the end of the novel includes a celebratory feast of food and drink. As well, the habit of sitting around a table, often with those unknown, provides a space for social interaction; a space for storytelling. At this point the narrator meets the *Kelimehändler* who stimulates him to question his own place in contrast to that of Ibrahim Gündoğdu.

Food and drink also represent different parts of the process of migration. For example, on the train journey into the unknown - where even the towns and cities to which the *Reisenden* have been assigned are unknown and become both mundane and magical - the food and drink is simple and shared. The food also represents different levels of belonging to a new culture. On the train, the passengers eat food specific to their cultural and geographic background. Their recognition and acknowledgement of this food is assumed; they know the taste and how to eat it. Many humorous stories of misunderstandings caused by not knowing food can be found in the work of Şinasi Dikmen, a writer with a keen sense of insight and comic irony.²⁷ Consequently, the uncertainty caused by misunderstandings about food habits indicates the importance of food to the culture and selfidentification of each member of a community and the difficulty of knowing beforehand what is expected in another culture. Indeed, this meal may well be the last they share before entering a new cultural environment in which their first experiences will be of loss and bewilderment.

This sharing of food, drinks and cigarettes also contributes to the creation of a friendly and trusting atmosphere. Each element shared binds the characters closer together; already bound by a common fate of leaving Turkey for Germany, and this more intimate atmosphere allows the characters to develop deeper discussions about themselves, their society and their expectations. For example, Tefvik Çiçek holds forth about democracy as a concept and then using metaphors explains how it works

²⁷ Şinasi Dikmen, *Hurra, ich lebe in Deutschland. Satiren*. Serie Piper, München 1995.

in Turkey. His explanation leads us to an appreciation of the underlying socio-political tensions in Turkish society which have contributed to pushing these passengers out of their communities and to working in Germany which causes them to form a new kind of community there.

(ii) (d) Shoes

Just as food and drink become a focus of sharing for the men, shoes play a similar if more comical role in the journey described in Özdamar's novel. The shoes represent not only individuality, but also the many journeys that are made. Shoes also are worn for different purposes and at different periods of life. I will briefly mention how Özdamar represents journeys, and then link this to the significance of shoes on this first journey. In *Die Brücke* the narrator tells the stories of a number of journeys: each journey presents a different part of her character, and acts as a transitional phase or bridge from one geographical space to another, and also a different type of relationship with these spaces. At the beginning of the novel²⁸ the narrator describes the journey from Istanbul to Munich. This description fills only one and a half pages, less significant compared to the nearly one hundred pages describing a similar journey in Ören's novel. Later journeys include holidays to Paris, return to Istanbul, then return journey (as a student) to Berlin, and in Part Two her journey to Anatolia in the heart of Turkey.

In the description of this first journey features similar to Ören's novel emerge. Primarily, the sense of loss is gradually felt, and the young woman reacts to this feeling by beginning to build relationships with the women (all unnamed) who sit with her in the compartment of the railway carriage. An initial reaction is to feel the loss of her mother, so she tries to identify emotionally with one of the other women, all older than herself. She searches for somebody who looks like her mother. In this search she remembers the shared times and the shared love. Her emotional and physical link to her mother is expressed in the metaphor of her shoes, which once stood so harmoniously next to her mother's. Shoes are personal. They fit personal wants, needs and tastes. Additionally, shoes convey something of the personality of

²⁸ *Die Brücke*, p.14-15.

the person wearing them, in terms of colour and design, as well as functioning as a covering for the body from heat, sun, rain and cold.

In taking off their shoes, the narrator notes how similar the women become. They act in the same way when taking off their shoes and leaving them standing next to each other on the floor, the shared space between them. When they need to stand up and walk around the carriage or go to the toilet, they stand in any pair of shoes and hobble about in shoes quite unfitting to them.

The narrator cannot find any woman who is like her mother. None of them can share the same feelings or experiences. She expresses this sense of loss through crying - but only behind dark sunglasses because she feels uncomfortable openly weeping in front of these women. Here her experience ill fits this new situation; these dark sunglasses serve to protect her from the outside world. They are like windows filled with opaque glass, affording little exchange between outside and inside. Being able to take off these sunglasses and find shoes that fit her feet as she takes her first steps in this transitional environment is a crucial action in laying a foundation for behaviour and interchange in this new community.

(iii) The arrival and settling-in

Ja ich gab mich dann oft sogar der Illusion hin, bereits früher hier gelebt zu haben. Obwohl mir alles auf eine oberflächliche Art und Weise vertraut war und mir nicht unbekannt erschien, konnte ich mich jedoch nicht dagegen wehren, Sklave eines Fremdheitsgefühls zu werden, das mich befahl, wenn ich mich auf den Sinn, auf die geistigen Werte einließ, die ich hinter den Handlungen der Menschen vermutete, oder wenn ich Zeuge der merkwürdigen Handlungen der Menschen wurde, die [34] mir begegneten. In solchen Momenten reichten auch die schwülstigen Worte meiner Muttersprache nicht aus, um meine Lage wiederzugeben. Die Unfähigkeit, meine Umwelt zu verstehen und angemessene Worte zu finden, brachte mich fast zum Ersticken. In einer Welt, in der ich mich nicht verständigen konnte, sollte ich zu einem Fremden werden.²⁹

The development of a sense of place begins with nothing, with feeling a sense of being foreign in an unmarked space. An excellent example of the process of moving from nothing or 'not knowing' to 'knowing' can be found in the above passage from *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*. The narrator, once more struck by Ibrahim Gündoğdu's insistent questioning, begins to relate his story about his arrival in Germany. Notably, this arrival is described as being in the "Mitte" or "Zentrum" of

Europe³⁰, and, significantly, occurs in the huge open spaces of the central railway station in Munich. Here the buildings fill the narrator with awe – the people rushing in the square underneath the imposing rococo and baroque façades, walk with confidence, whilst the narrator stands staring overcome by the depth of the buildings and the complexity of activity. Ören's narrator uses this complex sentence above to explain his feeling of being unable to orientate himself in this new space. Indeed, firstly, as an act of psychological defiance, he proclaims he knows this space, but then admits this knowledge is at best superficial. The rushing together of the observations of the personal with the descriptions of the activity occurring around him leaves him quite bewildered. His bewilderment is further complicated by the appearance of the crowds of people, who all show a purpose and certainty in their behaviour, even though to him the crowds seem to walk in random or chaotic patterns. However, he is without purpose, standing there while all others pass around him. The narrator, therefore, is working his way through his response to this new space: initially claiming knowledge and then recognising his lack of knowledge. This lack of knowledge is accompanied by a feeling of discomfort which almost 'chokes' him and deprives him of even his own language, and almost with a sigh of relief, he recognises that he has become a stranger (foreigner) in the heart of Europe.

In this paragraph the importance of recognising the difference in the cultural landscape is highlighted; that is, in order to 'breathe' in this new community, the initial lack of knowledge must be acknowledged. This acknowledgement is a positive act of expressing the feelings of discomfort or disorientation. The narrator uses the term "geistige(n) Werte"³¹ to describe the feeling that there is something more behind the behaviour of the people inhabiting this space. The journey then becomes not only a physical journey, but also the metaphor for migration, and the arrival represents also the beginning of this process of belonging. At this first stage in the process the question facing the narrator is: to what does he belong.

The use of the term "Im Zentrum Europas" as the title of Part Two links together the spiritual or emotional with the geographic. The centre, like a heart, has many connotations: as the focal point of power in an urban area, as well as being linked to human emotions and feelings, particularly love. The word 'heart' conveys

²⁹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.33-34.

³⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.33,34.

³¹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.33.

an image of a living, breathing, pulsating society. In the same way too that the heart pumps blood throughout the body, the centre of Germany sends resources throughout the transportation network of Europe. These resources (material, human, cultural) are constantly sent around the circulatory system forming a complex system providing nutrients, recycling energy, materials and people. The centre or core functions as a contrast to the periphery. The *Reisenden* are drawn from the periphery of Europe (or even outside its boundaries) to the centre. Ören is mapping this journey across these boundaries. The further stage of this journey can be described as settling in to this new centre, which also needs to be mapped. The narrator arrives in a state of disorientation and is overwhelmed by a feeling of foreignness; he finds himself amongst the 'foreign' in a place marked out by foreign symbols which at first mean little to him apart from this initial feeling. Being "slave to the feeling of foreignness" seems to irk the narrator, yet the exploration of these feelings takes us into a deeper understanding of what it is like to be standing alone as a foreigner in Europe. The centre of Europe becomes not only a transport or cultural node, for example, the central railway station, but is also a space filled with stories of fear and uncertainty and embracing the new influences, which are then distributed throughout Germany.

"Mit wieviel Leid, wievielen Klagen und vergossenem Blut war unser mühseliger Lernprozeß verbunden!"³²

For the narrator in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* the process of reckoning is a search through his own memories. These memories recall emotions about the struggle and difficulty of learning to live in this new cultural environment. Again, the narrator uses "unser" to further emphasise that this individual experience is part of a wider collective experience. In the retelling of these memories his story is inextricably intertwined with these other *Gastarbeiter* with whom he shared a railway compartment on the journey to Germany, and also with those with whom he shared an eight bed dormitory in the first year of his stay in Berlin. Everything about Germany and its language had to be learned: letters, words, numbers. The use of numbers and mathematical equations is linked to every new experience; these numbers replace the names of people and their feelings. The effect is that human relations are dampened, made cold, rational and objective. The narrator's memories then fit into a sequence of numbers, reflecting the insight of the outsider on the

³² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.149.

German bureaucracy in which each individual is reduced to a number able to be quantified and measured.³³

The narrator relates the physical conditions, as experienced through the senses such as smell, of this settling in period.³⁴ This *Notgemeinschaft* functioned on many levels, not only did a process of binding occur, but also of separation. (Özdamar presents this dual process with great humour, which will be discussed in Chapter Five.) Beyond the need for pure nourishment, as explained above, the sense of smell brings strong memories. Despite the care that his colleagues show, indicating an enjoyment of the process of preparing food, this space is constantly filled with the smell of burnt fat, onions, wet washing and sweat. The cooking implements are basic and inexpensive, just sufficient for the preparation and consumption of breakfast and dinner. The men are generally unprepared for this style of living; their cooking is unenticing except for special occasions such as after shopping, and they cook with reluctance. This reluctance reflects their general attitude towards living and working in Berlin.

The next step is to consider the character of the men who make up this *Notgemeinschaft*. The narrator describes two sorts of people: those who retain their “Dörflertum”³⁵ and for whom “[j]eder Schritt nach außen war zögernd und abwartend”³⁶; and those men like the student Güngör whose vision is fixed on this new place. This dichotomy neatly follows the division between older and younger women in *Die Brücke*. The first group of men had already spent three years in the “Heim” in Berlin, worked at the same job at the same workplace and undertook everything together. They shopped together, were astounded at all the prices, felt challenged by the masses of people, debated whether they should buy a certain product and on discovering the price would calculate everything into Turkish lira. They spoke loudly in order to cover their feelings of insecurity, and thereby emphasised the patterns of behaviour expected of them in Turkey. Their presence in Germany was solely based on financial imperatives, but Germany was also an exciting and challenging adventure:

³³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.149-150.

³⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.151.

³⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.152.

³⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.152.

Zum erstenmal in ihrem Leben machen sie in einer fremden Umgebung neue Erfahrungen, gaben auch diese untereinander weiter und werteten sie aus.³⁷

These actions of staying together and giving each other advice were directed at personal, spiritual and cultural survival. However, such actions in the longer term lead to an insular and stagnant view of self and community.

While these men feel a deep sense of melancholy and resignation, Güngör, on the other hand, represents the other type of migrant who makes up this *Notgemeinschaft*. Güngör is distinguished from them through education and outlook. He works to gain money to support his chemistry studies and his words convey restlessness and ambition. The melancholic lyrics and music, as well as the mournful delivery of these songs embarrasses Güngör; he calls it “Fliegengesumme”³⁸, a deprecatory term that conveys a sense of rural sounds and points to a life long resignation inherent in the quasi-feudal social structure of rural Turkey. Güngör benefits from gaining a wider perspective of Germany and of Turkey and his studies grant him a higher status in this *Notgemeinschaft*. Indeed his words and actions form a new type of social interaction that is directed more towards Germany than the cultural landscape he has left behind. This outlook and confidence also marked by doubts and stinging criticism, gives him a bridging function between the requirements of a *Notgemeinschaft* and those of a mature community. Güngör doubts, however, if anything can emerge from this type of *Notgemeinschaft*:

‘Wir haben unseren ganzen Dreck, unsere ganze Provinzialität, unsere ganze Beschränktheit in unseren Koffern her-[156]geschleppt Was es in der Türkei schon bald nicht mehr gegeben wird, wird hier weiter existieren. Eine anachronistische Sensation mitten in Europe, na, wär’ das nicht was?’³⁹

Güngör’s words reveal prophetic insight. The position of the community in the diaspora often compels a retention of traditional practices to a degree not experienced in the home country, for example, the later analysis of the wedding reception brings out the curious contradictions involved in the maintenance of culture.

³⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.152.

³⁸ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.155.

³⁹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.155-156.

Güngör's statement is also curious because it points to a later encounter between the narrator and Muharrem, who also shared the railway compartment on the journey to Germany.⁴⁰ However, Muharrem, who had dreams of agricultural fame and fortune with a fanciful scheme of infiltrating German crops with a pest disease and then selling the antidote back to the Germans, shows that Güngör's statement is not always accurate. The narrator meets Muharrem by chance and finds him managing a small *Kneipe* in Kreuzberg on behalf of an elderly German widower. Muharrem proudly explains that he has a "gemischte Kundschaft." He serves beer and raki and addresses his customers in German or Turkish. Older men play cards, young boys play "flipper"; quite unremarkable happenings, even allowing for the overtly insulting comments of one of the Germans. The desire to expand the financial bottom line is something shared, and this scene is an example of how these common elements are explored tentatively and point to the development of a more complex community.

2. The formation of the mature community

In the second part of this chapter I will map out the migrant community from a different perspective; that is, according to its character as a mature community. For the purposes of this work a mature community is defined as a community of people living in the same geographic space with shared concerns who have built a strong formal and informal infrastructure and network of exchange opportunities. This part will focus on incidents derived from both novels and be divided into two sections. In the first section, I will once again analyse the passage from *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* transcribed at the beginning of chapter two, as well as the scene devoted to the wedding ceremony that follows directly after. The second section will concentrate on *Die Brücke*, particularly focussing on the narrator's second stay in Berlin as a translator⁴¹, and her third stay as a theatre student⁴². The underlying purpose of this analysis is to draw out characteristics of this mature society, which reinforces my contention that the community, like the built environment, is a crucial influence on an individual's sense of place.

⁴⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.163-166.

⁴¹ *Die Brücke*, p.109-123.

⁴² *Die Brücke*, p.146-172.

Eine verspätete Abrechnung

As the narrator in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* walks through Kreuzberg on his way to the wedding reception, he wanders through a vital community. Not only the built environment is “vertrauenserweckend”, but also the people who comprise this community seem familiar. This feeling of *Vertrautheit* becomes a major theme for the narrator as he enters the community hall (*Aile Düğün Salonu*). He has recognised this feeling of *Vertrautheit* in this community, but questions what then is this community. However, this search is quite different from the search for connections with the fellow *Reisenden* on the journey to Germany. The narrator finds a community at the wedding reception that is diverse, comfortable and confident in this space and has built a strong infrastructure. Maturity does not necessarily imply integration into wider society because, as pointed out in Chapter One, participation in wider German society is a process with few successful models, and in practice is legally and socially circumscribed.

During the wedding reception the characteristics of this mature community can be gained from three different perspectives: the narrator, Ibrahim Gündoğdu and the *Kelimehändler*. This division into three perspectives reflects some examples of the different interpretations of a mature community developing out of a process of migration.

(i) The perspective of the narrator

The narrator has previously described this Berlin Turkish community as neither ‘Turkish’ nor ‘German’ but something else. This something else is confusing and complex. Without intending to confirm stereotypes, the narrator assesses the men and women entering the *Salonu* according to their exterior appearance and behaviour. He greets people and justifies to himself that being invited to the same wedding already binds them, if not even created a deeper sense of belonging. However, the narrator simultaneously feels himself being similarly assessed and categorised. The man returns his greeting with a blank stare, as if to assert that in Germany all social relations are conducted on a different level, and he will not be treated poorly

particularly in front of his wife and children.⁴³ This reaction flummoxes the narrator, yet curiously it also proves his point that there is a different form of community here. As well this reaction is evidence of a mature community because a man from a lower socio-economic background is prepared to signal his discontent at the way he is treated. Nevertheless, this reaction also reveals an assumption of patriarchal power, which paradoxically causes a similar discontent and harm; some forms of cultural baggage are offloaded and some are carried further.

The narrator attempts another method of assessing the position of this community. He sees himself as a camera man.⁴⁴ The eye of the camera, particularly since the Berlin-based work of Siegfried Kracauer and Sascha Stone, has proved a powerful method of observation and analysis. The narrator is creating a distance between himself and the rest of the community, who through their certainty that they are in the right place, have caused confusion in him. To overcome this feeling of discomfort, he will observe rationally like a scientist, and store the images for later use. This image humorously reflects the technique employed in constructing this novel. In the *Nachbemerkung des Autors*⁴⁵ Ören reveals that he collected in a quasi-scientific fashion notes, newspaper clippings, photographs, archival information, brochures, telephone books and previous writings and then reconstructed and reproduced them to create “eine neue Realität”, as the narrator describes his own intention.⁴⁶

While finding himself in this curious position as both ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’, the narrator fixes on the most fundamental thing he shares with Ibrahim Gündoğdu; that is, a shared sense of *Heimat*. Indeed, he is certain that this invitation will return him to a “verlorengegläubte *Heimat*.”⁴⁷ This *Heimat* is more a connection to a space, which can be revived even after believed lost. This phrase indicates a depth of emotion and romanticism that the narrator has long concealed. The chance incidents in the book have provoked the reawakening of this sense of a connection, as well as an intense questioning of what it may be. The chance meeting and subsequent recognition at the beginning of the novel has led to many subsequent recognitions which finally lead to this recognition of a *Heimat*. This *Heimat* is a curious beast

⁴³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.288.

⁴⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.289.

⁴⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.333-334.

⁴⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.289.

⁴⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.289.

because it is neither the traditional notion of 'Turkish' nor 'German', yet it is also able to be shared:

... so teilten wir doch hier und [290] heute den gleichen glücklosen Aufenthaltsort, den wir als unsere neue *Heimat* betrachten wollten, und das Nationalitäten übergreifende Geflecht des gleichen Stadtteils.⁴⁸

The narrator comments pointedly and directly that the district of Kreuzberg plays a fundamental role in this concept of *Heimat* even if the space is "glücklos" and described as transitory. However, this description reflects well the historical setting in which a form of *Heimat* grew even though this outcome hardly reflected the original intention, as explored in the previous section.

The narrator then measures himself against Ibrahim Gündoğdu. Although both have 'succeeded' in terms of integration, their relative success is measured quite differently. Both have acquired different kinds of social status and this assessment can apply equally as a general comment on the adaptation of the migrant community to German society. Yet in this process of taking on cultural practices of German society, they actually lose their own regional and religious differences and begin to start looking all the same, even if they do not recognise this process. Nevertheless, the narrator places himself in this community and reveals the paradox that no matter how much he tries to distance himself from this community, he becomes more a part of it.

For the narrator the next step is the most challenging: where is this *Heimat*? Crucially, he has framed this concept geographically, and then goes deeper to investigate the dichotomy that does not appear to fit the situation that attracts his senses: "Ist das die alte, verlorengeliebte oder vielleicht die neue entstandene?"⁴⁹ The narrator notes that what he sees and hears in this community represents a new beginning and ponders whether there can be an answer to a question asked in this dichotomous form. All should decide for themselves and be able to defend their answer, but importantly the concept of a fixed *Heimat* leaves the narrator cold. Such questioning can be seen as a sign of a community in which discussion about *Heimat* and belonging is not only dealt with but also encouraged. Through the raising of these doubts the narrator has revealed that this community has moved a considerable

⁴⁸ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.289-290.

⁴⁹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.290.

distance from the *Notgemeinschaft* in which such doubts and questioning would have appeared absurd because one answer (Turkish) would suffice. However, for the narrator these connections are now more diffuse and complex.

The next step is to consider what this community looks like and sounds like. From these observations this community can be revealed as complex and dynamic. The narrator observes various groups of people, particularly their patterns of behaviour. By concentrating on this behaviour, certain conclusions can be drawn about the connection between their Turkish heritage and the space where they find themselves. The strength of this connection depends upon many factors, such as age, gender, place of birth, and the measure of their success in Germany. Yet, surprised by this unexpectedly “bunt, gemischte Gesellschaft”⁵⁰, the narrator can still draw many common threads in their behaviour, which again makes them all appear similar. Even taking into account the complexity and diversity of this community, the practised eye of the narrator can locate the similarities. This similarity, which can be understood as a type of comfort zone, is a crucial element in understanding the formation of a mature community.

The narrator describes many different people at this reception and importantly notes the separate spaces they occupy. The focus here lies on four groups which indicate some important ideas about a mature community: younger women, older women, younger men, older men. The difference in age is important because the older men and older women retain patterns of behaviour associated with the *Notgemeinschaft*, even though it is hidden under the trappings of relative wealth and adaptation to the new cultural environment. The young men and young women behave in a quite different manner, which is closer to a hybrid form influenced by the many variations of Turkish and German culture existing in Berlin.

The young women are well dressed in evening dresses “von der Stange”⁵¹, have a fashionable hairstyle and wear quality jewellery. They stroll (“schlendern”) amongst the tables, and speak loudly with engaging smiles. This description conveys an impression of confidence, power and status. For they are able to afford these material goods offered in a modern and European city, and expect to be able to possess them. Few obvious restrictions appear to be placed on them, yet they are always under the supervision of the older women, as well as the male gaze. However,

⁵⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.290.

⁵¹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.290.

their behaviour is not presented as anything out of the ordinary. From all these clues, these women can be seen as belonging to a generation comfortable and at ease in this environment, which can be interpreted as a sign of a mature community.

The description of the older women provides a strong contrast. These older women embody a previous pattern of behaviour; an important element of this identification is the headscarf.⁵² Of mostly middleaged and “kugelrund” appearance these older women sit quietly by themselves along the wall near the stage. They do not move from their bench, and when they whisper to each other and laugh, their hands are held “schamvoll”⁵³ in front of their mouths. These women then represent another perspective of a mature community, providing a more traditional role model that requires silence, obedience and not drawing attention to oneself in public. However, they all drink coca-cola, a powerful symbol of assimilation into the North American-European system of values, particularly popular and commercial culture. Although also available in Turkey, the importance of coca-cola here is that it replaces a traditional drink. Yet even amongst the women wearing headscarves there are differences in behaviour: the younger women wear more stylish decoration to distinguish themselves from the older women; these scarves also indicate different regions in Turkey. However, these headscarves are both a symbol of power and oppression insofar as the headscarf conveys a feeling of strength and untouchability. The behaviour of the older women in particular affirms their role as supervisors of all the activity occurring before them. Indeed, Ibrahim Gündoğdu’s wife is one of these women and is described as exuding this matronly but only partially matriarchal power.

The younger men form another distinct group that plays an important role in this mature community. Young men fit and able to work in the factories, particularly unskilled work or cleaning and clearing machinery and industrial waste materials, have been the dominant demographic group in the migrant community. Many of these young men belong to the second generation, and many still work in these lower paid jobs, while a significant number have entered through the German education system into higher skilled trades. This confidence explains to some extent their behaviour at the reception. The young men are active, bumping into each other, greeting acquaintances, talking loudly, anything to make themselves the centre of

⁵² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.291.

⁵³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.291.

attention, particularly from the young women. This forced friendliness is a public display that hides a private diffidence. Dressed in their ‘Sunday best’ they need to be seen; the verbs used to describe them indicate this sense of constant movement and energy: “stürzten”, “schütteln”, “stolzieren”, “klopfen”.⁵⁴ However, this individual powerplay can only be effective when it is situated within a community that recognises and encourages their behaviour. Within this “geschäftig” type of behaviour is a connection between traditional expectations of work and success according to both the dominant German society and the home society in Turkey. Within the dominant German society these young men are marginalised, which in turn influences their behaviour inside their own community. However, this separation is in no way definitive; in the streets of Kreuzberg where the second generation has grown up, they also feel comfortable, and have participated actively in setting these expectations of work and success.

The older men form another group that reveals the connection between the *Notgemeinschaft* and the mature community.⁵⁵ They are described as sitting at the table “mit Kind und Kegel”, and carry themselves with the demeanour of respected elders, except when they fall into a drunken brawl. However, this behaviour cannot disguise their peasant background – their identity is inscribed on their bodies; the hard manual labour they have undertaken and the harshness of rural poverty in their places of birth influence how they move, stand and speak. Indeed, this behaviour appears to be inherited and cannot be ‘scraped off’ or washed out, nor can a different style of clothing or accent change this heritage. This external appearance includes cheap, unfashionable clothing, recently acquired for this special occasion, and which they thought looked rather good! The narrator again focuses on their similarities. They gaze at the people strolling around the tables with “mürrischen Gesichtern”,⁵⁶ and all have the stereotyped bushy moustaches, and they sip at their drinks with a “unergründlichen Traurigkeit.” In the narrator’s description of this wedding reception, the older men are the only characters who reveal a sense of sadness. This sadness can be interpreted as a mixture of regret, longing and envy because they do not feel at home, while the young people who have grown up in Berlin walk about with seeming confidence and ease. This description reflects the

⁵⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.290.

⁵⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.290.

⁵⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.291.

stereotyped *Gastarbeiter* of the 1960s and 1970s. In their hearts they have never left Turkey; they still revere their home provinces. Nevertheless their fate is now tied to this mature community, which ironically is the legacy of their struggle during the preceding decades.

(ii) The perspective of Ibrahim Gündoğdu

Another important perspective on this mature community is revealed in the dialogue between Ibrahim Gündoğdu and the narrator. He represents the successful migrant who arrived with little and builds a business empire in Kreuzberg, and is able to afford a “prachtvoll” wedding celebration for his daughter. The first description of Ibrahim Gündoğdu⁵⁷ places him in the role of host, father and community elder, as well as successful businessman and role model. His authority is unquestioned. He greets the guests as they enter the hall and organises their seating arrangements, at his discretion, not according to the individual taste. His clothing adds to the sense of authority he commands: “schillernden, ölfarbenen Anzug.” The colour connotes gravity and knowledge, while “schillernden” leaves an impression of style, flashiness, bravado and fashion. This type of clothing marks him out as different from those around him, particularly the older men who carry their sadness and poor family backgrounds with them.

Ibrahim Gündoğdu is both the charming host, greeting the visitors, and the chief organiser. He gives orders to the waiter about tables and chairs. He gazes upon the scene, like a military leader surveying the troops, and is satisfied that all seems in its rightful place. Indeed, the reception seems to revolve more around him than his daughter and son-in-law. However, his success in business is linked to his role as chief organiser, as he gently cajoles and inspires the young waiter with phrases such as “Mein Junge” and “Mein Löwe” to encourage him not only to follow directions but also to act on his own initiative. Moreover, not only his words, but also his behaviour gives the impression that his role is central to the ceremony. For example, he is constantly busy with guests, fussing over them and their every need. Consequently it appears that all the preparations depend on him. Such an attitude,

⁵⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.291-292.

reminiscent of Turkish rural sensibility reveals that even in Berlin the marrying off of his daughter is a special responsibility.

The narrator, however, puts this prominent position in some perspective: “An seinem Dialekt hatte sich nichts geändert, aber er gebrauchte inzwischen andere Worte.”⁵⁸ By referring to his dialect the narrator indicates the similarity in background shared by Ibrahim Gündoğdu with the other guests. He implies that this man is the same, even if a few of his words have changed. The effects of migration and success in business have compelled the use of additional words and phrases. He is no longer the “wortkarg” Ibrahim Gündoğdu of the railway journey, but a representative of the successful migrant as seen by himself, this community and German society. Nevertheless, his dialect still connects him to his Turkish provincial background, his previous status as a *Gastarbeiter* and to the *Notgemeinschaft*.

When introducing the bride and groom, Ibrahim Gündoğdu reveals more about the characteristics of the mature community. The place of birth is still an important indicator of the value of this marriage, not just as a relationship of love but also of cultural maintenance. He is relieved that his daughter will marry a Turk, who is also from a nearby province, which conveys a sense of *Vertrautheit*: “... sie kommt nicht in fremde Hände.”⁵⁹ Here *fremd* may be another Turk, implying that the monolithic concept that all Turks are the same is broken down, and that in a mature community these divides can be gradually bridged. This process of bridging also implies that difference is inherent in a mature community.

Ibrahim Gündoğdu deepens this concept by referring to the boundaries of *Vertrautheit* in his explanation about why the marriage took place in Berlin. His answer reveals much about the strengths and weaknesses of this mature community. Not only is it a question of adherence to tradition, but also of business: “... nach so vielen Jahren haben wir auch hier eine Vergangenheit, einen Freundes- und Bekanntenkreis ...”⁶⁰

The use of the word “wir” is an explicit reference to his family, but can also be applied to the whole migrant community. Ören has here underlined an important outcome of migration; that is, that the migrant community has a past in Germany, a tradition that can be drawn on and transmitted and which is linked to a specific place.

⁵⁸ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.293.

⁵⁹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.294.

⁶⁰ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.294.

However, Ibrahim Gündoğdu makes it clear that this past does not replace the Turkish past, rather that there are two pasts that overlap, sometimes in a complimentary manner, sometimes in conflict. The mark of a mature community is accepting the existence of this conflict and being able to find a resolution, generally an ongoing process. The narrator ponders the importance of the word “geschäftlich”⁶¹ because Ibrahim Gündoğdu acknowledges that this success is an important part of his identity. The “prachtvoll” appearance of the reception reflects the depths of his pride. He even relates with vigour and delight the commotion caused by the bridal party driving in convoy up and down the Kurfürstendamm, the main shopping and tourist boulevard in West Berlin:

Das war vielleicht ein Lärm, sag ich dir. Ist das denn kein Grund, wenn
Ibrahim Gündoğdus Tochter heiratet, das ist ihr Hochzeitszug!⁶²

This presents a distinctive contrast to the behaviour of the Germans; the bewildered remarks of the police reveal that this noisy, joyful occasion forms a different kind of interaction with mainstream German society. As a one-off event, it can be seen and accepted as exotic, therefore, harmless, and not yet an imposition on the cultural norms of the host society. The tone is triumphant. He has organised the event and so primarily the attention of passersby is focused on him, and only secondarily on his daughter. He celebrates publicly with style, which would have been quite unimaginable in the days after he first arrived in Germany as a ‘nobody’. He has become ‘somebody’. This idea leads him on to exploring how he arrived at this position.

Ibrahim Gündoğdu explores this *Vergangenheit* by asking himself the question: “Von woher wohin?”⁶³ He excavates his own history from rural poverty in a small town to being able to rent a *Hochzeitssaal* in Berlin. These types of achievements are crucial to a mature community because they reveal the possibility of movement into a position of material rewards and higher standard of living. Ibrahim Gündoğdu makes the link with his “Babu” (whose death was the catalyst for the first meeting on the train between Ibrahim Gündoğdu and the narrator) who

⁶¹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.294.

⁶² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.295.

⁶³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.296.

represents some form of traditional power that still has currency even at this distance from the provinces of Turkey.

However, for Ibrahim Gündoğdu some traditions have more value than others. The music, he has organised, for example, shows great variety. At the beginning an earnest young man sings mournfully to the solo accompaniment of a saz, a Turkish string instrument. Later the “Oriental-Rock” band play rock & roll to which some of the very young boys and girls breakdance quite out of tempo. Other dancers show their jive steps. The band then changes into a more traditional form of music known as a *Çifte Telli*. The dancers respond by moving seamlessly into a quite different kind of dancing, which involves moving the body in a different style and rhythm. They effortlessly cross these cultural borders expressed in music and rhythmic movement, and these types of border crossings are an everyday experience for the second generation. Another form of border crossing discussed at the reception is the “deutsche Bauchtänzerin.”⁶⁴ She is highly praised by the Turkish community, the narrator is informed. Nobody appears disturbed by or disapproves of this dance being performed by a German. This episode represents a curious inversion of expected cultural practices, a form of hybridisation which leads to curiosity and surprise. This ability to adapt and accept new and outside influences and incorporate them into or fasten them onto existing traditions is an important sign of a mature community.

Finally, food and drink play an important role in Ibrahim Gündoğdu’s perspective on the migrant community. An astonishing assortment of drinks is constantly plied to the guests: Asbach, Coca-cola, whiskey, cognac, raki, water. The etiquette appears to revolve around the guests’ wishes, rather than a pure adherence to tradition. These drinks do not appear out of place at this reception. They are everyday drinks and reveal a mixed European, American and Turkish heritage. The food, however, which is bountiful reveals deeper cultural traditions: dates, pistaccios, döner, lahmacun, zerdeli pilav, borek and a wedding cake. These platters of food (many known by their Turkish name, rather than a German translation) have deeper links to the Mediterranean, while the wedding cake has become an entrenched European tradition. Holding these traditions of food in some form of balance is an evolving task and reveals a firm intention to maintain culture.

⁶⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.311.

(iii) The perspective of the *Kelimehändler*

The *Kelimehändler* plays an important role in the novel, even though he appears only once and briefly. However, his role is also significant for this mature community. He presents himself as the knower of information about what occurs in the community and how every person's fate is intimately linked with many others both in Germany and in Turkey; the narrator reacts with scepticism, bewilderment and great curiosity. (Ironically the *Kelimehändler*, as the narrator calls him, does not reveal his name, which links him to the narrator who also remains nameless throughout the novel.) The *Kelimehändler* is the source of another interpretation of the *Aufstieg der Gündoğdu* as expressed in the long title of the novel. The narrator learns of the extraordinary links in the networks of Ibrahim Gündoğdu's business interests, and in the process another shadowy side of the mature community is revealed:

Sie werden alles daran setzen, auch diese Aufenthaltserlaubnis [311] zu bekommen. Wenn es um ihren Vorteil geht, nehmen sie jede Rolle an, unverschämt sind die, vor allem, wenn Geld im Spiel ist ...⁶⁵

The *Kelimehändler* describes the result of political and social marginalisation. Having moved to a new environment where many older traditions are devalued, new systems of value come in to replace them. The *Gastarbeiter* generation arrived principally to earn money and status at a level impossible to acquire in Turkey, but as they stayed in Germany these material values came to dominate to such an extent that the *Hochzeit* may be "prachtvoll", but to the *Kelimehändler* it is "hohl und aufgeblasen".⁶⁶ According to this perspective the ceremonies in this new space have become stripped of meaning.

The interaction of this mature community with the dominant German society is also put into question:

Integration, Integration, das ist doch eine perfekte Integration. Jeder lechzt nach dem eigenen Vorteil, weiß, wo er zu [313] suchen hat, wahrscheinlich sind sie auf ihre Geschäftsbeziehungen angewiesen ...⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.310-311.

⁶⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.311.

⁶⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, p.312-313.

The *Kelimbändler* has an eye for sharp critique. He peers into things not as they appear to be, but as they are. He underlines that what the Germans and Turks have in common is demeaning to both. He admits that this is a form of integration, but set in shallow soil. Mutual dependence on economic priorities was the original reason for the recruitment of *Gastarbeiter* and now continues to provide common ground, but to him it is a show, not integration based on mutual recognition. Being clear and truthful about matters of value, including spiritual value, is inextricably linked to the identity of an individual and the complex role (or roles) each individual plays in their community. The *Kelimbändler* does not lay blame on the Germans or Turks, but on dishonesty. However, a perspective which draws on such caustic undertones also reveals the health of this community; that is, this community is able to produce a critical response from within.

Die Brücke

(iv) The perspective of the narrator as a translator

The narrator's experience of Germany in *Die Brücke* is separated into three periods: *Gastarbeiterin*, translator and theatre student. The latter two periods will be the focus of this section. Although these periods cannot be described as mature in the same way as the wedding reception scene in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, there are a number of clues which highlight how this movement to a mature society occurs. A deeper analysis of the narrator's experience as a woman and a migrant will be given in Chapter Five.

As a translator for the Siemens company's *Wohnheim*⁶⁸ the narrator plays a major role in the creation of a new type of community. Through her ability to translate German and Turkish after attending a language school in Konstanz, she gains status, and in this case knowledge equals power. The male and female workers rely on her knowledge to survive at work and outside of work hours. In this position where the traditional networks of support are absent, the young narrator takes over many different roles: supervision; solving disputes about cooking and washing up; translating at hospitals, doctors' surgeries and workplace; giving advice on matters of

⁶⁸ *Die Brücke*, p.109-123.

love, heartbreak and abortions; and controlling the male-female interaction in the *Wohnheim*. In all of these examples, the narrator along with the *Heimleiterin*, Madame Gutsio, acts as a conduit and mediator between the German culture outside the *Wohnheim* and the Turkish culture within. Her skills of mediation influence both this inside community as well as the external or outside view of this community *im Bau*. Her bridging role becomes the point of entry for German words, ideas and experiences to travel across a previous divide.

(v) The perspective of the narrator as a theatre student

The narrator's third period spent in Germany reveals a further stage in the maturity of this community. In this period, the narrator is a theatre student with strong connections to the left-alternative groups in West Berlin. These groups also include solidarity groups between Turkish and Greek students and intellectuals. In Berlin these Turkish and Greek students mix freely and with trust – which they would not be able to do in their homelands –, organise political demonstrations, meetings, information evenings and spend most of their time agitating for social change, while drinking coffee, eating, dancing, sleeping with each other, watching Godard films, listening to Brecht Lieder, visiting East Berlin, and studying. This list is not peculiar to these foreign students, but could apply to most students aligned to leftwing politics at this time. However, it is important to stress that the foreign students followed the lead of the German students in cultural and political expression:

Die deutschen Studenten hatten Dutschke als Studentenführer, bald bekamen auch die türkischen Studenten in Berlin ihren Chef. Die türkischen Studenten sagten im Cafe Steinplatz, heute Abend gibt es eine Versammlung [161] im türkischen Studentenverein mit dem neuen Mann aus der Türkei, er ist Kommunist.⁶⁹

However, within these similarities lie different approaches to issues in Germany and Turkey. The foundation of a separate (Turkish) student association reveals that these different approaches and issues require another type of community institution, one that is neither German, nor traditionally Turkish, but an institution that deals with both Turkish and international matters and based in Berlin. Their aim is to transport European ideas to Turkey. Although this type of community also

existed in Turkey, primarily it was confined to Istanbul and to the middle class able to afford tertiary education. Yet this direct action takes place in Europe, generally by students from middle class families, rather than in Turkey. The founding of this group also shows the complexity of the migrant community even at this early stage. This kind of passionate intensity for direct action differs remarkably from the resignation and melancholy of the older *Gastarbeiter* in the *türkische Arbeiterverein* that the narrator visited during her first stay in Germany.

Özdamar places her narrator in a scene of great irony. Although these politically conscious and active students talk of political, economic and social equality, a beauty contest takes place before the meeting and the winner receives a garland of flowers. This contradiction in the treatment of women is striking. The narrator makes no comment on this contradiction; the stark juxtaposition conveys the harsh message of double standards. The presence of a leading leftwing personality from Turkey to provide the inspiration and initiative for this group of Turkish students also indicates that the ties to Turkey and traditional conceptions of the roles of men and women are still strong. So, while this community gathers strength, particularly owing to its increasing diversity in beliefs and opinions, simultaneously this diversity can also reveal the fragility of the community, as individuals choose which traditions to maintain or adapt or which to leave behind.

Conclusion

At the end of this scene, the narrator meets Renate, his former girlfriend, who apparently lives next door to the Gündoğdu. Renate is a marginal character who represents the good German willing to respect and participate in the activities of the new community. Additionally, in leftwing circles at the time in Berlin, such participation earns some form of credibility. This chance meeting with Renate recalls the first page of the novel, indicating the importance of chance events as a narrative technique, and allows us to understand that original chance meeting from a deeper perspective. That original chance meeting with Ibrahim Gündoğdu became the catalyst for the intensive reexamination of self and community that follows. From the

⁶⁹ *Die Brücke*, p.160-161.

experiences of the individual, in this case, the narrator, we learn about the experiences of the community.

This chapter has focussed on the influence of the community on an individual sense of place. This influence is profound and multifaceted and shifts over time. The focus in this chapter has been to trace the movement of this community from a *Notgemeinschaft* to a mature community. Tracing this movement is important because it reveals how an individual sense of place grows, changes, is consolidated and questioned according to the community surrounding the individual.

I have focussed on a number of scenes in both novels in order to illuminate this movement from a *Notgemeinschaft* to a mature community. Firstly, three elements were selected from the novels to illustrate this *Notgemeinschaft*: the leaving, the journey, and the arrival and settling in. In each element or stage the different characters and their patterns of behaviour are analysed. At each of these three stages I have highlighted the many shared things that are the basis of a community, for example, conversation, food, music, cigarettes, shoes, as well as a shared past, hopes and future expectations. Secondly, the focus shifts to an analysis of the mature community and draws on incidents from both novels.

In the section devoted to an analysis of *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* three perspectives have been selected and developed in order to bring out the complex nature of a mature community. These three perspectives from the narrator, Ibrahim Gündoğdu, and the *Kelimehändler*, together represent different sections of the migrant community. The narrator represents a character who has moved away from Kreuzberg – the physical location of the community – and then through a sequence of chance events, returns and recognises his place in this community. Ibrahim Gündoğdu represents the successful migrant who has established a thriving business network and has stayed within this community and acts as both a role model and a bridge between the migrant community and the broader German society. The *Kelimehändler* represents the short term migrant who has come with a single goal and been unable to achieve it. He casts a critical eye both over the traditions that have been lost in the community in the diaspora, as well as over the *Fremde/Eigene* dichotomy because both are engaged in a process of false integration.

In the section concentrating on *Die Brücke* the narrator's two latter periods of stay in Berlin are examined. Although these periods occur only a few years after her arrival as a *Gastarbeiterin*, both provide many incidents that reveal things shared in

common, which then later play a significant role in establishing the connection between the community and the individual.

The mature community is made up of diverse people who together have succeeded in forming a network or infrastructure. It is this infrastructure which encourages the exchange of goods, services, ideas and information, and also functions as a support network. Often a result of this broadening network is conflict over the interpretation of culture and how it is to be maintained.

It takes time to know a place

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to an analysis of the influence of time on an individual's sense of place. Like the built environment and the community, time is a multifaceted theme, which also does not exist in a vacuum. In this chapter I will argue that human experience of time is determined by how humans use this time. Time is used in a specific space, or a succession of spaces, and the more time spent in a space, the more familiar that space becomes. The focus of this chapter is that time is individually experienced, but that this individual experience is based on a number of influences, such as how the community perceives, experiences and constructs time. In the books under discussion, the migrant community constructs time in a different way from the mainstream German society. However, once more my focus lies on the migrant community, rather than the diverse German community, because my intention is to show the influence of time on the establishment of a community in an unfamiliar space. By drawing on appropriate examples from the novels, we can understand better Yi-Fu Tuan's contention that it takes time to know or feel attached to a place.¹

A series of experiences in a place allows perspectives to be drawn and the connections between each experience to be analysed. That time influences a sense of place has been investigated before, so the argument of this chapter proceeds along the line that time, particularly hindsight, is crucial to understanding how a relationship between an individual and a space is created. Further both novels also reveal narrators who are longterm participants in the growth of these relationships, rather than standing outside the process of its creation.

Having isolated 'space' and 'community' for analysis in preceding chapters, now 'time' is under focus. In this chapter, scenes from the novels under discussion analysed in previous chapters as well as other scenes, will be presented from the perspective of time; that is, how do the characters experience or use time in these scenes and what is the

outcome on a sense of place. Özdamar's young narrator offers a pertinent insight about what influences the perception of time when she returns to Istanbul after her time in Berlin. She has taken up with left wing intellectuals who watch Russian and other types of revolutionary films at the *Cinemathek*, and afterwards they eat, drink and converse in the *Kapitän* restaurant.² Her comments reveal much about her own perceptions, and the way these perceptions have changed as a result of the time she has spent as a *Gastarbeiterin*, translator and theatre student in Berlin. She has reached a point where she can distinguish between the quite different social outcomes which influence and are influenced by perceptions of time. And these concrete outcomes occur in a specific space that then becomes inscribed as normal; that is, where this particular outcome would be expected to occur:

Ich hörte öfter, daß sie [the *Arbeiter*] vor dem Kino: 'Schnell, es ist *Nacht* geworden' sagten und sich beeilten. Wenn dann die Arbeiter und die Intellektuellen in unterschiedlichem Tempo losgingen, sah es so aus, als es ob zwei unterschiedliche Nächte gäbe. Eine *Nacht* gehörte den Arbeitern zum Schlafen, und die andere gehörte den Intellektuellen zum Weitermachen.³

For the workers, like the older migrant women in the *Frauenwonaym*, the coming of night means a need to hurry home, so that there is time to rest before beginning another day of poorly paid manual labour. 'Night' has been socially constructed as time for necessary rest, a time when work for an employer is not required. In contrast, this is the time when the intellectuals work. However, their work appears to remain at a superficial level, such as trying to impress others with unrelated bits of knowledge, rather than setting in train the thinking required for fundamental social change. Curiously, their opportunity for revolutionary change (and not just an amorphous *Weitermachen*) arises later in the form of the confrontation with the vicious and brutal ultra-nationalist, military and security forces.

From the narrator's observation, other important factors for perceptions about time can be explained. The narrator is both young and female, two elements which place

¹ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 1977, p.179

² *Die Brücke* p.217-221

her outside the general characteristics of the group of intellectuals. For a young woman to spend time in this way is subverting the dominant paradigm of behaviour. Generally, the women in this group are peripheral and occupy circumscribed roles. Like the Greek owners of the restaurant, there is little time for *Weitermachen*, for this is a time of work. Their work creates leisure time for others. Here lies the paradox at the heart of these perceptions: while the *Arbeiter* is the focus of the intellectuals' discussions, they are generally absent – they have no time to be there.

The narrator's comment is perceptive in many ways. She comments on how time is perceived and used in quite different ways. There are four factors which determine this perception and use: class, age, gender and ethnicity. All four factors are woven through the examples that follow and all together reveal a depth of information about how the perception of time influences a sense of place.

1. Diurnal time

Diurnal time is an important category of time affected by class, age, gender and ethnicity. In *Die Brücke* the influence of the changing of the seasons provides some important clues for an analysis of the narrator's creation of a sense of place. She is astonished by the city of Berlin as the winter recedes and records vividly the actions of the city dwellers on the first day of sunny weather:

Die Menschen hatten ein neues Gesicht, als ob sie plötzlich alle die gleichen Masken aufgesetzt hätten.⁴

The sun represents a stream of positive energy after a winter of snow and rain, or as light after the darkness of being in an unfamiliar space. For the young narrator this first experience of a Northern European winter occurs at the end of her first year in Germany, so the cycle of a year's work as stipulated in her contract parallels the changing of the seasons. The arrival of the warmer weather temporarily gives everybody a "Freudenmaske", which seems quite out of character according to the narrator's previous experience with German people.

³ *Die Brücke* p.216

⁴ *Die Brücke* p.100

This new mask appears suddenly. The narrator describes how the people follow the sun almost nervously, as if the sun is both fleeting and an addictive drug. This precious energy is enough to draw the dead from their graves. According to the narrator the people she observes reveal a pattern of behaviour that suggests discomfort or uncertainty with the sun and the approaching summer:

Dann kam der Regen zurück und nahm den Menschen ihre
Freudenmaske ab. Der Regen stand der Stadt besser.⁵

Nevertheless, this first day of sunny weather presents a different type of experience of the city of Berlin for the narrator: from grey, cold, overcast, wind and snow, dark early mornings and late evenings, to the sun of longer daytime hours, which draws people out into the streets. Instead of dashing feverishly to the next building to avoid the cold, old women walk dogs, old men walk their “weiße Knochen” and shopkeepers push a stool into the sun and sit outside their shops on the footpath. Outside becomes comparatively bright, while inside the shop it appears dark as if winter is still holding on, holed up inside. Consequently it takes time for the eyes to focus, so the shopkeepers only grudgingly enter the shop to serve customers.

2. Time as memory

Like novels in general, in Ören’s *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* the characters spend much of their time thinking about past time. Time in this sense functions as the act of remembering events, people, conversations, thoughts, feelings, any kind of sensual experience, and is connected to specific spaces. The effect of this act of remembering is to render time as static and idealised. The perception is that time has become fixed and unchanging, which reflects the belief that the culture of that time and space has also remained unchanged. This way of seeing time as stable is comforting when contrasted to the unfamiliarity and discomfort the individual feels in the present.

Aras Ören presents this static experience of time in the scenes discussed in previous chapters. The men are tired by both work and the challenge of living in an

unknown and indifferent culture. All these characters have come from different regions, occupations and social strata in Turkey, yet all share the past as a source of common memories. For them the past is represented by the sound of instruments, such as the saz, lyrics of songs, their melancholy sound, stories of families, friends, events, cities or towns, or clothes and objects which remind them of home and of past time.

For some characters, this shared sorrow or longing is a source of strength and unity. However, other characters, generally a minority, such as Güngör, react furiously to this situation, which they interpret as one of resignation and lethargy.⁶ To Güngör this reaction is a refusal to recognise the reality of their situation; that is, that they do not really live in the present. To them the past has more meaning, and it is a better indication of who they are – they are shadows in an existence based on survival, rather than living. Ören portrays the stereotyped reaction of these men working in Germany as *Gastarbeiter* who live in the past to assuage the loneliness and longing of their present situation. However, this reaction reduces the past to a static experience. The past is an umbrella term for all those moments experienced individually which become moulded into a homogenous experience and able to be applied generally. Therefore, an accurate reinterpretation of the past becomes more difficult. This homogenous reaction neglects or denies any negative experiences of the past, such as poverty, discrimination and corruption, which have forced these people to leave their country in order to sustain themselves, their families and their communities, or to search for a future with greater economic and social opportunity. This situation encapsulates a bitter irony of this type of migration: the adversity that forces emigration from Turkey also contributes to greater cultural strength and unity in the new community in Germany.

Both the melancholic men and Güngör view time as a source of memory. Güngör, however, has a desire to achieve some form of security in Germany and therefore focuses on the present. This desire is partly a result of his youth and his determination to make greater economic opportunities for himself. Partly, he also sees the past as compromised by “Heiligtümer”⁷, to which he refers in a negative sense. For him such memories should

⁵ *Die Brücke* p.101

⁶ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.154-156

⁷ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.156

be subservient to present necessities. Güngör's focus on the present in Germany produces another type of memory. Not only do these men have a Turkish past, but gradually over time they also create a German past. The narrator's later encounters with these men consolidate this German past. The experience of time as memory, however, is peripheral to their main experience of time; that is, time for work.

3. Work time

Time spent working, or at work, is a prime example of how the individual experience of time can be socially constructed. Hours of work are set by human decision making rather than by diurnal time, whereas much pre-industrialised work depended on daylight, energy channelled in the form of electricity can change the way this time is used for productive tasks. Setting these hours of work depends on many factors, such as technology, labour regulations, profitability and human capability. For the migrant workers in both novels, their working time is dominated to a great extent by their supervisors, who are the direct representatives of this process of decision making. Furthermore, these supervisors become the knowers and come to represent Germany for the workers.

Work time is a fundamental part of a migrant's experience of this space. The characters in *Die Brücke* spend most of their time at work. They work in Germany in order to gain economic improvement, yet work also becomes a time and space of cultural exchange. (As adroitly expressed, work for material rewards reflects a basic tenet of German culture, in which status is closely related to work done.⁸) Their knowledge of Germany and Germans is built up through incidents and conversations occurring during work hours. From these separate incidents a larger meaning is deduced: a whole picture is drawn from brief half understood comments. Their means of communication are limited to basic words and phrases, often closely linked to what they do in work hours. They do not have the time to deepen their linguistic knowledge at this point, and it is not required by an indifferent German society.

⁸ Şinasi Dikmen, *Hurra, ich lebe in Deutschland. Satiren*, Serie Piper, München 1995, p. 11-21.

Özdamar locates much of the first part of her novel in the workplace, firstly in the *Radiolampenfabrik*, then with Siemens. She describes the narrator sitting at the workbench and recording what she sees: the equipment, the walls, doors, stairways and toilets.⁹ All of these everyday objects come to stand for different segments of time. The equipment demarcates time spent on work that requires great dexterity. The doors indicate the time of arrival and departure. The toilets represent private time, or cigarette breaks. The narrator acts furtively to escape being caught, so these breaks are far more heartily enjoyed insofar as they are time stolen from the company.¹⁰ Each object represents a point in her daily routine. The routine is predictable, and her behaviour is predictable. Nevertheless, time as routine allows these objects to become familiar.

Ören provides an example crucial to an understanding of this sense of work time not only as routine and drudgery, but also as causing alienation and insecurity. After meeting an old friend during a street demonstration, the narrator recalls when they first met.¹¹ Both were young, unskilled workers, recently arrived in Germany, and living in a migrant workers' hostel. They were employed on a casual basis and the duration of the job was at the whim of their employer. This experience of work time was associated with hard labour, nasty and discriminatory attitudes, and insecurity because it was temporary work that could not be relied on:

“Danach folgten verschiedene Arbeitsplätze und immer neue Bekanntschaften...”¹²

This constant change in workplace could also suggest a broadening circle of friends and acquaintances. However, in the context of the novel, it is presented as a sequence of superficial and negative encounters. This form of transient work generally consists of a number of unrelated jobs which tend to isolate the individual, rather than to encourage a form of integration into thinking about longterm plans or ownership over choices that are made. The experience by an individual of the surrounding space and culture is limited to the routine of that specific workplace and those who are the managers. Time is organised according to meeting productivity targets, rather than human wants and needs.

⁹ *Die Brücke* p.16-18, 25-27, 99-100

¹⁰ *Die Brücke* p.99-100

¹¹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.150

¹² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.150

The *Gastarbeiter* status of the narrators in both novels is determined by fixed term contracts agreed to by governments, companies and unions, as discussed in Chapter One. The contracts were designed originally to enforce the rotation of workers, into which the individual workers themselves would have little input. These contracts function as limits on the spatial and cultural experience, and the social construction of these limits is based on national economic objectives, rather than what the individual expects from their working life. To achieve these economic objectives at the scale of a factory, working hours are broken up into units of production, so that a certain output of production or objects is expected at the end of this unit of time. At the completion of the fixed term contracts another transitory period begins; most workers stay, but they still remain under the control of the Turkish government and are obliged to return to the German *Ausländeramt* every two years. The security of longterm residency is therefore denied.

4. Non-work time

Although the characters in both novels spend most of their daylight hours at work, time spent outside of work provides many more insights into the relationship between people and place. Indeed, both Özdamar and Ören place their characters in settings to show that non-work time is filled with activities which play a more formative role than work time. The characters spend this time in many different ways: doing domestic chores, such as cooking, eating, cleaning and washing; consuming or shopping; sleeping; talking; and remembering their past. Their marital status, being either single or married but with family abroad, also determines how they spend time because they have fewer social obligations or domestic duties to fulfill. Therefore, they have more time for themselves than they would have in Turkey.

Both the women in Özdamar's novel and the men in Ören's novel tend to divide into different groups and the source of this division can largely be traced to how they spend this extra non-work time. One group, after initial bewilderment about what to do, sets out to explore the new space in which they find themselves. Initially, the goal of this exploration is locating survival needs, such as shopping for food, drink and daily needs.

Then this exploration is based on curiosity and adventure and largely self-guided as they fan out from one space and communicate what this place is like to the others. Only gradually does this unstructured time become filled with place-specific activities, such as shopping in KaDeWe, drinking coffee in Cafe Kranzler, or attending a play in the Hebbeltheater.¹³

The other group adapts to this new place in the most limited way possible. They spend time together based on how they would spend time at home or with the return to Turkey always as the model guiding behaviour, for example, after items of necessities, they shop for presents for family and friends, or buy the same kind of inexpensive clothing to save money. The narrator humourously portrays these men as acting not only as if they are in familiar space, but walking slowly, talking loudly, occupying time as if they were in Turkey.¹⁴

Time also creates division between the women in *Die Brücke*. Time spent at work or doing domestic duties is time spent in common, however, the *Abend* soon becomes contested time. Watching television even though the programs are in German indicates that *Nacht* has begun and that sleeping to be ready for work the next day is appropriate behaviour,¹⁵ similar to the *Arbeiter* mentioned in the quotation at the beginning of this chapter. Additionally, the television represents a window to an unfamiliar culture which is presented in a spectacular and superficial form. The division in the way time is perceived occurs when the younger women decide to make *Nacht* into *Abend*¹⁶; that is, the after work hours become a time of entertainment, pleasure, socialising, rather than passively receiving life transmitted by the television. The young women are seen as disrespectful and untrustworthy by the older women, who by contrast remain in the hostel during the evening. The use of the word *Abend* becomes a key word signifying the change in behaviour of young women.

¹³ *Die Brücke* p.40-41

¹⁴ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.152-153

¹⁵ *Die Brücke* p.27-28

¹⁶ *Die Brücke* p.35-38

5. Holiday time

Holiday time is another quite specific form of non-work time. Holiday time ushers in significantly different types of behaviour for migrants. Their purpose for being in Germany, as discussed before, is future economic security, so holidays contradict this primary aim. Holidays have an ambiguous role: the migrant workers are already in a foreign country, so their lives are already filled with a feeling of being confronted by new cultural practices, and of being away from the demands of the homeland. Holidays, however, still represent a change in time. For many of the migrants, holidays become a time of conspicuous material consumption, rather than capital accumulation. This consumption is often linked with the temporary return to Turkey, where expectations (particularly in the initial *Gastarbeiter* phase) are that presents and money will be given to everybody.

Other burdensome expectations are expected of the women in *Die Brücke* who must accept a partial return to a more dependant lifestyle, as shown in the interactions about expected social practices between men and women in the *Wohnheim* where the narrator works as a translator.¹⁷ So, after taking time to adapt to the routines of life in Germany, the women must readapt to former social practices. In contrast, the character of the narrator is rather atypical. Holidays for her are similar to Germans of her age; she heads off for adventure, a trip to Paris leads to her first sexual experience, to Konstanz for a German language course, and then further journeys around Europe when she encounters many other different types of Turkish people searching for employment.¹⁸ The freedom to hear the stories of so many people is quite different from the rigid routine of her job in the *Radiolampenfabrik*.

The narrator hears stories of those returning to and from Turkey. In a number of interviews Özdamar has described the change in the perception of time between

¹⁷ *Die Brücke* p.113-119

¹⁸ *Die Brücke* p.108, 124-145

Germany and Turkey as like being on “different planets.”¹⁹ They leap from one to another, often surprised that the weather on the other side is the same as on the side you just left. Özdamar compares the difference in the pace of life between Anatolia and Istanbul as similar to the difference between the former East and West Berlin. Time is filled with different activities in these spaces: what is thought of as wasted time in Istanbul, such as religious observance, is a primary part of life in Anatolia, as the narrator finds out when she and her companion travel to inner Anatolia undertaking research for their theatre projects.²⁰ Similar the demands on individuals to organise their own life are far greater in West Berlin than in former East Berlin. In Ören’s *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* the character of Renate fulfills the former role.²¹ She is always busy, leading a hectic life and it seems odd to the narrator that a mark of the success of her life is that she is difficult to contact, and each part of her life must fit into an appointment schedule; her life is run like a business. From this perspective time appears very linear; there is little time for spontaneity, and the future is all planned out.

6. Future time

Understanding time as future reveals much about the depth of the relationship between a person and place. Time has a future component, which is fundamental to a definition of migration. Having a future indicates the willingness of individuals to see themselves as participants in and belonging to the community and society living in this space. For migrants having a future shows a crucial change in attitude and indicates the presence of a different type of relationship. Instead of the future being located in the past and in another space, gradually the future becomes connected with the unexplored territory of the new community. Whereas previously dreams, hopes, plans and expectations lay in a return to Turkey, they are now partially transferred to the new space. At the conclusion of *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* the narrator finds himself in the position of the migrant who has acknowledged the importance of recognising past

¹⁹ David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky (eds.) *Turkish Culture in German Society Today* Berghahn Books, Providence/Oxford 1996, p.53-54

²⁰ *Die Brücke*, (Part 2), p.266-286.

²¹ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.214-221

allegiances, as well as evincing a commitment to the future in Germany. The process of coming to terms with this decision (or often non-decision) or resignation to reality is often both difficult and life long as expressed in the last paragraph of the novel:

Gegen Morgen, an der Grenze zum dämmernden Tag, färbte sich der Himmel in ein blasses Rosa. Wenig später senkten sich wieder bleierne Wolken über die Stadt. Ein neuer Tag brach an. Erst jetzt war ich wohl ein wenig eingenickt. Als ich aufwachte, hatte sich der Sturm gelegt.²²

These images of the early morning suggest the completion of the *Abrechnung*. The new day represents the new beginning, which the narrator appears eager to set in progress. However, grey clouds and storms also suggest that this new beginning is intimately linked and dependent on the *Abrechnung* of past events, and will always be a constantly unfolding process. This process is dynamic and, like the dawn, never fixed to one point in time, but constantly in motion.

The wedding reception scene operates as an answer to the narrator's question about whether he had found a new *Heimat*. Feeling at home in a new place is secured by the thoughts and actions in the present. He witnesses such thoughts and actions in the wedding reception discussed previously. The marriage in Berlin of two young people of Turkish background indicates a clear intention to stake out a future in Germany. The future cannot be set inside fixed categories; it remains always a work in progress, a 'becoming', in which the apparently fossilised traditions of Turkey are loosened, and the primary principle of behaviour in this new community and society is to tolerate uncertainty and indifference.

Conclusion

American geographer, Yi-Fu Tuan, states in plain terms that "it takes time to know a place." Thus attachment to a place depends on a continuing presence, but not just presence, it also requires an active presence or participation. In this chapter I have selected many different examples to show how time is conceived of and used in a migrant community as portrayed in the novels. Six major categories of conceiving of

time as emerging from the novels were examined: diurnal time, time as memory, work time, non-work time, holiday time, and future time

Aras Ören places his narrator in a setting in which the narrator has a lived experience of about 15 years by his own reckoning. This duration of time allows the narrator to recall the many different types of connections with Berlin and Kreuzberg in particular in local spaces: workplaces, clubs, streets, apartments. These connections are recalled in a loose chronological order and each incident confirms a depth of knowledge of the area, its topography, climate and people. However, these fragments are not merely related in an indifferent fashion. They are presented with a depth of passion because the time he has spent here has great meaning; briefly he ponders the difference that time makes. He recalls conversations with Renate, his former girlfriend, with the mixed emotions of a *verflossene Liebe*. The incidents occurred over a considerable length of time and the emotional response that they still evoke reveals the importance of time to the feeling of belonging experienced in this space.

As noted in the conclusion to the previous chapter, the narrator meets Renate again at the wedding reception for Ibrahim Gündoğdū's daughter. At this reception the narrator ponders over a comment, almost an afterthought, made by Ibrahim Gündoğdū about why they chose to have the marriage ceremony in Berlin and not Turkey. In a direct reference to the Turkish community and himself, he says 'we' have a *Vergangenheit* in Berlin.²³ Time here is represented as a tradition made up of a series of interlinked moments and events, which implies that not only have they established a past in Kreuzberg, they also have a future.

²² *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.331

²³ *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* p.294

From *Wonaym* to *Wohnheim*: a woman's space

Introduction

In the opening scene of *Die Brücke*, Özdamar carefully and clearly places the narrator in a specific spatial and temporal setting: Stresemannstraße, Berlin 1966. In this street at this time the narrator often goes to the *Brotladen* to buy fresh bread warm out of the ovens. It is winter and the shop is full of wonder, and becomes a point of familiarity and comfort in this new and strange environment. The warmth of the bread held close to her body conveys feelings of emotional closeness and stands as a clear contrast to winter outside and the perceived coldness of this unknown culture. When the bread is warm, everything is easier. Even reading the newspaper headlines in a language she barely understands becomes easier. At the *Brotladen* she can communicate without great difficulty; she can point out the bread and receive what she wants without feeling humiliated, while buying other everyday products such as butter and chicken is more challenging. Her senses are on full alert to the new stimuli, particularly her sense of touch, which here plays a fundamental role in creating the connection between the narrator and this new environment.

This final chapter is devoted to exploring the complexities of the relationship between women and space because gender, as established in Chapter One, is a key issue in understanding the subjective nature of a sense of place. Thus the focus of this chapter lies on incidents selected solely from *Die Brücke*, particularly from the perspective of the narrator. I focus specifically on Özdamar's novel because the narrator, who is also the main character, is female. The difference that a female perspective makes is intimately linked to the social structure which is the heart of the discussion in this chapter. Although there are female characters in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, they play minor roles and do not dictate the view of the reader. These incidents have been placed in five categories in order to isolate them for analysis and then draw some conclusions about their influence on an individual's sense of place. Each category adopts a different perspective about the relationship between women and space: as a space of liberation; a

space of education; as a space of group or collective experiences; as a space of work; and as a space of *Heimweh* and *Fremde*.

From the moment the narrator sets foot in Berlin, she begins to form relationships with people and with the objects in the built environment around her. These types of relationships are of a different sort from the relationships that the men form. The narrator, like many of the women, is able to experience self discovery in this place which she would not have experienced in her own city and country. Together the women show a camaraderie which does not merely sustain them, but provides them with an impetus to explore other types of relationships. The women have quite different reasons for being in Germany, and the ability of the narrator to build relationships with them reveals her skills of communication and observation. The narrator is an acute observer of her immediate surroundings. These observations reveal her great curiosity about the cultural practices of this new space, for example, she is constantly reading signs and images, listening to new sounds, sensing new smells and tastes. Over time the narrator probes deeper into her observations as she becomes familiar with this new cultural landscape.

The phrase contained in the title of this chapter, 'From *Wonaym* to *Wohnheim*' indicates the depth of the process of familiarisation and acclimatisation experienced by the narrator. Initially the women use their knowledge of Turkish phonetics to name where they live, the *Frauenwonaym*. Over time a gradual acquisition of German sounds and language occurs, and by the end of her first stay in Germany, the *Wonaym* becomes *Wohnheim*, reflecting a deeper appreciation and understanding of this new cultural environment. This linguistic development appears to be a rare experience, as most migrants remain at their earliest learning experience, and these words become fossilised in their use of language.¹ So, feeling at home can be elusive, yet for all the migrant women portrayed, their presence in Germany produces profound changes in the social, economic and psychological performance of their identity. The effect of their initial temporal and spatial experience in Germany has certainly influenced the changing roles of women in both Turkish and German societies.

¹ See for a general discussion of the impact of first encounters with new languages and maintenance of old languages, Michael Clyne, *Community Languages. The Australian Experience*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge/Melbourne 1991.

1. A space of liberation

Considering the relationship between women and space as both threatening and liberating opens up many new perspectives for analysis. By focussing on the idea that Berlin becomes a space of liberation allows the experience of the women to be acknowledged more fully. In the first section of *Die Brücke* there are many incidents in which the women show nerve and initiative and break out of traditional expectations. Mapping their relationship with space becomes more complex and nuanced because each of the women reacts in quite different ways to the opportunities offered. Space here is understood in its most general terms and includes not just the built environment but also the new spatial relations arising from the presence of the migrant women in Kreuzberg, Berlin.

Liberating here refers to patterns of behaviour and a greater freedom of thought and action than she had previously experienced, in particular how the narrator thinks of herself as a responsible adult who is able to make her own decisions. She is the first of the migrant women to walk out into the streets and thereby test her own boundaries of comfort when coping with a new environment. Her sense of self is put to the test, and its strength derives from many overlapping features: the attitude of her parents, her relative youth compared to most of the other women, her understanding of language through theatre, and her desire to learn German and learn about the Germans. This sense of self is strengthened by her independence from her mother, who particularly at the beginning is the figure into which all her emotions of loneliness are poured.² Yet her separation anxiety diminishes as she finds other companions who act as guides for her experiences in this new environment. Her presence in Berlin requires different patterns of behaviour in order to deal with both this separation anxiety and the challenges of this new life.

An example of the city as a space of liberation is the behaviour of the *lesbische Cousinen* and the reaction of the other women to this behaviour.³ At first the narrator is surprised by the intense emotion the *lesbische Cousinen* express between each other, as well as the “matsch matsch” sound of their “Kußstimmen.” These words reveal the

² *Die Brücke* p.20-22

³ *Die Brücke* p.22-23

daring nature of their behaviour, which is also seen in a humorous light by the other women. Crucially, this first observation is linked to the neon light of the Hebbeltheater flicking on and off; the narrator watches and hears them through the mediated light of the theatre, which appears alive at night, but motionless during the day. The patterns of behaviour of the theatre goers stand as a major contrast to the behaviour practiced and endorsed by the older women, as well as by the narrator's parents. However, the behaviour of the *lesbische Cousinen* becomes accepted; when the *kommunistischer Heimleiter* offers them a room of their own, they are farewelled with such emotion as if they were embarking on a long journey.⁴ In the *Frauenwonaym* they not only behave according to their desires, but their behaviour is also recognised and acknowledged in a way quite different to traditional patterns of behaviour. This scene also points to the many diverse patterns of behaviour and traditions within this community of women in the Turkish diaspora and can also be seen as a protest against conformist behaviour, as well as a response to the greater acceptance acknowledged by the behaviour of the *kommunistischer Heimleiter*.

Managing her own affairs also marks out Berlin as a liberating space for the narrator. She works and is able to support herself for the first time in her life, and this act is a type of liberation from her parents' financial support, which importantly requires acts of responsibility. The narrator needs to control her use of income, as well as participating in cooking, cleaning, washing, being at work on time, and maintaining her emotional support networks with the other women. In Berlin the narrator has greater access to ways of thinking and behaviour, which she can choose to follow or stifle. This element of choice is an important part of seeing the space as liberating because it reflects her ability to make her own decisions, rather than be governed by her parents. For example, her decision to return to Berlin after learning German reveals an intention to deepen her knowledge of Berlin and its culture; her work as a translator and then as a theatre student reveal her as a risk taker and able to control her own destiny. In the novel such control is shown to have boundaries, yet her stay in Berlin has given her the knowledge and will to test these boundaries.

⁴ *Die Brücke* p.32

A more reflective type of liberation for the women is the ability to recite (and remake) their own stories. As the women in the *Wonaym* begin to build trust between each other, they start to explain who they are and how they came to be in Berlin; each has a story quite different from the stereotype of the poor, illeducated and repressed *Gastarbeiterin*.⁵ One is an opera singer unjustly treated; another needs to earn money to travel overseas to be with her lover; and another is fleeing a scandalous love affair gone wrong. Berlin represents both an escape from personal difficulties and an opportunity for financial independence, yet these women do not focus on Berlin, but rather on a return to Turkey as wiser, wealthier and emotionally stronger women. All these women come from different regions in Turkey and occupy different positions in society, in terms of class, religion and ethnicity, and Berlin becomes a space in which they can release themselves from their designation as “türkische Griechen, türkische Amenier, türkische Juden.”⁶ This process also reflects the view from outside where they are all seen as *Gastarbeiterin*, an undifferentiated category, as marked in their passports. Although they misunderstand each other owing to their many different dialects, they continue to speak and play with each other, partly out of necessity, as mentioned in previous chapters. In this process their patterns of behaviour, particularly language, merge, and they become liberated from this singular and imposed designation according to class, religion or ethnicity. Yet this remaking or rewriting of stories also carries simultaneously the difficulty of separation from something known and treasured. The anonymity of Berlin means both liberation and isolation, a contradiction that the young woman is able to handle.

2. A space of learning

Learning is a fundamental component of the narrator’s relationship with this space. Here learning will be analysed as a type of education according to the following categories: formal education, political education and sexual education. Learning can also mean education in this context, but it is important to emphasise that here education

⁵ *Die Brücke* p.28-30

⁶ *Die Brücke* p.28

indicates an active relationship to knowledge, rather than passive, and something that appears to be systematic, rather than solely based on chance.

The Western European notion of formal or systematic education is experienced by the narrator in two main forms: literature and theatre. Learning is received through both written and spoken language. The narrator is introduced to literature by the *kommunistischer Heimleiter*.⁷ He and his wife, known as Taube, are the supervisors and translators for the women in the *Wonaym*. The first book that the narrator encounters is Oscar Wilde's "The Picture of Dorian Grey"; her friend Rezzan has borrowed this book and recounts the story during the night to the narrator.⁸ This recounting of the story serves to liberate the narrator from her fear of the expectations of brothers and fathers; that is, the fear of traditional power structures constantly reiterated to her by the two sisters who also share this dormitory. The act of reading this book releases her from everyday anxieties and challenges, and introduces her to different ways of thinking and puts her life in a wider context. The content and form of Wilde's novel encourages this different way of thinking, particularly through the themes of masks and authenticity, likenesses and resemblances, and the construction of identity, which pervade the novel. An important theme in this novel is the cost of taking on a new identity, particularly when this new identity implies the acquisition of a different social status. Underlying this change in identity is the question of choice: to what extent can an individual choose to put on a different mask, and to what extent is this choice of mask governed by the social context to which the individual is inextricably tied. Masks can also serve to annihilate individual identity and de-racinate and de-socialise an individual. The cost of changing masks may well be exile from the group.

In a later scene, during her second stay, the narrator becomes good friends with Madame Gutsio, the Greek *Heimleiterin*, with whom she works as a translator.⁹ Madame Gutsio's favourite authors are Camus and Kafka. Both authors begin to take on the role of a type of companion for both women. Madame Gutsio has a young son living with her mother in Greece, but her boyfriend died a few years previously in a traffic accident. The choice of the authors indicates much about her experience and outlook on life: her

⁷ *Die Brücke* p.31

⁸ *Die Brücke* p.34

⁹ *Die Brücke* p.110

resignation and acceptance of the limits of choice in life, and the experience of being marginalised in both countries in which she lives – she is a *Gastarbeiterin* in Germany, and outlawed as a communist in Greece ruled by a rightwing military junta. By reading these authors, she connects herself not only to other marginalised characters, but also ironically to the canonic novels of World Literature, in which both are included even though they are seen as disturbing the dominant discourse. The choice of these authors reveals a number of contradictory points. Firstly, Camus and Kafka were fashionable in leftwing intellectual circles at the time, so the narrator is situating herself in a certain type of community. From this perspective, the choice is arbitrary. Secondly, both authors say much about the changing identity of the narrator. Camus' existentialism certainly leaves a strong impact, as well as Kafka's focus on the individual who is permanently bewildered by the system; a bureaucratic system exerts strong control over a migrant's activities. Like the individual in Kafka's works, the narrator here also takes action. These books then represent many different types of learning for the narrator. They are a point of entry into the world of ideas and into the culture out of which they are created. Additionally, the narrator learns about the fate of individuals of strong beliefs who are caught up in the larger power structures in society.

The theatre is the other form of education, particularly in its Western and European form, which influences the narrator. The effect of the neon lights of the Hebbeltheater has been discussed in a previous context as a representation of the other Berlin, a Classical siren beckoning the narrator into this demimonde, which so fascinates and appals the other women. Here the focus lies on the formal educational aspects of the theatre as opening up a space for different expressions of feelings and experiences, where the internal life is thrown outwards. The *kommunistischer Heimleiter* introduces her to theatre in Germany: he and his wife bring the names Brecht and Helene Weigel into the *Wonaym*.¹⁰ These names represent words of another language and another experience of that language. This German language, however, is a different type of German from the sensationalist headlines from newspapers, and the colloquial conversations and polite greetings of German bus drivers, workmates and doormen.

¹⁰ *Die Brücke* p.35

The narrator's first experience of the theatre in Germany is at the Ensemble Theatre in East Berlin. The Berlin Ensemble is an icon for leftwing intellectuals in West Berlin. As the home of Brechtian approaches to theatre – although ironically any experimentation with Brecht's work was halted after his death – this is the place for intellectuals to engage in a practical and fashionable way with theatre. Oddly, at this time it was easier for Turkish citizens to cross over to East Berlin than for Germans, so unwittingly the narrator has gained instant credibility. Her experience of East Berlin has many different aspects: it is thrilling, frustrating and evokes feelings of *Heimweh*:

Ich verstand kein Wort und liebte es und liebte die vielen,
vielen Lichter im Theater. In den Ostberliner Straßen bekam
ich plötzlich eine Sehnsucht nach Hause, nach Istanbul.¹¹

All senses are activated. Hearing is directed towards incomprehensible sounds, which are supported by an acute recognition of body language. The lights inside the theatre illuminate this dramatic world, which recalls the narrator's own experience of theatre in Istanbul. The experience of the theatre also includes the journey to this physical space, and the sense of smell serves as a direct connection between the narrator, the theatre, both in its physical and symbolic form, and Istanbul. Also East Berlin functions as a type of 'other' to West Berlin. Together these senses then create a new zone of comfort by making another space familiar.

In her third stay in Berlin, the narrator becomes a theatre student. As a student her description of films and theatre becomes more analytical, for example, with friends she discusses films directed by Godard, in a quite different way from the Hollywood films starring Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe and Elizabeth Taylor. She needs to learn a new language to discuss the French 'new wave' films.¹² Rather than the clothing, or the acting or the story, the narrator and her friends dissect the film or play from an analytical framework borrowed from Marxist critical theory. From these discussions, in which she participates gradually, a certain movement can be detected in the attitude of the narrator towards both theatre, and the boundaries of what she as a woman can express.

¹¹ *Die Brücke* p.35

¹² *Die Brücke* p.156

The next step is to consider how this space also represents political education. Once again, the *kommunistischer Heimleiter* and his wife play the role of catalyst for the narrator. They represent alternative role models; more significantly, Taube offers a model of an engaged and politically active woman. However, she too is dominated by her husband – her name in German ironically means ‘dove’, a peaceful, sedate bird, and this word can also mean ‘deaf’, so she is also ‘silenced’ in the conversations and subsequent decision making. The narrator, like many of the women, initially has little knowledge of Berlin, German or international politics. The women rarely converse about politics; when they do, their conversations are limited to discussing gossip about personalities or scandal, rather than linking what happens to them to a more formal level of political analysis. Here the *kommunistischer Heimleiter* gives the narrator the chance to link her situation as a woman and a worker to a wider struggle. Over time the narrator becomes a conduit of knowledge, so that she is able to make sense of the political structures which entrench discrimination, for example, in the form of sexism seen as natural, rather than as an aberrant discourse. Theatre, through Brecht, provides the initial link. A further link is provided by the *türkische Arbeiterverein*. The *Arbeiterverein* is also located in Kreuzberg, which has a strong tradition of allegiance to leftwing politics, and is filled with Turkish men after work drinking, smoking and talking in tones of resignation:

“Sie standen da wie im Traum. Das Zimmer war voller Rauch.”¹³

The men stand there as though detached from their surroundings. The smoke provides further means of escape and allows the harsh realities of their situation to be avoided or glossed over. As for many of the women their focus lies elsewhere; they cannot wait to return to a life that has been put on hold:

Sie redeten von diesem Jahr, für das sie nach Berlin gekommen waren, als ob es nicht zu ihrem Leben gehörte, rauchten, tranken Tee und liefen zusammen durch die Stadt, als ob sie in einem Dschungel wären – ohne Väter, die vor ihnen gingen.¹⁴

Their understanding of politics is likewise disengaged from their lives and a matter of indifference. They realise they are exploited and at the bottom of the scale, yet cannot

¹³ *Die Brücke* p.44

articulate their frustration, nor formulate ideas about what they can do about this situation. The narrator, in following these reactions, slowly recognises her own position, especially through the tutelage of the *kommunistischer Heimleiter* and his friend, Ataman, in discussions that draw out these critical perspectives. Gradually, the newspaper headlines begin to acquire meaning for the narrator, both in terms of language, and in terms of their political context.

The final step in her political education is participation in student politics and the street demonstrations of 1968. Her friendship circles are dominated by discussions of student and international politics. Özdamar places the narrator in a space dominated by politics and political events: debates in the Berlin *Senat*; bloodcurdling headlines in the Springer-Verlag newspapers; the visit of the Shah to Berlin; and the action of the SDS activists.¹⁵ The narrator is revealed as a 'knower', an insider on discussions of political issues, and aware of her position in these discussions. Her ability to explain and participate in a highly-charged political environment shows a further movement towards deeper knowledge about the space in which she finds herself.

The final step in terms of Berlin being a space of learning is the narrator's sexual experience. In particular, this form of education focuses on learning about relationships with men. She encounters many types of men while in Berlin. There are men who act as friends and mentors, such as the *kommunistischer Heimleiter* and Ataman; others who attempt to become lovers; others who act as spies and attempt to use her for information; and others who become her lovers, such as Jordi in Paris, and the *hinkender Sozialist*. Many of these men occupy dual positions; this mixing of the personal and the political becomes a strong theme in the novel.

The first sexual experience takes place in Paris. To be rid of her *Diamanten*, her virginity, becomes a focus of her life during her second stay in Berlin; she spends a weekend in Paris, falls in love and has sex with a Spanish student, Jordi. The scenes describing their meeting and lovemaking are written in the third person, as if the narrator is detaching herself from the experience.¹⁶ This linguistic strategy conveys a sense of nervousness and then of being carried away, weightless, in an experience so consuming,

¹⁴ *Die Brücke* p.45

¹⁵ *Die Brücke* p.153-160

¹⁶ *Die Brücke* p.131

that she 'rises' out of her body, and also sets up a stark contrast to her everyday routine life in Berlin. The romance includes conversation about poetry, particularly about the esteemed exiled Turkish poet, Nazim Hikmet, songs by Yves Montand, and a recording of Ravel's *Bolero*. Yet this relationship has another side, Jordi has a wife in England. Long term commitment plays no part in the narrator's experience of relationships, just sexuality, romance and politics.

In her relationship with Jordi the narrator was seduced, later she becomes the seducer. The *hinkender Sozialist* is her target, and in the process she realises her own power to awaken physical desire in men:

“Auf der Arbeit merkte ich plötzlich, daß ich mich vor Männer genierte.”¹⁷

Her embarrassment can be understood as a recognition of her sexual maturity. This recognition of her sexual maturity and its effect on men appears instantaneous and surprising to the narrator. Owing to this recognition she acquires a sense of power in these kinds of relationships. Although the novel reveals a gradual acquisition of knowledge about sexual relationships, but this recognition only occurs after some event that makes her aware of it. (A similar process followed Ibrahim Gündoğdu's question of recognition at the beginning of *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*.) Indeed, this process of recognition reflects the wider acquisition of a sense of place; that is, it takes time, and is only recognised once it is pointed out.

3. A space of group formation

Another way to view this space is that for women it can also represent a space in which new types of groups can form. The experience of being in Berlin is less a choice than responding to economic need. The traditional family networks are generally nonexistent, so new forms of collective responses need to be established. For migrant women, the urban area is a catalyst to forming groups based on interests different from those dictated by tradition owing to the greater variety of stimuli. These groups may also cross class and ethnic boundaries, and can be perceived as an example of how mutual or support networks function in a period of migration. In the *Wonaym* different groups are

¹⁷ *Die Brücke* p.165

formed according to many different criteria, for example, region of birth, class, religion, but these divisions prove to be quite fluid. The new situation requires coping mechanisms different from traditional expectations. These groups are formed through a process of labelling.

Division of the women into groups in this case emerges from the comments of the *kommunistischer Heimleiter* which are then turned into labels. He uses the word *Zucker* as a term of endearment when addressing the women.¹⁸ According to their relationship with him, the women appropriate and adapt this word to describe their divisions: those who like him call each other *Zucker*. On the other hand those women who do not like him, do not use *Zucker*. This humorous explanation then is transferred to label all aspects of the women's lives. In the kitchen of the *Wonaym*, those women who call each other *Zucker* cook and eat together and will not use the cooking utensils of the other group. These women also spend time in their group after work, or sit in the bus together. The other group swiftly finds a name from other comments of the *kommunistischer Heimleiter*, *Esel*. They address each other as *Esel* and form a similar group that overarches all parts of life, yet at work the distinction disappears. The women who call themselves *Esel* includes the narrator, and they spend time going out in the evenings to cafes, restaurants and nightclubs. In this way all encompassing groups are formed and the divisions fixed to some extent, but they are still fluid and alliances can shift according to new events:

In allen Zimmern wurde über die Frauen in den anderen Zimmern geredet. ... Alle Frauen machten die Gesichtsausdrücke, die Handbewegungen und die Dialekte der anderen nach, man machte sich darüber lustig, wie sie liefen, wie sie aßen, und so fingen die Frauen irgendwann an, sich wieder ähnlich zu sehen.¹⁹

What begins as a process of mockery, soon becomes a method of group formation, even if the group is only temporary. In this process of separation, a simultaneous process of becoming similar occurs. The patterns of behaviour in migration are repeated, then recognised and appropriated. In this process the women have begun to

¹⁸ *Die Brücke* p.37-38

¹⁹ *Die Brücke* p.43

build a new relationship with this space, in which their individual characteristics prevail, yet are continually influenced by the dialects and habits of the other women. To understand each other they begin to take on these inflections of speech or ways of cooking and gradually they merge. A process of recognition and understanding is under way in which each individual recognises self and community through these shared experiences. However, as mentioned, at work these distinctions disappear, work becomes a neutral space, as all go to the same factory, sit at the same bench and do the same work.

4. A space of work

The narrator in *Die Brücke* has three different types of occupation. From an analysis of each occupation, different conclusions can be drawn about the migrant women's experience of space, particularly because work is the principal reason for their presence in Germany. These three types of occupation also parallel her periods of stay in Germany: *Gastarbeiterin*, translator, and theatre student.

(i) *Gastarbeiterin*

Much research on women's role in society has focussed on equal or equitable access to work. Access to work measures changes in social relationships. A major difference in work undertaken by male and female *Gastarbeiter* is the type of stamina and fine motor skills required for the monotonous work in the *Radiolampenfabrik*. So delicate is the work that the women require a magnifying glass held in one eye as well as the dexterity to move the small cables. This punishing work is stressful on the mental and physical health of the workers, and is quite humorously explained as things appearing through one eye far bigger than through the other. The nerve ends and muscles of one eye are strained, and so literally what they see in Germany is 'one-eyed' and out of proportion.

The work at the factory is also collective. All women sit together at the one long bench, and all suffer from the same type of injury, overstimulation of muscles in one eye

and understimulation in the other. This work in a wider social context imposes this collectivity; only migrant women perform these tasks, and these tasks reflect their lower status. A status that does not encourage social mobility, but rather a social marginalisation because all workers are categorised into one task and the skills associated with it.

(ii) Translator

The narrator's role as a translator represents a change both in type of work and in status. She works with words, attempting to bridge two cultural contexts (as discussed previously) and is required to use different skills. Again the setting of West Berlin, and in a Turkish migrant workers' *Wohnheim*, is crucial. She has her own room and greater responsibility, particularly for the wellbeing of the other workers.

The position as translator marks her out as the person who brings the words into the *Wohnheim*. She is the cultural conduit through which cultural meanings are passed. Two examples of this translation of language are humorous and profound.²⁰ The narrator has learned in an intensive *Sprachkurs* all the stock phrases for polite conversation; the beginning of each of these phrases is the German word, "Entschuldigung". This word functions both as an apology, as politely and assertively asking for permission, and is frequently used to preface an interruption; these meanings become conflated with confusing and amusing results. Each time she speaks with a German, she begins with *Entschuldigung* or a variant, as if she must constantly apologise for some slight or ask for permission to speak. Curiously, when she translates into Turkish, she omits *Entschuldigung*, so she is aware of the difference that language makes. This usage suggests doubt and anxiety about her skill with language, and by extension whether she is in the right place. *Entschuldigung* becomes embedded in her everyday life; even when a paper falls from the table or a door cannot be opened, she apologises, as if her position there is tenuous and must always be renegotiated. Noticing the effect of this habit, Madame Gutsio asks her not to apologise so much; she wishes to assure the narrator that

²⁰ *Die Brücke* p.111-113

she should feel good about her presence there, not embarrassed.²¹ The word is then picked up by the workers who adopt it into Turkish as “ensuldugu”. In this process the word acquires wider meanings, for example, at their workplace, they refer to their supervisor as *Ensuldugu*.²² So, the narrator has provided the space for this new word to cross language and cultural divides and come out meaning something quite different. The narrator has acquired new status, but her sense of place is still conditional.

The other word used in a curious manner is “müssen”. In this case showing great versatility the narrator changes the German word in order to fit it into the Turkish language. Her bilingual knowledge compels her to translate “müssen” as “werden”:

“Das Türkische konnte ich von dem Wort ‘muß’ trennen, die deutsche Sprache nicht.”²³

Here different cultural environments are in conflict and the narrator must be creative in filling the gap in meaning. Her relationship with words reveals the gulfs in understanding between cultures, and that these words fit into a cultural environment in which they change and take on different meanings. Locating and filling these gaps between cultural environments is necessary for the creative and critical thinking required for her next phase as a student. Similarly, this movement from a lack of knowledge to knowledge about a space enhances her knowledge of her own role in the *Notgemeinschaft* in Turkish Berlin.

(iii) Theatre student

Her occupation as a theatre student neatly ties in with the beginning of the novel when still a school student she takes part in an amateur theatre production in Istanbul, and the theatre also provides a link with her later life in Istanbul. This occupation has many liberating aspects. She engages with space and with people from quite a different perspective, which can be seen in her reinscription of self as a political participant and as an actor, not a *Gastarbeiterin*. This process reveals a growing autonomy as she sees all her life as research for the theatre, indicating two contradictory trends: she is actively

²¹ *Die Brücke* p.112

²² *Die Brücke* p.112

²³ *Die Brücke* p.113

engaging (in the political sense) with people through theatre, but this research also results in a distancing from the lives of those whom she observes. So, observation of real life is used to create a dramatic representation of observed lives.

The narrator describes and engages with the political events with great flair and humour. The title of this part of the novel *Die freilaufenden Hühner und der hinkende Sozialist*,²⁴ is a linguistic play on the words of the sensationalist and derogatory headlines of the tabloid newspapers, and the speeches of conservative politicians after street demonstrations against the Vietnam War:

“ ‘Je enger der Hühnerhof – um so wilder flattern die Hühner.’ ”²⁵

This phrase is reappropriated by the students and conveys effectively the state of agitation, excitement, noise and confusion of the street demonstrations. These demonstrations can be described as a type of theatre in which a drama is played out in many different versions and with many characters. Death also occurs as a tragedy in which various actors are assigned a part, and as a story that is continually retold and analysed. The narrator's description of the newspaper picture of a woman cradling the wounded body of German student leader, Benno Ohnesorg, is conveyed as similar to a Brechtian drama. Ohnesorg becomes a symbol of the martyr, heroically cut down by unseen forces, similar to the Turkish student leader, Deniz, in Part Two of the novel, and also draws on the connotations of the “Mutter mit totem Sohn” statue in Berlin mentioned in Chapter One.

The narrator's role as a theatre student needs also to be understood as a development of self in this cultural environment. She enquires at the Turkish consulate to have the occupation changed in her passport from ‘*Gastarbeiter* to *Mondschein* or *Clown*.’²⁶ The reaction of the male employees of the consulate is predictable: they scornfully and mockingly refuse. They cannot see from her perspective; they have a methodical mindset, which is trained to see only the dichotomies and not the complexities within each person and the roles they play in a community. However, in the narrator's mind, she is already something other than the label in her passport. Indeed, she proudly carries her student *Ausweis* with its label: *Schauspielschülerin*; so pleased is she

²⁴ *Die Brücke* p.146

²⁵ *Die Brücke* p.157

²⁶ *Die Brücke* p.168

with this new identity, she smiles in the photo. This labelling becomes a true indicator of her life – everything is connected to theatre.

5. A space of *Heimweh* and feeling ‘out of place’

Critically, Berlin also functions as a space of *Heimweh*, or feeling *fremd* or out of place. *Heimweh* is linguistically and emotionally inextricably bound to the concept of *Heimat* – you cannot feel *Heimweh*, unless there is space to which you can feel a sense of loss. The narrator’s first reaction upon arrival in Berlin is to think of her mother. Subsequently, her final departure from Berlin occurs as a response to a telegram stating her mother is sick, and requests that she return to Istanbul.²⁷ In between these two events her mother is a dominant figure, whether in terms of figures of speech used, or as a memory of unconditional warmth and love. *Heimweh* then is connected to the figure of her mother; this type of maternal figure is also often linked to *Heimat* as discussed in Chapter One, where *Heimat* is experienced as both a powerful emotion, and one which should not be seen as exclusionary, but rather open to change

Madame Gutsio, the Greek *Heimleiterin* mentioned above, also represents a further experience of *Heimweh*. Her sense of *Heimweh* is complex: her mother and young son live in Greece, but Greece is ruled by a military junta, and owing to the military’s problems with her beliefs, her life would be in danger there. Her life is interwoven with feelings of loss, both for her family, for her past and for past dreams of a future that can never be realised. She longs to leave her shadow life in Berlin and return to Greece, but not to the Greece of the military or of the tourist brochures, but a Greece based on the connections between family, friends and her political beliefs. Just as Greece is contested terrain, so too is the meaning of *Heimweh*.

Café Steinplatz,²⁸ the meeting place for radical students, intellectuals and others seeking an alternative lifestyle in the 1960s and 1970s – somewhat more gentrified in contemporary Berlin but there are still echoes of a turbulent past – is also an example of a space which echoes, magnifies and dramatises feelings of *Heimweh*. The young

²⁷ *Die Brücke* p.170

²⁸ *Die Brücke* p.152-162

narrator notes the diversity of people pursuing different dreams and goals. In this furious mixing of people and ideas *Heimweh* is expressed in different and surprising ways. For example, the leftwing Turkish and Greek students entertain together, and engage in the same political discussions.²⁹ This co-operation is extraordinary considering the historical context of implacable opposition between the Greek and Turkish nations. Yet the students recognise what they share, particularly in terms of being exploited by powerful institutions within their home countries, as well as by foreign military and economic forces. They recognise that both countries are sources of *Gastarbeiter*, an outflow of labour which suits the economic objectives of both Northern European governments and businesses, as well as the Turkish and Greek governments. Accordingly, in both Turkey and Greece, social and economic practices are increasingly dominated by Hollywood and other forms of US popular culture. Ironically, many of the cultural practices of the students in Berlin also derive from philosophical traditions whose roots lie in the USA and other imperial powers. Additionally, the sights, smells and sounds of the Mediterranean landscape shared by both Turkey and Greece also evoke a common expression of *Heimweh* – the quite distinct contrast to the German climate is an important part of this shared evocation. So, all these reasons allow this feeling to be assuaged in a place that is refreshingly similar, but still disturbingly different:

... und viele griechische Hühner, die nicht nach Griechenland
durften, führen damals wegen *Heimweh* in die Türkei zum
Urlaub.³⁰

Ironically, those same students who blockade the travel agencies advertising holidays to Greece are prepared to undertake a similar kind of holiday to Turkey. The exploitation inherent in travelling to a poorer Mediterranean country is here overlooked. This example shows that the concept of *Heimweh* has turned full circle. It is dynamic and need not be directed towards a specific country, but can be connected to many diverse objects and concepts, including people, cultural traditions, landscape or climate. To complete this thought, Berlin becomes a space of *Heimweh* for the narrator once she

²⁹ *Die Brücke* p.159

³⁰ *Die Brücke* p.159

returns to Turkey where her experiences of Berlin become the measure of life. In this sense *Heimweh* becomes an experience of everyday life.

Özdamar then has conceived of *Heimweh* in many different ways owing to the many diverse influences on the narrator's experience. Three of these influences, her mother, Madame Gutsio and the students, point out the different feelings of *Heimweh*. In each case the very personal feelings of loss are located imaginatively within the socio-political context - of which the cultural environment of Berlin is fundamental - in which the narrator finds herself.

Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on the women's experience of space in order to investigate the influence of gender on an individual's sense of place. The discussion in this chapter has focussed on Emine Sevgi Özdamar's novel *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn*. By selecting various incidents from the novel, the special type of relationship, particularly as mediated through the character of the narrator, has been analysed.

This special relationship has been analysed through establishing five categories. Each category considers the relationship between women and space from a different perspective. These categories focus on the city of Berlin performing many different functions: a space of liberation, a space of learning, a space of group formation or collectivity, a space of work, and a space of *Heimweh*.

The female characters in the novel undergo a rapid process of change in response to the immediate challenges they face. These challenges to expected norms of behaviour are both externally and internally generated. The city of Berlin is the physical and cultural space which acts as a catalyst for this transformation.

Conclusion

At the end of *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* the narrator is flicking through a telephone book searching for a name. According to the alphabetical listing of names, the next name he locates would probably be that of the author (Ören), which implies with a heady dose of postmodernism, that the author is the source of the sough after information. However, a further interpretation arises as we look at the names printed on this final page; these names reveal a diversity of ethnic backgrounds, which together point to the existence of an extraordinary community in Berlin able to be sighted from the windows of the 140 bus. Peering into this community has occurred through the window offered by these novels, both captivating and compelling works, which prompt many different ways of thinking apart from the interpretations offered here.

In this work I have argued that Turkish migrants have created a special type of community in the Berlin innercity district of Kreuzberg. Furthermore, the analysis of this type of community can have a far wider application because it is based on feelings connected with a sense of place. I have investigated this thesis by exploring the concept of a sense of place. A sense of place is defined as that feeling of belonging or connection experienced by the individual in a specific time and space. I then focussed on four different influences on this sense of place as suggested by a close reading of the novels of Aras Ören and Emine Sevgi Özdamar: the built environment, the community, time and gender.

This dissertation is a personal account of feelings generated by connections established with the physical and cultural environment of Berlin, but could be applied on a more universal basis. After establishing that such a connection exists and is important, I have concentrated on different elements which influence this connection. Additionally, this connection exists in a specific time and place. Moreover, the migrant community here is my focus because that is the emphasis found in the novels. The German community exists – ironically – on the margins, even though the setting is Germany. Over time the migrant community have been able to adapt the expected customs and behaviour to their own uses.

Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* has provided a rich framework for the investigations undertaken in the course of researching and writing this dissertation. De Certeau, along with Bachelard, focuses on the habits of everyday life and analyses how these practices determine relationships to a particular space in a particular time. Using this as a basis we can see how traditions begin somewhere and some time; they are not immanent. In this dissertation I have shown how telling stories about a place begin, consolidate and maintain, as well as disrupt, traditions. Here literary analysis is important because it offers a way into analysing these stories. In the details of these stories we see possible lives and how they are lived. By highlighting these separate details and the ways in which they are connected, we see how a sense of place is created.

Chapter One outlined the theoretical framework to be applied in the analysis of the novels. Theories drawn on in this chapter are derived from many different and, at first glance unrelated, academic disciplines, which include a working definition of community, as well as a discussion of how this community functions and creates a home in a city like Berlin. This cross-disciplinary approach enables a yoking together of these theories to wring out the important common elements applicable to my thesis. The need for social, economic and psychological survival is the basis of the relationships created in the immediate stage of migration. These initial relationships set a kind of blueprint and tend to be enduring. Yet these relationships are also open to change, particularly as a result of the compelling practices of integration which become part of everyday life in a migrant community. Here questions of agency are vital to the degree of participation desired and required by the individual, the migrant community and mainstream society. Between all three exists a constant tension. Through an analysis of how the individual mediates these influences, we can see the extent to which a sense of place has been grounded into the everyday narrative practices of a migrant community.

Chapter Two is entitled 'Mapping out a migrant space' and focuses on the built environment. The built environment under analysis is located in Kreuzberg, an inner southwest suburb of Berlin. In this chapter a number of events and characters have been analysed. The analysis has included both a description of the object, its role in the literary text, and further information about its social historical in order to deepen this analysis. The first object analysed was the square around Kotbusser Tor railway station. This area

is recognised as the heart of the Turkish community in Berlin, and 'Kotti' is known locally as "das kleine Istanbul". This centrality is also indicated by its position as a transport node: two U-Bahn railway lines cross here, as well as a number of bus routes. Surrounding this square are a number of commercial and residential premises, which house and attract many different types of people on to the streets. The square functions as both a living space and a thoroughfare or point of transit on the way to somewhere else. For the narrator in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* this space recalls many people and incidents in his past. During his walks through Kreuzberg, he undergoes a process of recognition. This process begins with the recognition of Ibrahim Gündoğdu. The meeting of the narrator and Ibrahim Gündoğdu on a street corner in Kreuzberg is recorded on the first page of the novel. Two months later the narrator attends the wedding reception of Ibrahim Gündoğdu's daughter in a hired community hall only a few blocks distant from the corner where they originally met. This second meeting brings the novel to a close. Space plays a crucial role. By situating the novel in a specific space, Ören invites the reader to draw on knowledge of the various social and historical meanings embedded in this interaction of people with their surrounding physical and cultural environment.

Secondly, the retail shops illuminate another side of this relationship with space. The space is used here as a site of commercial activity, the exchange of goods, services and information, as well as emotional support. Many types of retail shops are portrayed and they represent different phases of the establishment of the migrant infrastructure in this area such as banks and funeral agencies. The contrast between *Die Brücke* and *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* in this area is worth mentioning. In *Die Brücke* no Turkish-run shops are mentioned, yet fifteen years later in *Eine verspätete Abrechnung*, many diverse Turkish-run shops actually dominate the narrator's view of Kreuzberg. He notes the fruit and vegetables stall in the square near Kotbusser Tor, the "Krimskrams" second hand shop, the Turkish sweets shop, and on other occasions, a mixed business shop doubling as travel agency and insurance office, amongst other functions in which the whole family plays a role. Behind the facades of these buildings, the many objects on sale or for decoration are examples of things which are "vertrauenserweckend". To the narrator each kitsch product appears in its rightful place. All these products engage the senses of

the narrator and they stimulate his memories drawing him further into the connection with the built environment.

Thirdly, a discussion of the buskers has been included because they too belong to the cultural landscape of this built environment. Their role in the public space as street entertainers and social commentators also influences the way the space is perceived by the narrator. This humorous scene again prompts the narrator towards recognising his place in this environment. The buskers add vitality and spontaneity to the street, a space in which many other things are ordered and organised according to strict regulation.

The community hall is a final element of the built environment that supplies important clues about how space acquires meaning for the individual. The analysis of this scene particularly focuses on the narrator's first impressions of the external appearance of the *Hinterhof* through which he must pass to reach the *salonu*. The external appearance reveals several layers of care and neglect, for example, the neon lights, the smell of urine and the dishevelled tree draped in cheap fairy lights. The analysis of the posters at the entrance to the *salonu* reveal further complex layers of meaning these posters are directed at the Turkish community in Berlin, written in German and Turkish, advertising a wide variety of goods and services. These posters suggest that within this space a migrant infrastructure has been established, which encourages or enables the migrants to maintain many traditions.

In the scenes chosen for analysis from *Die Brücke* the emphasis shifts to public landmarks. These landmarks possess many different layers of meaning and the narrator along with the other Turkish *Gastarbeiterin* imbue these German landmarks with new and unexpected meanings. The first encounter with the built environment of Berlin is intimidating, and the characters take gradual steps to become acquainted with the city – in the process the city moves from being an unknown space to a known place. The streets and buildings of Berlin form a point of first contact for the narrator. They contain both fear and adventure, and the sounds of the street, particularly overhearing conversations at mealtime, evoke feelings of *Heimweh*, as they realise they are separated from both the German experience and from their families.

That part of the built environment they come to know well is the *Wohnheim*. Although a sterile environment in which all space is made equal, the *Wohnheim* becomes

the site of intense interaction, and the place in which the influences from outside gradually seep in. Owing to its confined space, the women also need to negotiate their own behaviour within the kitchen, laundry, bathrooms, living rooms and dormitories.

The Anhalter Bahnhof façade is crucial to the establishment of the narrator's understanding of the new space. In the small square in front of the Anhalter Bahnhof, the narrator establishes an initial point of contact with Berlin at nighttime. The telephone booth also acts as a point of contact with their distant culture and families in Turkey.

The Hebbeltheater plays many roles, as a significant part of the built environment in this area, as a representative of German culture, and symbolises the lure of the demi-monde of the theatrical world. The location of the theatre next to the *Wohnheim* creates an imposing presence in the narrator's life. The flickering light keeps the narrator and her friends awake, and helps to illuminate the world in the books they read to each other at night. The flickering light also creates a space for the *lesbische Cousinen* to spend time with each other in semi-privacy. So, this light serves both to hide and reveal activity generally hidden in the darkness of the private space.

In Chapter Three, 'Mapping out a migrant community' the influence of the community on an individual's sense of place has been explored. The particular frame of reference in both novels is the Turkish community in Kreuzberg, Berlin. It may appear that there is some overlap with the previous chapter, however, the emphasis is quite different, and as a result different conclusions can be drawn. These conclusions detail the development of the community in the novels from a *Notgemeinschaft* to a mature community.

This chapter is divided into two parts to better analyse aspects of this development. In the first part, devoted to the *Notgemeinschaft*, three separate phases are considered: the leaving, the journey, the arrival and settling in. In each of these sections, various scenes are selected from both novels to emphasise that small steps, for example, the shared provisions, stories, fears or expectations, are the basis of the *Notgemeinschaft*. In this case a *Notgemeinschaft* is a reaction by the Turkish migrants to Germany to the process of being lumped together in the same category of *Gastarbeiter* irrespective of religious, class, ethnic or gender differences. Through the immersed eyes and ears of the narrator, a picture of the beginnings of this community can be discerned. Here I have

argued that membership of this community is based on contribution, or an informal *ius participari*.

The mature community is analysed in the second part of the chapter. The questions under analysis are: what does this mature community look and sound like? In *Eine verspätete Abrechnung* the focus lies on the perspective generated by three different characters at the wedding reception in the *salonu* foreshadowed in Chapter Two: the narrator, Ibrahim Gündoğdu and the *Kelimehändler*. From these three figures a general impression of the community can be discussed. The perspective of the narrator revolves around his simultaneous feelings of unease and familiarity that occur the moment he enters the *salonu*. He locates himself as an insider, but one who has distanced himself from this community, furnishing him with an acute insight. The perspective of Ibrahim Gündoğdu compels an analysis of the links between past and present, poverty and wealth, and a continuation of tradition, but grounded in the everyday reality of living in a community created out of migration. The perspective of the *Kelimehändler* strikes a discordant note in this observation of the migrant community. His critical insight reveals more about the character of Ibrahim Gündoğdu, and by extension of the migrant community, which is built on both altruism and hard edged business activity.

In *Die Brücke* the two later phases of the narrator, as translator and as student, are analysed in relation to the growth of a mature community. Although the community presented in both phases cannot be described as mature, many valuable clues are given about the future shape of the community. For example, in her phase as a translator, the narrator acquires knowledge of the German language, which gives her a position of relative power, responsibility and influence. In her later phase as a theatre student, she participates more fully in the other Berlin, for example, by studying theatre, and by engaging in student politics on both domestic and international issues. This participation includes marching in street demonstrations with the other *Hühner*, which represents an important assumption of power by the narrator in her confidence to walk in the city streets, remarkably different from her first impressions of the streets and buildings of Berlin at the beginning of the novel.

In the Fourth Chapter, the importance of time on an individual's sense of place is discussed. Time and space are inextricably interwoven and in this short chapter the effect

of time is considered in five different ways: time as memory, work time, non-work time, holiday time and future time. Each of these elements are shown as critical factors in the migrant's experience of a sense of place.

In the final chapter, the influence of gender on a sense of place is discussed. The difference that gender makes becomes a vital factor in determining the motivations of various characters. In *Die Brücke* space is conceived of in the following different categories: liberation, learning, group formation, work and feeling out of place. The narrator is the focus of this chapter, but other characters are also drawn into this analysis in order to provide points of comparison and contrast.

A sense of place means many different things to many different people. In this work four different influences have been called upon to analyse a sense of place as it emerges from the novels, both set in Kreuzberg between the years 1966-1983. These are not the only influences that can explain a sense of place, indeed, innumerable influences exist in any society at the threshold of the twenty first century. Nevertheless, the four influences chosen here can illuminate just a little more that sense of belonging experienced each time we make a place special.

Here the journeys on the 423 and 140 buses end. However, this journey will once more be undertaken in other times and by other people, and will each time evoke different responses. A sense of place is an organic phenomenon; it shifts and forms according to the individual and the community to which that individual belongs. A fundamental part of this journey has been to illuminate the vitality of this community, made up of quite different individuals. The art and practice of storytelling employed by the community beyond the bus windows encourages us to take more than just a sidelong glance, but to rest awhile and observe the everyday life of individuals in this community and of ourselves as well.

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