

## Introduction

### Germany, Turkey, and the Space In-Between

At first, I could not look at Cologne Cathedral. Whenever the train arrived in Cologne, I always shut my eyes. Once however I opened an eye, and then I saw it: the cathedral was watching me. At that moment a razor blade entered my body, ran through me and there was no more pain. I opened my other eye. Perhaps I lost my mother tongue there, then, that time.<sup>1</sup>

☞ The coming of age of the Turkish diaspora in Germany has not been painless, as the Turkish German writer Emine Sevgi Özdamar bears witness in the epigraph above.<sup>2</sup> It has involved the loss of the mother tongue, especially for the generations born in Germany, and the radical questioning of attachment to the homeland. Coming of age has been a lengthy process of self-redefinition culminating in an emergent subjectivity, namely, *Deutsch-Türken*, *Almanyalı*, or Turkish German. Coming of age has not meant, as many would have preferred, the peaceful “bridging” of two distinct cultures. Rather, it implies a coming to terms with both the consequences of deracination and the refashioning of assumptions about “our culture.” This has entailed Germany’s recognition of the multiple links to Turkey, or, more generally, between Europe and its fantasies of Orient.

Rather than look at a Turkish diaspora in Germany as a bounded social community, I follow the multiple references of belonging across several decades and places. In lieu of reviving the tired bridge metaphor, either linking or separating two distinct cultures or peoples—ever notional at best—I find it more productive to explore the novel and not-so-novel spaces defined by contestation and other performances, of interaction and mutual influencing. The bridge metaphor inadequately separates somewhat arbitrary entities; focusing on the shifting spaces in-between captures a more nuanced picture of the complex dynamics at work.

On a sociopolitical level, too, we can point to a radical questioning of the

very presupposition of a dialogue between distinct, bounded entities—between Germans and Turks. To reject this rigidity is to accept not only the loss of language but the invention of new languages, idioms, and practices with the aim of confounding the cultural hegemony that assumes dialogue between distinct cultures. Turkish German theorists such as Özdamar and Zafer Şenocak have questioned the ubiquitous leitmotif of the “bridge”—at many levels of German political and social discourse—linking two different but, according to a certain interpretation of German political discourse, ultimately irreconcilable visions of sociality. The writer-rapper Feridun Zaimoğlu exploded the premises of an intercultural mediation between these ostensibly different cultural worlds by styling a new, ironized inflection of an ethnicized language, *Kanak Sprak*, interrupting “the state-sanctioned dialogue between ‘Germans’ and ‘Turks’” (Cheesman 2002: 2). In his performances and writing, Zaimoğlu has appropriated the pejorative term *Kanak* and transformed it into an indirect moniker of subaltern power. Other practices of subversion of the dominant motifs have generated different forms of cultural renewal, as we will see below, though these cannot be reduced to claims of ethnicity and authenticity.

Indeed, one aim here is to challenge the often cursory invocation of ethnic categories sometimes assumed in social science literature. I attempt this by demonstrating to what extent “ethnic” identifications follow class, racialized, or other agendas (thus I prefer to speak of processes of ethnicization rather than ethnicity). Furthermore, I explore the extent to which categories are reappropriated by contemporary social actors in their efforts to redefine themselves from other perspectives. Whereas the dominant German narrative of ethnicizing Turkishness would often homogenize Turks into a monolithic unit, when examined from the perspective of these ethnicized subjects, a fundamentally different picture appears, one of contestation, complexity, and diversity.

Deconstructing the bounded notions of Turkishness, already inaugurated by Şenocak, Özdamar, and others, has led to explorations of different kinds of migratory experience from Turkey. These may encompass the conventional identitary oppositions: rural, urban; elites, workingclass; Sunnis, Alevis; Turks, Kurds; Islamist, secular; or naturalized Germans, Turkish nationals. All point as much to the divisions within the category “Turkish” as to the otherness that this represents to the host German society. In other

words, “Turk” is shown to have become a signifier of instability and anxiety, in national, subnational, and transnational narrations. These narrations are also invested with competing ideologies, whether nationalist, religionist, or secularist.<sup>3</sup> Thus the ideological referents of the nationalist perspective can evoke symbols of patriotism or fascism, imperialism or its opposite; the subnational implications equally connote political or religious minority organizations in Germany and civil war in Kurdistan; the ideologies of transnationalism imply social mobility as well as social and political marginalization outside the homeland.

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, the intimate cohabitation of host and guest communities—predominantly in large mining and industrial regions such as the Ruhr and cities such as Cologne, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich, Hamburg, and Berlin—has resulted in mutual transformations, making it imperative for an analysis of immigrant, transnational experiences in Germany to encompass elements of German society as well. Hence the need to look at the ways in which German representations of Turkish difference are deployed and appropriated—or rejected—by the actors themselves. The German context serves as a critical mirror through which Turkish subjects can recognize the characteristics of a variety of interpretations of their selfhood and confront them in different ways. On the one hand, common projections of Turks, often reducing them to tropes of abjection, do not do justice to the myriad alternatives lived out in practice. On the other hand, the processes of self-creation and cultural renewal that are taking place among different segments of the diasporic population are not totally unrelated to the mechanism of projections of Turkishness available in the German public sphere. Zaimoğlu’s *Kanak Sprak* (1995), for example, appropriates the unambiguously derogatory term *Kanak* and playfully tosses it back to its would-be users. Through a subversive lexical device, abusive speech is challenged as is, by extension, the basis of the discriminatory act and ideology.

The early chapters of the book try to identify and describe the contours of the social spaces being redefined and reclaimed. Sometimes the claimants are the children of immigrants who could not speak for themselves, who may have felt a degree of safety along with the pain of invisibility. Some adopted the muteness of migration, unable to answer or assert, fearful of those who controlled the foreign terms of reference. Thus Zaimoğlu opens up a new discursive space where the politics of language can be refashioned to confer transformed meanings and connotations. This

new space located in the social margins originally was represented by alternative publishers, provocative bloggers, and rap artists. Though initially marginal, the space is expanding to include new iterations of novel forms of visibility, be they sartorial or literary.<sup>4</sup>

Processes of mimetism are found in the variety of assertions of visibility. Taussig insists on the “necessary collaboration between copy and contact, on ‘the magical power of replication’ whereby the image affects—or even contaminates—what it is an image of”;<sup>5</sup> this is particularly pertinent in shifting spaces of Turkish German entanglements. An argument running through the book insists on a continual process of reflexive mirroring, of the imagining of self and other. These imaginings and practices are entailed in rejections of, desires for, and insistences on alterity or convergence in unexpected ways and sources: for instance, Turkish women might opt for cosmetic surgery, aspiring to a “Germanic” look; and German men choose to eat “Turkish” garlic. Given mutually contaminating perceptions and practices on the one hand, juxtaposed with occasionally transgressive desires and acts on the other, alleged categorical fixity loses its bearings. Thus, though I have found it near impossible to dispense with otherwise constricting terms—German: Turkish—nevertheless one intention of this book is to contribute to the destabilizing of “German” and “Turkish” as unproblematic categories.

## REVAMPING GERMAN

The German-German unification following the opening of the Berlin Wall in 1989 had profound effects on the myriad expressions of “Turkish German” identities. In describing this, I build on research carried out by Berdahl, Borneman, Linke, and other anthropologists of contemporary Germany, work examining the critical *Wende* period. (The term *Wende*, lit. “turning point,” synthesizes the monumental transformations brought on by unification.) Ideas of mimicry emerge from Borneman’s work on the fracturing of German identity in both divided and unified Germany. He uses the imagery of a distorted mirror to aid in the understanding of East-West German relations and has also directed attention to issues of retribution in post-unification Germany. Taking themes of east-west personal-to-political relations that Borneman addresses, but applied to the ethnography of borders—national, regional, cultural, social—Berdahl’s study of an eastern German village on the frontier of western Germany raises important

questions about German identity, history, and memory, showing how identities are renegotiated at the borders, both of time and space (Berdahl 1999a; see also 1999b). Linke's influence (1999a, 1999b) is evident here as well, in the analysis of modes and expectations of Germanness, of ideologies of blood and belonging, and the historical continuities implied.

Cognizant of these discussions, in this book I demonstrate how the new, conspicuous presence of *Aussiedler*—those “ethnic Germans” from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe who arrived in the 1990s—adds yet another layer to the complex of historically charged projections of identity. At one end of the spectrum reside those resentful about the painfully high economic costs of unification, much of which was devoted to the support of “repatriating” this Russian German population. Still more distressing to many was the discovery that their “co-ethnics” arriving in Germany spoke Russian and were imbued with Soviet cultural dispositions; moreover, they also appeared uninterested in “*becoming*” Germans. In other words, they did not wish to appropriate the ready-made models and roles of Germanness. At the other end of the spectrum are the left-liberal intellectuals and activists who have been struggling with issues of national identity, questioning the universal validity of such models and roles. Not wishing to envision German identity as part of an exclusivist national agenda, something they see as having been discredited by the legacy of National Socialism, they nonetheless realize that a new national or postnational narrative is necessary for a democratic development of civil society. The playing out of these competing narratives of German identity arguably can best be observed in the symbolically, historically, and politically overloaded city-state of Berlin. It is to this highly charged, often overdetermined space of Berlin that we now turn.

## BERLIN ENSEMBLES

The city of Berlin serves as a protagonist of this ethnographic narrative. It represents an experiment in the making of a distinctive German national narrative through the (re)constitution of a late- or even postmodern cosmopolitan city. The ethnography is localized around urban spaces of Berlin; the old/new capital provides a laboratory of social relations within Germany. Berlin symbolizes both the fissures of the Cold War and the Allied postwar effort to reconstruct (West) Germany. The postwar boom economy had expanded faster than its labor force. With the erection of the

Berlin Wall, West Germany's and West Berlin's labor source vanished overnight, as East Germans no longer could cross over to the West as day laborers upon whom West Berlin's economy had become dependent. This conjuncture—boom economy plus labor shortage—gave birth to the *Gastarbeiter*, guestworker program. Within less than a decade, over one million foreign workers were recruited to West Germany. A disproportionate share was lured to Berlin, for a massive urban renewal effort, and to fuel the industrial economic miracle, but also to repopulate the city, replacing frightened Berliners who had fled to West Germany following the construction of the Wall. Among foreigners in Europe, Berlin acquired a cachet, attracting yet more workers and their families. Today some seven million immigrants live in Germany, close to half of them from Turkey or “of Turkish heritage.”

Berlin also has held a special appeal for self-ascribed domestic and international cosmopolitans, being a long-time bastion of left-wing intellectuals, bohemians, and the German culture industry. Intellectuals and artists from Turkey were no exception, drawn to the dynamic arts scene as well as to West Berlin's well-regarded universities. And, thanks to the high numbers of guestworkers, West Berlin also became a highly visible Turkish center as well, making it attractive to those workers wishing to live in a Turkish-speaking environment. Yet herein lies the contradiction discussed throughout this book: it is precisely the high visibility of Turkishness in nearly all districts of Berlin—whether an alteration tailor, a *döner kebab* kiosk, or schoolgirls wearing headscarves—that challenges many Berliners' image of themselves as cosmopolitan. If to be cosmopolitan implies multicultural fluency, the acceptance, even celebration of difference, many German Berliners, perfectly at home with the French countryside, Chinese cuisine, or Italian film, still fail the test spectacularly when it comes to speaking the language of tolerance toward those next door. The separate chapters of this book each deal with aspects and interpretations of this paradox: the differentiation of difference.

## IDENTITIES, MIMETISM AND THE VIOLENCE OF HISTORY

Transnational experiences of life in Germany prove as diverse as the regional, religious, and class origins. For example, urban middle-class Istanbulites who migrated for professional training have discovered their life trajectories altered as a result of the ethnicized constraints on foreigners in

Germany. Some have learned that the only way to succeed is by mirroring ready-made expectations for them: transforming themselves into the spokespeople for their working-class compatriots—a stance that never would have emerged had they remained in Turkey.

For some migrants and their children, having arrived in Germany from a Turkey that disallowed many Islamic expressions, the German experience presented the possibility of refashioning themselves as explicitly nonsecular in a diasporic existence. This may have been partly a reaction to the fear of an unfamiliar Christian culture that might threaten their own and their children's attachments to their homeland, culture, and religion, but also a reaction to newly discovered freedoms of religious expression offered by liberal German society.

Equally significant is the focus on mechanisms of differentiation on the part of migrants from Turkey, as well as self-differentiation within German society itself. These issues reverberate in concerns about what it means to *become* German, to be the bearers of specific values, languages, rights, and social practices. Such questions result in a dominant German national narrative evoked across the German public sphere, encompassing realms political to moral, economic to aesthetic. This discourse is intimately entangled with a vision of alterity, specifically with the perception of Turkishness as a threat to a supposedly stable German essence. Though such a vision might be unacceptable to a significant portion of the German population, it nevertheless emerges in a variety of discursive fields (legal, moral, political, aesthetic).

The leitmotif framing this book, the *Ausländerproblematik*—the foreigner question or problem, having divided the German public sphere over the past decades, does not concern simply the different ways in which the “others” have been construed in Germany. Rather, it has to do as well with the ways in which Germans in a variety of realms have dealt with the “otherness” that characterizes some of their “own” people (for example, the so-called ethnic German *Aussiedler* settlers from the former Soviet Union) and ultimately themselves.<sup>6</sup> German society has entered into an internal debate about what constitutes German identity. Germans now must ask, in a very real sense, “who is a German” and, echoing Walter Abish, “how German is it?” It is a question that has perplexed Germany since its inception in the nineteenth century and bears troubling references to the anxieties and uncertainties surrounding German right-wing ideology at the turn of the century. More importantly, the question of what

constitutes German identity poses the problem of mimetism, as Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy recently have demonstrated. Mimetism for these authors consists of the search for models or types on the basis of which to identify and reinforce a national identity.

The various efforts over the century to secure a coherent and consistent narrative about German identity demonstrate its elusive qualities. The darkest episode within German national discourse is linked to the Nazi identification with the specific myth of the Aryan as the pure origin of a glorious German past to be ritually reenacted through collective forms of participation in the body politic. While the contemporary debate on German identity does not mirror the repressed gesture of Nazi ideology, insofar as it is not grounded in a discourse of racist exclusivity, it does on one level provide a dangerous evocation of its negative appeal. As with all mimetism, any attempt to identify Turkishness or Germanness with a specific genetic myth of national origin constitutes a violent misunderstanding of what identity is. Its danger lies in presupposing that identity must be given a priori, either as a model to be imitated or as a model to be created allowing a community to embody it as its collective *re*-presentation. Thus the creation of national fictions or myths supplements the lack of certainty and the anxiety concerning the identitary origin of given communities.

These questions about German identity and memories of the past have been the focus of the work of many anthropologists and other cultural critics of Germany. Most importantly, Santner (1990) has demonstrated that Germany, despite its obsession over the past several decades with producing memorials, narratives, and political debates about the Nazi past, has not fully worked through the significance of the loss incurred as a consequence of its World War II defeat. Building on the thesis developed by the Mitscherlichs, in their *Inability to Mourn* (1975), Santner shows why the necessary processes of mourning have not fully occurred. For example, in part, this is because the actors in this process of mourning have been centrally concerned with describing an ideal German *Heimat*—homeland. Like the film that bears this name, *Heimat* is both innocent and evocative of a relation to the land and the emotional investment in it, where the tragedy of the Nazi Holocaust played itself out as an epiphenomenon. Furthermore, the constant efforts in these gestures of appropriation of a pre-Nazi, prewar German identity are often accompanied by the search for a different scapegoat, for a different construction of an “enemy” who might be responsible for the misfortune that befell Germany. This conveniently

positions the lead characters in a narrative that precludes empathy and solidarity with the Jewish victims in favor of identification with the suffering experienced by ordinary Germans.

Similarly, Saul Friedländer has posed the question about the relationship between traumatic suffering of the Shoah and the necessity of working through the incalculable loss, on the part of both Jewish and German historians. He criticizes an ambivalence of certain segments of historiography in addressing the intractable and unbearable aspects of the Shoah in a scientific manner. In particular, he points to the partial failure of contemporary projects of memorialization of the past insofar as they are perceived as efforts to come to a definite closure, in order to open a new untainted era in the history of Germany (1992). This book pursues these and related themes, in an attempt to come to terms with the problematic meanings of Jewishness and its conspicuous invisibilities in contemporary Germany.

#### CREATIVE TRANSNATIONALISM AND VISIBLE DENIZENS

The nature of transnational movements between Turkey and Germany has changed throughout the years, no longer following a “traditional” pattern of migration with a unilinear trajectory. The dynamics of migration from Turkey were such that not only did people move both ways, to and sometimes fro, and sideways to other diasporic spaces, but also such movement was frequently accompanied by the flow of commodities, information, fashions, children, marriage partners, and politics. The place that comes directly under scrutiny here is Berlin, but specifically, the complex spaces of Kreuzberg, examining the politics of spatiality in this famous city quarter, bearing the telltale moniker “Little Istanbul.”

In looking at the ways migrants have appropriated multiple spaces, it becomes evident that Turkish Germans continually reposition themselves as part of increasingly complex transnational networks. Furthermore, the very idea of “diaspora” comes to assume new connotations, just as it embodies contradictions, as many Turks who grew up in Germany consider it their *de facto* natal land—and not Turkey. Kreuzberg has retained an alluring appeal in the imagination of many Turks, who have transformed it into a privileged site for expressing visibly political and religious affiliations.<sup>7</sup> An important characteristic of the Turkish population in Kreuzberg lies in a creative transnationalism, revising the attachment to the home- and host lands and developing new forms of social interaction and entrepreneurial-

ism. As de Certeau maintains, minorities' experience in adapting themselves to host societies entails a "sudden acceleration in the transformations of a cultural ground" and "displays creativity at the limit of its capacities" (de Certeau 1998: 160). This acceleration might be conceived by staging Turkish Germans as a legitimate national minority with valuable contributions to offer, instead of as *Ausländer*—foreigner-outsider—as is more common in German political discourse. Thus, from the perspective of the urban organization of the landscape the positioning of Turkish Germans can be read either as foreigners or locals.

In the cityscape that is Kreuzberg the establishment of mosques located in unlikely venues, such as vacant warehouses, points to the ambivalence of the roles of Islam and of Turkish Germans. Sometimes these mosques shape the shared visual landscape, but often they are hidden from view. More controversial is the audible call to prayer in Arabic punctuating the temporal and aural rhythms of the city. The book's sections on Islam and Kreuzberg take on various aspects of Islam in Germany, examining the causes and consequences of the myriad of Islamic expressions.

Another marker of the visible materialization of the Turkish presence in Berlin is the creative medium of wall graffiti. Depicting conflicting national and transnational political visions of the homeland and diaspora, Kreuzberg's walls are amply decorated with competing inscriptions highlighted by color encoding, explicitly marking different political messages ranging from the initials of specific parties and their slogans to names of community martyrs who died for their beliefs. Legitimizing the illegitimate, now many of Kreuzberg's walls and public spaces display artwork created by local Turkish German artists, commissioned by local arts councils. The local government even has sponsored graffiti workshops for Turkish youth.<sup>8</sup> A closer look at expressive culture adds an important dimension to the analysis of the space of German Turkish interactions at a number of levels, dealt with in chapter 5, in the context of Kreuzberg, but also in chapter 7 focusing specifically on migrant elites.

Some German locals have perceived the appropriation of numerous areas in Berlin, from the run-down buildings in Kreuzberg to the audible signs of Islam and the writing on walls, as confirmation of their worst fears of the effects of *Überfremdung* (generally understood as "over-foreignization"). Writing about space and the immigrant experience, de Certeau claims that the "true nature of ethnic confrontations lies in *"violent allergies,"* the reactions of natives against foreign ways of using the natives' space. Dif-

ferent uses of native territory can be perceived as “errors” or “barbarisms committed by immigrants” (1998: 176; emphasis mine).

Perhaps the most “violent of allergies” has been the near obsessive objection on the part of many Germans to what they see as the trespassing into their moral and aesthetic sensibilities of headscarved women in public space. The headscarf has become a fetishistic signifier of Turkish intractability. This overdetermined symbol has been associated with the Turkish patriarchal oppression of women, an unwillingness to integrate and adopt German modernity, and a persistent Islamic presence. It has become the essential bearer of contrastive visions of national and transnational identities, as I discuss at length throughout the book (particularly in chapter 11). The ubiquitous proliferation of headscarved women in urban spaces, from the cleaner to the grocery store, from the university classroom to the cinema, is seen by many as the signal of a stubborn defiance of Western modes of being, as the antagonistic hardening of an already troubling identity. It troubles many Germans to confront something they believe their secular society has overcome—though of course, to non-Germans the hegemonically Christian rhythms and rituals in Germany appear anything but secular. Frightened by such a display of alterity, many are blinded by the nature of their own society and their own narrowly delimited “cosmopolitan” (i.e., Enlightenment) morality. To those troubled or offended by the headscarf, these social actors are permanent outsiders, inhabiting an illegitimate moral space beyond the limits of the German nation.

#### EUROPE: A CHRISTIAN CLUB

“An Undersecretary of State said to me: ‘Herr Özdemir, you should tell your compatriots . . .’ And I told him: ‘Herr Lintner, you are my compatriot.’”<sup>9</sup> This interchange between State Secretary Lintner and Cem Özdemir, a German-born member of Parliament, after Özdemir’s election in 1994, describes a parallel between the permanently outsider status of scarved women and the inescapable alterity experienced by a man so “integrated” that he has won a seat in Parliament. Regardless of having been born and raised in Germany and a member of Parliament elected through the German electoral process, Özdemir’s Turkish parental background indelibly marks him as “other.”

At stake in this stigmatization of Turkishness is a contest over prevailing visions of the moral self, trapping the Turkish other into an atemporal

history, eclipsing internal differentiation within this population. Hence the failure to understand Turkish heterogeneous expressions as part of a transnational vision of the diaspora linked to related global processes and networks. These range, as shown later, from Islamic global networks to business to media links. The effects of these global politics are felt in contemporary debates over the nature of democracy in Germany and Europe. Still, Adelson has argued that Turkish organizations have played a pivotal role in the German public sphere, having become a critical mirror of the degree to which postwar (West) German society is deemed civilized, democratic, and European (2000: 96). In other words, the appearance of tolerance of difference, of minorities, reflects positively onto postwar, democratic Germany. Turkey, perennially concerned with its deferred application for membership in the European Union, has been particularly sensitive to European criticism for being “insufficiently committed to human rights and, hence, not civilized enough to be fully welcomed into Europe’s warm embrace, unlike a fully Western democratic Germany” (97). In recent years the tensions have escalated, as the precariousness of freedom of speech and the press has attracted unwelcome attention, with the trials of Orhan Pamuk and other writers charged with insulting the Turkish state. Yet the same Turkish state, maintaining a consistent interest in its foreign nationals throughout the decades, for its part has issued complaints to Germany about the poor treatment of immigrants there.

These tensions play out in the contradictions of borders, crossings, and the loaded interpretations of them. This book explores, for example, how the German state increasingly represents itself as cosmopolitan yet ultimately marginalizes the transnational experience of Turkish German migrants. The changing status of Turkey within EU geopolitics, currently at the margins of acceptable consideration for membership, implies a transformation of Turkish German relations. Moreover, an increasingly essentialist vision of culture—“Islamic vs. Christian”—arguably plays a key role. This reductive view of civilizational clash has kept Turkey from being fully understood and appreciated for its diversity; ultimately membership is continually deferred in the EU, what often is seen as the Christian Club of Europe. Turkey’s status as Islamic rather than Christian has caused it to waver at the geographic, economic, and social borders of Europe. Whereas for many years the immigrants were simply marginalized guestworkers, now they are more likely to be seen as Muslims in an unwelcoming environment.

The danger of essentialism can be seen in the comparative analysis of how different cultural or national groups have settled in Germany. Some have argued that the reason behind the easier integration of other foreign groups such as Greeks, Italians, and Spaniards has to do not only with their common relationship to the EU but also more deeply to their unquestioned assumption of the sharing of a Christian religious heritage. According to this logic the figure of the Islamic Turks—like Jews in certain historical periods—has played the role of the quintessential and nonassimilable outsider to German and European identity and culture. This vision of a monolithic Muslim group has prevented a more nuanced understanding of the heterogeneous constitution of these “outsiders” and, indeed, of Islam in general. It is arguable that the discursive place taken by the Turks in contemporary Germany bears troubling resemblance, though it is far from identical, to the place occupied in German political rhetoric by the tropes of the unassimilable and nonconvertible Jew, dating back to the Reformation (Gilman 1990). Chapter 4 takes up this theme, as well as the parallel between tropes of Turks and Jews (e.g., Adelson 2000). Some in Germany have voiced the facile phrase “the Turks are the new Jews.” However, underlying this provocative generalization—itself a denial of the incomparability of the Shoah with the predicament of Turks in Germany—there may be a noteworthy identitary mechanism at work. The reification of the other as irredeemably outsider and antagonistic to the host country restages a gesture of repression of the other. Such a gesture by definition was and is oblivious and insensitive to a population that has by now penetrated nearly every stratum of German society yet nevertheless is treated as an alterity that often must be kept beyond the possibility of domestication and integration.

This is especially the case in the socialization of children, highlighting the unequal pedagogic entitlements enjoyed by mainstream Germans. Such contradictions suggest the need for an examination of competing German notions and practices of inclusion, exclusion, and cosmopolitanism. I argue that this is particularly vital in light of the heightened self-consciousness of German efforts to be seen as a “normal nation among nations.”

## BRANDING NORMAL

In 1999 a debate arose within the German public sphere about the portrayal of Germany’s image abroad. The need for a new unequivocally positive

German national brand was identified; one result was the *Markenmanifest für Deutschland*—“branding campaign for Germany.”<sup>10</sup> The project was designed to turn around what was seen as the stigmatizing negative associations and reputation Germany has been unable to shed since the Second World War. The final report observed that the country no longer shared a clear identity, its symbols having lost their former power.

The branding campaign also addressed German cosmopolitanism, presenting Germany as a cosmopolitan society—“world-open” (*weltoffen*)—tolerant, humanist, and universalist. It may be worth noting that at one point the city of Berlin chose a British Jewish conductor to represent “world-openness” on its website. But Germany’s world-openness is a selective cosmopolitanism. Understanding the mechanisms of how and why this is so is one of the explicit aims guiding this book.

As Clifford has argued, the claim that one society is more cosmopolitan than another is an ideological aberration on the part of the powerful. Referring to diasporic articulations as “unresolved historical dialogues,” he writes:

Such cultures of displacement and transplantation are inseparable from specific, often violent, histories of economic, political and cultural interaction—histories that generate what might be called *discrepant cosmopolitanisms*. . . . And in this perspective the notion that certain classes of people are cosmopolitan (travelers) while the rest are local (natives) appears as the ideology of one (very powerful) traveling culture. (1997: 37)<sup>11</sup>

Almost ironically, in the present instance the structural inverse still proves the same point. Here, the Germans take the role of “local” and the Turkish immigrants assume that of “traveler,” yet the powerful locals claim a cosmopolitanism overshadowing the worldly competence achieved by the traveling Turks, whose cosmopolitanism is too demotic to compete. As I show in chapter 1, the classic identification of bourgeois travelers with an enlightenment vision of cosmopolitanism has distorted a more nuanced understanding of translocal cultural life in Germany. According to this vision the experiences of the Turkish German immigrants or other minorities would be *too* local to be included in a more transcendent vision of metropolitan culture.

Issues of locality and cultural identity are subordinated to the more transcendent question concerning the power of the nation-state and its

ability to control the territory from threatening outsiders; moreover, the threat increases when outsiders have penetrated inside, as some rhetoric in Germany implies. Alongside such perceived threats is the declining role and sovereignty of nation-states, the increasing emergence of supranational and transnational organizations and players, and a strong competition among them. In light of this new configuration it no longer is possible to strictly identify national cultures with the bounded territoriality of the old European nation-states, challenging some of the assumptions around the issues of citizenship and participation in civil society. Yet what are the reasons behind the German government's endemic reluctance to open domestic politics to a redefinition of the meanings of national citizenship that no longer dwells on issues of loyalty to a single nation-state? I propose that the answer lies in the persistence of an aestheticist, elitist vision that conflates essentialist ideas of belonging.

#### POLITICS OF CITIZENSHIP

Advocates of civil rights and integrationist policies have made considerable effort over the past two decades in challenging this essentialist vision of belonging. A significant increase in numbers of naturalizations points to this; yet the new legislation does not fully enfranchise the *Ausländer* population. The landmark decision in 1999 to grant German citizenship to certain categories of children of immigrants born in Germany paves the way for a new generation of enfranchised citizens. However, critically, even punitively, the new law stops short of offering dual nationality: upon reaching the age of majority one must make a choice of national affiliation.

Although some have written enthusiastically of the possibilities offered by “postnational” citizenship in our era, in the long run rendering the fiction of the nation-state obsolete (Soysal 1994), I suggest that the gap separating national and postnational rights is too wide to disregard the experience of alienation and discrimination among minorities. The model of postnational citizenship—where supranational identities and organizations (e.g., EU) emerge as more important than national—does not sufficiently account for the existential anguish caused by persistent legal and bureaucratic hurdles and procedures. The frustration and humiliation inherent in restrictive visa regimes, traumas of denied family reunion, and different sets of rights for resident aliens will be with us for some time. I argue that the protective reach of supranational bodies is limited because,

in general, only those who already enjoy the freedoms and rights entailed in national citizenship in their place of residence benefit from their protective reach.

#### TURKEY AND EUROPE: TURKEY IN EUROPE

Though popular perception construes Turkish intractable difference as belonging to a different political, religious, and sociocultural spectrum, it should be recalled that for centuries Turkey has played a consistently important and complex role within European social history. Highlighting certain historical parallels, Perry Anderson observed: “The Ottoman State, occupant of South-eastern Europe for five hundred years, *camped in the continent without ever becoming naturalized into its social or political system*. It always remained largely a stranger to European culture, as an Islamic intrusion into Christendom, and has posed intractable problems of presentation to unitary histories of the continent to this day” (1979: 397; my emphasis).<sup>12</sup> There are those today in Germany, France, and elsewhere in Europe who would concur with one implication of Anderson’s comments—that Turks still have not managed to “become naturalized into Europe’s social or political systems.” Throughout this book I hope to make a case for the contrary—that though the contemporary post-Ottoman Turks have been “camping” for close to fifty years, unlike their Ottoman fore-parents they now are deeply engaged in naturalizations—some might even claim they are “naturalizing” the Europeans. Anderson further suggests that attempts at European “unitary” historiography have been destabilized by a Turkish and/or Islamic presence, past and present; in the following chapters I extend this idea to realms of sociology, culture, and literature.

The history of Ottoman Turkish—and later Republican Turkish—European entanglements is such that it makes little sense to posit a sharp distinction between a false dichotomization of “east and west” since they share a history of mutual constitution (Navaro-Yashin 2002). More importantly, the presence of diasporic Turks in the heart of Europe since 1960 has had a tremendous impact on shaping German culture and society. As will be shown, this has occurred in part by introducing a new culinary culture,<sup>13</sup> a non-Orientalist aesthetics, Islamic rituals and practices, and by infusing a multicultural sensibility and visibility onto the German landscape. Ultimately, writing a history of transnational Turkish practices, aesthetic sensibilities, and movements across time and space amounts to writing the

very history of contemporary Germany. But one should be wary of identifying strictly ethnic appropriations. Turkish German authors have appealed to multiple realities, inter-references, and social contexts in order to account for their own experiences in Germany. In other words, an obsession with “ethnic” differentiation among Turkish German actors leads in the opposite direction from what this book attempts. Instead I try to show that a process of reciprocal transformation and social differentiation has taken place in German society to such an extent that in many realms it already is impossible to distinguish two distant, bounded totalities.

#### TOWARD AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF DE/RACINATION AND MOVEMENT

This book aims to contribute to an anthropology of movement and change, of deracination, displacement, and emplacement. In recent years, similar studies have fallen under rubrics such as diaspora or transnationalism, thus moving away from limited visions of earlier migration studies. These latter often were envisioned through the lens of problematic modernization theories. Instead, I try to paint a picture of migration illustrating it with nuanced shades defining how the lives of immigrants have been forever marked by having left the natal home and relocated to Germany. But others have been equally affected by change though having never left home; instead, home abandoned *them*: their natal country vanished, to be replaced by the once adversarial neighbor. Can we think of former East Germans nostalgic for their old, seemingly certain lives, as living in a psychological or social diaspora, of having been deracinated from their homeland only to find themselves living an alien life on the self-same street? And what about a Turkish German, born in West Berlin, but finding himself at odds with the radically altered street politics after unification in 1991? Similarly, entire Anatolian villages have been transformed thanks to social and economic remittances.<sup>14</sup> Certainly comparisons with experiences of Turkish immigrants and their offspring might be suggestive, but how far can these analogies be pushed? Though not the central thrust of this book, these questions do animate debates on diaspora, cosmopolitanism, and deracination.

The literature addressing migrations, transnationalisms, diasporas, and ethnicity aids in the analyses of these questions. Some ground-breaking works over the past generation opened the way to paradigm shifts in how migration was conceptualized. Shifts from the mechanistic “push-pull” models explaining immigrants’ motivations—unemployment and poverty

at home, new opportunity abroad—to theories that anticipated globalization helped to challenge the beliefs about the roles and contributions of immigrants in interconnected global political economies. Furthermore, ideas about bounded communities come under scrutiny. Given that “the transnational and territorial cultures of the world are entangled with one another in manifold ways” (Hannerz 1996: 107), these interconnections render the closure of bounded communities impossible. Likewise, those advocating a transnational approach have been critical of locating transnationalism within a too narrowly defined concept of community, concealing the more complex issues of power and political economy (Glick Schiller et al., 1994, 2001).

Moreover, the critical and often problematic factor of the sending—and returning—country, city, or village has been approached in a variety of ways over the past generation of migration studies. Bourdieu and Wacquant caution that since migration needs to be understood as emerging from historical and international relations, both material and symbolic, its sociology must begin from the sending communities complete with their historical and structural contradictions (2000). Cognizant of this, material presented here centers on relations and contradictions transpiring over the years between “homeland” and “host land”; for example, sometimes a subtle reversal in the referents of the two is experienced, when the “homeland” gradually assumes the status of a foreign, vacation destination.

While delving into these questions, it becomes apparent that the Turkish Germans, wherever they might have been at a particular time (e.g., Turkey or Germany), remain acutely aware of the place they are not. This double negation of place suggests that the possibility of reterritorialization is continually out of reach, ever remote. To misquote Gertrude Stein, their “there” is always elsewhere; it is temporally and spatially perpetually displaced. This temporal multi-sitedness has assumed a significance in the very making of contemporary German history, shaping current practice and ideology. Both axes—the spatial and the temporal—are essential to an understanding of the polysemic forms of transnational living in Germany today.

In addition to experiences of transnationalism, I argue that traumas of displacement, deracination, and loss, as well as eager participation in new opportunities abroad, require an understanding of diasporic existence. A glance through recent literature shows that “diaspora,” summoned in a myriad of contexts, serves as many purposes. Though I draw on this word

throughout the book, it is in the connotative, not denotative sense that I find it useful. I concur with Clifford, who argues for a disconnection of a teleology of return from the master narratives of diasporism, underscoring that “decentered, lateral connections may be as important as those formed around a teleology of origin/return. And a shared, ongoing history of displacement, suffering, adaptation, or resistance may be as important as the projection of a specific origin” (1997: 250). This echoes the experience of many immigrants whose voices are heard in these pages.

This instance of migration has continually resisted comfortable periodization. Though much of the literature takes for granted first-, second-, and third-generation migrants, I reject this generalization and avoid reference to the “second generation” as an unproblematic given. This is an important point, supported by anecdotal, ethnographic, and demographic evidence. For example, some of my informants have described the endlessly iterative dynamic of a first generation continually repeating itself along with its significant social problems. Spouses (predominantly but not exclusively women) still are sought in the Anatolian villages and brought to Germany with little education or understanding of German society. Thus do parallel streams of “Turkish Germans” coexist in Germany: on the one hand are the monolingual isolated newcomers often reproducing bilingual illiterates, living disenfranchised and marginalized lives in Germany. But on the other hand are those who have “made it” through the legal, economic, and educational hoops, and who have entered a middle-class lifestyle similar to their German neighbors. This situation belies a simple periodization of second-third-fourth-generation immigrants, as it introduces a more complex sociocultural configuration.

#### DREAMS DEFERRED: ISLAM, EXILE, ETHNICITY

Thanks to the cultivation of transnational networks, increasing access to global media, and investment in its future, Turkish Germans maintain a strong sense of attachment to the Turkish homeland. After years abroad, many claim that one day they will return to their homeland. But the dream of return is indefinitely deferred, having acquired new symbolic valence. Equally, many children who have been born or reared in Germany nurture strong ties with the Turkish homeland and reiterate the same myth of return voiced by their parents. However, whereas in the 1980s this homeward recitation of eventual repatriation was ubiquitous, today it no longer

is the norm. One surprising outcome of the Turkish diasporic existence is that for some, the homeland and the host land become mutually constitutive, feeding the imaginary attachment to both places, further complicating the idea of a pure teleology of return. Indeed, population statistics reveal that relatively few actually repatriate. Ultimately, an implicitly diasporic purview is an enabling one. If many Turkish Germans indeed are in Germany to stay, an acknowledged diasporic social space permits them to develop new articulations of attenuated transnational identifications while localizing themselves within narratives of a positively inflected diaspora.<sup>15</sup>

This inflection is reflected in the desire among Turkish Germans to select and identify with an array of models and roles available to them. It is well documented in the diasporic “revival” of Alevis in Germany, variously understood by observers as a religious, political, or cultural expression of emerging identity politics. Later chapters elaborate on this, focusing on different forms and expressions of Islam. Alevis, the most populous Muslim minority in Turkey, making up perhaps 15 to 20 percent of the population, are widely considered by the dominant Sunni population to practice a heterodox and heretical version of Islam. A fundamental aspect of Alevi existence is the technique of dissimulating the self, by emphasizing inner spirituality rather than outward manifestations. A critical difference from religious Sunnis is their rejection of the ultravisible and overdetermined headscarf. This manifestation of the self enables Alevis to live at relative ease with Germans and to be better accepted by Germans, in return.

The resurgence of Alevilik—Alevi-ism—sheds light not only on the complex entanglement of secular and religious practices but also on the forms of differentiation among social actors from Turkey. As Castles and Davidson have observed, the phenomenon of revival, in this case an alternative form of Islamicization, should not be viewed exclusively as a “religious phenomenon, but also as a specific way of inventing group culture and of ethnicity construction in a situation of disempowerment” (2000: 137). Much contemporary literature on migration depends on a vision of ethnicity in the description of immigrant experience, often placing it as a stable given in the wider debates over identity, agency, and authenticity.

Ethnicity too often is taken as an unquestioned cultural “fact,” a given as part of an immutable social ontology. Here I argue, following Comaroff, that processes of ethnicization must be understood as systems of relations and differentiation: “Ethnicity, far from being a unitary [thing], describes both a set of relations and a mode of consciousness; moreover, its meaning

and practical salience varies for different social groupings according to their position in the social order” (1992: 54). I look in particular at the ways in which the Turkish Germans themselves employ, contest, and transgress ascribed and assumed “ethnicities,” just as they subvert the techniques of classification taken for granted by many Germans. As described already, an extreme case of the unsettling of ethnic ascription is the invention of the “ethnicity” *Kanak* by the author Feridun Zaimoğlu. Zaimoğlu plays with power and language, ultimately opposing *Kanak* with *Türk*, destabilizing the ways in which the German state, and popular culture as a whole, classify their others (Cheesman 2002).

In response to the ethnicization of foreigners some foreign groups choose to express themselves by means of auto-ethnicization. In no way an isolated process, it stems from observing the ways in which other groups both described themselves and were classified by the wider German public. Perhaps not unlike the processes at work that mutually shape the colonizer and the colonized, the ethnicizers and the ethnicized enter into a dialogue of social relations.<sup>16</sup> Yet, and here is the key point, ethnicization is a process in all instances, a mutually entailing, mimetic play of mirrors. In this process images of self and community held up for scrutiny by outsiders and insiders to those communities are reflected but also countered with alternative images by the subjects of these reflections. In this mirroring back and forth, deformations emerge, so that as Homi Bhabha has argued about colonial mimicry, irony, displacements, and other features enter the identitary picture and what results usually diverges from initial image. Thus throughout this book, I prefer the language that privileges process (ethnicization, de-ethnicization) to the idioms of fixity often linked to “ethnicity”—something economically held, accumulated, constructed, structured, circulated, and ultimately essentialized.

This introduction opened with Özdamar’s eloquent reflections on the loss of self, of language, of mother tongue. These tropes of abjection and trauma define part of the diasporic discourse, dependent upon the inhospitability of the encompassing space. However, alternative discourses challenge the abjection paradigm, in increasing force and creativity, unconcerned with hospitality. Ultimately the book poses questions about the resulting tensions, as well as those entailed in the receptivity and ambivalence on the part of the German public in welcoming the Turkish population in accor-

dance with an “ethics of hospitality” (Derrida 2001). The following chapters query the contours shaping competing modes of identification and differentiation that might preclude—or advance—the full realization of such an ethos of hospitality. This has political and legal as well as historical and moral implications, both for the German body politic and its internal alters. A consideration of specific conditions that impinge upon a call for the state’s unconditional responsibility toward its guests (Derrida 2001) serves as a subtextual thread tying together the pieces of this book. Thus, as well as the violent sense of mute invisibility suggested by Özdamar, counterpoints of subversion and resistance, accommodation and acceptance will expand the story that is the complex world of Turkish Germany.