

Translating Multilingualism into National Languages:
The Case of German Turkish Author Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Mutterzunge*

by

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ABSTRACT

The work of one of the most prominent German Turkish authors, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, is well known for its multilingual strategies. Her collection of short stories *Mutterzunge* (1990) is praised for its strategic use of literal translation to convey the linguistic hybridity of cultures that emerged following twentieth century migration from Turkey to Germany. Özdamar points to the impossibility of a homogenous language by creating bilingual neologisms and by referencing Turkish language reforms. While *Mutterzunge*'s use of translation has been well researched, the actual practices shaping the work's translations into other languages and the reception of these translations have remained underexplored. This thesis considers how *Mutterzunge*'s multilingual qualities are treated in English- and Turkish-language translations, and how the receiving cultures' relationship to migration and multiculturalism impact their reception. This project argues that while the English translation sacrifices many of *Mutterzunge*'s creative neologisms to introduce Turkish German cultures to English-speaking audiences through analogy to migration from Mexico, the Turkish translation reiterates the Turkish language reform's attempt to create a "purer" language, while successfully rendering Özdamar's neologisms in a context where Turkey is becoming an immigrant-receiving country. As the two translations aim to acquaint their audiences with a multilingual text and the migrant culture it references, they are shaped by experiences of migration and ideas about national identity in the host nations. The thesis concludes that both translations signal a reluctance to fully represent Özdamar's multilingualism, which points to the need for

further conversations on the practices of translation of literary texts that incorporate multilingual strategies.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: MIGRATION AND TRANSLATION

Emine Sevgi Özdamar's *Mutterzunge* is the first collection of stories written by the prominent Turkish-born German author. Critics have emphasized how her use of literal translation successfully conveys the experience of Turkish guest worker (*Gastarbeiter*) migration to Germany in the second half of the twentieth century. As criticism of her work focused on her innovative use of bilingual strategies, Özdamar's writing became categorized as "immigrant", "diasporic", or "hybrid" literature. This approach to bi- and multilingual literatures tends to categorize them as in-between and belonging to neither of the national literary traditions with which they engage. Largely, translation is seen as a strategy of multilingual literature, and its authors are considered to be translating "home" into "host" cultures for the critics of multilingual literary traditions.

This thesis approaches translation not only along these established lines as a means to transfer one culture to another, but also as a way to create new literary traditions that move beyond established national ones. I examine the translations of Özdamar's multilingual work of literature, mainly written in German, into English and Turkish to explore how they are influenced by and also impact the target cultures' attitude towards multilingual literature, immigration, and multiculturalism. This approach moves beyond the perception that multilingual literatures are themselves "translations" and that they

“defy translation”. The English and Turkish translations of Özdamar’s short story collection offer a case study that illustrates how translations of multilingual and/or migrant literature are both shaped by and also reflect the target culture’s experiences of and attitudes towards migration and multilingualism. The chapters focus on how the translations treat Özdamar’s bilingual strategies and these treatments are shaped by attitudes toward migration and multiculturalism in the receiving context of Turkey and the United States.

EMINE SEVGI ÖZDAMAR AND *MUTTERZUNGE*

Özdamar was born in 1946 in Malatya, a city in Turkey’s eastern region. Growing up, she has lived in the western Anatolian cities of Istanbul and Bursa, and her experiences in various regions of Turkey exposed her to the country’s cultural diversity at a young age. She first migrated to Germany in 1965 as a guest worker; however, her real passion was to become an actress and work in theater. Her admiration for German playwright Bertolt Brecht influenced her acting career as well as her prose. During her first stay in Germany, she did not know any German, and in her prose, she often describes how trying to read newspapers and magazines in a language she did not know made her feel like a child all over again. She later returned to Turkey for acting lessons and worked for some time as an actress but felt alienated because the 1971 military coup had greatly limited the right of freedom of speech. During this time, she was involved in the leftist movement. Her experiences of having been an activist appear in the first story of *Mutterzunge* and in her

later semi-autobiographical novels. In 1976, Özdamar moved permanently to Germany, this time to work in theatre, and since that time she has worked as playwright, director, and actress. One of her plays, “Karagöz in Alamania”, which was staged in 1980s, appears in prose form in *Mutterzunge*. After her success in theater, she also published prose work, and her first novel was awarded Germany’s Ingeborg Bachmann prize in 1991.

Mutterzunge has been one of the most often cited works of Turkish-German literature because of Özdamar’s literary success and her unique use of literal translation as a literary technique. The work consists of four stories. The first two, “Mutterzunge” and “Großvaterzunge” (“Mother Tongue” and “Grandfather Tongue”), are an interconnected account of an immigrant woman in Berlin who embarks on a search to find “when she lost her mother tongue”¹ (9). In the second story, Özdamar complicates her reference to the “mother tongue” by having the narrator learn Arabic in order to remember Turkish, alluding to the language reform of 1920s-30s that abandoned Arabic script and purged the language of Arabic loanwords. The third story, “Karagöz in Alamania/Schwarzauge in Deutschland” (Blackeye in Germany) is an adaptation of a stage play she had previously written, which narrates the journey of a Turkish immigrant from his village to Germany. The fourth and last story is titled “Karriere einer Putzfrau/Errinnerungen an Deutschland” (A Cleaning Woman’s Career/Memories of

¹ The narrator declares: “Wenn ich nur wüßte, in welchem Moment ich meine Mutterzunge verloren habe.“ (If only I knew in which moment I lost my mother tongue.)

Germany) which narrates the story of a migrant cleaning lady by juxtaposing it with the figure of Ophelia in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In all these stories, Özdamar literally translates Turkish idioms and proverbs into German, incorporates Turkish folk tales, and refers to significant events in Turkish and German history. Migration is a central theme in her work as her characters constantly cross borders, either within Germany, within Turkey or in-between these countries.

Criticism of her work can be grouped under three major headings. Sociological studies approach her work as representative of Turkish immigrant literature in Germany and celebrate its contribution to discussions of multiculturalism. Her work appears, for instance, in the collection *Germany in Transit*, edited by Deniz Göktürk, David Gramling and Anton Kaes, a reference book that aims to provide a comprehensive account of the “cultural history of postwar Germany through the lens of migration” (xviii). Alongside other “immigrant” authors such as Japanese-German author Yoko Tawada, Özdamar appears in the ninth chapter of the collection, entitled “Writing Back: Literature and Multilingualism” (383-424). An essay Özdamar wrote for the influential German newspaper *Die Zeit*, which asked her to narrate her experiences as a migrant author, is also included in the chapter. Özdamar narrates how she wrote her first play *Black Eye in Germany*, which later appeared as a short story in *Mutterzunge*, and her experiences in directing the play on stage (Göktürk et al. 398). The essay starts with her receiving a long letter from a guest worker whose life inspired the character of Black Eye in the play, continues with a journey on a train full of guest workers with only a limited command of

German, and narrates the difficulties of working with a cast of Germans and non-Germans on a play about Turkish immigrants.

Özdamar's work also appeared in the collection *Turkish Culture in German Society Today*, edited by David Horrocks and Eva Kolinsky. Published in 1996, the collection provides an account of the Turkish minority in Germany not long after the unification of East and West Germany. In this book, Özdamar appears as a representative of Turkish-German writing, and the editors argue that literature functions to enable communication between two separate communities in Germany that do not interact on a daily basis (188). Horrocks and Kolinsky also interview Özdamar, and rather than asking her about her writing and her stylistic concerns they are interested in her view on her first play, on stereotypical representations of the Turkish minority, on her choice of German in her writing, and on her response to "the recent wave of xenophobia" (50–53).

The second tendency in discussing Özdamar's work takes a cultural studies approach and is interested in her use of literal translation and her references to Turkish culture and history as signifiers of the immigrant experience. In her comparative study of Germany and the United States as immigrant receiving, multicultural contexts, Azade Seyhan considers immigrant writing as a means of "intentional remembering" and a "restorative work of cultural memory" (15). She also draws on Homi Bhabha's notion of migrants as persons who are situated "in-between" cultures and are "hybrid". She argues that Bhabha does not "engage" texts "in a genuine dialogue" but prefer to "instrumentalize[]" them "to perform theoretical tasks", which to her, results in their

isolation from the cultural and historical context in which they were produced (4-5). Seyhan interprets Özdamar's "Mutterzunge" and "Großvaterzunge" as a rewriting of the recent history of the Turkish language under the language reforms and argues that her use of literal translation is a means of "resisting monolingualism" (116-117). However, Seyhan fails to further explore this resistance and its implication for larger theories of the German literary tradition. Margarete Littler builds on Seyhan's criticism, adding that the narrator's rediscovery of her roots does not only challenge recent accounts of pre-republican Turkish history, but also affirms her inability to construct a "pure past" through her references to the pre-Islamic Turkish traditions (228). Littler argues that Özdamar not only revisits Turkish history through her use of literal translation but also creates an association between Turkish and German (230). Her interpretation signals a shift in the criticism of Özdamar's work towards a more transnational lens that considers her bilingual writing not so much a reconstruction of her past home culture, but rather a form of negotiation between two cultures and languages.

The latest wave in criticism shifts the focus from an emphasis on Özdamar's engagement with her home culture and history towards examinations of her Turkish background's interactions with the German context. Leslie Adelson calls for "a new grammar" in talking about Turkish migration to Germany, introducing "the concept of *touching tales* as an alternative organizing principle for considering '*Turkish*' lines of *thought*" in German literature (20). The idea of "touching tales" denotes intersections between German and Turkish, and the emphasis on "Turkish lines of thought" refers to

literary and thematic innovations in migrant literature (Adelson 21). In her reading of Özdamar's stories, Adelson points to the ways that Özdamar brings together references to the Cold War, divided Germany and Germany's Nazi past with an emphasis on Islam, the dominant cultural background of Turkish immigrant in Germany (154-158). Yasemin Yildiz approaches Özdamar as a writer who is "uncomfortably positioned" within a "monolingual paradigm" that imagines a German nation with a corresponding, distinct language, dominated by a German-language canon starting with Romanticism (5). Since conceptualizations of literary canon are still dominated by the monolingual paradigm in literary criticism, multilingual writing cannot be easily fit into these theories, and instead is described as a phenomenon that is situated in-between various monolingual national traditions.

Yildiz's reading of Özdamar's "Mother Tongue" offers a fresh perspective, as she argues that writing in a foreign language can be a way of "working through trauma" experienced in one's native language (146). Yildiz's approach to multilingual literature moves beyond the categorization of these texts as located in-between national literatures, or belonging to one or either of them, as she acknowledges the restrictions that dominant constructions of national traditions place on newly emerging multilingual works. As existing approaches to *Mutterzunge* are concerned with ways to categorize multilingual writing within existing literary and national traditions, this thesis is more centrally informed by the newer emphasis on the role of multilingual literature for generating new forms of expression.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: MIGRATION AND TRANSLATION

The criticism of *Mutterzunge* categorizes the work's use of literal translation and its mixing of languages and cultures as an example of "hybrid" literature. This approach is influenced by postcolonial theories, such as the work of Homi Bhabha, which theorizes the emergence of new literary forms through cultural translation in the notion of a meeting of cultures or as border zones (212-235). However, the use of Bhabha's concept in critical readings of Özdamar's work has resulted in a misreading of his concept of hybridity (Kaiser 971-972). Bhabha's "in-betweenness" also refers to innovative spaces where unique expressions emerge out of a merging of identities, but this idea is interpreted as a description of the suspension of migrants "between" cultures (972) and of migrant literature as conduits of immigrant experience rather than as individual works of art. These readings are useful for sociological discussions of immigration and its cultural challenges, but do not consider the artistry or innovations of this work.

Translation is considered a central element of immigrant literature or of "hybrid" literature as Bhabha theorizes it. Postcolonial criticism and translation studies converge in discussions of how immigrants use translation to negotiate cultures and identities; they "self-translate", as Seyhan puts it ("Adivar and Özdamar Write Back", 215). Studies that focus on translations of the immigrant experience focus on this strategy of self-translation and the authors' negotiation of their identities at the crossroads of cultures. Although translation studies have examined how translation is utilized by bi- and multilingual authors, the translations *of* multilingual texts themselves are a subject that is yet to be

explored. Yildiz's theorization of the "monolingual paradigm," which imagines an organic bond between nations and their languages helps to understand why that may be the case. This bond is described as a "kinship" relationship, mostly through its designation as the "mother language" as standing "for a unique, irreplaceable, unchangeable biological origin" (9). Immigrant literature produced by authors who are not native speakers of the host language or belong to a minoritized ethnicity is difficult to place within national literary traditions that are shaped by the association of a dominant language with notions of kinship and national belonging.

At the same time, within the monolingual paradigm, translation is often considered as an act that carries a text from one language into another, preferably from a foreign into a native language. This is reflected in the most well-known theories of translation. An example is George Steiner's "hermeneutic motion" that describes translation as a process in four stages, initiated by the first two stages in which the translator trusts that "there is 'something there'" and then "invades, extracts, and brings [it] home" (312-314). Postcolonial criticism has pointed out that translation "rarely ... involves a relationship of equality between texts, authors, or systems" (Bassnett and Trivedi 2), which highlights the importance of ethical considerations. Postcolonial critic and translator Gayatri Spivak, similarly, points out to the tendency to render "literature of the Third World ... into a sort of with-it translatese" in translation, and suggest a new approach guided by "love" (313-315). However, despite the increasing attention paid to the translations of multilingual texts that emerged as a result of postcolonial contact,

translation still seems to be considered an act of translating from one language to another, and in parallel, from one national context into another. On the other hand, how to talk about translations of multilingualism is yet to be explored in new theoretical frameworks that acknowledge the practice of translating texts that are produced in resistance to the monolingual paradigm. The self-translation of authors in postcolonial and other border zones is still decipherable through the existing translation studies paradigm since these writers can be said to be translating one language into another, and their multilingualism is decoded along the familiar lines of a close tie between nation and language.

Another element that may factor into the lack of discussions of the translations of multilingual literature is the traditional perception of translation as inferior to an original work. The translator is seen as imitator or reproducer of a literary text by a writer whose “genius” produced an original piece of literature. This view ties back to the earlier point: that the cultural translation strategies that characterize multilingual literary texts are often not treated as expressions of individual creativity, but rather a representation that encompasses a certain immigrant group. This misreading of multilingualism as a main feature of texts that represent an immigrant culture dominates the perception and criticism of multilingual texts. Although the positioning of the translator and of translation in opposition to authors and their original literary piece is contested in translation studies and by individuals who study, critique, and practice translation, the publication, promotion, and consumption stages of translations do not reflect this. Translators are still regarded as secondary to authors in publications. Criticism and

reviews of translated books often do not mention the translator at all or mention them briefly, although they play a central role in the representation of the source text in the target language. When the multilingual texts are conceived as “translated” texts, it becomes harder to associate their authors with “original” productions. This also contributes to the fact that discussions of translation remain at the level of the multilingualism of specific texts, and do not extend to their translations.

The standards and conventions for publishing literature are still highly influential for both the publication of multilingual texts and their translations. Özdamar, an immigrant author who writes in German and engages with Turkish culture and language, publishes with a German publishing house and unless her work is translated, her texts do not reach audiences outside German-speaking national contexts, such as Turkey. The translations of *Mutterzunge* discussed in this thesis were published by publishing houses that print books in a single national language and follow the dominant conventions for publishing translations. Opening up discussions around the translations of multilingual literatures shows that these conventions limit the translations of creative expressions within multilingual texts.

The study of translations of multilingual literatures is crucial so that they can be recognized for their artistry and creativity, and to extend conversations about migrant literatures beyond their acknowledged function as representations of the migrant culture. Studies of this work can potentially contribute to discussions of immigration and multiculturalism in other immigrant-receiving contexts. For example, *Mutterzunge*'s

Turkish translation can influence ongoing debates about the influence of growing Syrian migration to Turkey and its impact on debates about multilingualism. Marta Sánchez's study of translations of Latinx literature into Spanish from a bilingual English illustrates an "intranational" form of translation into what is a minority language in the United States, which also sought to encompass readers outside the country (79-80). Sánchez refers to translations conducted within the same nation state as intranational translation, as opposed to an "international" translation which refers to a translation produced and marketed in a different national context, at the same time illustrating how the boundaries between the two are crossed by bilingual texts.

Sánchez's study is influential for extending debates about translation into the domain of literary texts with bilingual qualities and can help to approach about the Turkish translation of *Mutterzunge*. Özdamar's text integrates Turkish into its German-language dominant text in ways that addresses readers outside of Germany (many of whom are already somewhat familiar Turkish-German immigrant guest worker experience) and its "international" translation into Turkish needs to address the original codeswitching and multilingualism of the work. The cultural proximity between Turkey and Germany that emerged as a result of guest worker migration questions classification of the translation as an "international" translation. The English-language translation, in contrast, is faced with the greater difficulty of having to introduce English-speaking audiences in Canada and the United States to a largely unfamiliar immigrant population

and its multilingual qualities through comparison to similar immigrant groups in North America, particularly Latinx.

This thesis aims to contribute to growing discussions of multilingualism in German literary studies in order to consider the role of formal innovations in multilingual works through the discussion of their translations. The translations of *Mutterzunge* illustrate how receiving contexts respond to multilingual literatures based on their proximity to and familiarity with the source context and on their own experiences with immigration and existing multilingual traditions.

THE TRANSLATIONS

The following chapters focus on the English translation of Özdamar's work, *Mother Tongue*, and the Turkish translation, *Annedili*, respectively. Both chapters discuss the publication histories of these translations, the critical responses to the translations, the translations' treatment of *Mutterzunge*'s bilingual elements and the implications of these treatments for debates about immigration and multilingualism in the respective contexts of the receiving culture. The first chapter argues that *Mother Tongue*, translated by Craig Thomas, misses the opportunity to introduce its readers to a new form of multilingualism by either naturalizing or exoticizing Özdamar's bilingual strategies. Thomas's approach to translation provides a case study of a translated text that has to familiarize its audience with the bilingual source culture and writing. To do so, his translation references existing cultural signifiers with which his North American audience is familiar and mistranslates

Özdamar's narrative by interpreting her immigrant protagonist's exploration of her mother tongue as a backward-directed search for a lost language rather than the description of a language that is yet to be formed.

The Turkish-language translation by Doğan, however, does not naturalize or exoticize Özdamar's bilingual strategies as it attempts to replicate her bilingualism, but it reinforces Turkey's nationalist monolingual ideology as created by the modernizing language reforms. Interestingly, both translations miss opportunities to create new forms of multilingualism because they follow the conventions of their own national literary traditions. Turkey is a late-comer to the discussions around multiculturalism compared to either North America or Germany because of its much more recent formation as a nation state and its strong insistence on a homogenizing nationalism; however, the influx of refugees in the recent decade has also initiated discussions of multilingualism. The second chapter discusses how the relationship between the language reform and multiculturalism manifests itself in the Turkish translation of the bilingual strategies of a Turkish-born German author. The chapter argues that the Turkish translation, rather than replicating Özdamar's criticism of the monolingual Turkish nationalist ideology advocated by the language reform, reinforces these ideas by correcting her Turkish and otherwise intervening into her text.

CHAPTER 2

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION: (MIS)RENDERING MULTILINGUALISM AS RETURN TO A LOST MOTHER TONGUE

“In der Fremdsprache haben Wörter keine Kindheit,”² declares the narrator and protagonist of “Großvaterzunge”, the second story in *Mutterzunge*, towards the end of the story (46). It is a statement that aptly summarizes the narrator’s exploration of her “mother tongue” both in a foreign country and through a foreign language. This and the preceding story “Mutterzunge” feature the narrator’s journey in search of her mother language, Turkish, in a divided Berlin, while learning Arabic from an Arabic teacher, Ibni Abdullah. Critics have associated the narrator with Özdamar as many of the details about her correspond to her own migration story to Germany (Kaiser 975). By the end of her search, the protagonist has collected a number of words in her mother tongue that, as she says, “have childhoods” because for her, words spoken during one’s childhood have their own childhoods. She learns Arabic and Arabic script from Ibni Abdullah because she believes that this will enable her to connect with the language of her childhood, meaning her mother tongue, which, at the time, was in the process of being altered through the language reforms of the Republic of Turkey. Thus, her reference to her mother tongue does not only refer to Turkish, but also to the type of Turkish that before

² “In a foreign language, words have no childhood.”

the reforms had used Arabic script and included a high number of loanwords from Arabic.

Critics have interpreted the search that Özdamar's protagonist embarks on in "Mother Tongue" and "Grandfather Tongue" as a restoration of "linguistic memory" (Seyhan 108) and as an act of "working through traumatic (trans)national histories" (Yildiz 146). By remembering the Turkish of her childhood in Germany (and through the German language), Özdamar creates a bridge between Turkish and German, and in all her stories Turkish and German mix into one another in the form of literal translations from Turkish into German, as code-switching, or as word pairs that translate and pair Turkish and German words. (In the rest of the chapter I refer to these instances as forms of bilingualism or codeswitching.) For this reason, even though her text is not easily accessible for the German reader, it is not incomprehensible. Her style can be identified as what Seyhan has called a "foreignizing translation" (Seyhan, "From Istanbul to Berlin" 156). While, ultimately, Özdamar's Turkish is restored through its translation into German as the narrator remains in Berlin and carries on with her search (Özdamar, *Mutterzunge* 50), it takes a new form through its interaction with German. Thus, Özdamar's German is unique and "diffracted through Turkish" as Birgit Mara Kaiser puts it (978). As Kaiser further argues, both Özdamar's narrative and her language are highly personal, including a high number of references to her own personal experiences with a special emphasis on her search for identity, resulting in a "singular" German that is both different from the language used by her fellow immigrant authors and from standard

German (972). As a result, the narrator's search does not come to an end with her remembrance of mother tongue of her childhood, but rather through its translation into and association with German. Rather than engaging in the remembrance and restoration of a homeland, which is attributed to examples of immigrant writing, Özdamar's work contemplates the impossibility of an "originary" homeland language that has remained untouched.

The English-language translation of *Mutterzunge* misses this central point of the book – its use of multilingual strategies and its migration theme to contemplate the impossibility that a language remains stagnant – in favor of rendering the book understandable to North American readers, and thus loses an opportunity to recreate the multilingual strategies employed by its author. As *Mother Tongue*'s translator Craig Thomas renders Özdamar's multilingual writing into cultural codes readily available for the English-language reader, he interprets the narrator's remembrance of her mother tongue as a journey back to her childhood language rather than a journey forward to restoration through its association with a new language. Thomas's treatment of Özdamar's multilingualism equates Germany and the United States as migration receiving contexts and uses Mexican migration to the United States as a vantage point to interpret the Turkish migration to Germany that is the focus of Özdamar's book, while at the same time also Orientalizing the Turkish language. In the following, I will provide information on the translation and its reception, analyze the translation's treatment of the

author's multilingual strategies, and finally discuss the implications of this translation for its reception along with the text's initial English-language academic readings.

THE TRANSLATION

The first and only English-language translation of Özdamar's *Mutterzunge* with the title *Mother Tongue* was published by Coach House Press, a publishing house based in Canada, as part of a book collection titled *Passport Books*, edited by Alberto Manguel, himself an Argentine-Canadian translator and author. *Passport Books* is a collection of translations of famous authors who write in non-English languages, most of whom have a cross-border consciousness stemming from their residency in countries other than their home country, such as Argentine author Julio Cortázar and French author Marguerite Duras. *Mother Tongue* was initially not referenced in academic studies as critics preferred Özdamar's German original. However, more recent criticism by Adelson and Birgit Kara Maiser discusses where the translation fails at capturing the meaning of the original text. This is significant given the attention the book has received in US-based German Studies. The privileging of Özdamar's original text over its English translation can be attributed to the importance given to studying literary production in its own language and context; however, it is significant that when the translation is mentioned, it is in order to draw attention to its problems with capturing Özdamar's original.

Unfortunately, there is not much information on the translator and the publication as the publishing house has gone through a change in its editorial team since then in

1997. It was a single-edition publication series that aimed to introduce foreign literature that was unfamiliar to US and Canadian audiences, and these translations have not been republished since. Özdamar's positioning as an author with a Turkish background in Germany is unfamiliar to an English-speaking audience. Even though the context of Turkish migration to Germany resembles that of Mexican migration to the United States, Özdamar's Turkish background – and even to an extent the contemporary German context – is culturally distant to the audience. Many reviews of this translation reflect this distance. For instance, a *Publisher's Weekly* review describes the text as “[a] fusion of wildly fantastical Scheherazade stories with the nightmarish surrealism of Franz Kafka” and notes that “[a]lthough not much of wordplay comes through in the translation, it does retain the mesmerizing quality of the original”. Interestingly, the reviewer chooses the most known literary figures, Scheherazade, as the best-known storyteller-figure in Middle Eastern cultures, and Kafka as one of the best-known authors who wrote in German, in order to describe the story collection. The reviewer further comments that “flowing, jarring word stream propels readers into the world of an outsider, forcing them to hear and see with the ears and eyes of a stranger,” interpreting Özdamar's literal translation as “jarring word stream”, and positioning her as an “outsider”. Charlotte Innes, in her review for the *New York Times Book Review*, comments that the opening sentences of “Mother Tongue” represent “a graphic image of immigrant eagerness to learn new habits” (24). In short, German and Turkish cultures that mix in Özdamar's text are interpreted as either the account of a migrant's perception of a new culture or as mixed

representations of or references to well-known literary figures in the respective Turkish- and German-language cultures.

This reception of Özdamar's text is related to Thomas's strategies for rendering the German text and its multilingual strategies into English. Özdamar's stories rely heavily on literal translations of Turkish proverbs and idioms, references the Turkish language reform through translating Turkish words with Arabic origin into German, and employs descriptions of bilingualism in everyday language, such as code-switching. Her text treats German and Turkish, and even Arabic, as languages that mix into one another. Immigrant characters with no other common language, for instance the narrator and her Arabic teacher Ibni Abdullah use German in order to communicate with each other but integrate words and phrases common in both their native languages, such as *inschallah*, *selaminaleyküm*, etc. (Özdamar, *Mutterzunge* 13-14). Turkish immigrants in "Karagöz in Alamanía/Blackeye in Germany"³, talk to one another while waiting for the Orient Express on their way back to Turkey in a Turkish full of German words they have no equivalent in Turkish. Thus, none of the languages appear on their own or distant from others (82).

Özdamar does not translate or explain all the non-German words since her audience consists of Turkish immigrants living in Germany and a German public

³ This story has two titles with the same meaning. The guest worker protagonist of the story, Karagöz Schicksallos (Karagöz Fateless) shares his name with the protagonist of traditional Turkish shadow-play *Karagöz ile Hacivat* (Karagöz and Hacivat), his name literally translated into German in the second title as Schwarzauge (Blackeye). *Alamanía* (in Turkish; Alamanya) refers to Germany, a colloquial form of Turkish *Almanya*.

increasingly more familiar with the immigrants and (some of) their bilingualism. Her choice for not providing translations or footnote explanations for the foreign words she mixes into her German has a disturbing effect on non-Turkish speakers but aims to induce a willingness to learn more about the Turkish language and the culture. In an attempt to replicate this multilingualism, the English-language translator chooses to only translate the main German text and leaves the Turkish untranslated. Although this strategy seems to follow Özdamar's use of language, *the translation* positions Turkish (and Arabic) as much more distant from the German than it is in the original. He also misses an opportunity to replicate Özdamar's strategy of creating German neologisms through literal translations from Turkish, and instead renders these words into everyday English. His treatment of Özdamar's multilingualism inadvertently reaffirms stereotypes of both the German and Turkish cultures and reaffirms an Orientalist perception of the Turkish German immigrant culture. At the same time, leaving Turkish untranslated in the English comes to resemble some of the literary strategies used by Latino/a/x authors when they intersperse Spanish (and sometimes indigenous phrases) into English. The intermingling of English and Turkish in the translation prevents the reader from better understanding the "translated" Turkish German immigrant culture, and also renders the conditions that have created Turkish migration to Germany—and its cultural representation as well as discourses about multiculturalism in Germany—as similar to migration into the United States.

TRANSLATING THE SOURCE TEXT'S MULTILINGUALISM

The German title *Mutterzunge* is a neologism Özdamar derives by playing with the words *Muttersprache* (literally “mother language” in German) and *ana dili* (literally “mother language/tongue” in Turkish; the Turkish words for “language” and “tongue” are homonyms). Özdamar exchanges the German word for language, *Sprache* in the compound word *Muttersprach*, with *Zunge* (“tongue” in German, but unlike the English word “mother tongue,” the German term does not refer to “language”). This word appears in the first story included in the collection with the same title and is central to the text as the narrator repeatedly refers to her native language as “Mutterzunge”, trying to figure out “when” she has lost it (7). She also uses the word “Muttersätze” (literally “mother sentences”) when she recounts a conversation she had with her mother (7). At the beginning of the story, the narrator declares “In meiner Sprache heißt Zunge: Sprache”, explaining the logic behind Özdamar’s neologism to the non-Turkish speakers. Thomas’s English translation uses the term “mother tongue” for Özdamar’s “Mutterzunge,” and translates the first sentence as “In my language, “tongue” means “language”.” (9). Since it is not uncommon for the English “tongue” to be used for “language”, the neologism’s effect is lost in Thomas’s translation, and this sentence inevitably loses its literary effect in its English translation, although there is not much else the translator could have done in order to replicate it. The rest of the translation, however, further normalizes the term “mother tongue” without attempting to adequately render into English the sense of the rest of Özdamar’s neologisms.

The narrator soon recalls her conversations with her mother, and she refers to them as “mother sentences” (7), which Thomas translates as “I can remember sentences now, sentences she said in her mother tongue” (9). His translation renders this neologism into a familiar language, instead of re-creating the sense of neologism from the original. Further, Thomas uses the word “tongue” in translating words Özdamar uses *Sprache*, such as in translating “Fremdsprache” (literally, “foreign language”), making its use more normal than it would be otherwise (52). His approach makes these words flow naturally in English, while Özdamar deliberately plays with words in order to convey the narrator’s difficult relationship with the languages she speaks. It is no coincidence that the narrator uses *Zunge* when she talks about her mother language, and *Sprache* when she employs the word foreign language, probably referring to German. In the stories “Mother Tongue” and “Grandfather Tongue”, the narrator is on a journey of remembering when she lost her mother tongue because she feels estranged from it, remembering it as if it were a foreign language that she knows (7). Her choice of words might be connected to the narrator’s act of “traumatic recall” as Yildiz puts it in her analysis of “Mutterzunge” (146), because of her estrangement from her mother tongue, for reasons either connected to her migration to Berlin or to her traumatic experiences in Turkey due to her involvement in the leftist movement, or perhaps connected to the language reform that has altered the language massively. *Mutterzunge* then could be interpreted as an act of remembrance, whereas the term *Fremdsprache* could refer to German and does not trigger remembrances. It is also a

significant part of the text where Özdamar addresses how multilingual consciousness changes the languages the speaker knows.

Thomas's translation practically erases Özdamar's use of neologisms. There is only a hint now that the narrator is bilingual and contemplates her experiences of losing some of her mother tongue and the ways that this act of contemplation itself influences or changes the language in which the text is written. Only the Turkish idioms that she literally translates remain as instances where the reader can glimpse the influence of another language in the English text; however, these are mostly explained by the author through contextualization, and thus do not necessarily change or influence the English of the translation. The creative multilingualism of Özdamar is mostly lost due to the translator's attempt at domesticating or naturalizing the language of the translation. Naturalizing foreign words and concepts, according to André Lefevere, is one of the common responses to translating them as opposed to leaving them untranslated, which has the opposite effect of "exoticizing" them (17). As the target culture learns more about the source culture, the translators' job gets easier because they do not have to choose between naturalizing a foreign concept or exoticizing it (17). Thomas is in the position as one of the first English-language translators of having to translate a "hybrid" Turkish-German culture that creates new ideas and ways of expression as Bhabha puts it (226-229), and he resorts to both these strategies in order to render this culture and its language more easily intelligible to English-speaking audiences. While he naturalizes the terms

Mutterzunge and *Muttersätze*, he takes an exoticizing approach when it comes to Turkish words that appear untranslated in the source text.

The Turkish words and sentences in Özdamar's text appear as carefully placed words that do not necessarily disturb or disrupt her narrative. She often immediately provides German translations within the text, and in instances where she does not, the meanings of these words are not central to her message. An example is a conversation between guest workers waiting for a train to back to Turkey in "Karagöz in Alamania/Schwarzauge in Deutschland". The workers speak Turkish but integrate German words for which they do not have corresponding terms in Turkish (82). Here Özdamar exhibits an example for multilingualism that is the reverse of the rest of the story. While the rest of the text demonstrates how her Turkish affects her German, here the reader is given a glimpse of how German influences the Turkish of the guestworkers.⁴ The English translation's treatment of these Turkish sentences follows the translation of the rest of the text; the German words in the Turkish sentences are translated while the Turkish is left as is, thus shifting the Turkish-German code switching to English-Turkish bilingualism. A problem occurs, however, in the translation of some German words that have Turkish suffixes. Turkish is an extensively agglutinative language, and most of the German words in Özdamar's Turkish sentences receive suffixes that indicate grammatical cases or the conjunction "-de"⁵. At the same time, as a rule, Turkish suffixes change their

⁴ Elsewhere, Özdamar admits to having inspired for Karagöz's story after receiving a typed letter from a guest worker whose Turkish she could not understand well (*Der Hof im Spiegel* 48).

⁵ Added after a word in order to give the meaning "too", as in "Me too."

vowels and/or consonants in order to fit the sound structure of the word to which they are added. For instance, the German word *Wohnungsamt* receives the suffix “-de” and is given as “Wohnungsamt da”. The English translation completely ignores this grammatical convention in Turkish, which shapes the conventions of German-Turkish codeswitching, and leaves all the non-German parts as they are, even though some of the English words do not work with the Turkish-origin suffixes given to the mostly German words. “Wohnungsamt da” is translated as “Housing office da”; however, the sound structure of the English word “housing office” would require the Turkish-origin suffix to change into “-de”, which would mean that a genuine Turkish-English bilingual translation would have to read as “Housing office de”. Thus, the translation of these passages does not look like the sentences of bilingual speakers of English and Turkish who would be mixing these languages, as they do in German. This indicates a lack of knowledge on Turkish on Thomas’s part, since if he had known Turkish it would have been a better strategy to replicate the source text’s bilingualism.

Most of the translations of the Turkish in the text follow the same pattern as the Turkish sentences of the guest workers. Thomas seems to have decided not to add anything to his translation, shying away from footnotes or translations of words that Özdamar chooses not to translate. Thus, his approach falls under the exoticizing category referred to by Lefevere. He not only leaves Turkish words or parts of neologisms or bilingual phrasings untranslated but also italicizes them, thus drawing the reader’s attention to their “foreignness” and also separating them stylistically from the rest of the

English text. The examples of the guest workers' bilingual/codeswitching conversations below illustrate the differences between the original and its translation in terms of their stylistic choices in including Turkish:

“Sonra Dolmetscher geldi. Meisterle konustu. Bu Lohn steuer kaybetmis dedi. Finanzamt cok fena dedi. Lohnsteuer yok. Bombok. Kindergeld falan alamazsin. Yok. Aufenthalt da yok. Fremdpolizei vermiyor. Wohnungsamt da yok diyor. Arbeitsamt da Erlaubnis vermedi.”⁶ (*Mutterzunge* 81)

“*Sonra interpreter geldi. Foremanle konustu. Bu income tax kaybetmis dedi. Tax office cok fena dedi. Income tax yok. Bombok. Child allowance falan alamazsin. Yok. Residence da yok. Immigration police vermiyor. Housing office de yok diyor. Employment office da permit vermedi.*” (*Mother Tongue* 96)

The English text visibly distances the two languages from one another, even though it is not necessary, and even though the original is trying to replicate an easier interplay between German and Turkish (not a distancing relationship). Thomas consistently italicizes Özdamar's foreign words, whereas Özdamar uses italics far less and for a different purpose. In her story “Karagöz in Alamania”, she does not use italics at all. In “Mutterzunge” and “Großvaterzunge”, she uses italics for the Turkish words that

⁶ In English: “Then interpreter came. He/She spoke to the foreman. He said, this income has lost tax. Tax office says, too bad. No income tax. Shit. You cannot get child allowance or anything. No. No residence, either. Immigration office isn't giving it. Housing office also says no. Employment office isn't giving permit, either.”

the narrator remembers in her search for her mother tongue but does not italicize all of the Turkish. Words such as *Bakshish*⁷, *Alamania*, and *Inschallah* that appear as part of the narrative or in dialogue are not italicized. At the end of “Großvaterzunge”, the last word the narrator remembers in her mother tongue is *Ruh*, and Özdamar italicizes it when the narrator initially mentions it. However, after the narrator tells its meaning to the German girl she has met, ““*Ruh* heißt Seele”, sagte ich zu dem Mädchen”⁸, when the girl repeats it back to the narrator, the word is not italicized; ““Seele heißt *Ruh*”, sagte sie”⁹ (50). It is clear that Özdamar’s use of italics reflects the narrator’s search for not simply remembering words from her mother tongue, but for connecting them to German. Özdamar emphasizes the creation of a Turkish-German multilingualism as a result of her attempts to reconnect to her mother tongue in what is to her a foreign or second language, rather than the simple remembrance of a mother tongue with which she feels she is losing contact. When the translator italicizes her Turkish words in the English translation, he fails to approximate the original’s embrace of multilingualism as a way to connect German and Turkish, and further distances Turkish from English, another language that signals the context of an immigrant-receiving country.

Not only does Thomas’s treatment of the multilingual features of Özdamar’s text distance Turkish further from the dominant language of an immigrant receiving society than in the source text, but it also paves the way for their stereotypical interpretation. The

⁷ Tip

⁸ “*Ruh* means soul,” I said to the girl.”

⁹ ““Soul means ruh,” she said.”

translation reinforces and also shapes the emphasis on a migrant consciousness and on the mixture of German and Turkish cultures that characterizes reviews of the translation. Thomas's translation reinforces the idea that the "mother tongue," as indicated in the title of the book, is a concept that the author has trouble remembering, and its restoration requires a going back to the culture "left behind." Kaiser points to a change in a translated passage where Özdamar's narrator becomes determined to find her mother tongue (981). The narrator decides to learn Arabic in order to be closer to her grandfather's Turkish, which still included high numbers of Arabic, as told in the following sentence: "Vielleicht erst zu Großvater zurück, dann kann ich den Weg zu meiner Mutter und Mutterzunge finden¹⁰" (13). Kaiser emphasizes that while the narrator talks about going **back** to her grandfather, she does not denote her way to her mother tongue as a going back, she simply states that she will "find the way" (981). But Thomas's translation reads, "I can find my way back to my mother, back to my mother tongue", literally adding a direction to the narrator's hypothetical journey toward her mother and mother tongue (15). Kaiser further argues that the narrator's journey is actually going forward towards finding her German, "diffracted through Turkish (969), based on how she not only translates Turkish words and idioms, but also makes them part of her German, such as through associating the Turkish *Ruh* with the German word *Ruhe*¹¹ based on their phonetic similarity in the earlier mentioned passage (983).

¹⁰ "Maybe first back to grandfather, then I can find the way to my mother and mother tongue."

¹¹ Peace, calm, quiet

Thomas's translation prevents this reading by adding the word "back" to the sentence, and by his overall treatment of Özdamar's multilingualism, which she sees as her new, "singular German" (Kaiser 978).

IMPLICATIONS

A naturalizing translation strategy, such as the one used by Thomas, is not necessarily problematic in itself. As Lefevere argues, all literary traditions take time to learn about and get used to new concepts and foreign ideas and it is through "refractions" of literary texts that we mostly learn about them (18). A refraction could be a translation of a literary text, a simplified or annotated version, or a critical reading. It allows new and foreign ideas to spread and reach new audiences. As the audiences become more familiar with these ideas and as their literary tastes expand, the texts are re-translated, and new refractions emerge in that culture. Thomas's translation of *Mutterzunge* can be considered the initial contact an English-speaking North American audience makes with Özdamar's language and even though US-based academics rarely quotes it, it does reflect the perspective taken by critics in the initial reception of the stories. Much of the initial readings emphasized her use of cultural translation, and this translation is either considered a re-writing of the historical narrative of her homeland, Turkey, in order to fill a gap emerged in her historical memory as a result of her migration (Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation* 13), or the emphasis is on her "transnational" language that puts her and her characters in-between nations. Thomas's translation, through keeping Özdamar's

languages apart and not allowing for a kind of natural codeswitching that is more similar to the texture of the original re-iterates approaches that trap migrants in-between nation-states, belonging to none.

In her discussion of multilingual literatures, Seyhan concludes that they are the best source for teaching about other cultures (Seyhan, *Writing Outside the Nation* 157). She points out that “if our reception of transnational, emergent, diasporic literatures is mediated only through English, not only linguistic but also cultural differences and specificities will be lost in translation” (157). She emphasizes the importance of “listening” to the languages that produce these texts and paying attention to the “memory” of the “mother tongue” that exist in a bilingual writer’s texts (157). It is inevitable, though, that the reading and teaching of a multilingual text will require some form of translation, especially if one or two of the languages are not accessible to the reader. Thus, the role of translation for bilingual texts is to render visible all the languages within the text. Translations of multilingual literatures, especially when English is the language of education not only in Canada and the United States but worldwide, can provide a new area where we can observe how representations of difference –and also the emergence of new bilingual cultures– can be achieved in translation. When *Mutterzunge* is treated as a primarily German text in English translation, even though Turkish and German are presented together through codeswitching, both are “foreign” languages as far as English is concerned. When Özdamar, an author with a migrant background living in Germany, uses Turkish words

and chooses not to provide translations, this strategy differs from the minoritization of Turkish in an English translation that does not assign Turkish the same status as a minority language as in the original text. This choice indicates an assumption on the translator's part that German, as the dominant language of the culture of arrival for Özdamar and her immigrant characters, and as a European language functions much like English in the similar migration-receiving contexts of Canada and the United States. However, the transposition of a German-Turkish multilingual text into English in this manner disturbs the codeswitching dynamic between the languages that Özdamar highlights. This strategy highlights the "foreignness" of non-German/non-English-speaking migration over the multilingualism its author creates.

Seyhan's comparative study of the United States and Germany as homes to multilingual and multicultural literature analyzes Turkish-German literary production alongside Chicano/a/x literature. She reads *Mutterzunge* alongside Chicana author Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*, arguing that both Özdamar and Anzaldúa re-write their nations' histories by using multilingual strategies. She unpacks Özdamar's references to the Turkish language reform and other historical events, but emphasizes the migrants' lack of historic continuity, and sees the texts by Özdamar and Anzaldúa as tools to create new national narratives (15). What is missing is how these immigrant cultures interact with the contexts in which they are written, and what is new other than the act of re-writing the homeland's history. Seyhan's account also reflects the tendency to equate similar literary traditions of distinct minority/migrant cultures with one another.

If the distinctions of how the “minor” language interacts with the “national” language are not visible in a translation, it is a natural tendency to interpret Özdamar’s immigrant writing similar to the more well-known Chicana writing, both of which appear to make similar use of multilingual strategies as a way of negotiating their identities in a language that dominates their “mother language”. However, this is not entirely accurate, because Anzaldua’s multilingual writing as a native bilingual author aims to express her identity at the crossroads of multiple cultures which have been in the process of moving and mixing with one another for much longer than the history of Turkish migration to Germany. As a sequential bilingual, a first-generation immigrant who learned German as a second language, Özdamar, in contrast, does not advocate for a similar “borderlands” language, but rather describes a more recent form of contact between two languages as a result of economic conditions. In general, as Adelson argues, Turkish-German literature “is not anchored in a politics of identity” (20), as opposed to Chicano/a/x literature.

Thomas’s translation may not explicitly equate Chicana writing with Özdamar’s German-Turkish background; however, his translation strategies and the presentation of the translation suggest an implicit connection between the two. The use of italics as a marker of Spanish words characterizes some Chicana multilingual writing. Anzaldua’s bilingual text, for example, switches between English and Spanish but stylistically separates the Spanish text from the English through the use of italics. Thomas’ translation of Özdamar’s codeswitching may have been influenced by this convention in Chicana writing (which may itself have been shaped or influenced by publishing convention in the

United States where Spanish has remained a “foreign” language even though it is spoken as a first or domestic language by a growing number of US residents), or at least reminds the reader of it, in terms of both its representation as immigrant writing, and also its stylistic choices. However, this is only an illusory reminder, and it tricks the reader with the association it creates, because the context of Turkish migration to Germany and its literary representation differs greatly from Mexican migration to the United States. The association is often built on the fact that both migration waves were a result of 1950s guest worker programs and that both immigrant communities pose a challenge the majority language’s homogeneity in their new environments (Sánchez 54). The focus on the theme of migration, the emphasis on disturbing the historical narratives of their home and host nations, and the use of multilingual strategies are common attributes of both literary traditions; however, an interpretation of Özdamar’s stories in the US context based on existing Chicana and Latina literary traditions flattens the distinctiveness of Turkish-German migrant cultures and histories.

One important distinction between the two migrations is the duration in which the two respective cultures have been interacting with each other. Spanish (and to a far lesser extent Indigenous) languages that have been instrumental in creating a US-multilingual writing have a much longer history and interaction with English compared to the Turkish migration that took place in the second half of the twentieth century and is ongoing. Spanish and Indigenous languages have predated or emerged simultaneously with the existence of English in the Americas, and the tension between these languages are caused

by a colonial history of land domination, which resulted in a displacement of peoples of various backgrounds from and to the United States. Although the guest worker programs of the twentieth century coincided in the United States and Germany and may have resulted in similar traditions of immigrant writing, the positioning of minority languages in the United States and in Germany is not the same. Another distinction between the two migrations is the positioning of the Turkish language, culture, and religion as “Middle Eastern” and non-European/Christian, especially from a Western perspective. In contrast, Spanish and English both are European languages, the predominant religions of North America are Christian, and both languages are linguistically and culturally much closer to one another compared to Turkish, which is more open to “the conventionally negotiated immediacy of exoticism”, to use George Steiner’s words, for English readers (380).

The immediacy of exoticism is what allows Özdamar’s stories to be interpreted as “wildly fantastical Scheherazade stories” and in opposition to Kafka’s German, a much more recent literary figure compared to the storyteller of *One Thousand and One Nights* from the Middle Ages. What does not get attention in this reception of the English-language translation of Özdamar’s work is her description of the migrant consciousness of in-betweenness and its embeddedness in modern Turkish culture. The fall of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the modern nation state after the fashion of the European nation states have created a new national Turkish culture that considers itself a bridge between the East and the West, and also a culture that has turned towards the West and therefore “modernized” itself. Özdamar’s reference to language reform, and her

incorporation of Arabic in “Großvaterzunge” are important signifiers of this. The language reform both sought to nationalize the language by removing Arabic script and words, and also sought to Westernize it by replacing the old script with Latin letters. This, in turn, led to subsequent generations’ forgetting of the old letters and the daily language has changed drastically between generations. The old language, now referred to as Ottoman Turkish, along with other aspects of the culture that was changed as part of modernization and nationalization efforts, became the target of a negative rhetoric that sought to establish Turkish culture as more modern and therefore European. Yüce refers to these “Europeanizing” changes as forms of “self-Orientalism”, which was ironically deployed in order to dispute the “Orientalist stereotypes about Muslim Turks” (103). Özdamar’s “Großvaterzunge” dramatizes this through its protagonist’s failure to learn Arabic.

The narrator of “Großvaterzunge” repeatedly tries to learn Arabic letters, but keeps likening them to various shapes, and is never able to completely learn reading the script (45). In the instances where she manages to read, her voice mixes into other students of Ibni Abdullah, who are in the same room but separated from her behind a curtain, “Orientalisten” collectively reciting the readings (33). At the end of the story, the narrator leaves Ibni Abdullah’s story, having fallen in love with her grandfather who is symbolized as both Ibni Abdullah and the Arabic language, but has not learned the language in the process (45-46). Ottoman Turkish and Arabic, in Özdamar’s stories, symbolize a romanticized past, which at the end of the story is not brought into present-

day; rather, they remain in the past, although the narrator previously lamented the loss of Arabic script and words. The Arabic letters remain undeciphered signs that the narrator has merely interpreted according to what their shapes resemble. This self-Orientalism, or self-exoticism of Özdamar's protagonist, can be said to be representative of Thomas's treatment of Turkish in his translation of Özdamar's text. Not only is he not really approximating the texture of her bilingual text, but he also leaves the Turkish words open for interpretation.

CONCLUSION

Thomas's translation of Özdamar's *Mutterzunge* reflects an approach towards interpreting "literatures of migration", to use Adelson's term, as products of a hybridity that separates them from the national traditions in which they were created (4-5). This approach tends to interpret the hybrid cultures that emerge in immigrant communities as cultures that are in-between, belonging to none. As Özdamar's stories in *Mutterzunge* illustrate, however, immigrant communities merge the cultures of their home and host countries to create unique forms of articulation in literature. The tendency to view literary productions of migration in this way, overlooks individual voices of the authors.

Thomas's English translation of the stories fail to replicate Özdamar's individual voice through her use of bilingual and multilingual features, and it misinterprets the central message of her stories. A new focus on literature of migration within German studies shows a need for a translation that will better reflect the original's multilingualism and

can be instrumental in understanding new cultures and contexts that emerge in national contexts through various migration waves.

Adelson's study of literature produced in the context of Turkish migration focuses on how it interacts with the "German-language literature of the 1990s [that] responds to historic changes at the millennial turn" (20). As opposed to Seyhan's focus on their interaction with the home culture by categorizing these writers as having disrupted histories, Adelson argues for an approach that will explore how they respond to and engage with the ongoing historical events of their new environments (22). Her emphasis is on fully exploring the idea that the immigrant cultures may create a new culture, which moves beyond the nostalgia for the homeland. Yildiz's later study that examines German literature from a lens of a new, "postmonolingual" paradigm operates along the same line of thought. She offers it as a tool to investigate multilingual strategies in order to re-orient the criticism of these works within national, monolingual contexts. This new approach to the criticism of multilingual literatures signals a more informed understanding of "hybrid" cultures in contexts where two or more cultures meet, thus, inviting a fresh perspective on their translation as well. This new perspective ideally would require an increased awareness of the uniqueness and originality of these works and strive to represent this merging of cultures in equally unique ways, inviting dialogue between languages that perhaps have not merged yet with English.

CHAPTER 3

THE TURKISH TRANSLATION: FROM NATIONAL TOWARDS MULTILINGUAL WRITING

A compelling detail about *Mutterzunge*'s Turkish translation is the translation of the word "mutter" (mother) throughout the text. Like the English translator Craig Thomas, Fikret Doğan, the translator of *Annedili*, interprets Özdamar's search for her mother tongue as a search for the authentic language of her childhood. For Doğan, however, the challenge is to translate the text into the mother tongue in question. Doğan successfully incorporates Özdamar's neologism "Mutterzunge" into the Turkish version as "annedili", further complicating the associations derived from the word in Turkish. While its German original signals a migrant's creative use of German, its Turkish translation directly evokes the changes Turkish has undergone in the twentieth century under the influence of the language reforms. This is a fitting choice on Doğan's part since Özdamar's stories "Mutterzunge" and "Großvaterzunge" are full of references to the language reform, especially to the Arabic loanwords that were largely replaced with Turkish equivalents. The central theme of Özdamar's stories being migration both within and from Turkey necessitates an investigation of links between the language reform and the country's relationship to migration. Doğan's translation needs to engage with the language reform's influence on the language.

This chapter will consider Doğan’s translation in the context of the language reform’s effect on Turkish and its relationship with migration and multiculturalism as part of nation building practices in the Turkish Republic. It argues that, although the translation engages in a critical representation of the reform by offering the Turkish neologism of “annedili” for Özdamar’s German “Mutterzunge”, it reiterates the reform’s role in correcting, standardizing, and categorizing the language to support a Westernized nationalism, which closely relates to how the nation has approached issues of multiculturalism. Doğan’s translation is a contribution to the Turkish literary scene at a time when large numbers of Arabic speakers were entering the country as refugees, and the translation’s engagement with Özdamar’s themes of self-orientalism through language reform and migration is indicative of the approach towards the refugees and the prospect of a multicultural society at the time. The chapter will first address the translation’s treatment of *Mutterzunge*’s multilingual strategies and then interpret the translator’s choices within the context of the influence of language reforms on the discussions of multiculturalism in Turkey.

THE TRANSLATION

First published in 2013, Doğan’s translation of *Mutterzunge* was part of a larger effort by İletişim Yayınları, a prominent publishing house in Turkey which publishes literature,

academic research, and criticism to educate its readers and foster free thinking¹², to publish all of the books written by Özdamar. The publication points out that her work is *finally* available in Turkish, meaning that it was an oversight on the publishers' part that the work of an author of Turkish origin, who has become popular and won awards abroad, was not made available in her home country. Considering *Mutterzunge's* first publication in German was in 1990 and that her first novel, *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei, hat zwei Türen, aus einer kam ich rein, aus der anderen ging ich raus*¹³ earned her the Ingeborg Bachman Prize in 1991, it is notable that the translation of her works into Turkish took more than twenty years. One of the reasons for a need for their translations was the 2007 publication of *Kendi Kendinin Terzisi Bir Kambur*¹⁴, an account of the time period before the death of the famous Turkish poet Ece Ayhan, who was close friends with Özdamar. Another factor that influenced the translation of Özdamar's books, especially *Mutterzunge*, was the then-recent wave of Syrian refugees following the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011. The mixed attitudes towards the Arabic language as a result of modernization reforms in the country's recent history has contributed to the linguistic difficulties the incoming refugees have experienced. As primarily Arabic speakers, they represent a time in recent history where Turkish was

¹² The publishing house was founded right after the 1980 military coup in Turkey. They emphasize that the post-coup political environment was not as tolerant to free thinking as they would like, so they founded their publishing house in order to increase the outlets for information. They started out by publishing magazines on economy and encyclopedias.

¹³ *Life is a Caravanserai, Has Two Doors, I Came in One, I Came Out the Other*, translated by Luise von Flotow

¹⁴ *A Hunchback, His Own Tailor*. Published by Yapı Kredi Yayınları

closer to Arabic and “the East”, before the country headed towards “the West”—Europe and the European Union. Özdamar’s critical engagement with the language reform through a protagonist who tries to remember her roots by learning Arabic is a worthwhile contribution to discussions around the integration of Syrians into Turkish everyday life.

The Turkish language reform, which started with the change in script in 1928 and was mostly carried out after the foundation of the Turkish Language Association (*Türk Dil Kurumu, TDK*) in 1932, was instrumental in the creation of a new language that could appeal to all segments of society and also created a new national sense of belonging.

Osmanlıca or *Osmanlı Türkçesi* (Ottoman Turkish) was influenced by Persian and Arabic, and was the literary and administrative language, as opposed to the everyday language spoken by rural and uneducated people. The aim of the language reform was to bridge the gap between the educated and the uneducated by removing foreign influences from the language and also by standardizing it. The standardization was necessary because the everyday language spoken by rural people varied greatly from one region to another, and later migrations from various parts of the Balkans and other former-Ottoman territories only increased this variety. The reform also sought to make reading and writing easier through the adoption of a more phonetic Latin alphabet compared to the Perso-Arabic script used by the Ottoman Turkish, which was argued to be unsuitable to the sound structure of Turkish.¹⁵ The reform was very successful in terms of increasing

¹⁵ Arabic script allows only three vowels, while Turkish script has eight. Arabic script also has more consonants than Turkish needs, which would result in more than one letter being used for the same sound. These have resulted in reading and writing to be mostly based on convention, and reformers have argued

literacy rates and changing the language in a short time, therefore succeeding in establishing a national language. However, as Yüce notes, the language reform was also accompanied by an ideological mission to separate the new nation from its Ottoman legacy, which resulted in a negative rhetoric towards both the Ottoman culture and history, and also towards Arabic, which he refers to as a form of “self-Orientalism” (108-109). The reform has remained a subject of debate, even though it was largely successful, because critics of the reform have argued that it caused a gap in the nation’s cultural memory (Yüce 112-113).

Özdamar’s stories criticize this Westernizing nationalism within and through the language reform, and her take on the individuals who have experienced this linguistic change does not advocate for the language reform or its opposition. As argued in the earlier chapter, Özdamar’s protagonist in “Mutterzunge” and “Großvaterzunge” fills the gap left by her lost “mother tongue” through learning a new language, German, as it is impossible to return to her childhood and completely reconstruct its language in a foreign land and at a different time (and because the language no longer exists in this form because it has undergone changes in Turkey). Her contemplation is a productive contribution to discussions surrounding multiculturalism, which have heightened with the arrival of the Syrian refugees to the country, in a way similar to the Turkish migration to Germany. Both migration waves have initiated or deepened debates around issues of

that it was mostly guesswork, thus Turkish needed a new alphabet that reflected the language’s sound structure better.

multiculturalism and also included arriving migrants who were perceived to be “Eastern” (Turkish immigrants in Germany are seen as Middle Eastern, and Syrian refugees are perceived as *more* Eastern than Turkish people who are considered more European because of modernization) although the reasons and consequences for this migration are distinct. The Turkish translation of *Mutterzunge* inevitably engages with the legacies of language reform in ways that indicate the country’s approach to cultural aspects of migration and a post-national consciousness.

TRANSLATING THE SOURCE TEXT’S MULTILINGUALISM

In contrast to Thomas’s English translation, Doğan’s Turkish text sustains Özdamar’s neologisms that play on the word “mother tongue”. While there is a tendency to render phrases such as “Mutterzunge” and “Muttersätze” as the more intelligible “mother tongue” and “sentences she said in her mother tongue” in the English translation (9), the Turkish translation attempts to come up with equivalent neologisms. Doğan uses literal translation in translating these phrases as “annedili” and “annecümleleri” (literally; “mothersentences”) respectively (7). Although the terms sound foreign to Turkish readers, they replicate the effect the words have in the original text. The difference is that the Turkish text evokes the changes that occurred in Turkish during the language reform more visibly than either the German source text or the English translation. The use of “anne” instead of “ana” emphasizes reference to the role of one’s mother in the context of language learning, rather than solely referring to one’s primary or native language, in a

way that “ana dili” does not. Because of this, these neologisms stand out in the text and evoke neologisms created for words of foreign origin by the Language Association for the contemporary Turkish speaker.

The Language Association took a special interest in replacing the scientific and new technological terms with counterparts derived from existing word roots. These words were either borrowed from Arabic or European languages, especially French. The new words were considered “pure” Turkish (*Öztürkçe*) even though the process of deriving them relied on the translation of foreign terms.¹⁶ *Ana dili* itself is a word created for the French *langue maternelle*¹⁷ as a linguistic term which appears for the first time in *Dilbilim Terimleri Sözlüğü*¹⁸ published by Language Association in 1949. It is often confused with a similar word, *ana dil*, another linguistic term for proto language, offered in place of the French *langue mère* in the same dictionary. There seems to have been a change in the meaning of this term since then. According to the *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük*¹⁹, *ana dil* refers to the English term for proto language, a language from which other languages have been derived, while the French word refers to a Proto-Human language that is the originator of all the world’s languages. At any rate, since the spelling and pronunciation of *ana dili* and *ana dil* are very similar, *ana dil* is often mistakenly used for *ana dili* in everyday language by native speakers. The logic behind the difference

¹⁶ For a more detailed account of neologisms of the language reform, see Lewis 107-123.

¹⁷ Mother language

¹⁸ Linguistic Terms Dictionary

¹⁹ Updated Turkish Dictionary

between these words is that while in *ana dil* the word *ana* is used as an adjective, meaning “main, essential, fundamental” according to the *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük*, in *ana dili*, the word is used as a noun and refers to “mother”. The extra vowel in *ana dili* is the suffix that is used to create the accusative form of *dil*, signaling a possessive relationship between the mother and the language. The word could potentially refer to “mother’s language” or “the language learned from the mother”. The confusion stems from the fact that the Turkish words for “main” and “mother” are homonyms, just like the words for “language” and “tongue”. So, when the members of the Language Association were creating Turkish words for basic scientific terms, they apparently had trouble inventing words for these European-origin terms, which resulted in the creation of two words that sound very similar and are hard to distinguish.

On the other hand, there are many words that contain the word *ana* as in *ana dil*, such as *ana vatan*, *ana başlık*, *ana bina*, which refer to the words’ home country, main title, and main building, respectively. This creates further confusion, because even though the word *ana* here refers to the adjective “main” since the second words in the compound words are not in their accusative form, the meaning “mother” is still associated with some of these words. *Ana vatan*, for instance, refers to “mother” when we consider how Northern Cyprus is most often referred to as *yavru vatan*²⁰. When it comes to these words, then, even though the Language Association insists on their use as separate words in these compounds, the two words are closely associated in the speakers’ minds in

²⁰ *yavru*: child, offspring; *vatan*: country, land

everyday language. Some scholars have pointed to this confusion and have suggested alternatives to one or two of these words. It is interesting that one of these suggestions, made by Mukim Sağır, is the use of “anne dili” instead of “ana dili” (543). Doğan’s choice in using *anne* instead of *ana* removes the confusion as to which meaning is referenced. The neologism resembles the type of neologisms created by the Association that replaced many of the foreign-derived words in everyday language and scientific terms. It creates a platform for thinking about this moment in the linguistic history of the language, which is often not remembered by the young generations because they were born into the modern language. This choice of translation points out to inconsistencies (Why is it *ana dili* and not *anne dili*, if the word *ana* was being replaced by *anne*?) and approaches the source text with a critical lens that reflects Özdamar’s use of literal translation in German. It also repositions the linguistic effects of international migration in the context of the language reform.

Aside from the success of *annedili* as a key word of the text, the Turkish translation aims to provide a source text for Özdamar’s translated German. There are a number of strategies the translator employs to achieve this. First, there is a tendency to correct Özdamar’s Turkish where the translator perceives mistakes. The translator here appears to be trying to provide a translation that refers to a more authentic culture because this tendency is most often observed in bilingual parts of the text that either include Turkish words and/or their literal translations. The second strategy is the translator’s manipulation of context to reinforce stereotypes associated with the

characters in the stories. The translator seems to want to provide a more accurate “original” to Özdamar’s translated German while describing Turkish contexts, and also to insert “local color” and references to class differences that largely does not exist in the German text. These interventions are unnecessary because Özdamar’s text does not attempt to be authentic or accurate in its use of Turkish but rather to contemplate the impossibility of authenticity or accuracy. His choice of translation strategies implies that Doğan is more interested in correcting Özdamar’s cultural translation rather than in rendering Özdamar’s attempt to complicate the idea of an authentic or accurate mother tongue. This, in turn, resembles the Language Association’s attempts at correcting the Turkish language by attempting to standardize it and removing foreign-derived words in the process, thus eliminating any notion of bi- or multilinguality or bi- and multiculturalism within the Turkish nation or its main language. The translator’s choices also reflect a form of romantic nationalism maintained by the language reforms around a “pure” Turkish, as reflected in the language spoken by the uneducated Anatolians, as opposed to a supposedly more elitist Ottoman Turkish.

It is highly possible that Doğan often resorted to the Language Association’s dictionary when translating the stories in *Mutterzunge* because rendering its bilingualism, especially the word pairs in “Großvaterzunge,” in modern Turkish equivalents represents a challenge. The Arabic words used by Özdamar, as the narrator of “Großvaterzunge” mentions, are words still used by modern speakers, despite attempts to purge them entirely from a modernized Turkish (29). A translator attempting to translate a word pair

such as “Mazi – Vergangenheit”, for instance, can easily pair *mazi* with *geçmiş*, a Turkish word suggested for its Arabic counterpart, as Doğan does, because both words are used interchangeably in daily language (38). Not all these words have such counterparts, however. More often than not, the translator is left without a word that can easily be used in place of the German translations, either because the word is still in use or because it gradually fell out of use without even being replaced by a new word. Some speakers may know these words, as Özdamar apparently does, but they appear as *eskimiş*, archaic, in *Güncel Türkçe Sözlük*. An example of the first case is *ikamet*, which is paired with the German word *Aufenthalt* by Özdamar, meaning *residence* (most often in connection with migrants, such as in *Aufenthaltsgenehmigung* or residence permit) (48). Doğan pairs this word with *oturma*, a word with the same meaning derived from the Turkish verb for “to reside;” however, in daily speech and on legal documents *ikamet* is much more common than its counterpart. An example to the latter case is *mübrem*, whose Turkish translation is a dictionary definition rather than a single word. Özdamar pairs the word with the phrase “dringend erforderlich”, and the Turkish translation literally translates this as “acilen gerekli olan”, both meaning “urgently needed”. The rapid change in the Turkish language in such a short time made turning to the Language Association’s dictionary necessary in order to determine which word replacements or the meaning of a word that fell out of use in time.

It is striking that Özdamar’s seemingly random choice of words in her word pairs include some key terms from migrants’ day to day experiences. *İkamet*, for instance, is a

crucial legal term at the center of their experiences in new countries because a residence permit is the first step for being able to settle in a foreign country. “Karagöz in Alamania” is full of references to how Turkish workers’ lives included a great deal of negotiation in terms of finding and keeping their jobs in order to remain in the country legally when their guest worker permit expired. A Turkish immigrant, for instance, tells another that he cannot receive a residence permit because of a problem he had with his tax documents, using the German word *Aufenthalt* in a Turkish sentence (81), while the earlier story’s narrator discusses the term’s Turkish equivalent with her Arabic teacher (48). The Turkish translation of *Aufenthalt* in the Turkish sentence reveals an interesting gap in modern Turkish when it comes to terms relating to immigration. Özdamar’s sentence reads “Aufenthalt da yok,” (81) meaning, “No residence permit, either”. Doğan transfers this phrase as is into Turkish, since the sentence is already partially in Turkish; however, he translates it in a footnote. The footnote translates *Aufenthalt* as “oturum”, favoring the word with Turkish origin suggested by the Language Association, despite its Arabic-origin counterpart being used more commonly in daily language and in legal documents (64). Turkey’s Directorate of Migration Management, for instance, refers to a residence permit as *ikamet izni*, and not as *oturum izni*. Although the translator chooses to follow the guidelines provided by the Language Association, he ends up choosing a word that people do not actively use.

The translator also seems to have used the dictionary to determine if the spellings of these words correspond to their updated spellings by the Language Association. As

Lewis notes, the change in Turkish during the twentieth century was so drastic that every few decades significant publications required a re-publication that was simplified or translated into its present-day Turkish (3). Along with the changes in words, however, spelling and punctuation have also changed over time, making it hard for newspapers and book publishers to keep up with the changes made by the Language Association. One of the premises of the change from Arabic script to a modified Latin alphabet was that the Arabic alphabet was ill-suited for the Turkish language's phonetic structure. The newly accepted letters made it much easier to write and read, but a new problem presented itself. Since the new script privileged how a word sounded, it needed to be determined which pronunciation of a word was to be preferred. The Language Association needed to regulate the language and announce to the public the correct spellings of words, and this information was largely communicated to the public through the public school system alongside the newly created Turkish words that replaced old, foreign words. It took some time for the public to adapt to the new rules of spelling and punctuation, and the Language Association sometimes changed its mind about the spelling or standards of punctuation. Current publications that translate or simplify books from the early years of the republic not only change words to make them more intelligible for present-day readers, but also correct spellings in order to meet the Language Association's updated rules and decisions. Considered in this context, Doğan's decision to ensure that Özdamar's words meet the spellings designated by the Language Association does not seem out of place, even though he manipulates her text in ways that take away from her

efforts to undermine the notion of a homogeneous language or mother tongue and her focus on the biculturality and bilinguality of Turkish migrants in Germany.

Doğan seems to have cross-referenced Özdamar's Turkish words with the Language Association's dictionary and changed her spellings where the words did not match the official spellings. In addition, he also intervenes into what he perceives are mistakes in Özdamar's translation of the Turkish words. One example is the translation of the word pair "*Leb – Mund*", *leb* being a loanword from Persian, meaning "lip", being paired with the German word for "mouth" (29). Özdamar's mistake is to suggest that this is an Arabic word when it is in fact a Persian word. Doğan pairs *leb* with *dudak*, a contemporary word for lip in Turkish, rather than *ağız* (25). A reader of the original German who also knows Turkish would definitely notice this word, especially since the narrator repeatedly asks her Arabic teacher if the word for mouth is the same in Arabic, when she only asks about other words once. He even points out that she has previously asked about it (42).

Özdamar's "mistake" might be interpreted as a tool to illustrate that when languages change, everyday speech does not necessarily keep count of word origins and the changing the meaning of words. Özdamar's Arabic character is only representative of her perception of the Arabic language and culture, which is influenced by her experience in her mother language that sought to replace Arabic words. Since Arabic script is now seen as a major influence on the "old" language, she perceives all old words as Arabic, although Persian was even more influential on the literary language, as opposed to Arabic

being considered the language of science and knowledge. Further, Özdamar's translation of the word as "mouth" may correspond to a regional use of the word that the translator may not know. Through one exchange between her Turkish narrator and her Arabic teacher, Özdamar points out that words change when they travel from one language to another (29). The Turkish translation subtly intervenes and corrects the meaning of this word, therefore preventing further connections to the word's distorted meaning and its potential readings. This contributes to the effort initiated by the Language Reform in reinterpreting and categorizing the language's relationship with its history in the present-day language. It is also indicative of the self-Orientalizing attitude towards Arabic and Ottoman Turkish because the "correct" translation of the word from old Turkish *leb* to present-day *dudak* is unnecessary for informative purposes. It is a word often used in pre-republican literary traditions and thus remains in use through popular examples. By correcting the word in translation, Doğan implies that because it is archaic it either needs to be correctly translated for the modern speaker or it needs to be replaced by the correct Turkish word for future reference.

Doğan's main intrusion into Özdamar's text lies in the translator's manipulation of the source text's settings in a way that represent various characters' voices differently, particularly the voices of those considered less educated and less urban. The translator adds colloquial phrases (or "local color") to the dialogue and narrative of certain characters and standardizes colloquial use for characters he interprets as more urban and educated. In the third story, "Karagöz in Alamanian", the translator inserts colloquial

idiom that is not in the original into the narrative of a farmer who travels to Germany as a guest worker and other characters who, unlike the protagonist of “Mutterzunge” and “Grossvaterzunge,” would probably use a more colloquial, rural language. For instance, to describe the farmer’s “proud” walk out of the medical examiner’s room for a health report needed for his trip to Germany, Özdamar uses the word *stolz* (proud). But Doğan’s translation reads “horoz gibi göğsünü kabartarak” (literally: “while puffing up one’s chest like a rooster”), using an idiom that refers to somebody who seems overly proud of themselves and that is mostly used in colloquial language in rural settings. This change not only adds an expression that Özdamar does not use, but also slightly changes the meaning of the sentence. The Turkish idiom denotes a form of exaggeration on the part of the individual who is proud of something they did or have, and is a rather demeaning description of that person, while the source text does not have such connotation.

On the other hand, in his translation of “Mutterzunge”, the translator removes a colloquial expression, *Alamania* (*Alamanya* in Turkish, a colloquial form of *Almanya*, which means “Germany”), and replaces it with the more formal word *Almanya* (7). The word appears in a sentence spoken by Özdamar’s narrator’s mother as she remembers her mother tongue. *Alamanya* is a significant colloquialism in the context of Turkish migration to Germany because of its association with another word used when referring to migrants. *Alamançı* (or more formally, *Almançı*) is derived from the Turkish word for German (*Alman*) and denotes migrants’ alliance to Germany because it provides them with employment. Migrants in Germany are the only group that is referenced in this

manner, though mostly in informal and rural settings, otherwise the term is considered rude. Özdamar repeatedly refers to Germany as either *Alamania* or Germany (*Deutschland*) and never uses the formal Turkish word. Doğan removes the word's association with *Alamancı* because the narrator's mother is in an urban setting. He does, however, keep the word *Alamania* in “Karagöz in Alamania” since its protagonist and most of its characters are peasants and workers. His treatment of “local color” (and class and regional differences as they shape linguistic variety) in the translation of these stories rewrites the context described by Özdamar in a way that fits the stereotypical representations of respective characters.

When it comes to Turkish sentences that feature German words, Doğan's approach is more productive than his interventions in the rest of the text and than Thomas's English translation. Doğan chooses to leave the Turkish text as it is and transliterates German words to Turkish script based on how they would sound. He also provides the original spellings and Turkish translations of these words in footnotes. In addition, he inserts Turkish characters (which probably were missing from the German text due to limitations in printing), thus correcting the spelling of the Turkish words as well. The translation of the example provided for the previous chapter on the English translation can be seen below:

“Sonra Dolmacer geldi. Maysterle konuştu. Bu Lohn ştoyer kaybetmiş dedi. Finansamt çok fena dedi. Lohnştoyer yok. Bombok. Kindergeld filan alamazsın. Yok. Aufenthalt da yok. Fremdpolizay vermiyor.” (*Annedili*, 64)

Doğan's treatment of these bilingual sentences allows the translator to keep the phonetic qualities of the foreign words, but also provides their meanings to the reader. This presentation of the bilingual Turkish sentences may also be connected to the Turkish reader's relative familiarity with the hybrid language that is spoken by second-generation Turkish immigrants in Germany. Their representation in Turkish television and theater mostly emphasizes that they speak incorrect Turkish with German words mixed in, and that they lack knowledge of Turkish traditions and customs. Because of this stereotypical representation of Turkish-German youth in entertainment, the Turkish audience is familiar with the sounds of German words, which makes it easier for Doğan to present this mixed speech to a Turkish audience. This highlights how important it is that a target audience is familiar with at least aspects of the translated language and cultural context and how utilizing this knowledge can make the text more accessible to the reader.

IMPLICATIONS

Doğan's translation reflects how much the Turkish language has been shaped and controlled by the Language Reforms. The standardization of the language may have been beneficial for the formation of Turkish as a national language as part of the nation-building efforts of the new republic. However, as a project, its purpose was mainly ideological and closely connected to the creation of a monolingual national history and identity. Right before the establishment of the Language Association, an association that was tasked with researching the national history of the Turks, the Turkish History

Association (*Türk Tarih Kurumu, TTK*), was founded in 1931. The two institutions served the common goal of establishing a new and unifying national identity for its citizens. However, as Yüce notes, the initial work conducted by these institutions to create a pre-Ottoman historical past relied strongly on pseudo-scientific research (110), which argued that Turks were ancestors of the world's greatest civilizations (including Sumerians in Mesopotamia, and even Mayas in the Americas who still live in present-day Mexico) but also argued that the Turkish language was the originator of all modern languages.²¹ Current research shows that these claims were untrue, but they are indicative of the nationalistic and Westernizing ideology behind the reforms. Their aim was to create a homogenous, monocultural, and Westernized nation from the remnants of the multinational Ottoman Empire.

It is no surprise that the reforms also correspond to a time of extensive migration. Although the new republic was founded on the ideals of a monocultural nation-state, much of the incoming and outgoing migration was based on a common religious rather than national (ethnic) origin. The 1923 population exchange agreement between Greece and Turkey, for instance, was intended to homogenize the populations of both countries; however, the migrating populations did not only consist of Greeks and Turks, but also of Muslims and Orthodox Christians of other ethnicities. Later incoming migration waves followed this pattern; therefore, it was deemed important to establish the notion of a linguistic and national unity. Considered in this light, the language reform's promotion of

²¹ This theory was called the "Sun Language Theory".

its nationalist and Westernizing ideology restricts variety in language by standardizing and preventing loanwords, and paradoxically enriches the language through its constant word derivations for old and new foreign concepts. Doğan's translation illustrates this through its treatment of Özdamar's neologisms and the translator's intervention into her text. If the translator had followed Özdamar's more critical engagement with the language reform and its homogenizing goals, it would have required less intervention into her use of Turkish.

In addition to the domestic backlash towards the reforms for cutting the nation's ties with its recent history, new migration waves also increase the need for critical discussions of nationalism and multiculturalism. Recent Syrian migration has created mixed responses from the public as the first migration whose members required language education for their integration. While Özdamar's contemplation of Arabic and the self-Orientalizing rhetoric of the language reform can contribute to these discussions of multiculturalism in the wake of Syrian migration, Doğan's translation is more concerned with representing her text in a "correct" Turkish as designated by the language reforms. His translation not only limits other possible readings of her work, but also misrepresents the spoken language represented in the work by preferring the use of words designated by the Language Association. His translation promotes the language reform's nationalism and its Westernization attitudes at the expense of considering the multiculturalism and multilingualism in Turkey following increasing migration.

CONCLUSION

Doğan's tendency to correct Özdamar's translation of the Turkish language in *Mutterzunge*, and his subtle manipulations of her text imply that the language reform's ideological influence remains. In addition to standardization and linguistic research, the Language Association continues to translate foreign words (albeit mostly new technical terms that now enter the language from European languages, mainly English). This shows that the language remains rather closed to bi- and multilingual writing (there is also no established multilingual literary tradition in Turkey), and their translations will be examples of how such translations can be developed in the future. *Annedili's* neologisms and its treatment of German words that remain in the translation provide examples for creative uses of multilingualism that may lay the foundations of future multilingual literatures. Despite this, its treatment of Özdamar's deliberate criticism of the nationalist purging of the language from the influences of the "foreign" through her use of multilingual strategies paradoxically prohibits a possible multilingual re-imagining of the language in the context of the re-arrival of Arabic into the country with the Syrian immigration.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION: HOW TO TRANSLATE MULTILINGUALISM

My analysis of *Mother Tongue* and *Annedili* as translations of a multilingual literary piece, *Mutterzunge*, illustrates the growing use of multilingualism in creative expression in a world of an increasing number of bi- and multilingual speaker. As the number of works that engage more than one language increase, criticism that focuses on expressions of bi- and multilingualism and its relationship with monolingual national publishing contexts needs to also examine its implications for the future of national literary traditions. The emergence of such literature is directly related to growing movement across borders and advanced global communication that allows easier access to information abroad. As migration increases and an awareness of multilingual subjects whose daily interactions occur in a language other than their own becomes more prevalent, the status assigned to works whose authors are bilingual change, and new strategies that rely on the mixing of two or more languages are seen less as indications of using a broken language or using it “wrongly,” but rather as creative expressions that reflect “a new consciousness”, as Gloria Anzaldúa puts it (99).

Despite the emergence of a new multilingual genre and its various expressions in distinct contexts, however, a common challenge to multilingual and multicultural writings is the limitations posed by the national traditions and monolingual thinking. As literary criticism develops new strategies and theories to better understand the

implications and impact of bilingual writing, its practice is impacted by many factors, such as regulations in publishing, an audience's attitude towards bilingual writing and bilingual speakers, and perceptions of multiculturalism within the nation in question. As Brian Lennon points out, for instance, existing conventions to put "foreign" concepts in italics when printing literary books limits multilingual writing's ability to experiment (10). The tendency to represent migrant authors as a group of writers who make use of bilingual writing in order to explore common themes overlooks the diverse motivations that drive individuals to express themselves bilingually. This tendency partly stems from the classical perception that every writer expresses themselves best in their native language, and thus writing in a language that is perceived to be "other than one's own" is considered to be lacking.

This perception is closely related to how translation is traditionally imagined as an act of bringing something over from the foreign. Migrant and/or multilingual writing disrupts the pattern that the translation engages in the classical sense. The notion that good literature can only be produced by those who express themselves in their "mother tongue" ignores the reality of increasing immigration patterns and multiculturalism, even in countries that have long been closed to such discussions. Traditional attitudes toward migration and translation need to be adjusted so that established national conventions in publishing can be more accommodating towards the newly emerging multilingual and hybrid cultures and their representations in literature. *Mutterzunge's* translations show that the receiving national traditions were not entirely well equipped with dealing with a

German-Turkish text, each for their own reasons. While the analysis of *Mother Tongue* illustrates the importance of engaging with both languages that make up a bilingual culture (German and Turkish, in this case), the analysis of *Annedili* shows that language should not be deliberately closed off to “foreign” influence if the aim is to either translate or foster bi- and multilingual literature.

The conditions that have created Turkish migration to Germany and German-Turkish bilingualism have significantly changed. However, the effects of migration have permanently changed German culture and encouraged the country’s consideration of its own multiculturalism. Migration continues from and to other countries, including Syria, and continues to foster multilingualism in new contexts. Moreover, bilingualism today not only occurs through immigration, but foreign language education may also induce migration or at the very least bilingual writing. Many of the world’s leading institutions offer English-language education or encourage students and academics to publish in English in order to increase access to the knowledge they produce outside of their country’s borders. More and more individuals today live bilingually even though they have never left their countries because their professions require them to access information globally. Bi- and multilingual writing, thus, is not only confined to spaces where incoming migration necessitates a bilingual consciousness. Yoko Tawada, for instance, is a contemporary author who writes in both German and Japanese, and neither her bilingualism nor her immigration to Germany are the result of economic or political conditions which would require her relocation but were based on choice. As bi- and

multilingual literatures increase, their translation into more contexts will be necessary, and preventing the transmission of their multicultural messages in national literary traditions that are closed-off to new forms of expression requires analyzing existing translations and offering solutions that will contribute to the transmission of bilingual texts.

Thomas's English translation of *Mutterzunge* ultimately fails because it cannot adequately communicate the author's ideas about multilingualism or her bilingual strategies. It fails while trying to remain loyal to Özdamar's bilingual writing style that does not provide translations to the Turkish words. Since English is the current global *lingua franca* and maintains no direct cultural proximity to German-Turkish culture, a translation strategy that engages Özdamar's Turkish would have been necessary to treat its bilingualism. Rather than doing it in the main text, Thomas could have translated the non-translated Turkish text of the original in footnotes or endnotes and he could have abstained from naturalizing Özdamar's neologisms. Instead, a creative re-writing of these neologisms or an effort to retain their foreignness would have enriched the translation. The English-language publication conventions of stylistically separating foreign words could also have been abandoned, thus opening the doors to experimentation in English language literature. All these adjustments require translators, however, who approach the text with an awareness that they are translating not only a text in German, but also one that is the product of a specific cultural exchange, and a knowledge of Turkish, or collaboration with a translator who knows Turkish, would have helped immensely.

Annedili's translator is luckier in approaching Özdamar's bilingual text since he was required to be proficient in both Turkish and German. However, he fails to support the work's multilingualism because he is too bound to the Turkish language reform's nationalist approach in preferring the use of "pure" Turkish words and even encouraging them over their "foreign" counterparts. Since this approach obscures Özdamar's emphasis on the fluidity of language and her encouragement of new connections between languages, a future Turkish translation of *Mutterzunge* would need to engage with the legacies of the language reform more critically. Especially since the arrival of Arabic-speaking Syrians into the country, the nationalism that tackled the presence of Arabic in Turkish will have to rethink its history of Westernizing policies in the language.

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