Intermedial Solidarity: Drawing Inspiration from the 1970s

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„Jeder heutige Mensch kann einen Anspruch vorbringen, gefilmt zu werden."
(Walter Benjamin)

„Mein Leben ist sowieso wie ein Film."
(Kazım Akkaya)

In a rear-view mirror . . .

Why revisit poems and movies made for television from the 1970s that stage Turkish "guest workers" and their neighbors living in a street in Berlin-Kreuzberg district, as I am looking at the San Francisco Bay from my window on to an environment that has been locked-down and home-bound for months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with daily reports of infection and death, violence and protest, social injustice and economic crisis dominating world news in the late spring of 2020? Apart from the obvious reason, that I have been asked to contribute to a special issue honoring the writer Aras Ören, the pioneer chronicler of migration from Turkey to Germany, I propose here that rereading Ören's early Berlin texts from the 1970s with a focus on tactics of performance, audience address, and mediation might offer fresh vantage points on life and work in the modern world. There are impulses to be gained from this material beyond mere nostalgia for a time when revolutionary spirit still held some promise of solidarity transcending race and class. My aim with this essay is to reframe Ören's epic poems, most prominently *Was will Niyazi in der Naunynstraße* [What is Niyazi up to in Naunynstraße, in the following: *Niyazi*] (1973)[1], in the context of a multimedia aesthetic project. Embedded

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Aras Ören (left) and Friedrich W. Zimmermann discussing *Frau Kutzer* (1975). On the wall in the background a wood cut by Kurt Mühlenhaupt from Aras Ören's book *Disteln für Blumen* [Thistles for Flowers], published in 1970 by Polyphem Handpressendruck in Berlin.
Source: From the archive of Friedrich W. Zimmermann. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Friedrich W. Zimmermann.

in media theoretical and political debates, this project, I argue, combines poetry and documentary to conceive of the city as a dynamic site of contact, cohabitation, and change—long before intersectionality was to become a hot paradigm of cultural studies and anti-discrimination activism. To this end, I read the poems in conjunction with a related but lesser known television film largely based on *Niyazi* that was produced by SFB (Sender Freies Berlin) as a collaboration between Ören and the reporter Friedrich W. (Fritz) Zimmermann, *Frau Kutzer und andere Bewohner der Naunynstraße* [Frau Kutzer and Other Residents of Naunynstraße, in the following: *Frau Kutzer*] (1973).[2]

Crafting an audiovisual poetics of everyday life, *Frau Kutzer* dramatizes and visualizes Ören's poem in a sequence of loosely connected scenes. In a combination of scripted inner monologue, dialogue and voiceover narration, staging with professional and lay actors, documentary and archival footage, the film introduces an ensemble of characters living in the working-class West Berlin neighborhood of Kreuzberg, which in those days of the Cold War constituted an enclave bordering on the Wall. The epic poem *Niyazi* and the film *Frau Kutzer* feature old and new residents of Naunynstrasse. In fact, they

both unsettle the binary between natives and migrants by revealing the migration history of Elisabeth Kutzer's family. Her father, Franz Brummel, came from Eastern Prussia to make a life in the city as a locksmith in the mid-19th century. Her grandfather, Heinz Brummel, also a locksmith and blacksmith, gained civic rights of residency in the city (*Bürgerrechte*) for the family in 1894. Frau Kutzer's late husband, Gustav, who worked at Borsig, was once a young communist fighting for proletarian rights. The railway and industrialization continued to draw people from the country to the city. Her new neighbors—Niyazi, Halime, Ali and others—hail from Turkey and work the assembly line at Preussag, Telefunken and Siemens.

In 1973 over 2.5 million foreign workers were living in West Germany; close to 300, 000 Turks had been living there for at least four years.[3] They were perceived as a visibly distinct group and public resentment was on the rise. On 26 March 1973, the weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* ran an cover caption "Gettos in Deutschland: Eine Million Türken" and an eleven-page title story "Die Türken kommen – rette sich, wer kann*"* [The Turks are coming—run for your lives].[4] In August 1973, Turkish workers at the Ford factory in Cologne engaged in a wildcat strike demanding equal pay but met with little solidarity among their German colleagues. Following an economic recession, the federal government declared the official end of labor recruitment (*Anwerbestop*) on 23 November 1973. After that date, migration from Turkey increased further, based on family unification visas. As Rita Chin highlights, the publication of Ören's book by Rotbuch Verlag marked a milestone in raising awareness among a progressive leftist German readership of this new resident population as individuals rather than a threatening dark mass summoned in newspaper headlines. Chin emphasizes the significant departure of Ören's approach and agency from guest worker figures staged as "exotic victims" in the works of German authors such as Jorgos played by Rainer Werner Fassbinder himself in *Katzelmacher* (1968), Mehmet in Heinrich Böll's novel *Gruppenbild mit Dame* (1971), and the underdogs of exploitation in Günter Wallraff's reports from the trenches of informal labor. (Chin, 70; Wallraff 1972) Contemporary reviewers highlighted Ören's empathic engagement with German figures and history.[5] The assemblage of portraits in short scenes in *Niyazi* and *Frau Kutzer* highlights the multifaceted spectrum of migration as a formative force in urban life. The focus is on shared experiences—in Leslie A. Adelson's terms, "touching tales" emphasizing the labor of figuration and narration (Adelson, 20–23)—of natives and migrants, driven by curiosity, even in instances of resentment and violence.

The combination of exterior, factual reporting with interior narration of memories and dreams of the characters creates a spatial and temporal continuum between now and then, here and there. The interplay of poetic text and image marks a difference from conventional documentary reportage. As we shall see, Ören's poem already includes explicit references to the work of the

television reporter Fritz Zimmermann. This intermedial referentiality suggests that cinematic adaptation was by no means external to the literary text but factored into it from the outset in a collaborative production, acutely aware of the poetics and politics of voice, performance, and (re-)presentation.

There has been an extensive body of scholarly work on intermediality in literary, cultural and communication studies, analyzing the complex forms of interplay between various media, first and foremost between text and image. (Rajewsky, Jensen, Rippl) With the digital turn, media convergence has become a resonating concept. (Jenkins) While my approach is indebted to studies in intermediality, my emphasis in the following is on *infusing intermediality with solidarity*, which means that I am not proposing an argument merely about formal correspondences between text and image, literature and cinema, documentary and performing arts. My focus is rather on a collaborative media practice that engages multiple actors and cultural forms in rethinking relations between image producers and recipients while also addressing power dynamics between German and other, host and migrant, native and foreigner.

Let us now take Ören's poems and films in a rear-view as an occasion to probe some key questions about the role and responsibility of literature, cinema, and television in imagining the dreams and aspirations of forgotten people. Aiming to avoid a paternalistic perspective that has tended to frame migrants as figures of social crisis without agency, I propose to draw inspiration from the film *Frau Kutzer* in its sympathetic attempt to imagine other lives with a sense of transethnic solidarity. At stake are possibilities of audience engagement through artistic intervention. The poetic spirit that animates *Niyazi* and *Frau Kutzer* within a forcefield of larger social processes and shifting labor markets, shaped by European integration, Cold War confrontation, and media transformation, might transmit some fresh impulses into our current time, which is characterized by global entanglement as much as inequities, separation, and closure of borders.

Chasing Expired Media

How do we determine beginnings and endings of stories? Thinking about historical processes entails (re)reading, (re)viewing and (re)discovering documents, fragments, random pieces that might have been previously overlooked from new and ever-changing vantage points. Our knowledge is always based on partial views and selective evidence, the tales we spin about the past to confirm or critique present-day conditions or envision an alternative future are bound to be incomplete and contingent. Discoveries of archival materials in formal or informal settings might lead to revisions of timelines and reassessment of presumed points of origin and destination. This is particularly true with regard to experiences of migration, which are rarely contained in

national history books. Stories about the causes and effects of cross-border human movement by definition transcend the scope of nation-state policies, official languages, and legitimizing histories of bounded citizenry. The relative ease and speed of travel in recent decades (at least for those with the necessary means and papers) has been accompanied by a range of restrictive measures imposed by nation states. Meanwhile, rapid changes in technologies of mediated communication and information storage have created shifting environments of proximity and distance, remembering and forgetting, alliance and disjuncture.

As I lived in Berlin 1982 to 1995 as a student and translator, the cover of Aras Ören's *Was will Niyazi in der Naunynstraße*, a cheap pocket book featuring a grainy blue photograph of children on a run-down street framed in bright red, published by Rotbuch Verlag, was a familiar sight on book shelves in shared apartments (Rotbuch sold 12,000 copies of this book), but I had never heard of radio and television productions from the 1970s based on these poems. Even when I subsequently translated three novels by Aras Ören from Turkish into German,[6] *Frau Kutzer* and *Kazım Akkaya* never appeared on my radar. I did not discover these two films made by Ören and Friedrich Zimmermann until 2011, when I participated in the festival staged by the Ballhaus Naunynstrasse in commemoration of 50 years of Turkish migration to Germany, *Almancı: 50 Jahre Scheinehe*. They were shown as part of the film retrospective *Gegen die Leinwände* as a community event followed by a discussion with the director Friedrich W. Zimmermann and some of the actors.[7] Alas, I was not in Berlin for these festival screenings at Kino Eiszeit; still, I was able to obtain DVD copies from the festival organizers. One of those DVDs proved to be defective, the other one went missing. A colleague helped out and sent a VLC file via WeTransfer. Meanwhile, I wrote to archives in Berlin trying to find out more about these television productions—without much success. The archive of SFB, now RBB (Radio Berlin Brandenburg), holds copies of the films, which have not yet been digitized. The archive of Akademie der Künste who has Ören's papers was unable to scan and share documents but pointed me to another researcher who had worked on these materials. I emailed, texted, and called people who might remember these productions. Eventually, I was able to reach the director Friedrich W. Zimmermann in Berlin. After an inspiring video call, I sent the VLC file of his film to him, since he no longer had a copy of the film himself. The conversations are ongoing. . . .[8] This tale from the researcher's workshop is simply meant to demonstrate that even in our age of seemingly total digitization far from everything is streaming online, many documents are hard to come by, and discoveries are still often based on coincidences and communicative memory.

Back in my student days, having bought my first Macintosh Classic in 1990, it was hard to foresee that we would one day be streaming movies on

personal computers and cell phones. Turkish was spoken on many streets in the city. Waiting for the underground train, I would be reading the headlines of Turkish papers at newsstands. The Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) in Cologne had been producing regular Turkish programs since 1964. In Berlin, Aras Ören started working for the Turkish desk at the Sender Freies Berlin (SFB) where he became chief editor in 1996.[9] The Amerika-Gedenkbibliothek offered a sizable collection of Turkish literature, but finding films was difficult. In those pre-internet days of slow dial-up connections, there was no Google, no long tail on Amazon Prime, no DVDs. Film and television archives tended to be concerned with guarding their catalogues and holdings rather than making them accessible. With the advent of the VCR, a few specialized video stores started catering to immigrant audiences, so occasionally, one could get lucky finding an old VHS tape. Later, satellite and cable television provided Turkish-language content. Today, classics of popular Turkish cinema, many of which revolve around the effects of migration such as Halit Refiğ's *Bir Türk'e Gönül Verdim* (1969), Türkan Şoray's grand directorial debut in her melodrama *Dönüş* (1972), Şerif Gören's *Almanya Acı Vatan* (1979) featuring Hülya Koçyiğit as a material girl working at the Telefunken factory in Berlin, as well as his memorable comedy *Polizei* (1988) starring the great comedian Kemal Sunal as a street cleaner with theatrical aspirations, to name but a few, have become readily available on YouTube. However, the rapid change in technologies also entails inaccessibility of expired media forms. Who still has the equipment to play a cassette or a VHS tape? In the excitement of constant innovation, we keep reinventing the wheel at every turn, while previous productions fall prey to cultural amnesia. Especially when it comes to migration, the complete picture tends to be elusive, since threads and collections are scattered over multiple countries and languages.[10] The material at hand only yields partial views that need to be continuously complemented and animated through perspectives from literature and cinema.

The retrospective *Gegen die Leinwände* presented *Frau Kutzer* and *Kazım Akkaya* within its lineup of documentaries, suggesting that these films featured authentic characters in their real-life situations. This categorization corresponds to the prevalent framing of disenfranchised people in terms of realism focused on social problems. I argue that this framing has tended to obscure performative and creative interventions. Except for occasional nods toward a few forerunners from the 1970s and 1980s, the story of Turkish German cinema has been predominantly told as a story beginning with the late 1990s breakthrough of "Young Turks" born in Germany, most prominently Fatih Akın. I myself have contributed to this narrative at times. After all, we tend to be more receptive to moments of cultural change if they come amplified with public recognition through media events such as the Berlin Film Festival and international circulation. A closer look at the two films by Ören and Zimmermann, however, suggests that Turkish German collabora-

tions in cinema and literature from the early 1970s were in fact far more adventurous and daring than many a film drama produced later. The craft of staging, acting, and media reflexivity that animates these poems and films from the pre-digital era is awaiting rediscovery.

Digging in the Tenements

The film *Frau Kutzer und andere Bewohner der Naunynstraße* (1973) opens not with work but with a scene of loitering. Three boys are throwing stones, or rather pieces of dug-up asphalt, to break windows, while a younger boy and three girls are watching them, one of them holding a rag doll. She gets bored and dumps it as if she is tempted to join the more forceful activity of the boys, only to try on some skates while another girl starts to make rounds on a scooter. The boys are targeting the derelict façade of an abandoned building wing, likely designated for demolition. To the shattering sound of breaking glass and distant sirens from the street, their missiles fly precariously close to an inhabited space, framed by net curtains and laundry hanging on a line outside what is probably Frau Kutzer's window, as mentioned later in the poem. Children idling in the liminal spaces of Berlin's tenement courtyards [*Hinterhöfe*] have been a trope from Heinrich Zille's paintings and photography to classics of Weimar cinema such as the opening scene of Fritz Lang's early sound film *M* (1931). What is new in *Frau Kutzer* is that these children are speaking a mix of Turkish and German. They are digging up the asphalt ground, peeling off layers of the old city fabric and uncovering the soil beneath the built environment. The courtyard scene is a long take of 49 seconds with only one cut, which introduces a high angle looking down at the children from one of the windows, reminding the viewer that these tenement courtyards are semi-public spaces where observation from above is always possible. Back on the ground, the camera travels out of the courtyard through the portal onto the street where a long shot captures the writer Aras Ören, first in profile then from the front. The urban chronicler sits on a chair in the middle of the street with a large notebook on his knee, reading and mumbling quietly. As the camera moves closer toward him, a voiceover narrator begins to read a quote from his book *Was will Niyazi in der Naunynstraße* (1973):

> When Franz Naunyn was mayor of Berlin / Naunyn Street was not Naunyn Street / but just any street. / In winter horse carts were passing through / sinking into mud. / Amidst sour smells of cabbage. / And when you raised your head, / the sky had already fallen through, / a frame without a picture.[11]

A tune plucked on the strings of a *saz* sets in with slow crescendo. The voiceover narrative alluding to Berlin's past mingles with Anatolian folk music, suggesting an exploration of urban topography and history with new

inflections, referring to the times when Franz Naunyn was mayor of Berlin in the years of the 1848 revolution and gained popularity with the public for negotiating for the withdrawal of troops from the city streets. While Ören's tribute clarifies that the street was renamed only later in remembrance of Naunyn, his poem sets the tone for an imaginative reanimation of the tenements' past appearance and atmosphere. The final lines, addressing the reader directly, conjure up a powerful image of tilting up the gaze and realizing that the sky has "fallen through" [literally: fallen into water]. The pre-title sequence of the film thus ends with this image of urban structures framing the elements for the gaze, opening up voids that invite imagination. Edged by buildings, still pockmarked by missile damage from World War II, the film's title appears on the cloudy sky. The "frame without a picture" leaves the viewer with a fitting motto for this film, which sets out to fill the frames with an intriguing mix of acting and documentary while also performing the labor of adjusting the frames in which migrants are cast.

When the camera takes us back into the courtyard the children are kicking around a soccer ball. As Frau Kutzer aproaches they shout: "Die Alte kommt!" and run to hide behind the garbage bins. With her walking stick, she pushes aside a red bucket and other things left in front of the door, before she limps on, chin up, pouting slightly, wearing a headscarf and carrying a big handbag on her arm. The voiceover accompanies her entrance with another quote from Aras Ören's book:

> You all know Mrs. Kutzer / or at least her husband: / He worked at Borsig, / where he tightened the front axles / of the mighty locomotives. / When he received his weekly wages and / [. . .] took a look at himself in the closet mirror / – he had long given up on resistance, / bowed his head to the system – / he felt like a giant / and went to Café Bauer with his wife / – he did not go there of his own accord / but let his wife persuade him – / drinking tea from a silver set. / Back then already / they lived in Naunyn Street.[12]

Frau Kutzer's aspirations shine up in her memories of dressing up, going to the fancy Hotel Adlon where the prominent socialites, politicians and industrialists meet, drinking tea from a silver set, and feeling part of the upper class. At this point, the camera pans over a well-composed montage of archival photographs from the Weimar Republik, featuring Ribbentrop, the son-in-law of the Borsigs, and a judge from the Reichsgerichtshof. This is one of three such montages that insert archival material into the film and capture industrialization and competitive capitalism, the tumultuous years of the Weimar Republic, unemployment, and the rise of the Nazis in correspondence with Frau Kutzer's memories. 1933 marks the end of her husband Gustav's political engagement when he and his friend come home after being followed and anxiously burn their communist pamphlets in the stove. Less involved with political struggles of her time, Frau Kutzer was more concerned with

her loss of status. Having to work as a cleaner after World War I in a war profiteer's household in Neukölln was a bitter experience for her that she continues to wrestle with in her old age.

Niyazi Gümüşkılıç and Frau Kutzer meet on the street as she is going shopping while he is returning from the night shift. As we learn from the voiceover, he lives one floor above her, with a shared toilet on the stairwell as was common in these tenements. The encounter with Niyazi triggers an inner monologue by Frau Kutzer, once again an excerpt from Ören's book presented in voiceover:

> When you are young / you don't have that much fear, / as long as there is work, one can work. / A person that works / makes more or less. / But how long will that last? / Either youth / or work / come to an end. / That I have experienced in my life.[13]

The non-diegetic use of sound in the delivery of the characters' interior monologues contributes to the contemplative mood of the film. As Frau Kutzer slowly continues on her walk on the street, she pauses in front of the colorful fruit and vegetable display of a Turkish grocery store where another woman is weighing the temptation of tasty mutton against her distrust of Turks while the proud store owner Memet, a former blacksmith, is eyeing her, thinking about the stinginess of German women. The film then proceeds to explore further scenes of contact, most importantly, sites of work such as the factory, but also leisure such as bars, cafés and domestic spaces.

The Inescapable Cycle of Consumption

A little girl chants a counting-out rhyme in Turkish going around in a circle, as Sabri San, a pale young man, is lingering and watching. As he walks along the street in voiceover soliloquy from Ören's poem, he briefly contemplates opening a grocery store, as the camera shows close-ups of peppers, eggplant and garlic, then remembers work and decides to get a doctor's note to avoid losing his job. On the train, he recalls a conversation the night before at the café with Niyazi who rocked his world by questioning the use of saving money: "Spar soviel du willst, den Spaß daran werden andere haben!" [Save as much as you like, others will end up enjoying it!] When Sabri is being examined in the doctor's office, his deep cough provides a sound bridge to the next scene, which presents the first of two reenactments of *Workers Leaving the Factory* (1895), the famous film by the Lumière brothers. Both of these scenes function as moments of reflection that interrupt the flow of the film. The reenactment of the Lumière film is rendered in slow motion, which emphasizes the quotational character of the scene. Workers are walking toward the camera, dispersing to the left and right at the factory gate. One of them looks directly into the camera with a friendly smile and raises his hand

for a greeting as if addressing the audience but then turns sideways to high-five a colleague.

In his essay film *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* [*Workers Leaving the Factory*] (1995), Harun Farocki points to the Lumières' short as the first film of cinema history and reflects on the gate as a barrier that separates work from leisure, rendering modern industrial work invisible.[14] Interestingly, what Farocki deems the first film also presents a reflection on the film industry itself. The workers exiting the Lumière factory were in fact involved in film production. As some of them looked into the camera they might have been conscious of becoming actors themselves. The act of looking back is a sign of obstinacy, as Richard Langston observed. We will therefore return to acting in more detail later. The editing sequence that connects a lung examination at a doctor's office with the reenactment of *Workers Leaving the Factory* highlights the double meaning of consumption—even more suggestively in English—as an infectious disease of the lungs that consumes the body's strength and as the daily routine of being discharged from the factory after work to shop and consume. In a pet shop window, Sabri watches white mice running in a wheel, seeing in them a metaphor for his own life, similar to the blindfolded horse (*Tretmühlengaul*) that walks around in circles to pull water from a well in the village back home. With a long hold on the white mice running in the wheel, the film follows the character's imagination in visualizing the circular routine of working people's lives. Sabri's diagnosis is delivered in the generalizing language of public health by the Turkish doctor who reads in accented German a dry text about the spread of tuberculosis in a poor country like Turkey. The use of language here is reminiscent of Alfred Döblin's famous novel *Berlin Alexanderplatz* (1929) where narration proceeds as a montage of official language, public documents and popular culture, zooming in and out on characters as they make their way through the city that permeates their consciousness.

Subsequent scenes focus on the circulation of money. A folktale of a bald shepherd, who saves gold coins in his belt but eventually is robbed by the money lender from the city (*Niyazi*, 42–4), underpins Sabri's insight of being trapped on a treadmill like a hamster. In this sequence, the translation of the literary text into a cinematic language is at its best. While the voiceover reads in a storyteller voice what appears to be a folk tale on the predicament of frugality, two Turkish men with moustaches immersed in conversation, one with long sideburns and a hat, walk majestically along the busy street toward the camera and pass in front of the Berliner Bank at Kottbusser Tor. Another man comes out of the bank and delivers some money to someone waiting, a deal is closed with a handshake. The Berliner Bank features a big Turkish flag with an announcement in Turkish in its window, trying to attract the new immigrants as customers: "Berlin'de üç şeye ihtiyacınız vardır: Ev, iş ve BERLINER BANK." [You need three things in Berlin: a place to live,

work, and BERLINER BANK.] As a man reading a headline about labor migration in the Turkish newspaper *Milliyet* emerges from the Kottbusser Tor underground station, the voiceover switches to a radio report about a ceremony celebrating the departure of the 500,000th worker from Turkey, stating that the Turkish labor minister hugged the traveler to Germany goodbye and congratulated him on his contract. The montage of monetary transactions on local and international scale culminates with Frau Kutzer who is collecting her pension at the post office, thinking that the clerks might be wondering what she still needs money for at her age.

The film epitomizes the materialist outlook on life under the signs of capitalism and the German economic miracle in the figure of Klaus. A worker like everyone in his family, his life is driven by labor and consumption. Over the years, he works more and more overtime to fulfill his wife's shopping desires and pay off installments on furniture in his modern apartment, most likely in the new housing estate of Märkisches Viertel, a satellite neighborhood on the outskirts of the city where those who could afford it moved from the derelict tenements. However, as he is restlessly pacing around his living room, not even the color television and the new record player bring any joy, while the motorcycle has long been put away. Every Sunday, he washes his car before visiting the parents with cake. To escape his discomfort, he drives to Kreuzberg to go drinking in a bar. Already drunk, Klaus sees his colleague Ali walking by on his way home from work and calls him in for a drink. Beer and schnapps are ordered while the radio features a report on the police: "The police run into obstacles from many sides as they aspire to fulfill their mandate to protect the basic free and democratic constitutional order. It is simply untrue that the police have not learned from their mistakes in recent years. . . ."[15] Klaus listens to this official defense of the police with his back to the camera, looking at a blank television screen, then he slowly turns around and raises his voice, competing with the official language continuing in the background: "Freedom . . . basic free democratic order . . . what is that? What do I know about that? Just don't duck, from no one, not even from yourself. If you want to strike, strike! Some deserve it, especially *affenpinschers* like you!"[16] As aggression rises, racism surfaces, and a punch hits Ali who slowly rises to his feet. In the resulting fight, Klaus loses his life, Ali gets beaten up by several others in the bar. "In their hands no machine guns. / On their heads no steel helmets, / on their feet no boots, / they did not wear brown uniforms / and no swastikas. / Lightly they went to work on Monday."[17] The poisonous continuity of the Nazi creed in a new guise is visually conveyed in the film with black leather jackets, one with "POLIZEI" printed on the back in white letters, surrounding the limp figure of Ali. The film presents this incident without moralizing, showing headlines of three similar cases from the newspapers, highlighting that such violence is not an isolated incident and news reporting tends to frame Turks as potentially violent knifers obsessed with

their honor without paying much attention to individual cases and systemic frustrations that result in altercation.

The police show up at Ali's home and take his wife Nermin to the hospital. She had spent the evening with two visitors—Dursun and his wife—and the conversation revolved around items to buy for one's household or as gifts for relatives in Turkey. Nermin proudly showed off her new gas stove, bought at a discount due to a small defect at the factory where Ali works. Like Klaus, Ali, too, has been doing overtime. The switch from plough to mill has been hard on him. His colleagues have been teasing him. Both households—Klaus and his wife, Nermin and Ali—are ultimately driven by similar aspirations of consumption.[18] Buying new things and showing off a modern lifestyle appears to be the only way of becoming a personality who deserves recognition in a daily cycle of work and more work that yields little relaxation and happiness. Under the auspices of capitalism, the life of the Turkish family and that of the German family might differ in terms of wealth and material accumulation but ultimately, they are propelled by similar drives. The film demonstrates that the treadmills containing these lives are not all that different. Recognizing and analyzing the parallels is an exercise left to the viewer.

The introduction of Ali is interrupted with a second scene reenacting the Lumière brothers' film *Workers are Leaving the Factory*. The same factory gate, the same framing. Ali is among the workers leaving the factory. Once again, one of the workers looks into the camera and raises his hand, but this time the look and gesture are less friendly, as if he is taking issue with the presences of the camera team filming and wants to brush them off. This brings us back to obstinacy as a tactic of speaking back to the frame set by conventionalized forms of representation in the media.

Narrowcasting, Distant Viewing

Aras Ören has proven that it is possible to be a German author without writing in the German language. He was included as a German author in the *Kritisches Lexikon der Gegenwartsliteratur* but he continued to write in Turkish, reaching a German readership via translation. The topographies and intersecting histories that he writes about, however, are distinctly German, specific to the city of Berlin, which has seen massive transformations in the course of the 20th century. This intensive engagement with German locations and history might have posed a barrier in Turkey, where he was never really canonized as part of Turkish literature. Many of his books are not in print there. As the recipient of the first Adelbert-von-Chamisso Prize in 1985, a prize awarded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung to honor authors whose first language was not German, Ören reflected in his acceptance speech about the massive societal and cultural transformation through migration. He obstinately resisted being subsumed under patronizing categories such as "Aus-

länderliteratur" [literature by foreigners], questioning instead the limits of national culture in the horizon of a changing Europe and expanding technologies of communication that, paradoxically, go hand in hand with the isolation of the individual. His goal was no less than envisioning a new function for literature in a changing media environment:

> In view of this new role that literature must adopt, I belong neither to those who scorn mass media nor to those who see them as a competitor that will edge out the book over time. Although for advocates of so-called *Kommunikationsfreiheit*, or freedom of communication, the issue is nothing more than the total (or as complete as possible) engagement of minds, fantasies, and consciousnesses; it would be absurd to fight against this development like one of Don Quixote's companions. For me the writer's task is to draw consequences from everything, to establish the "consciousness industry," as Enzensberger says, as the focus of public attention, and to watch for, develop, and cultivate new territory, thereby redefining the role of literature. (*Germany in Transit*, 391–94, trans. Tess Howell)[19]

In a media archeological perspective, those were the days of the rise of television, in German: *Fernsehen*, which literally translates as distant viewing. Conversely, the young Elisabeth Kutzer's dreams were fueled by the cinema. When she walked into the Bayrisches Zelt at Friedrichstrasse with her husband, she used to feel like the movie star Lilian Harvey (*Niyazi*, 9).[20] In her old age, what remains from cinema is an old neon sign, highlighted by an upward tilt of the camera. As Frau Kutzer walks down the street, she stops in front of a shop window selling second-hand items, *Gelegenheiten*, where a television set is dimly flickering in the background. At home, too, we see her watching a report on Turkish workers in Germany on television. Meanwhile, her younger neighbors such as Halime are working at the electronics company Telefunken (since 1967 AEG-Telefunken), assembling television sets. The Telefunken factory in Moabit specialized in broadcast transmitters and pioneered the PAL color television system, which became world standard everywhere but in the United States. Television sets along with refrigerators, gas stoves and, of course, cars were symbols of wealth and modern comfort in economic miracle land—for guest workers as much as for natives. While Nermin shows off her newly acquired gas stove, her visitor plans to take a television set to Turkey where her brother works as a "televizyoncu" [sales and repair man for television sets].

In his socialist theory of electronic media, first published in 1970, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, whom Ören mentions in his speech, advanced the Frankfurt School's thesis of mass manipulation by the culture industry and pointed to possibilities of participation and reciprocity in communication. While he admits that the dominant use of television and film follows a centralized program with one sender transmitting to many receivers and addressing them as passive consumers, his analysis hinges on the invention of the

transistor, which potentially enabled role switching between sender and receiver. Building on Bertolt Brecht's theory of the radio, Enzensberger's visionary reflections aimed to transcend the separation between producer and consumer: "Every transistor radio is, by the nature of its construction, at the same time a potential transmitter; it can interact with other receivers by circuit reversal." (Enzensberger, 262) Emancipatory media use, according to Enzensberger, could enable mobilization of viewers, though he stresses that the work of emancipation and political intervention cannot be achieved merely by technological advancement but requires human interaction and organization.

> Any socialist strategy for the media must, on the contrary, strive to end the isolation of the individual participants from the social learning and production process. This is impossible unless those concerned organize themselves. This is the political core of the question of the media. It is over this point that socialist concepts part company with the neo-liberal and technocratic ones. Anyone who expects to be emancipated by technological hardware, or by a system of hardware however structured, is the victim of an obscure belief in progress. Anyone who imagines that freedom for the media will be established if only everyone is busy transmitting and receiving is the dupe of a liberalism which, decked out in contemporary colors, merely peddles the faded concepts of a preordained harmony of social interests. (Ibid, 267)

Enzensberger's cautious warning against techno-optimism rings prophetic in our current age of social media where there is certainly no lack of many-to-many banter, amplification, and agitation via Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms, but emancipation through critical thinking and solidarity beyond like-minded circles still remains a desideratum. The questions raised by Enzensberger and Ören regarding the predicaments of mediated communication have become more pertinent than ever in the twenty-first century.

The focus on the reader or viewer as an active maker of meaning rather than a passive consumer was in line with reception-based theories of reading that gained traction in those years. In his seminal essay "The Death of the Author" (1967) Roland Barthes had called for literary criticism to transcend its focus on the author's biography to make room for the reader. John Berger, known for his collaboration with photographer Jean Mohr in *A Seventh Man. A Book of Images and Words about the Experience of Migrant Workers in Europe* (1975), was animated by a similar spirit of empowering readers and viewers. In *Ways of Seeing*, published as a book and also as a four-part television series produced by BBC (1972), he used the medium of television to reflect on how viewers see images in what Walter Benjamin called the age of technical reproducibility and to incite critical scrutiny regarding the culture of advertising. The first part ends with John Berger addressing the viewer directly, highlighting the potential of reciprocity that Enzensberger called for:

> But remember that I am controlling and using for my own purposes the means of reproduction needed for these programmes. The images may be like words, but there is no dialogue yet. You cannot reply to me. For that to become possible in the modern media of communication access to television must be extended beyond its present narrow limits. Meanwhile, with this programme, as with all programmes, you receive images and meanings which are arranged. I hope you will consider what I arrange but be skeptical of it. (Berger 1972)

The skeptical and inquisitive reader and viewer with agency was the kind of recipient that *Frau Kutzer* and *Kazım Akkaya* were addressing at a time when television offered some spaces for cinematic experimentation.[21]

Commissioned by editors Alfred Berndt, subsequently Jürgen Tomm and Annette Dietrich, SFB enabled the journalist Friedrich W. Zimmermann and the author Aras Ören who were both at the beginning of their careers to engage in this extraordinary collaboration. In fact, the film paved the way for Ören's subsequent employment by the SFB as an editor for the newly created daily Turkish-language radio program. Zimmermann states in conversation that rather than making films *about* Turks or Africans his goal was always to make films *with* them.[22] Considering this collaborative spirit behind the scenes, is *Frau Kutzer* a documentary reportage? Or is it a dramatized epic poem? The low-budget production shot on 16 mm is not easy to classify in terms of genre. It is too multiperspectival and polyphonic to conform with the category of an essay film. Zimmermann explains that *Frau Kutzer* and *Kazım Akkaya* did not fit into conventional formats of television production.

> Our films, the first with dramatic action featuring Turks in Berlin, were declared to be experimental by the editors at the television station. They were really not supposed to cost much, so the pay that we could offer cast and crew was modest. Actually, I personally persuaded the actors to work with me on the production. The experiment succeeded but only in hindsight. *My approach to combine literature, dramatic action and documentary was new and did not fit into any existing format.* That's why the films were broadcast in the 3rd program of SFB. I am not even sure whether there were any reruns on television. There were a few screenings at film festivals focusing on third world topics. The SFB, too, did not have much interest in marketing this film. Evidently, Berlin did not want to fill a slot in the ARD [*Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* – Germany's first public federal television network] program with its "guest workers."[23] (Zimmermann)

Narrowcast, the film did not reach broad circulation and therefore has not yet garnered much attention in cultural history. However, it truly envisioned distant horizons in terms of media-conscious acting and potential activation of the audience.

Becoming a Cinematic Personality

The cultural critics whose intellectual formation took shape during the Weimar Republic were pioneers for a more emancipatory understanding of media.

Siegfried Kracauer saw film as "the discoverer of the marvels of everyday life." (Kracauer, "Preface," Ii) The photographic medium to him was a bearer of a material aesthetics that had the capacity to expose outer reality by capturing its transient, ephemeral, and fleeting aspects. In a similar vein, Walter Benjamin stressed the camera's ability to capture new perspectives on modern life, only perceptible through the apparatus, in his famous essay "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit" (1936). His focus was on workers speaking for themselves in revolutionary Soviet cinema of Dziga Vertov and other directors (Benjamin, 34). For Benjamin, the cinema is a site of potential obstinacy, as he states that

> the majority of city dwellers, throughout the workday in offices and factories, have to relinquish their humanity in the face of an apparatus. In the evening these same masses fill the cinemas, to witness the film actor taking revenge on their behalf not only by asserting his humanity (or what appears to them as such) against the apparatus, but by placing that apparatus in the service of his triumph. (Benjamin, 31)

Benjamin wrote: "Any person today can lay claim to being filmed." (Benjamin, 33) One of the characters in the poem *Was will Niyazi in der Naunynstraße* does exactly that: advancing a claim to be filmed and being an actor who controls his own role. Ören's poem introduces the construction worker Kazım Akkaya from İnebolu on the Black Sea with an explicit reference to Friedrich W. (Fritz) Zimmermann: "In einer Reportage des Fernsehreporters Fritz Zimmermann hat Kazim Akkaya sich so bekannt gemacht: / Ich bin der Liebling des Meisters. / Mein Name ist Kazim Akkaya." [In a documentary by television journalist Fritz Zimmermann Kazim Akkaya introduced himself: / I am the darling of the master (foreman). My name is Kazim Akkaya.] (*Niyazi*, 32) This suggests that Ören's poems were already produced within a framework of intermedial cross-fertilization and cooperation. Clearly, the cinematic presentation was not an extrinsic afterthought, a mere adaptation and translation of a literary text into the audiovisual medium. Cinematic performance was in fact anticipated and reflected in the poetic text itself. Characters—both in the literary text and in the cinematic dramatization—appear conscious of their role as performers, deliberately presenting themselves to the camera.

The carpenter Kazim Akkaya ends his monologue in the poem: „Next week you will come to film my apartment? / Then I'll tell you about my life again. / My life is like a film anyway. / I'll make you tea, / dark like rabbits' blood / and you will shoot pictures of me / that make me look good / in my navy-blue suit."[24] This mediated self-presentation of self undercuts any assumptions of direct cinema as unfiltered capturing of reality. It implies a critique of the objectifying ethnographic mode of documentary filmmaking that tends to represent poor and disenfranchised working-class migrants as victims without voice or agency. In contrast, Kazım Akkaya's entrance shows clearly that he is conscious of his role as actor in the reportage; he conceives

of his life in cinematic terms ("Mein Leben ist sowieso wie ein Film"), interacts with the television crew, and aspires to shape his own media appearance by dressing up and offering tea. In the film *Frau Kutzer*, Kazım Akkaya stands amidst the television crew, cameraman, interviewer Fritz Zimmermann, and the sound technician. The character Kazım Akkaya appears again in the second volume of the trilogy *Der kurze Traum aus Kagithane* (1974), once again engaged in an interview with reporter Fritz Zimmermann (see Tom Cheesman's translation of that scene in this issue). Kazım Akkaya is played by Tuncel Kurtiz (1936–2013), an actor known for his roles in Turkish cinema, especially alongside Yılmaz Güney in *Çirkin Kral* and *Hudutların Kanunu* (1966), *Umut* (1970), *Sürü* (1975), and later Fatih Akın's *Auf der anderen Seite* (2007). In Tunç Okan's *Otobüs* (1975) he acted alongside Aras Ören in the grotesque dark comedy depicting a journey of a group of nine Turkish men who are lured by a shifty driver on a treacherous journey in a rickety bus all the way to Stockholm's busy Sergels Torg square, abandoned there without papers and money.

In line with the particular blend of dramatic and documentary forms in *Frau Kutzer*, other characters in the film were also performed by professional actors whose prior and subsequent biographies help to situate film within German cinema, television and stage history. Frau Kutzer herself was played by the stage and screen actress Dorothea Thiess (1898–1973) who had trained with Max Reinhardt. Her acting career ranged from roles at small town theaters to supporting roles in movies such as *Skandal in der Parkstrasse* (1932), Frank Wysbar (later Wisbar)'s *Anna und Elisabeth* (1933), Detlef Sierck (later Douglas Sirk)'s *Das Mädchen vom Moorhof* (1935), Josef von Báky's *Ihr erstes Erlebnis* (1939), *Der eingebildete Kranke* (1938), *Thérèse Raquin* (1966), and in the television series *Familie Bergmann* (1971). Although she did not rise to lead roles and great stardom, the Internet Movie Database does list 64 acting credits to her name, which incidentally do not include her last role as the widow Frau Kutzer, shuffling along a street in Kreuzberg on her walking stick, engaged in soliloquy with a beautiful smile on her face. *Frau Kutzer* sets a memento to this forgotten actress whose life experience shines through her role. In a review of the film she is quoted: "I am a perfect match for this role. [. . .] I am simply happy when I say in the final scene: 'The years are like canyons, when I turn around I feel dizzy.' Then I see my own life, which was so exciting and so beautiful."[25] (Sieben)

Nermin, who presents her new gas stove with great delight, is played by the actress Birgül Topçugürler who also played the mother in Sema Poyraz' film *Gölge – Die Zukunft der Liebe* (1980). Klaus, the embodiment of the economic miracle whom Nermin's husband Ali accidentally kills in a bar fight, is performed by Peter Kock (1947–) who had started his television acting career in the mini-series *Der Seewolf / The Seawolf* (1971). Renate Koehler plays Halime and performs her job assembling television sets at

Telefunken while one of the real workers, a woman with her long black hair tied back, is standing by with a faint smile. Koehler was later to become well-known to German audiences as Marlene Schmitt, one of the leads in Germany's primetime soap opera *Lindenstraße* during the years 1986–2001. The performances of German actresses in the role of Turkish women are interesting instances of "ethnic drag," to use a term coined by Katrin Sieg. Departing from documentary practices of ethnographic representation that aims to capture the social reality of minority populations, film serves as a stage for acting and interacting as ways of becoming acquainted. Niyazi's girlfriend Atifet is played by Katharina Tüschen (1927–2012) who was active as a stage actress at Schaubühne am Halleschen Ufer in the early 1970s, playing the roles of mothers in *Peer Gynt* and *Geschichten aus dem Wienerwald*, later at Thalia Theater in Hamburg, Schauspielhaus Bochum and back in Berlin at Schaubühne am Lehniner Platz. She also acted in some film and television productions, including three episodes of the primetime crime show *Tatort*. Claus Theo Gärtner (1943–) who plays Frau Kutzer's neighbor Horst Schmidt also came from theater. He had won the Bundesfilmpreis as best young actor in 1972, later became well known to German audiences for his long-standing role as detective Josef Matula in 300 episodes of the television series *Ein Fall für zwei* (1981–2012). Finally, Niyazi is performed by Krikor Melikyan (1924–), an Armenian born in Germany, author, journalist, and actor who shared a stage with Gustaf Gründgens in the latter's famous production of *Faust* in the late 1940s, later acted in the crime series *Stahlnetz* (1968), and in Alexandra von Grote's film *Novembermond* (1985).

In short, alongside some lay actors the film featured a cast of professional theater, cinema, and television actors, but, surprisingly, none of them has *Frau Kutzer* listed in their filmographies on the Internet Movie Database (IMDB) or other websites. The assistant director on the production was Skip Norman (1933–2015) from Baltimore. He had been a student at the newly founded German Film and Television Academy Berlin (DFFB) in 1966. He worked as a cameraman and director on 27 productions of the DFFB and primarily made short films relating to the struggle for African American civil rights such as *Blues People* (1968), *Black Man's Volunteer Army of Liberation* (1970), and *Strange Fruit* (1970).[26] The exchanges between African American, German, and Turkish perspectives on the set of *Frau Kutzer* would have been exciting to eavesdrop on. The above overview on some actors involved in the production shows that what at first glance appears to be a documentary on the life of Turks in Berlin is in fact scripted by a writer, staged by a director, and enacted by an ensemble of professional actors who produced a film that conveys a different sense of time and place than more conventional formats of television production.

Unlike other reports on the hardship of guest workers, *Frau Kutzer* does not focus on social problems from a judgmental stance. A panorama of scenes

from lives on Naunyn Street is lovingly staged without deriding anyone and without laying claim to completeness or coherence. The collaborations of Zimmermann and Ören, aesthetically comparable with Hans Andreas Guttner's *Alamanya Alamanya – Germania Germania* (1979), to which Ören also contributed text, perform both a gesture of trans-ethnic solidarity and an intermedial fusion between literary text and documentary images, pointedly avoiding exploitation of the migrant. *Frau Kutzer* does not limit migrant lives to a perpetual state of arrival at border checkpoints or in scenes of passage on trains, suitcases in hand. It is primarily concerned with finding accommodation, settlement, and tracing points of contact and entanglement. In that sense the film is "post-migrant" *avant la lettre*.[27] Comparable to Rainer Werner Fassbinder's famous film *Angst essen Seele auf / Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* (1974), *Frau Kutzer* stages scenes of contact between elderly German women and new migrants in locations such as bar, domestic space, stairway, grocery store, and workplace. However, *Frau Kutzer* presents a multiplicity of characters in a succession of scenes rather than focus on two protagonists and developing their relationship hampered by a hostile environment into a full-blown melodrama. It also refrains from the mendacious pathos that animates Helma Sanders Brahms' *Shirins Hochzeit* (1976) which featured Ören as an actor in the role of Shirin's lost husband. Compared to these contemporaneous dramatic feature films staging migrants, *Frau Kutzer* feels liberatingly open ended, collaborative, and inspirational—even when viewed almost half a century later.

Aras Ören developed his literary poetics hand in hand with theater aesthetics. He worked as an actor and dramaturg with theaters in Istanbul, West Berlin, and Frankfurt/Main from 1959 onwards. He adapted Brecht's dramaturgy into Turkish and wrote plays himself. After shorter stays in Germany in 1962 and 1965, he moved to Berlin in 1969, where he continued to be involved with theater. Ela Gezen has situated Ören's work in the context of the transformation and politicization of the Turkish theater in the 1960s, influenced by Bertolt Brecht's conception of an epic theater that engages the audience to provoke reflection through interruption and defamiliarization rather than emotional catharsis. (Gezen) The two scenes in *Frau Kutzer* discussed above that reenact the Lumière film *Workers Leaving the Factory* can be read along such lines of interruption to pause for reflection. Gezen defines Ören's approach to writing and acting in service of social change as "didactic realism." Brechtian dramaturgical tactics have no doubt been influential for Ören's writing and his engagement with the poetics and politics of realism is undeniable. I would like to question, however, the didacticism of his approach and place more emphasis on performative interventions. References to cinema abound in Ören's texts and the ironic quest to become a real personality in a world of total mediation is a trope that he revisits over and over in his work, maybe most explicitly in the disappearance of Ali Itır in *Bitte nix Polizei*

(1981) and the resurrection of this character as a movie actor in *Berlin Savignyplatz* (1995). (See also David Gramling's contribution to this issue.) In this sense, the character Kazım Akkaya's confident engagement with the film crew in the poem *Niyazi* and the film *Frau Kutzer*—and the actor Tuncel Kurtiz's performance of this role—suggest agency and obstinacy in terms of self-staging.

Media Practice in Solidarity

The dream to become someone, to be a movie star, is akin to the dream of living like an American. The fictional character Niyazi comes closest to an alter ego of Aras Ören in terms of political consciousness and some biographical details, despite differences in class, education and profession. They both hail from Bebek on the Bosporus in Istanbul and after seven years of living on Naunyn Strasse, Niyazi still dreams of returning to Bebek one day. In a monologue Niyazi introduces his birthplace, a hut in Bebek where during his childhood the rich and the poor still lived side by side. Ashamed of his torn shoes, he worked in a shipyard on the Golden Horn. The common dream of "living like an American" lured him to Germany.

> Germany is a little America. / You go there, Niyazi, / and you will live like the rich folks in Bebek. [. . .] / Everyone has a car there, / modern apartments with a bathroom, / closets full of suits, nylon shirts / and lovers whom he kisses at street corners, / just like in the movies.[28]

In the film *Frau Kutzer*, Niyazi's past dreams are synchronized with a photomontage of Bebek and Istanbul, including a shot of a young boy gazing at the Istanbul Hilton Hotel, built in 1955 as an emblem of the international style in modern architecture. As real estate speculation takes hold and modern apartment blocks replace the old wooden houses, Bebek becomes a neighborhood where only the superrich can afford to live; Niyazi's mother sells her hut and moves to Kağıthane, in those days a slum that housed many migrants from the countryside. *Frau Kutzer* was made without any travel budget, but nonetheless brilliantly managed to condense several decades of urban transformation and migration history in Istanbul into this short sequence.

Niyazi's girlfriend Atifet, who works at Siemens, came to Germany after losing her lover and her son to political unrest and police brutality in Turkey, followed by a career as a belly dancer and prostitute. She is seen marching arm in arm with Niyazi and Horst in the front row of the protest march through Kreuzberg, demanding workers' rights, affordable housing, and international solidarity. When bystanding German workers are interviewed by a reporter on their opinion regarding the protesting "foreigners" or "guest workers," they give differing responses. One claims neutrality:

while he is too tired from work to join the march himself, he thinks it should be everybody's right to protest, regardless of their nationality. Another expresses his support for foreign workers protesting, pointing to practices of exploitation. A third position is articulated by two workers who see themselves comfortably established within the capitalist system and say that people who feel a need to demonstrate should go back home. They claim that throughout history workers have never fared as well as today, asserting that they possess families, fully furnished apartments, and cars. Their lives do sound like a "little America," but they also resonate with the "chaos of consumption" that Klaus felt trapped in. While the film exhibits these positions without comment, it seems to suggest that empowerment is only possible if people learn to listen and begin to imagine the experiences that might be driving or hindering others.

Frau Kutzer presents a collectivity that is composed out of multiple perspectives and partial views. There is no claim to tell totalizing life stories here, realistically covering every detail. Instead, the actors dramatize experiences of migration and settlement as an ensemble, presenting new and old neighbors as conflicted human beings with their sorrows, fears, and dreams. The residents of Kreuzberg do not figure as a homogenous mass of social problem cases, but are engaged in conversations, negotiations, and soliloquies. Through its attentive curiosity about everyday life, the film exhibits solidarity with old and new underdogs without attempting to educate, reform, or sanitize from the high horse of bureaucratic paternalism. Solidarity shines through the collaborative aesthetic practice of this film, driven by self-conscious reflection on the positionalties of the writer and director vis-a-vis their subjects.

The epilog of *Frau Kutzer* shows a brief dialogue between Niyazi and Horst about Kazım Akkaya, the foreman's darling, who has meanwhile lost his job. A self-organized letter writing session follows where several workers are gathered around a table writing petitions while Atifet and Horst staple papers in the background with Brecht looking down on them from a poster on the wall. The poem and the film both end on this declaration of solidarity written by a worker in broken German in the form of a letter addressing a colleague in the factory, preempting Emine Sevgi Özdamar's later experiments in writing *Gastarbeiterdeutsch*:

> Mister / Fabrika Colleague! / Forener bad, / you say—why? / German Bad, / says forener—why? / I yumen, / You yumen, / You worker, / I worker! / We make together money / for the fabrika direktör . . .[29]

Such insight exposes the cycle of consumption that underpins the dream of "living like an American," highlighting the need instead to understand structural inequities on a transnational scale and organize around common causes, tentative alliances, and a push for systemic change. The call to start "ganz

unten" [at the bottom], which Horst articulates answering Niyazi's question where to start, has a less hierarchical and patronizing ring in *Niyazi* and *Frau Kutzer* than in Günter Wallraff's subsequent book title *Ganz Unten* (1985), translated into English as *Lowest of the Low* (1988). The joint writing session suggests that passive spectators can become active agents who intervene in the system by expressing their own claims in a kind of circuit reversal as Enzensberger had envisioned. The self-ironic agency of those portrayed is crucial for the potential activation of the viewer of a film that induces collective convergence beyond the confines of assigned and assumed identities. The intermedial negotiations and collaborations from the 1970s discussed in this article entailed moves toward solidarity beyond paternalist talking down or melodramatic pitifulness. Rediscovering those impulses in 2020 might hold some promise for the future.

[1] Aras Ören wrote the epic poem [*Niyazi'nin Naunyn Sokağında işi ne*] in Turkish. It was published in German translation by H. Achmed Schmiede and Johannes Schenk by the newly founded collectively run Rotbuch Verlag [Red Book Publishers] in 1973. Along with *Der kurze Traum aus Kagithane* (1974) and *Die Fremde ist auch ein Haus* (1980), it forms a trilogy. The Turkish originals were after the German translations, assembled in one volume as *Berlin Üçlemesi* (1980). A new German edition gathered the three volumes: *Berliner Trilogie: Drei Poeme: Was will Niyazi in der Naunynstraße? Der kurze Traum aus Kagithane. Die Fremde ist auch ein Haus* (2019). See also translations by Tom Cheesman and Yasemin Yildiz of a selection from these poems in this special issue.

[2] Aras Ören and Friedrich W. Zimmermann made a second film *Kazım Akkaya und die Bewohner der Naunynstraße* [Kazım Akkaya and the Residents of Naunynstraße, in short: *Kazım Akkaya*] (1975). Within the scope of this article, my focus will be on *Frau Kutzer*.

[3] For a detailed account that situates Ören's writing in its historical context see Chin (2007), esp. Ch. 1: "Aras Ören and the Guest Worker Question," pp. 30–85.

[4] *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 31/1973, cover and pp. 24–34. See: https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/index-1973-31.html and https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-41955159.html

[5] My translation from the German: "Zu bewundern ist hierbei, wie ein Schriftsteller aus Istanbul voller Souveränität, Ironie und einfühlsamer Kenntnis etwa im Lebensbild einer Proletarierwitwe und Kleinbürgerin, Niyazis Vermieterin [sic], 60 Jahre deutscher wie türkischer Geschichte und Geschichten miteinander verwebt. Ören hat damit auch dem Berliner Stadtteil Kreuzberg, wo heute über 60.000 seiner Landsleute leben, ein literarisches Denkmal gesetzt" (von Becker, 38).

[6] *Berlin Savignyplatz* (1995, Orig. 1993), *Sehnsucht nach Hollywood* (1999, Orig. *Hollywood Özlemi*, 1991), *Unerwarteter Besuch* (1997, Orig. *Beklenmedik bir Ziyaretçi*, 1995). Along with the novels *Eine verspätete Abrechnung oder Der Aufstieg der Gündoğdus* (1988) und *Granatapfelblüte* (1998) these books form part of a cycle titled *Şimdiki zamanın peşinde / Auf der Suche nach der Gegenwart* [In Search of Present Time].

[7] I discuss this retrospective in Göktürk (2020).

[8] I am grateful to Friedrich W. Zimmermann for sharing his memories. I would also like to thank Lilla Balint, Duygu Ergun, Ela Gezen, Kumars Salehi, Zafer Şenocak, Jonas Teupert, İpek Türeli, Barbara Wolbert, and Yasemin Yildiz for input at crucial junctures of gathering and thinking through this material.

[9] On the history of broadcasting for migrants in Germany see Kosnick (2007).

[10] The Documentation Center and Museum of Migration in Germany (DOMiD) in Cologne was founded in 1990 and staged several exhibitions that displayed images, documents and objects of everyday life of migration: https://domid.org/en/about-us/history/.

[11] My translation from the German: "Als Franz Naunyn Bürgermeister war in Berlin, / war die Naunynstraße / nicht die / Naunynstraße, / aber es war eben eine Straße, irgendeine. / Im Winter fuhren Pferdewagen / Im Matsch versinkend hindurch. / Zwischen sauren Kohlgerüchen. / Und wenn du den Kopf hobst, / war der Himmel auch schon damals / ins Wasser gefallen, ein Rahmen ohne Bild" (*Niyazi*, 14). See also translations by Yasemin Yildiz of excerpts from this poem in this issue.

[12] My translation from the German: "Ihr kennt alle Frau Kutzer / oder doch ihren Mann: / Er hat bei Borsig gearbeitet, / dort verschraubte er die Vorderachsen / der mächtigen Lokomotiven. / Und wenn er seinen Wochenlohn bekam und / [. . .] sich im Schrankspiegel selber besah / – schon lange hatte er aufgegeben, / seinen Kopf ohne Widerstand / dem System gebeugt – / kam er sich wie ein Riese vor / und ging mit seiner Frau ins Café Bauer, / – nicht von sich aus ging er hin, / er ließ sich von ihr überreden – / Tee trinken aus silbernem Service. / Schon damals / Wohnten sie in der Naunynstraße" (*Niyazi*, 5–6).

[13] My translation from the German: "Wenn man jung ist, / hat man nicht soviel Angst, / solange es Arbeit gibt, kann man arbeiten. / Ein Mensch, der arbeitet, / verdient gut oder schlecht. / Aber wie lange dauert das? / Entweder die Jugend / oder die Arbeit / geht zu Ende. / Das habe ich in meinem Leben erfahren" (*Niyazi*, 10).

[14] Harun Farocki also created a 12-channel video installation of the same title.

[15] My translation from the German: "Es wird der Polizei von vielen Seiten schwer gemacht, ihrem Auftrag gerecht zu werden, die freiheitlich demokratische Grundordnung zu schützen. Es ist schlicht unwahr, dass die Polizei in den vergangenen Jahren aus ihren Fehlern nicht gelernt hätte."

[16] My translation from the German: "Die Freiheit . . . demokratische Grundordnung . . . Was issn das? Was versteh ich denn davon? Nur nicht ducken. Vor niemandem. Auch nicht vor dir selbst. Und wenn du zuschlagen willst, dann schlag zu. Manche haben's verdient, besonders solche Affenpinscher wie du."

[17] My translation from the German: "In ihren Händen keine Maschinenpistolen. / Auf ihren Köpfen keine Stahlhelme, / an den Füßen keine Stiefel, / sie trugen keine braunen Uniformen / und keine Hakenkreuze. [Sieben oder acht Mann waren sie, / die anderen in der Kneipe. / Die Arme blaßblau tätowiert, / Lackschuhe, / und eine in ihren Köpfen genährte Schlange / sprizte ungehindert Gift. / Und sie alle haben / Klaus recht gegeben, / sie tielten sich eine gemeinsame Freude.] / Leicht gingen sie am Montag zur Arbeit" (*Niyazi*, 48–49). The bracketed lines are not used in the film.

[18] For an analysis of the bar scene in *Niyazi* and a comparison between Klaus and Ali see also Chin, pp. 74–77.

[19] In German: "auf der einen Seite die rasch expandierende Kommunikationstechnik, auf der anderen die Verdammung des Individuums zu Kommunikationslosigkeit [. . .] Unter den sich verändernden technischen und sozialen Bedingungen muß es unsere Aufgabe sein, die Rolle der Kunst, soweit sie Mensch und Gegenstand, also die Wirklichkeit wiederspiegelt, unter dem Vorzeichen der neu entstandenen Identitätsverflechtungen zu sehen, sie zu verändern und ihre Funktion neu zu definieren. [. . .] Bei der Bestimmung der neuen Rolle, die die Literatur zu übernehmen hat, gehöre ich weder zu jenen, die die Medien mit Verachtung strafen noch zu denen, die in ihnen einen Konkurrenten sehen, der das Buch im Laufe der Zeit an den Rand drängen wird. Obwohl es den Verfechtern der sogenannten Kommunikationsfreiheit um nichts anderes geht als um die möglichst totale Okkupation der Köpfe, der Phantasien und des Bewußtseins, wäre es lächerlich, wie ein zeitgenössischer Don Quichotte gegen diese Entwicklung anzukämpfen. Für mich besteht die Aufgabe eines Schriftstellers darin, aus dem allen Konsequenzen zu ziehen, die Bewußtseinsindustrie, wie Enzensberger sagt, ins Blickfeld zu rücken und zu bestellen, also, wie bereits gesagt, die Rolle der Literatur neu zu bestimmen" ("Dankrede zu Preisverleihung," 25–26).

[20] This reference to the popular star of early sound cinema in musicals such as *Die Drei von der Tankstelle* (1930), *Der Kongreß tanzt* (1931), and *Ein blonder Traum* (1932) enters the text in the process of translation into German. The Turkish original uses the language of fairy tales: "Kimbilir kaç kez – oraya her gidişinde – / kendini Bayan Kutzer Kafdağı'nın ardında / peri padişahın kızı sanmıştır" [Who knows how many times—whenever she went there— / Frau Kutzer thought of herself as the daughter of the sultan of fairies at the end of the World]. (*Berlin Üçlemesi*, 20)

[21] On the poetics and politics of cinematic realism and experimentation see Kappelhoff and Daniel Hendrickson (2015): "It was the cinema more than any other cultural practice that brought together entertainment and information, art and pop, fiction, theory, and document in a was that made possible the configurations of poetics and politics that today [. . .] seem to define art as such." (4)

[22] Friedrich W. Zimmermann subsequently moved to Cologne where he became editor for African topics at Deutsche Welle.

[23] My translation from the German: "Unsere Filme, die ersten Spielhandlungen mit Türken in Berlin, waren von der Redaktion damals als Experiment deklariert. Durfte eigentlich nicht viel kosten. So wurden bescheidene Honorare vereinbart. Eigentlich hatte ich die Schauspieler persönlich überzeugt, bei mir mitzumachen. Das Experiment war gelungen, aber erst in der Rückschau. *Mein Ansatz, Literatur, Spielhandlungen und Dokumentation zu verbinden, war neu und passte in kein Format*. Deshalb wurden die Filme auch im 3. Programm des SFB ausgestrahlt. Ich bin nicht mal sicher, ob diese im Fernsehen damals wiederholt wurden. Es gab ein paar Vorstellungen auf Film-Festivals zum Thema Dritte Welt. Auch der SFB hatte kein großes Interesse daran, diesen Film zu 'vermarkten'. Berlin wollte offenbar mit seinen 'Gastarbeitern' keinen Sendeplatz in der ARD bespielen." My emphasis.

[24] In German: "Nächste Woche kommt ihr meine Wohnung filmen? / Dann erzähl ich euch wieder mein Leben. / Mein Leben ist sowieso wie ein Film. / Dann mach ich euch einen Tee, / dunkel wie Hasenblut, / und ihr dreht Bilder von mir, / auf denen ich mich gut mache / in meinem dunkelblauen Anzug" (*Niyazi*, 34).

[25] My translation from the German: "Ich liege genau auf der Rolle drauf [. . .] Ich bin einfach glücklich darüber, wenn ich in der Schlußszene sage: 'Die Jahre sind wie Schluchten, wenn ich mich umdrehe, dann wird mir schwindelig.' Dann sehe ich mein eigenes Leben, das so aufregend und auch so schön war."

[26] Five of his films were screened at the Kino Arsenal in Berlin on March 22, 2018: https://www.harun-farocki-institut.org/en/2018/03/15/public-screening-skip-norman-a-selection-of-films-march-22-2018-arsenal/

[27] The term "post-migrant" originated in the 1990s in the Kanak Attak movement. More recently, Shermin Langhoff and her team at Ballhaus Naunynstraße, and subsequently the Gorki Theater, in Berlin have deployed "post-migrant theatre" to counter ostracism with an insistence on settlement. See also the three-part study *Deutschland postmigrantisch*, published 2014–2016 by Naika Foroutan and her team at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin: <https://www.projekte.hu-berlin.de/de/junited/deutschland-postmigrantisch-1/>, <https://www.projekte.hu-berlin.de/de/junited/deutschland-postmigrantisch-2-pdf>, and <https://www.stiftung-mercator.de/media/downloads/3_Publikationen/Deutschland_Postmigrantisch_3__Juni_2016.pdf>.

[28] My translation from the German: "Deutschland ist ein kleines Amerika. / Gehst du dorthin, Niyazi, / lebst du dort wie die Reichen von Bebek. [. . .] / Dort hat jeder einen Wagen, / Moderne Wohnungen mit Bad, / stangenweise Anzüge, / Nylonhemden / und Geliebte, die er an den Straßenecken küßt, / genau wie im Film." (*Niyazi*, 25)

[29] My translation from the German: "Herr / Fabrika Kollege! / Auslender schlecht, / du sagen – warum? / Deutsch Schlecht, / auslender sagen – warum? / Ich mens, / Du mens, / Du arbeiter, / ich arbeiter! / Wir machen suzammen geld / für di fabrika direktör . . ." (*Niyazi*, 68–69)

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