

Introduction

The “other Germanies” of our title do not yet exist. The scholars whose words fill this volume and the women writers and artists whose work they investigate are all experimenting with new ways to frame discussions of identity, citizenship, and national history; together they represent movements toward an openness that can further the ongoing negotiations surrounding culture in Germany. The artists and writers can be regarded as engaged in a common enterprise despite their disparate ethnic heritages and national origins—Argentinean, Czech, East German, Ghanaian, Nigerian, Turkish, and West German. Whether “native German” or “non-German,” whether part of a core culture or members of peripheral groups, they deconstruct traditional notions of Germanness and explore ways of constituting new political, cultural, and personal identities in interrelationship with German culture.¹

While the focus of the collection is on cultural and personal identity, the phrase “other Germanies” not only addresses the representation of ethnic minority groups and the fictitiousness of a homogeneous German culture but also examines gender and culture as interconnected systems. In recent studies of Germany’s confrontation with its past and its approaches toward a new self-identification as a culturally diverse society, the production of women artists and issues of gender have been only marginally addressed.² Furthermore, in literary and artistic representations of the German nation, the category of gender has historically

been applied solely to women and to the cultivation of their role in the home, a marginalization that ignores women's cultural production outside of the domestic sphere. While both gender and culture have been regarded as essential and "natural" in traditional narratives of the German nation, the ways in which gender and culture interact are just beginning to be investigated. The artists and scholars represented in this volume, while sharing an interest in the question of how gender and culture are intertwined, do not offer a unified response. Their approaches vary from an analysis of women's political participation in the state to the inflection of gender roles at the intersection of two cultures to an implicit denial of genderedness. For these artists and scholars, then, both the discounting of the gender marker and the thematizing of gender offer possible strategies for asserting women's cultural production.

The contemporary artistic and scholarly preoccupation with questions of identity and culture in Germany, as reflected in this collection of essays, did not arise, of course, in a social and political vacuum. The question of identity became a topic of intense and widespread public debate in Germany in the early 1990s, its urgency triggered both by the unification of East and West Germany and a dramatic rise in xenophobia. German unification, originally conceived as a means of bringing Germans together in a spirit of national unity, instead aroused feelings of divisiveness, and Germans found themselves faced with the unexpected problem of integrating diverse German cultures into one society.³ Moreover, the unification of East and West Germany elevated the status of a nationalist rhetoric that marginalized not only those perceived as ethnically different but also those marked as different by gender. Women in East Germany, for example, were hit particularly hard by unemployment, the curtailment of subsidies for childcare, and the restriction of their reproductive rights. Coincident with unification came a rise in right-wing extremist violence against Germany's foreign residents—so-called guest workers as well as asylum seekers—and against German citizens of color. The necessity of confronting the surge in xenophobia forced the beginnings of a reexamination of German identity and of a recognition of the multiethnic constituencies that make up German society.

As an orientation to the essays that follow, the general approaches in the three sections will be outlined here. The first section, "Defining and Erasing the Margins: Overcoming Ethnicity?" portrays the efforts

of several women authors to define their identities as members of ethnic minorities, here Turks and Afro-Germans, in (West) Germany. Their writings convey a restless movement between their culture of birth and culture of migration, and they explore the interpenetration of the two cultural spheres. On a more abstract level, the essays in the second section, "Exploring Cultural Constructions: Postmodern Strategies," reveal how artists create culture and shape identity while at the same time deconstructing cultural norms. In the works of literature and film treated in these articles, various geographic spaces and points in time are portrayed as being present simultaneously, thus upsetting assumptions about ethnic identity and gender roles. Similarly, disruptions of a unified narrative in the works of visual and dance art represented here disclose social constructions of meaning and the ambivalences within those constructs. The postmodern view of identity as fragmented and multiple is supplanted in the third section, "Confronting German History," by a focus on the efforts of individual women to overcome barriers to a unified personal identity. Here, female protagonists in drama, film, and novels struggle to achieve a sense of psychological wholeness against the intrusions of state power and to come to terms with their own complicity with Nazi ideology or with state censorship in East Germany.

Part I. Defining and Erasing the Margins: Overcoming Ethnicity?

As Germans are beginning to recognize that their society is de facto a culturally diverse one, Turks and Afro-Germans, among other minority citizens and residents, are articulating their relationship to or are redefining a core culture in Germany.⁴ Turkish migrants, including both "guest workers" and asylum seekers, have until recently had an uncertain residency status and no right to German citizenship, whereas Afro-Germans, because of their German parentage, have full citizenship rights de jure. Although their legal status is different, both Turks and Afro-Germans are visibly marked as different from "native," i.e., white, Germans. The social positioning of these two groups, both of which are perceived negatively as being made up of "migrants," can be seen more clearly when it is contrasted with that of another migrant

group, ethnic Germans. These immigrants, mainly from the former East Bloc countries who have been migrating to (West) Germany since World War II, enjoy greater constitutional rights than Turkish residents and greater social acceptance than Afro-Germans. This despite the fact that many Turkish “migrants” have resided in Germany for decades and that many Afro-Germans have lived in Germany their entire lives while ethnic Germans may arrive in Germany with little knowledge of its culture and language. Nevertheless, ethnic Germans are accepted as German, while the civic equality of Turks and Afro-Germans remains limited. The Turkish and Afro-German writers represented in this collection question the demarcation of separate cultural spheres while simultaneously resisting the erasure of aspects of their identities and heritages that fall outside dominant notions of German culture.

Questions of Identity

The question asked by Ülker Gökberk, Margrit Frölich, and Erin Crawley is, then, how the artistic production of minority writers can be integrated into the larger society without being either absorbed by the dominant culture or being consigned to a cultural ghetto. Their essays suggest several different answers. Gökberk and Frölich both begin with a caveat against regarding the work of Turkish authors merely in relation to traditional German literature, as if it were an exotic tonic capable of infusing new life into the literary canon. As an alternative to such a view, Gökberk proposes a theoretical model of dialogic understanding offered by the developing field of intercultural *Germanistik*. Breaking with a German pedagogic model that advocates teaching German literature in foreign countries as it is taught in Germany, under the assumption that it can be read and understood in other cultures exactly as it is at home, intercultural *Germanistik* stresses the importance of interaction between the culture represented in a text and the culture of the reader. In contrast to Hans-Georg Gadamer’s “fusion of horizons” between text and reader, Gökberk points out, the intercultural approach assumes that understanding will vary according to the particular cultural perspective of the reader. Thus, she argues, it can also serve as a model for understanding the literature written by members of minority groups in Germany and for incorporating minority literature into the canon while still preserving its heterogeneity.

While Gökberk draws on hermeneutic and psychological models to conceptualize communication between foreigners and German citizens, Frölich focuses on the ability of minority literature to destabilize Germans' ethnocentric notion of German culture as the central reference point from which all other cultures are regarded. The Turkish author Emine Sevgi Özdamar, Frölich shows, writes against the usual conception of "migrants' literature" by placing Turkish society at the center of her narrative with Germany, the country of migration, appearing only on the periphery. Similarly, Erin Crawley argues that Afro-German authors Katharina Oguntoye and May Opitz, by insisting on the fact of their Germanness, can change Germans' view of their culture as homogeneous and white. Personal narratives of travel to Ghana and Nigeria provide Oguntoye and Opitz with a discursive space for questioning their ethnic marking as Africans in Germany, since it is in Africa that they encounter most decisively their German identity.

Gökberk and Crawley focus not only on the transformative power of minority literature vis-à-vis German national identity but also on the personal identity of the "outsider" to German culture. Gökberk draws on the work of Julia Kristeva and of Turkish author Aysel Özakin to analyze the concept of exile as a condition intrinsic to humanity and calls for the recognition of the foreigner in all of us to help break down the cultural barriers that divide us. Crawley discusses the construction of an Afro-German identity as both a political act and a personal quest for a sense of self that can partake of both African and European cultures while not belonging entirely to either.

Questions of Gender

The three essays in this section analyze gender in relation to Turkish religious and political institutions, to socioeconomic exchanges between first-world nations and the less industrialized Turkey, and to negotiations of ethnicity between Germans who do and do not "appear to be German." Gökberk shows that, in Aysel Özakin's novel, gender is one facet of "otherness" for the protagonist, a Turkish girl who identifies both with Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, and with Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the modern, secular Turkish state. Even as the girl looks up to these "supraindividual, patriarchal authorities," she realizes that as a female she can never be as pure as they are and that she herself is per-

petually in exile within her own culture. The splitting she experiences between male identification and the lack of a positive female model is accompanied by a splitting between a public identity that ostensibly supports the authoritarian values instituted by the 1980 military coup and a personal identity that is privately critical of them.

In Frölich's analysis of Emine Özdamar's *Life is a Caravanserai*, a young woman emigrating from Turkey to Germany represents the upheaval in a society racked by the process of industrialization and Westernization. Özdamar, Frölich argues, subordinates a focus on gender per se to wider economic concerns within a broad portrayal of Turkish culture. As a child, the protagonist is pulled back and forth between Western and Islamic cultural spheres and their attendant gender roles, as her family's economic well-being fluctuates. During periods of prosperity they pursue an American lifestyle, while in times of economic stagnation they readopt traditional religious values. However, at the point when their economic decline appears irreversible, the daughter upsets a traditional gender hierarchy within Islam by replacing her father as the family's breadwinner. Eventually, economic circumstances lead her to set out on her own for Germany. Frölich notes that Özdamar, by portraying an economically self-sufficient Turkish woman, counters the Western notion that Islamic women are quintessential victims of patriarchy. And yet, Özdamar does not appear wholeheartedly to celebrate the daughter's separation from her family as a liberation from Islamic strictures: on the train to the West she travels with "female societal outcasts," namely, prostitutes and lesbians. Thus, while it is true that she has gained a greater freedom of mobility, she also seems to have moved uncomfortably outside socially accepted categories of femininity.

Crawley does not investigate, as Gökberk and Frölich do, the representation of gender within the texts she studies. Instead, she describes the cultural context in which the texts were written, emphasizing the importance of connections between the West German women's movement and Afro-German women who began to form their own movement during the mid-1980s. The women's movement provided the Afro-German women with a model of consciousness-raising; and individual women within that movement, like the publisher Dagmar Schultz, facilitated contacts with African-American intellectuals such as Audre Lorde. Citing Katharina Oguntoye, Crawley finds these possibilities for discussion of cardinal importance for the self-identification of

Afro-German women. However, according to Oguntoye, participants in the West German women's movement were not prepared to address the intersection of gender politics with issues surrounding ethnicity and constructions of Germanness, and Afro-German women thus split off to form their own movement.

Part II. Exploring Cultural Constructions: Postmodern Strategies

The artists represented in this section explore questions of identity formation by making visible the processes of cultural construction. In their works they do not attempt to produce the illusion of realness (in contrast, for example, to the personal narratives discussed in Part I). Rather, a sense of aesthetic play predominates. Postmodern strategies disrupt linear narratives, juxtapose and equate different levels of time and space, emphasize techniques of repetition, and draw attention to the arbitrariness by which signs derive their meanings. The exposure of the mechanisms that create cultural values also opens avenues for their deconstruction. Thus, while the production of the effects of realness would seem to guarantee authenticity and the immediacy of struggle, the display of the aesthetic means by which "realness" is constructed also allows for liberation from culturally imposed constraints.

The four artists whose works are treated here—a novelist, a filmmaker, a dance artist, and a visual artist—employ several different narrative and compositional strategies to cast doubt on both the concept of a stable identity and the validity of societal truths. Novelist Libuše Moníková chooses as her protagonists four artists who are occupied with restoring the sculptural decorations on a national landmark. Their idiosyncratic manipulation and creation of cultural symbols thematizes the artificiality of "timeless" values that supposedly essentially characterize a nation and set it off from other cultures. Ulrike Ottinger's point of departure in her film *Johanna d'Arc of Mongolia* is the encounter of Western European women travelers with a tribe of Mongolian warrior women. By disrupting ordinary notions of historical time, Ottinger attempts to counteract Western audiences' consumption of exoticized images of the "native other" and achieve an authentic representation of a minority culture. Choreographer Pina Bausch, rather than bringing

a multiplicity of different cultural periods and spaces into conjunction, instead focuses exclusively on postwar (West) German society. Here, compositional elements of fragmentation and repetition expose the hollowness of social conventions and hint at elements of violence beneath a veneer of affluence and orderliness. The nonrepresentational work of painter Eva-Maria Schön, finally, narrows the focus even further, to symbols divorced from any geographic or historical context. Schön's technique of doubling images or arbitrarily fragmenting them unsettles our usual assumptions about the unity and wholeness of identity.

Questions of Identity

The constructedness of meaning through visual symbols, through narratives of the nation, and through cultural differences within and between nations is the focus of the articles in this section. With their discussions of Czech author Libuše Moníková's novel *The Façade*, Katie Trumpener and Karen Jankowsky shift the focus of attention from a multicultural Germany to a culturally diverse Eastern Europe. Trumpener argues not only that the novel rejects the German framework as an absolute but also that Moníková herself resists incorporation into a multicultural Germany. Instead, Trumpener reads Moníková in connection with Milan Kundera's writing about the Prague Spring and within a Czech literary tradition that thematizes the preservation of regional identities in the face of state imperialism. The novel's postmodern sense of time and place, Trumpener argues, promotes the coexistence of a multiplicity of cultural groups. For Jankowsky, Moníková's portrayal of heterogeneous cultural groups from Bohemia to Siberia exposes the artificiality of distinct and homogeneous national identities, while the never-ending restoration work on the facade of a Renaissance castle takes on metaphoric meaning to thematize the almost ritual constructedness of the Czech national past. The author's position of writing in exile, Jankowsky believes, sharpens her analysis of the efforts that are required in order for a national identity to appear organic and unified.

The representation of travel between cultures is as central to Shanta Rao's examination of Ulrike Ottinger's film as it is to Trumpener's and Jankowsky's analyses of Moníková's novel. Rao delineates Ottinger's efforts in *Johanna d'Arc of Mongolia* to hinder the exoticizing of cultural differences between the Western European travelers and the nomadic Mongolians they encounter. Nevertheless, Rao is dismayed that the

Western visitors are portrayed as learned cultural interpreters of native subjects who cannot mediate and explain their own reality in the process of cultural transfer. In contrast to the scholars in Part I, who argue that the writings of minority authors in Germany work toward an interaction that will entail changes for both the core culture and its margins, Rao finds that Ottinger's film maintains a separation between German and Other. Even though Ottinger strove for a portrayal of harmonious cultural transfer, Rao argues, the filmmaker's Eurocentric eye conceptually polarizes the two groups, rather than mutually transforming their relationship to each other.

In the production of the artists who work in dance theater and visual art, the process of constructing—or dismantling—an identity is questioned on a more abstract level. Elements of deconstruction form the focus of Heidi Gilpin's discussion of the work of German choreographer, dancer, and performance artist Pina Bausch. Gilpin notes that Bausch's compositional strategy is based on fragmentation, negation, and absence; her characters do not relate a coherent story. Images of amputation imposed on the female body allude to the breakdown of unified narrating subjects. By requiring her dancers to perform the expression of emotion apart from the events that evoked the emotion, Bausch denies her audience the sense of wholeness we seek in personal narratives and individual histories.

Analyzing the work of German photographer and painter Eva-Maria Schön, Barbara Buenger points out the various ways in which Schön's art is based on indeterminacy. Repeatedly, Schön confounds the viewer's conceptions of unified identity and unambiguous identification. For example, what is "obviously" a detailed photograph of a prehistoric fossil turns out to be smudges made by Schön's finger in a thin wash of ink over photographic paper. A sense of play inspires Schön to "identify" her paintings with labels giving totally irrelevant information. Here Buenger sees Schön as gently mocking the museum's world of scientific exactitude, labeling, and identification—as well as her audience's own need to see and believe in unequivocal identity.

Questions of Gender

In their discussions of Libuše Moníková's *Façade*, Trumpener and Jankowsky explore constructions of gender that cast women's sphere as the home, in contrast to the male sphere of action in society. Both schol-

ars show that such a definition of a respectable role for women is embedded in the narratives of the nation that proliferated in Europe during the nineteenth century and that were adopted and further developed by middle-class women, who in so doing both carved out and limited their space as guardians of the national family. Trumpener argues for the importance of the nineteenth-century Czech writer Božena Němcová to Moníková's portrayal of women's thoroughly circumscribed sphere within the nation. Even when Moníková portrays a strong, independent female character outside the bounds of the home, Trumpener shows, the author undermines the character, a Siberian shaman, through a regressive equation of the female with the folkloric. Jankowsky's analysis recognizes that gender and nation are interrelated in ways other than limiting women's social participation to the symbolic realm of "mother of the nation." Not only does Moníková make apparent the artificiality of national history and identity, she also problematizes the naturalness of the heterosexual role division.

In her critique of *Johanna d'Arc of Mongolia*, Rao questions the success of Ulrike Ottinger's efforts to bring the cultural life of nomadic Mongolian women into visibility within Western European feminist film production. While other critics have praised Ottinger's strong female protagonists and her treatment of homoerotic desire, Rao argues that Ottinger's ethno-documentary aesthetic, with its reliance on an ahistorical sense of time, results only in a fabrication of authenticity for the Mongolian women. Rather than radically rewriting definitions of gender and difference, Ottinger's film represents a continuation of an older colonialist discourse on a racially defined Other.

Despite attempts elsewhere to frame the work of Eva-Maria Schön and Pina Bausch within feminist categories of analysis, Buenger points out problematic aspects of such a categorization for Schön, while Gilpin examines Bausch's choreographic work without taking gender into account. It is particularly surprising that Gilpin does not focus on Bausch's gender politics, since Bausch often uses the personal, gendered experiences of her dancers as elements of her choreography. Buenger notes that while Schön has been featured in major German shows of feminist art, she herself resists the labeling of her art as feminist and avoids incorporating marks of gender into her work. Nonetheless, Buenger argues that Schön's work, whether intentionally or not, often parallels that of other women artists in its focus on touch and sensuality. It is important to note here, however, that the main implication of

not directly addressing gender, whether in the work itself or in its analysis, is to work against a ghettoizing of women's art as somehow tangential to "real" art that is not explicitly gendered.

Part III. Confronting German History: Constituting an Identity in Fascism, State Socialism, and in the United Germany

The artists represented in this final section focus on the efforts of individual women to construct a personal identity within the context of recent German history, beginning with the rise of Nazism. In the works considered here, German fascism is portrayed not only as Hitler's exercise of power from above but also through the actions of individual citizens as they adapted to or participated in Nazi ideology. In the German Democratic Republic, state socialism was conceived as a reaction to fascism, and yet, as with Nazism, totalitarian mechanisms of state control, including surveillance and imprisonment, exerted their influence over individual citizens. Rather than encouraging citizens to develop their individuality, the state effectively pressured them to conform to the needs of the collective. Thus, writers and intellectuals who sought to develop an oppositional voice had to struggle against both political controls and their own impulses to censor thoughts perceived to be inimicable to the socialist state. After German unification, their attempts at encouraging a reform of East German society from within were discounted by West German critics, who now assumed that more heroic acts of resistance against the GDR state should have been undertaken. The undermining of East German oppositional voices took place as Germany was in the process of unification and as German history was being "normalized," focusing on the country's development into a major economic and technocratic power. Countering that trend, dissenting voices from the East and West, such as those of the artists represented here, recall the legacy of the Third Reich and expose the moral bankruptcy of the postwar Economic Miracle.

Questions of Identity

In her study of a trilogy of plays by West German dramatist Gerlind Reinshagen, Angelika Czekay examines the depiction of the everydayness of fascism through the actions of women, children, and men on the

home front during World War II; the postwar implications of complicity with fascism; and the reconstitution of a German identity (in the Federal Republic) in terms of economic success. Reinshagen's portrayal of history through women's experience and the construction of national identity from the perspective of a female protagonist, Czekay points out, represents an alternative to the postwar documentary drama developed by playwrights such as Peter Weiss and Heinar Kipphardt. The realistic style of the first play of the trilogy confirms the factualness of cooperation with Nazi institutions, while dream sequences and fantasies allow the protagonist in the following plays to imagine a personal and social identity in Germany different from that dictated by the consumerist culture that surrounds her.

The performance of an assumed identity, Janice Mouton shows in her discussion of Jeanine Meerapfel's *Malou*, was adopted as a survival strategy by the film's title character in order to escape the Third Reich. Mouton traces the efforts of Malou's daughter to find the mother behind the performance: to reconstruct her dead mother's life story from fragments of the past and, in so doing, to shape the narrative of her own life. (Meerapfel herself, as Mouton notes, shares the heritage of her protagonist, as the daughter of a German Jewish father and French mother who emigrated to Argentina from Hitler's Germany.) Reading the film's search for the absent mother together with texts by Julia Kristeva, Marguerite Duras and Trinh T. Minh-ha, Mouton argues for a successful outcome of the daughter's quest for understanding and wholeness.

In Sylvia Kloetzer's discussion of two novels by East German authors Christa Wolf and Monika Maron, the political dimension plays the predominant role in the struggle of the individual to find her identity. Kloetzer develops the theme of the fragmented self in the context of political and cultural debates in the German Democratic Republic in the 1970s. The East German state, Kloetzer argues, had invalidated the very need for individuality. Maron's novel reacts by portraying the loss of voice experienced by a journalist for whom state censorship has become self-censorship. The pessimism of Maron's novel is somewhat alleviated by the hope Wolf expresses in her novel *What Remains* for the discovery of a new, as yet undefined, language. While Wolf fears that it may be too late for her to learn a new language of self-expression, she looks optimistically to a younger generation of writers to adopt it as their own.

Questions of Gender

Czekay's examination of women's role in fascism and in postwar Germany recalls Jankowsky's and Trumpener's analysis of the limited and self-limiting role of women in constituting the nation. As Czekay points out, the adult female characters in the first of Gerlind Reinshagen's three plays are portrayed as confined to the home and as largely indifferent to public events. While their narrowly circumscribed role conforms to the clear gender role division mandated by the fascist state, it can also be seen as a kind of self-enclosure, as a refusal to assume responsibility. In the second play, women play no larger a role as wielders of actual political power than in the first play. Rather, in the context of Germany's postwar recovery, they are portrayed as a site of consumerism, as bodies to be enjoyed in male sexual fantasies and to be adorned with jewelry, furs, and other consumer goods. However, Czekay argues that the protagonist here is not simply a passive object but an active subject who seeks a path to resistance in her utopian visions of an alternative Germany. Yet the protagonist's suicide at the conclusion of the third play clearly signals the playwright's loss of confidence in this utopian potential.

Just as Czekay points to Reinshagen's portrayal of ways in which individual women hid behind a feminine role when they adapted to fascist and postwar structures, Mouton likewise problematizes a femininity that offers an illusionary escape from social and political reality in Meerapfel's *Malou*. The French Christian mother, whose history the film reconstructs, seeks refuge from social and political forces in enacting sexualized images of femininity through her cabaret singing and, later, through the comfortable material circumstances provided by her German Jewish husband. The need to escape the Nazis as a Jewish couple and to live in exile in Argentina confronts Malou with the fragility of her construction of femininity. In the manner in which Malou's daughter reconstructs her mother's identity, Mouton recognizes painful attempts to come to terms with contradictory relationships among personal identity, gender, and political power structures.

Of the three articles in this section, Kloetzer's analysis places the least emphasis on gender. Kloetzer points out that gender issues played a relatively minor role in East German oppositional literature and politics, since mechanisms of censorship in the GDR equally threatened the individuality of both men and women. Focusing on key instances of au-

thors' expulsion from the East German Writers' Union or their expatriation, Kloetzer argues that writers tended to engage in self-censorship in order to prevent social and political isolation. By emphasizing the effects of intimidation on writing, Kloetzer frames her analysis differently from many American feminist critics who attribute an expressly feminist politics to East German women writers. At the same time, Kloetzer does acknowledge the particular stresses on women in the GDR. Women's responsibility for household and family in addition to employment outside the home led East German women authors to expose a general lack of emancipation in the eastern German state and thus to thematize threats to free speech and thought.

With Sylvia Kloetzer's article on two East German authors, the collection has in a sense come full circle. With the unification of the two German states, which consisted in the German Democratic Republic's being absorbed by the larger and economically stronger Federal Republic, came a realization of the "foreignness" of East German culture to the dominant West German society. East Germans found themselves stigmatized as backward and lazy, as somehow not quite "German." Despite a shared German cultural history before World War II, the citizens of the former GDR had to struggle against a second-class and minority status in the new Germany. Just as the essayists in the first section of the volume explore ways in which Turkish authors residing in Germany and Afro-German writers might overcome marginalization while not erasing their ethnic heritage, Kloetzer insists on the importance of remembering East German oppositional women writers: their work must not be forgotten in the ongoing process of (re)defining Germanness. The East German authors join the other women artists represented in this collection in countering a view of German culture as static and homogeneous. Their creative work enables us to imagine the possible forms of "other Germanies" that can emerge from the turbulent contestations of identity at multiple sites in contemporary German society.

Notes

1. Though the people who lived historically in the territory that is today's Germany were never of one ethnic heritage, characterizing the majority of the population in Germany today as "native" as opposed to "non-German" does in-

dicating a relationship based on cultural differences in which the "natives" define who is outside their group on the basis of biological heritage, appearance, and cultural background. "Ethnic German" has historically referred to people of German heritage living outside Germany in Romania, the Czech Republic or the republics of the former Soviet Union.

2. The *Special Issue on Minorities in German Culture* of the journal *New German Critique* 46 (1989) addressed gender in an article analyzing constructs of Turkish female identities through the meanings ascribed to the wearing of headscarves (Ruth Mandel), in part of a review article, "Minority Literature in the Federal Republic of Germany," relating to women authors (Heidrun Suhr), and in a review of the collection *Farbe bekennen: Afro-deutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte* (Karen Obermeier). See also Georg Gugelberger, "Rethinking Germanistik," *Monatshefte* 83, no. 1 (1991): 45–58.

3. In response to xenophobic acts of violence, the German government took steps to ease naturalization for long-time foreign residents of Germany and to restrict the entry of asylum seekers. As of July 1993, naturalized citizenship is available to legal residents aged 17 to 23 years who have eight years of residency and six years of schooling in Germany, and to those over 23 years of age who have resided in Germany for at least 15 years. As of July 1, 1993, German asylum laws were changed: only foreigners who have entered Germany directly from a country that is considered unsafe have a right to apply for asylum. Foreigners who pass through a third state that is considered secure can be sent back at the German border. Those who come from "safe countries of origin" (for example, Poland, Hungary, the Czech or Slovak Republics, Romania, Bulgaria, Gambia, Ghana, and Senegal) must be able to document that they have been politically persecuted, or their applications for asylum will not be recognized.

4. While the term *minority* in the United States refers to citizens who are disadvantaged, the combination of citizenship and disadvantage does not apply to the same extent to the German context, which makes the use of the word somewhat problematic. Germany is home to some six million non-Germans, mainly "guest workers" recruited by West German industry decades ago from Turkey and southern Europe. By the 1980s, it had become clear that most of these foreigners were in fact permanent residents. Under Article 16 of the West German constitution, all victims of political persecution were guaranteed the right to asylum, until the laws were changed in July 1993. Because those applying for asylum are housed and supported at public expense while their cases are reviewed, they increasingly came to be regarded as an unacceptable additional burden on Germany's already faltering economy (in 1991 256,000 refugees entered Germany; in 1992 440,000; in 1993 322,599; and in 1994 127,210).