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## An Outlook on Immigrant Literature in Terms of Culture Education

(Göçmen Yazınına Kültür Eğitimi Açısından Bakış)

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### Abstract

In this study, the utility of Turkish-German Immigrants Literature in foreign language and specifically literature and culture-oriented course such as literature, country-science, text analysis and so on in education or philology department related with German will be analyzed. The Turkish-German Immigrant Literature which contains specific fifty-year period to Germany and has a different meaning as concern closely our people who have been there since three generations, is considered important in terms of recent German literature and is accepted as been part of German literature. Therefore, this subject emerges inevitably in German literature, as well as in courses related with German country-science or Culture-science as a course Material even it can be taught as a separate course. Based on this situation, it will be discussed that the evaluation of Turkish-German immigrants literature in terms of education in the context of aforesaid department of university, opinions about strategy in terms of education program will be evaluated, Education of Turkish-German Immigrants Literature will be tried to be expressed. In this context by making references to the artist of Immigrant Literature, the principal course Schedule-recommendations will be evaluated in terms of literature and education of literature, in concept of the work of related artist. During the study it will be tried to take advantage of the recent research in this area and the data of Turkish-German literature.

**Keyword:** Immigrants Literature, Turkish-German Literature, literature-Course, literature education.

### Özet

Bu çalışmada, Türk-Alman Göçmen Yazınının yabancı dil ve özelde de Almanca ile ilgili eğitim ya da filoloji bölümlerindeki yazın, ülkebilim, metin incelemeleri vb. yazın ve kültür odaklı derslerde kullanılabilirliği irdelenmeye çalışılacaktır. Almanya'ya özgü elli yıllık bir süreci içeren ve orada üç kuşaktır varolan insanlarımızı da yakından ilgilendirdiği için ayrı bir anlamı olan Türk-Alman göçmen yazını, son dönem Alman yazını açısından da önemsenmekte ve Alman yazınının bir parçası olarak kabul edilmektedir. Dolayısıyla gerek Alman yazını, gerekse Alman ülkebilim veya kültürbilim ile ilgili derslerde ister istemez ders malzemesi olarak da karşımıza çıkmakta, hatta ayrı bir ders olarak da okutulabilmektedir. Var olan bu durumdan yola çıkarak Türk Alman göçmen yazınına üniversitelerin adı geçen bölümleri bağlamında eğitim açısından değerlendirilmesi konu olarak ele alınacak, eğitim programı açısından nasıl bir yol izlenebileceği konusunda görüşler değerlendirilerek, Türk-Alman göçmen yazınının eğitimi konusu dillendirilmeye çalışılacaktır. Bu bağlamda göçmen yazını sanatçılarına da göndermeler yaparak, ilgili sanatçıların metinleri bağlamında belli başlı ders izleneciler de yazınbilim ve yazın eğitimi açısından değerlendirilmeye çalışılacaktır. Çalışma boyunca Türk-Alman yazınbilim verilerinden ve bu alanda yapılan son dönem araştırmalarından yararlanmaya çalışılacaktır. Burada ele alınacak olan kültür kavramı, yazın alanındaki kültür kavramıdır ve Almanya'da artık elliinci yılına ulaşan "gurbetçi" adını verdiğimiz insanlarımızın bu uzun süreç boyunca sanat ve edebiyat alanında oluşturdukları ekinlerinin tamamı, yani kültürü demektir. Çalışmanın çıkış noktası da buradan başlamaktadır: Elli yıllık gurbetçilerin üç

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kuşak boyu hikâyelerini içeren, “konuk işçi yazını”, “gurbetçi yazını” ya da “dış göç yazını” (Bkz.: Karakuş / Kuruyazıcı 2001) olarak da zaman zaman adlandırılan Türk-Alman göçmen edebiyatı aracılığıyla Almanya’daki Türkleri anlamak ve tanımaktır. Bunun için kültür ve kültür eğitimi kavramları ayrı ayrı ele alınarak aralarındaki bağ ortaya konmaya çalışılacak ve ardından Türk Alman göçmen yazınının bir araç olarak Almanya’daki Türk kültürünü tanımada kullanılabilirliği tartışılacaktır. Tahmin edileceği üzere Türk Alman göçmen yazını iki dilli, iki kültürlü, Türkçe ve Almanca olmak üzere her iki dilde de ürünleri olan ortak bir süreç ve bağlama sahip bir kültür çevresidir. Bu özellikleriyle hem Türk, hem Alman yazını açısından önem taşıdığı gibi, diller bağlamında da Türkçe olduğu kadar Almanca açısından da ayrıca önem taşımaktadır. Günümüzde artık Almanya’da okullardaki ders kitaplarında da Türk-Alman metinlerine yer vermeye başlanmış, kültürlerarası iletişim açısından “ötekini” anlamada bir araç olarak görülmeye başlanmıştır. Bilimsel anlamda da yazınbilim, Alman yazın tarihi gibi alanlarda son dönem Alman yazını içerisinde Türk-Alman yazını olarak yer almaya başlamıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Göçmen Yazını, Türk-Alman Yazını, Edebiyat Dersi, Yazın Eğitimi

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## Introduction

The concept of culture which is handled in this study is a culture concept in literature field and by that we mean especially our people reaching a fifteen- year period in Germany who are called as the “guest workers” or “migration workers”. The works in art and literature which is constituted by them throughout this long period in Germany defines this culture concept. This is even the starting point of this study: The stories of the guest workers in this fifty-year period containing the stories of three generations, are occasionally classified as the “guest worker literature” or “ migration literature” (see Karakuş / Kuruyazıcı 2001) or generally as the Turkish-German migration literature. Through the agency of this literature is tried to understand the Turkish people in Germany and empathize with them. For this purpose, firstly the concept of culture and culture education are handled separately in order to execute the connection between them, and then the availability of the Turkish- German literature as a course material to discover the Turkish culture in Germany will be discussed. As predicted, the Turkish- German Literature is characterized by two languages, two cultures and, it has products in both languages, which is the reflection of a cultural environment referring to common process and context. With these characteristics, this literature has a place in German and Turkish literature as well as in Turkish and German within the context of languages. In contemporary times, school books in Germany includes Turkish-German texts, which are considered as a method of “understanding others” with regard to intercultural communication. From the scientific perspective of literary science, the German Literature history’s last period includes the Turkish-German Literature.

### **The concept of “culture”**

The concept of culture can be defined in a variety of ways. According to the Turkish Language Association culture is defined as follows<sup>2</sup>; All material and spiritual values which made in a historical and social development process and a collection of tools, which are used to create them, to transmit them to the next generations and, to show the measure of sovereignty of human being to natural and social environment. And as a second definition culture is defined as “peculiar idea and art collections to a community or folk ensemble” (TDK 2015). If it is considered in regards to human being, it could be said that culture is the whole heritage which is created in a definite process or history. According to Parekh is culture “a system of beliefs and justice in order to understand the individual and social life of a group

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<sup>2</sup> The same reference includes the french word of “culture”. According wikipedia, the word culture goes back to Latin *colere*, “ to inhabit, care for, till, worship. More generally, culture is defined as everything that humanity has produced. (wikipedia)

of people.” (Parekh 2002: 15). More specifically, culture<sup>3</sup> is defined as writing, verbal, auditory and visual arts etc. and the whole products or work of arts that are created in these art fields (bpd.de 2015). In this context, the concept of migration literature determines within the framework of this study the whole literature work of our artists who lived or still living in Germany and the Germany culture which is expressed by this literature. With the image of Germany dealing within the context of migration literature will be indicated a different image of Germany through the eyes of migrants. And the education of this whole culture could make possible concerning writers or students to know this different Germany image and to put across it well.

With the end of Second World War in Europe, the reconstruction and development initiative resulted especially in Germany’s ongoing need for immigrants to bolster economic development and maintain a dynamic workforce and spread throughout Europe. But after the ‘70s, with the cohabitation in Europe, where foreigners were defined as the “others”, a reaction against immigrants appeared and an obvious anti-foreignism came also into existence. For that reason, the concept of intercultural dialogue is quite frequently discussed and the subjects of intercultural communication were given priority. In that connection, the literature world can serve as a means for the purpose of intercultural communication, consequently for culture education.

### **Migration literature as a subject of culture education**

Literature is a culture technique. Consequently, if we say culture education we automatically think first of literature. Migration literature can be handled within the frame of general literature both as Turkish literature and comparative literature in the context of German literature or Turkish-German literature. But, migration literature which is treated in the context of cultural education will naturally suggest a course of action about Turkish culture as well as German culture by means of literary experiences. In this connection, concerning Turkish readers as well as German readers, migration culture will involve a specific cultural transfer or a particular expression to that culture. If we consider it more specifically, this subtype of literature containing Turkish and German literary works speak to both different reading groups two of whom are Turkish and German. Therefore, this culture education has an intercultural property consisting of Turkish and German. Due to this property, migration culture includes historical and social impacts about last fifty years of emigration period. For that reason, nowadays in German language and literature departments in Germany as well as in programs concerning German language teaching and literature in our country, including master and doctoral programs, migration literary works are frequently examined as course material. Along with the literature world Turkish-German films, theatre players, shows etc. and events are attracting a great deal of attention and they are becoming a subject for analysis in studies. This situation clearly presents to our eyes that migration literature is used as an instrument or material in culture education. In order to understand how migration literature is conducted it is necessary to go into detail of the meaning, history and stages of migration literature.

### **General Outlook of Fifty Years of Immigrant Literature**

According to an historical outlook, the immigration process of Turks to German starts in 1961 with a bilateral agreement between Turkey and Germany (Kuruyazıcı 2001: 4) and it still continues today. The main idea behind this immigration process having started in 60s from Turkey to Germany was to stay there a few years, save money, return to homeland and

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<sup>3</sup> The German Federal Agency for Civic Education - the Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung or the "bpb" as it is referred to in short is a federal public authority providing citizenship education and information on political issues to all people in Germany.

there have a business. Nevertheless, the first generation of immigrants gradually extended their stay in Germany; those who were alone fetched their wives and children, single ones got married and took their wives with them to Germany to settle down in the country. Turks known as the first generation immigrants were the ones who first met with ‘the others’ and had the most amount of challenges with respect to language, culture and traditions. Moreover, they haven’t had received any special education, information or orientation before migrating to the country, in that sense, they were completely left alone. The services in question could only be provided through embassies, being the first step of everything. Official communication, on the other hand, could only be realized through translators.

The so-called second phase of immigrant literature is the young generation of children having born and raised in Germany. These kids having born and got education in Germany started to shape the future of their families. In time, the idea to return to homeland lost grounds and the opinions of these children came to forefront. Kids having been raised in Germany belonged to the country and they would definitely have problems in adapting to Turkey. In other words, they got alienated from the homeland of their parents. Temporariness thusly gave way to permanency. Immigrants’ worlds started to change with their kids and they were more obliged to get in touch with institutions, organizations and officials responsible for health, education etc. services. Their problems therefore became more and more complicated. At the beginning, immigrants staying in the country started to rent or even buy their own houses, then to be called “Alamancı.” They totally renew their furniture and goods that were once composed of second-hand materials. This might be interpreted as their wish to be permanent. In time, growing numbers of Turkish immigrants started to have their own businesses. However, this generation had a different problem: identity. They felt neither Turkish nor German. This generation stuck between two cultures started to seek for a new identity leading to a double-bind that they accepted to carry throughout their lives. This identity problem sometimes led to division. While some returned to homeland, others decided to stay in their country, Germany for good. Many kids having returned to the homeland could not adapt to this new culture and went back to Germany.

The last part of the immigration process known as the third generation is composed of children from these people who are stuck between two cultures. However, they openly declare their identity: Turks from Germany. This generation, apart from the ones that came to Germany later on, does not anymore have identity problems that the first generation confronted. They are Germans with Turkish origins. They belong to Germany and in general Europe with respect to language, culture and lifestyle. This is a generation that accepts that they have been alienated from the homeland of their parents, who go there simply for holiday, who believe that they are from Germany and who has a sub-culture in Germany. They feel foreigner in the homeland of their parents. Their problems are also different than other generations for sure; they more have problems regarding harmonization politics, xenophobia. As they do not completely belong to German society, they have established their own sub-cultures instead. The authors of this generation write exclusively in German.

### **The stages of migration literature**

After seeing the fifty-year period of migration from a historical perspective, it is necessary to look at the stages of migration literature which takes place simultaneously with this historical development. Until today, a large of classifications has been made and building on those classifications, many discussions were held and scientific researches have been also conducted (see Topçu 2009: 701-734). As it was mentioned earlier, the first thing that faced or lived our people in Germany is the concept of “others”. Facing a different community and other problems that they lived there, including the language as the main problem as well as religious, social, historical and cultural differences were topics which were traeted by means

of literature. In this context, the issues in regard to language and communication come into force. Furthermore, authors of the first generation, to be known as the first generation of authors, is a group of authors who went to Germany for various reasons and still write there. In the following there is a chronological order of the authors of the respective generation;

**The first generation of authors:** *Yüksel Pazarkaya, Bekir Yıldız, Fakir Baykurt, Güney Dal, Fethi Savaşçı, Aras Ören, Habib Bektaş, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, Murat Karaaslan, İsmet Elçi, Şinasi Dikmen* etc. Except for these authors there are authors who have migrated for political reasons. Such as: *Orhan Murat Arıburnu, Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı, Dursun Akçam, Oya Baydar, Aysel Özakin, Ali Arslan, Şakir Bilgin, Vehbi Bardakçı, Doğan Akhanlı, Sırrı Ayhan* gibi (Topçu 2009: 712). According to the classification Topçu's a group of authors were tasked with higher education or various fields in Germany. Such as: *Orhan Asena, Adnan Binyazar, Salih Sıtkı Gör, Ayhan Can, Haluk Eker, Ömer Polat, Kemal Kurt, Mevlüt Asar, Ertunç Baran, Alev Tekinay* etc. Within this group *Yüksel Pazarkaya* should hold a special place because he migrated before the migration process in 1957 to Germany.

**The second generation of authors:** *Renan Demirhan, Akif Piriñçi, Zehra Çırak, Metin Faktoğlu, Zafer Şenocak, Sivri Yücel, Nevfel Cumart, Leyla Taşdelen, Feridun Zaimoğlu, Tunç Denizer, Hatice Akyün, İmran Ayata, Aygen-Sibel Çelik, Nuray Lale, Menekşe Toprak, İlhan Atasoy, Menekşe Toprak, Yade Kara* et al. As a matter of fact, the authors of this generation can be considered as authors of kind of transitional period between two periods. Therefore, this group involves the majority of authors, defined as the first or third generation. The most important and distinctive property of this group is characterized by literary works that especially deal with the topics of the identity problem caused by sticking in between two cultures. In this context, this group includes all literary works focussing mainly on the topic of identity and culture conflict.

**The third generation of authors:** It can be said that the authors of this group are consisting of the young generation who emigrated at an early age there. They call themselves as the "European Turks". They are our people of Turkish origin who know the German language and culture very well and also feel closer to Germany. For that reason, subjects they dealing with are consequently current issues, such as integration issue, the situations of minority, foreigners and xenophobic. The following authors belong to this group: *Osman Engin, Django Asül (Uğur Bağışlayıcı), Kerim Pamuk, Selim Özdoğan, Melda Akbaş, Hatice Aksoy, İris Alanyalı, İmran Ayata, Esmehan Akyol, Güner Yasemin Balcı, Birand Bingül, Safiye Can, Bülent Ceylan, Seher Çakır, Fatih Çevikkollu, Bora Dağtekin, Tunç Denizer, Aysun Ertan, Cem Gülay, Kübra Gümüşay, Dilek Güngör, Lütfiye Güzel, Murat Ham, Güzin Kar, Berkan Karpat, Denis Moschitto, Hasan Özdemir, Filiz Penzkofer, Alpan Sağsöz, Şener Saltürk, Deniz Selek, Kaya Yanar* et al.

As a matter of fact, in all these definitions and classifications the third generation represents the largest group and the majority of them haven't become famous yet. Turkish-German films and other stage designs belonging to this field are alone a wide topic which are not be treated here. Within the framework of this study, exclusively authors and their literary works are mentioned.

### **Immigrant Literature as Course Subject**

In the previous chapter named immigrant literature as the subject of culture education, it was mentioned that this type of literature and works within this field were subject of literature courses and used as course material. Immigrant literature is considered as a single course at undergraduate programs on German in our country, or it could become a subject in any lecture about the twentieth century. For instance, in Trakya University, Faculty of Education, German Teaching program, this issue is partially mentioned in "German Literature

II” course for the second year; occasionally considered in “Literature Text Review and Teaching I-II” course; and the immigrant literature texts are used as course material in elective courses such as “novel review”, “short story review” or “poetry review”. In our masters program, immigrant literature is a course itself under the name “Turkish Authors in German Literature”. Also, there is another course named “Turkish-German Immigrant Literature” in the doctoral program. There are similar courses in other German Teaching and German Language and Literature programs like Trakya University; and it is observed that there are studies on immigrant literature in master and doctoral theses (Pls. refer to YOK Thesis Center). In departments such as Translation or German Translation and Interpreting, immigrant literature works are mentioned in terms of translation efficiency or translation criticism and texts on this area are evaluated accordingly. Besides, Turkish-German movies which are very popular recently (e.g. Fatih Akın movies) are also mentioned in several lectures.

Turkish-German immigrant literature mentioned within the courses at master programs about German is a subject evaluated as certain literature research area and it is seen that there are master and doctoral studies conducted on this subject (Asutay, 2014). Within this context, it can be said that immigrant literature is a vast area for young researchers and it provides many opportunities for research.

## **Conclusion**

As it can be seen, the concept of migration is a process that continues in different forms within different parts of the world, with the European geography taking the lead where the societies mix gradually. This concept has established its own areas of art and literature, contextualized its own statement and fictionalized with other means of art. Within the process of immigration, this subject was also mentioned as a part of child and youth training and had its place within the programs as an education subject. It can be said that it has become the main subject and tool within the context of culture education in order to serve the inter-communal communication. Immigrant literature especially in Turkish-German culture has produced pieces of work in art, literature and science as a common subject of both cultures and is still producing (Şen 2011). In 2011, fiftieth year of migration to Germany, the migration process and the cultural richness it created within the context of Turkish-German relations has been compiled as historical documents, activities and meetings. This fifty year long richness naturally appears as a subject of cultural education and provides us vast opportunities of research and review, materials and course subjects in the area of Turkish-German immigrant literature.

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