The field of Turkish-German Studies has grown significantly in recent years. Scholars working in a variety of disciplines have influenced and invigorated the field: Leslie Adelson, Daniela Berghahn, Tom Cheesman, Rita Chin, Deniz Göktürk, Randall Halle, Kader Konuk, Ruth Mandel, B. Venkat Mani, Azade Seyhan, Karin Yeşilada, and Yasemin Yildiz, to name a few.1 The central concerns of contemporary Turkish-German Studies have revolved around intersections of nation, citizenship, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and religion.

Yet while much important work has been conducted to investigate «the cultural effects of migration» and to examine «reconfigurations of the German national archive,» with this special issue we would like to shift the focus in our field to also examine the implications for the Turkish archive (Adelson 7, 12). At the same time, we conceive of this special issue as a forum for examining the significance of Turkish contexts – cultural, political, historical, and social – in regard to our research questions, and for identifying existing blind spots and possible directions for the future.

In the past two decades critics have productively explored the significance of the Turkish-German subject within German public political and memory discourse, focusing on representations of the Holocaust, the Cold War, 1968, and reunification. More recent publications, however, have pursued new investigative directions by expanding both the traditional geographical focus and temporal scope of earlier studies: Kader Konuk’s exploration of the impact of German-Jewish exiles on modern Turkey; Randall Halle’s work on film production guidelines and practices in a Turkish and European context; Yasemin Yildiz’s in-depth engagement with the Turkish historical context during the 1960s and 1970s in her analysis of translational practices; as well as Deniz Göktürk’s work in film studies with her emphases on institutional frameworks, tactical role-pay and humor, and digital spectatorship.2 Two publications in particular promote, address, and circulate interdisciplinary conversation, exchange, and research within Turkish-German Studies. First, Sabine Hake and Barbara Mennel’s edited volume Turkish German Cinema: Sites, Sounds, and Screens in the New Millennium (2012), which grew out of a
workshop on Turkish-German cinema held at the University of Texas at Austin in 2010. Comprised of fifteen essays that foreground transnational Turkish-German visual culture and discuss topics such as institutional practices, sound, installation art and television, and actors, this book indeed presents a novelty by «offer[ing] an overview of contemporary practices and debates associated with Turkish German cinema, […] outlin[ing] the shifts in aesthetic and critical sensibilities since the 1970s, and […] introduc[ing] intertextual, contextual, institutional and transnational perspectives» (15). The second publication, equally unique in its focus on (multi-author) Turkish-German Studies scholarship, is the transnational yearbook Türkisch-deutsche Studien edited by Şeyda Ozil (Istanbul University), Michael Hofmann (University of Paderborn), and Yasemin Dayioğlu-Yücel (University of Pennsylvania). Published annually since 2010 it provides a platform for interdisciplinary networking in order to «neue Synergien zu entdecken und Synthesen zu wagen und somit die wissenschaftliche Beschäftigung mit türkisch-deutschen Themen anzuregen» (Ozil et al.). Inspired by these groundbreaking publications in the field of Turkish-German Studies – publications that provide a platform for interdisciplinary, transatlantic scholarly exchange and dialogue – we see this special issue as the most recent manifestation of these collaborative efforts. In line with current scholarship, we hope that this issue will offer new insights into the most recent Turkish-German entanglements, encounters, and exchanges by expanding geographical, temporal, and methodological frameworks that have thus far eluded German Studies.

The special issue resulted from a series of panels titled «Transnational Hi/Stories: Turkish-German Texts and Contexts» and presented at the 2013 conference of the German Studies Association in Denver, Colorado. The decision to put together this panel series arose from an unexpectedly high number of submissions that offered new approaches, methodological frameworks, comparative analyses, and considerations of underexamined historical and cultural contexts and archives. In various conversations during the conference, panel participants and attendees alike expressed and emphasized the need for a forum to engage in conversations about current scholarship, possible (interdisciplinary and transatlantic) collaborations, and future projects. We perceive of this special issue as the first result of these conversations and as a timely response to the need for a platform of scholarly exchange, debate, and discussion regarding the past, present, and future of Turkish-German Studies, and its objects of inquiry.

The introduction to this volume stands in a dialogical relationship with the first essay by David Gramling. Both pieces taken together are intended to provide a stimulus for future conversation, for which a look at past and pres-
ent scholarly practices is essential. Gramling thus explores a cross section of recent debates and discourses within Turkish-German Studies on both sides of the Atlantic. At the same time he examines Turkish (and Ottoman) literary, historical, and linguistic texts which resist classification into a single national archive, foregrounding their significance for Turkish, German, and Turkish-German Studies.

While Zafer Şenocak’s œuvre overall has received much scholarly attention, Elke Segelke directs her inquiry at his less-considered novel *Deutsche Schule* (2012), first published in Turkish in 2007. Through a historically contextualized close reading Segelke offers new insights into Şenocak’s representation of links between German and Turkish histories.

With Maha El-Hissy’s contribution on Yade Kara’s *Cafe Cyprus* (2008) we encounter a new contextual framework: the Cyprus question, as it is woven into «Kaffeehauskultur,» which evokes longstanding coffee house traditions in both East and West.

Mert Bahadir Reisoğlu investigates overlaps and differences in literary debates surrounding 1968 in both Turkish and German contexts, and their significance for Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s *Die Brücke vom Goldenen Horn* (1998). His reading highlights the interaction of both archives in Özdamar’s text and their transformation in the process.

While music – with the exception of rap and, more recently, soundtracks – has received little attention as object of inquiry in Turkish-German Studies, Ela Gezen shifts our attention to the Turkish music collective *Bandista* by examining their appropriation of various traditions of Marxist protest from the German context.

The final piece by Berna Gueneli investigates the creation of a transnational film history within the work of Fatih Akin. Taking *The Edge of Heaven* (2007) as a case study, Gueneli discusses the casting choices and the soundtrack to highlight the cinematic intertextualities (Yeşilçam, Young Turkish and New Turkish Cinema) that ground Akin’s work.

Our vision for the future of Turkish-German Studies is based on other collaborative models in the field of German Studies such as Film Studies and Black German Studies. Since 2001, scholars of DEFA film have been convening biannually for the *East German Film Summer Institute* at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, organized by the DEFA film library and consisting of workshops, screenings, and readings. Similarly, the University of Michigan has been hosting the biannual *German Film Institute* since 2004, featuring screenings and a weeklong seminar on a given topic. Finally, the *Black German Heritage and Research Association* (BGHRA) has hosted its annual convention since 2009 showcasing scholarly, artistic,
and autobiographical presentations. While Turkish-German scholarship is regularly represented at various international, national, and regional conferences, workshops, and symposia, we hope that based on current conversations, recent developments, and upcoming collaborations – including this special issue – we will be able to lay the foundation for a multi-media and multi-format platform similar to those mentioned above; a venue that will further motivate and facilitate interdisciplinary and transnational exchange and collaboration between scholars working on Turkish-German texts and contexts.

Notes

As guest editors of this special issue we would like to thank all contributors for their engaging essays, as well as the co-editors of *Colloquia Germanica*, Harald Höbusch and Linda Worley, for their interest in and commitment to providing a forum for publication.


3 A few examples include: the conference *Goodbye Germany? Migration, Culture and the Nation State* at the University of California, Berkeley (2004), the conference *Interzone EU: Crossroads of Migration* at the University of Pittsburgh (2008), the symposium *Eenementalisierung von Kultur: Fatih Akins Film Auf der anderen Seite als transkulturelle Narration* at the University of Konstanz (2008), the Graduiertenkolloquium *Interkulturelle Konstellationen im deutsch-türkischen Kontext* at the University of Paderborn (2009), the conference *Türkisch-Deutscher Kulturkontakt und Kulturtransfer: Kontroversen und Lernprozesse* at Istanbul University (2010), the workshop *Rethinking German-Turkish Cinema* at the University of Texas at Austin (2010), the *Transnational German Studies Workshop* at the University of Michigan, University of Warwick, and Humboldt University (2012 and 2013), the conference *Mobilizing Difference: Gender, Islam, and the Production of Contemporary Europeanness* at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2013), the *German Literature Transnational* conference at NYU (2014), the symposium *Transnational Encounters and Interdisciplinary Dialogues* at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (2014), and the *Intersections: Cross-Cultural Theater in Germany and the US* conference at the University of Pennsylvania (2014).

Works Cited


Introduction


