# Escaping the Hamster Wheel: Creative Remembrance in Traveling Archives

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How can one find meaning in the scattered fragments that remain from a life? For me, this question arose full force when I was asked to contribute a short piece of writing on my mother Angela Göktürk to a volume honoring her life and work, initiated and published in Turkey by her former colleagues at Trakya University in Edirne. Leafing through handwritten notebooks, loose pages, letters, photographs—some arranged in albums, many more jumbled in boxes of various sizes at multiple locations—I felt overwhelmed by the task of integrating these disparate pieces into a coherent text. The sense of fragmentation and dispersal painfully highlighted the limits of full comprehension, even with respect to a person whom I had known closely for my entire life. At the same time, going through old papers can also be a creative pursuit that holds a captivating thrill: reviving memories, illuminating connections, and enabling new discoveries. As long as words written on pages open up into imagined conversations, those who have passed continue to be present by our side. The following essay weaves together findings from personal and public archives– both the Turkish-infused archives of contemporary Germany, and the German-infused archives in the Turkey of my childhood–to suggest possibilities of creative engagement transcending borders and nativism.

Fig. 1 Pia Angela Lorenzi (1927-2020)

# I.

What can we find in past writings of border-crossing travelers in our age of incessant rush? Might it be possible to recover seeds for a different future on old pages? Personal fragments from everyday life rarely make it into institutionalized official archives for lack of funding to preserve such artifacts in organized collections housed in well-tempered buildings. The archive is the place where the invisible flow of time clots and becomes tangible. As one searches through materials aiming to tell a comprehensive story, the likelihood of stumbling over unexpected finds is high. To the attentive reader, such discoveries enable forays into slumbering possibilities that beg to be realized. Missives from the past can suspend the logic of linear progress and suggest that presumed novelties in the present are merely repetitions with variations.

Meanwhile, no archive, whether public or private, is ever complete or fully exhaustible. Researchers are bound to notice missing pieces, gaps in documentation, which have to be filled by imagination, creative combination, and further research. People with authority who seek to legitimize their power, pedantic archivists who just follow regulations, or activists who assemble counter-archives designed to call into question official accounts of history, determine according to their interests, which pieces from the past they deem worthy of preservation for the future. Yet often mere chance valorizes some pieces as documents and shields them from being obliterated. This process of selection for preservation or elimination pertains especially to the traveling archives of cross-border wanderers, migrants, and exiles. With only the papers in their luggage, and so much left behind or lost along the way, libraries had to be rebuilt and put back in order. Letters, which used to be written back and forth to report about life events and everyday occurrences, are nowadays replaced by emails, text messages, and real-time video. The traveling documents of such lives in transit are scattered and ephemeral. The context of knowledge that would render these lives readable is not gathered in one place or easily retraceable. Memories that cannot be contained within one country or language often fall by the wayside in narratives of national consolidation.

The absence of institutionalized archives of migration has motivated private and academic collectors to gather published and unpublished materials. They have filled folders, boxes, and filing cabinets with clippings from newspapers, books, magazines, out-of-print fliers, handwritten letters and diaries, VHS tapes, and DVDs. As storage media kept changing, folders have moved to computers, holding digital files. The Documentation Center and Museum of Migration in Germany (DOMiD), founded in 1990, grew out of such private assortments and has fought decades-long for a permanent home for its growing collection, now under construction as the House of Immigration Society (Haus der Einwanderungsgesellschaft) in Cologne: note the emphasis on *Ein*wanderung (*im*migration), on arrival and settlement within the boundaries of the receiving nation. In 2005, *Projekt Migration*, a large collaborative exhibition staged across multiple locations in Cologne, drew on DOMiD's collection as well as various archives of scholarly work and artistic practice. I was invited to curate one of the film programs for this exhibition, which gave me a chance to see the creative installation from the archives of migration. Further west, across oceans and continents, in the Department of German at the University of California, Berkeley, another hub of collection has been in the making. Since 2001 in the context of the Multicultural Germany Project, in collaboration with a changing cast of

motivated colleagues and students, I have been promoting a comparative and critical perspective on literary and cinematic interventions that complicate scenarios of rigid identification. The documented history in our collection *Germany in Transit: Nation and Migration* (2007, co-edited with Anton Kaes and David Gramling) resulted from this collaborative collection effort to familiarize an English readership with official and unofficial voices in debates on territory, identity, and rights that have shaped Germany's reluctant realization of being a nation of immigrants. The German originals of these documents were repatriated to Germany with new additions in an expanded collection as *Transit Deutschland: Debatten zu Nation und Migration* (2011). Much of my work around these projects has been devoted to translation between languages and cultures. As media formats and geopolitical configurations kept changing, we have traced how nation-states have adjusted their framing of migration, citizenship, and participation.

The year 2011 saw commemorations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of migration from Turkey to Germany. The most memorable of these festivals was *Almancı! 50 Jahre Scheinehe*. Staged by the Ballhaus Naunynstraße in Berlin-Kreuzberg, this festival ironically framed half a century of Turkish-German interactions as a "sham marriage," a union based on mutual convenience rather than love. The team of organizers offered a spirited intervention in public debates concerned with integration (or disintegration) by focusing on missed opportunities, forgotten interventions, and wry moments of Turkish German interaction. The two-month-long festival presented an impressive spread from the archives in a spirit of reconnecting with voices from the past to energize a pluralistic vision for the future. Still under Shermin Langhoff's artistic direction at that time, the Ballhaus Naunynstraße showed a retrospective of Turkish German theater productions dubbed "post-migrant theater," including Nurkan Erpulat's successful play of immigrant youth reading Schiller at gunpoint, *Verrücktes Blut* (Crazy Blood, based on the Turkish word *delikanlı*). The curator of the film program "Gegen die Leinwände" (Against the Screens), Tuncay Kulaoğlu, had harvested many of the films, mostly in VHS format, from a Neukölln video store that was closing down. "Gegen die Leinwände" featured a comprehensive selection of cinematic work along the Turkey-Germany axis, including productions made in Turkey such as Türkan Şoray's powerful melodrama *Dönüş/Return* (1972) and the popular comedies of Kemal Sunal *Gurbetçi Şaban* (1985) and *Polizei* (1988). The festival also staged a number of community events, celebrating among others the author Aras Ören, who has featured the city of Berlin in many of his books since the 1970s. As the first recipient of the Adelbert von Chamisso Prize in 1985, Aras Ören said in his acceptance speech: "Europa ist die Reflexion meines Gesichtes, und umgekehrt: Ich bin die Reflexion des Gesichtes von Europa. Meine Sprachlosigkeit ist auch die seine." [Europe is the reflection of my face, and in return: I am the reflection of Europe's face. My speechlessness is also that of Europe's.] (*Transit Deutschland*, p. 580). Ören collaborated with the television director Friedrich Zimmermann on cinematic renderings of his poems in *Frau Kutzer und andere Bewohner der Naunynstraße* (1973) and *Kazım Akkaya und die Bewohner der Naunynstraße* (1975). Rather than restating an opposition between foreign and native, those cinematic poems and poetic films imagined migrants and locals in conversation, illuminating entangled histories with a sense of transethnic solidarity. Experiences of migrants thus appeared not as an abnormality at the margins, but right at the center of societies in transformation. Rediscovering such interventions in 2011, the

festival *Almancı! 50 Jahre Scheinehe* creatively took stock of the transient archives of migration. Making this archive more broadly accessible is a task that still lies ahead.

In the context of *Almancı! 50 Jahre Scheinehe*, I met the writer Deniz Utlu who had organized a series of literary events titled "Vibrationshintergrund" within the scope of the festival. In his essay "Das Archiv der Migration," a reflection growing out of this collective work of taking stock, organizing, and curating, he emphasized the need for an archive to develop a sense of continuity and conversation with previous generations:

> "wer kein Archiv hat, muss das Rad immer wieder neu erfinden. Und vielleicht entpuppt sich dieses Rad am Ende auch noch als Hamsterrad." [those who have no archive have to keep reinventing the wheel. And perhaps in the end, this wheel turns out to be a hamster wheel.] ["Das Archiv der Migration"]

The image of the hamster wheel is reminiscent of a scene in Aras Ören and Fritz Zimmermann's film, *Frau Kutzer und andere Bewohner der Naunynstrasse*. One of the characters from Ören's poem, Sabri, who has just been diagnosed with tuberculosis and is aimlessly wandering through the streets of Kreuzberg, stops in front of a pet shop window and watches white mice running in a wheel, pondering their similarity to the blindfolded horse [*dolap beygiri*] that walked around in circles to pull water from a well in his village back home. With a long take of the white mice running in the wheel, the film follows the character's imagination in visualizing the circular routine of working people's lives. A montage sequence connects the scene with a lung examination at a doctor's office, the language of public health on tuberculosis, and a reenactment of the Lumière Brothers 1895 film *Workers Leaving the Factory*, highlighting the double meaning of consumption 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. This mind-numbing cycle offers no escape from compulsive repetition. In this cycle of repetition, remembering and forgetting can turn into a perpetual hamster wheel.

The attempt to escape the hamster wheel through memory work drives Utlu's essay and other recent publications such as Fatma Aydemir's "Arbeit" (from *Eure Heimat ist unser Albtraum*) with her reference to Semra Ertan[1] and shows that Turkish German literature has been coming of age and is now looking back to realize the circular repetition in migrant experiences. Aydemir opens her successful novel *Dschinns*, published by Hanser Verlag in 2022 and nominated on the longlist for Deutscher Buchpreis (German Book Prize), with the return migration of Hüseyin, a guestworker of the first generation: his arrival in the Zeytinburnu district of Istanbul, in an apartment that he has bought for his family after thirty years of hard work in Germany. His unexpected death, before he can begin to enjoy his new home, assembles the family and results in revelations of long-hidden secrets. In her presentation of this family story, Aydemir masterfully animates in lively narration the archives of migration through references to popular music that range from İbrahim Tatlıses and Bülent Ersoy to Kurt Cobain and Lauryn Hill. Popular culture has always been an international assemblage, irreducible to national labels.

[1] See Doughan, Sultan. "Memory Meetings: Semra Ertan's Ausländer and the Practice of the Migrant Archive." *TRANSIT Journal*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2022.

The transcontinental Zoom conversations in our series "Archives of Migration. The Power of Fiction in Times of Fake News," which were enabled by the shift to real-time video communication during the pandemic and organized by Elisabeth Krimmer and myself, have highlighted the important role of fiction in creatively animating fragments from the past in translingual environments. Deniz Utlu, recipient of the Alfred Döblin Preis 2021, has continued to reflect on archives in literary contexts and new formats, for example by curating "Unterhaltungen deutscher Eingewanderten," available online on Dichterlesen.net. The correspondence of the title with Goethe's "Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten" and the prominent sponsors Literarisches Colloquium Berlin, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Literaturhaus Basel, Literaturhaus Stuttgart, Stiftung Lyrik Kabinett München and the internationales literaturfestival berlin signal that literature written by translingual writers is not a marginal phenomenon but has long arrived at the center of cultural production and reception.

The term "postmigrant society," coined by the transethnic group Kanak Attak, popularized in the theater by Shermin Langhoff and in the social sciences by Naika Foroutan and Regina Römhild, highlights "belonging" of those who did not themselves experience migration but are nonetheless racialized based on appearance, language, accent, or name, and repeatedly addressed as strangers with questions such as "where are you really from?" or "when will you go back?". However, the term "postmigrant" still operates within the logic of integration into the framework of the nation state with a focus on "arrival," "settling," "integration" or "discrimination." What about the more comprehensive pictures that would include the driving forces for departure, onward journeys, and impossible returns? Where are the records of those movements that do not fit neatly into stories of *im*migration? Interestingly, recent novels by Utlu (*Die Ungehaltenen*), Aydemir (*Ellbogen*, *Dschinns*) as well as films by Fatih Akın (*Gegen die Wand*, *Auf der anderen Seite*) and others tackle scenarios of alienation in returning to Turkey,[2] calling into question unilinear narratives of migration. In diversifying societies, such narratives are important to avoid facile self-positionings as victims along common polarizations of native vs. foreign, which often lead to resentment, a sense of entitlement, and a loss of ability to think outside one's own box.

Resistance against facile categorizations has been a central concern throughout Zafer Şenocak's fictional and non-fictional work. In his collection of semi-autobiographical essays, *Das Fremde, das in jedem wohnt: Wie Unterschiede unsere Gesellschaft zusammenhalten*, published in 2018, Şenocak writes about handwritten letters left behind by his mother who moved from Turkey to Germany in the 1960s as a young teacher and settled in Munich. He asks in which archive such writings that transcend the boundaries of national languages might be preserved: "Wer wird sich um die Briefe meiner Eltern kümmern? Sie sind hier, wo ich aufgewachsen bin, fehl am Platz. Es sind Briefe in fremden Sprachen, jene in arabischer Schrift nicht einmal für mich gut lesbar. In der Türkei allerdings bleiben diese Briefe ebenfalls unleserlich und daher auch ungelesen. 'Archiv' ist dort ein Fremdwort*"* (192). [Who will tend to the letters of my parents? They are out of place here, where I grew up. These are letters in foreign languages, those written in Arabic script not even easy to read for me. In Turkey, however, these letters remain unreadable and unread as well. Archive is a foreign word there.] While Şenocak points to the absence

[2] See Cho-Polizzi, Jon. "'Almanya: A [Different] Future is Possible.' Defying Narratives of Return in Fatma Aydemir's *Ellbogen.*" *TRANSIT Journal,* vol. 13, no. 2, 2022.

of a multilingual archive devoted to documenting migration to Germany, he also highlights the absence of such an archive in Turkey. In the same book, he includes a reflection on hearing the sound of church bells in Istanbul, alluding to the obliteration of the Christian population, once in the majority in this city, now largely dispersed in the diaspora. Narratives of national cohesion do not dwell on documents by the departed.

Fig. 2 Akşit and Angela Göktürk in 1962

# II.

In tracing the endangered spirit of pluralism, I would like to suggest reaching back further in time, to earlier moments of traffic along the Turkish-German axis, which was drawn even before the labor recruitment treaty of 1961. Thinking about the lives of my mother and father, reading what they wrote, I see a world where native and foreign do not stand as incompatible antinomies. I grew up primarily in Istanbul, except for some intervals in my mother's hometown of Konstanz. German was my mother tongue and Turkish my father tongue. My parents ignited in me the desire to read early on. Being the first in their families to aspire to higher education, both of them had to fight to continue their studies. For that reason, both of them highly valued reading and motivated everyone around them to learn. Our small apartment never wanted for books. On some Sundays, we would go to the old book sellers in Beyazıt, back then a serene place right next to Beyazıt mosque, the Old Bazaar, and Istanbul University. We would stop by the bookstore of the philosopher Arslan Kaynardağ. Beautiful old books published in many languages were spread on the floor and offered for sale at cheap prices. I remember acquiring an old volume of the *Rübezahl* folk tales, which I devoured in bed during a feverish illness, thus teaching myself to read *fraktur*.

After book shopping, we would drink a glass of tea under the large plane tree and talk about books and libraries who had lost their owners. My father and I once went on a book saving adventure. There had been a fire in a store for spare auto parts in Tarlabaşı near Taksim Square, and books in great numbers had been found in the back of the dark store. Neighboring shop owners called my father, assuming that he would understand what these books were about. So we went to take a look and found a tremendous library with shelves full of classics of English literature in complete editions, some volumes damaged by the fire. We rescued the books from being sent to the paper mill, and packed them in countless boxes which we carried to our home in Cihangir. My mother inquired where we were planning to put all these books. Shelf space was indeed scarce, but none of us had the heart to throw these rescued treasures away. Meanwhile, we began to imagine the life of this dealer of spare auto parts whom we had never met. He seemed to have created a world for himself among his books. We wondered if he felt lonely surrounded by other shopkeepers who must have regarded him as a strange fellow. In our fabulations, we turned him into a potential character in a novel.

The creative mind and literary imagination that drove our discovery and rescue of books in the most unexpected places in Istanbul was not fueled by reading alone but by experiences in places where books were a scarce good. My father Akşit Göktürk (1934-1988) graduated from high school in Van in the far East of Anatolia, and came to İstanbul to attend university. Staying in crowded dormitories and living frugally on limited funds, he educated himself, graduated from the department for the philology of English, where he was later hired as an assistant professor and eventually, after many years of hard work, promoted to full professor. He was the only faculty member in that department who had not been educated at one of the English-language private schools in Istanbul. His research stays at the newly founded Konstanz University and participation in the interdisciplinary group working on reception aesthetics around Wolfgang Iser and other scholars became formative for his thinking about the pursuit of reading. He left this world far too early, but the books he published on imaginary islands, on the act of reading, and on translation theory, introducing foundational concepts of literary criticism to a Turkish readership, and

his Turkish translations of classics by Francis Bacon, T.S. Eliot, D.H. Lawrence, and other authors continue to be published and read to this day.[3] His award-winning translation of Daniel Defoe's complete *Robinson Crusoe* was typed on a manual typewriter at our round and somewhat shaky dinner table. In that era before our household had a phone, television, computer or washing machine, when letters were written by hand and books typed manually, when exam questions were duplicated from stenciling paper, my parents were able to do so much with so little. Their process of writing seems so distant from our world of cluttered tabs and fidgety thoughts.

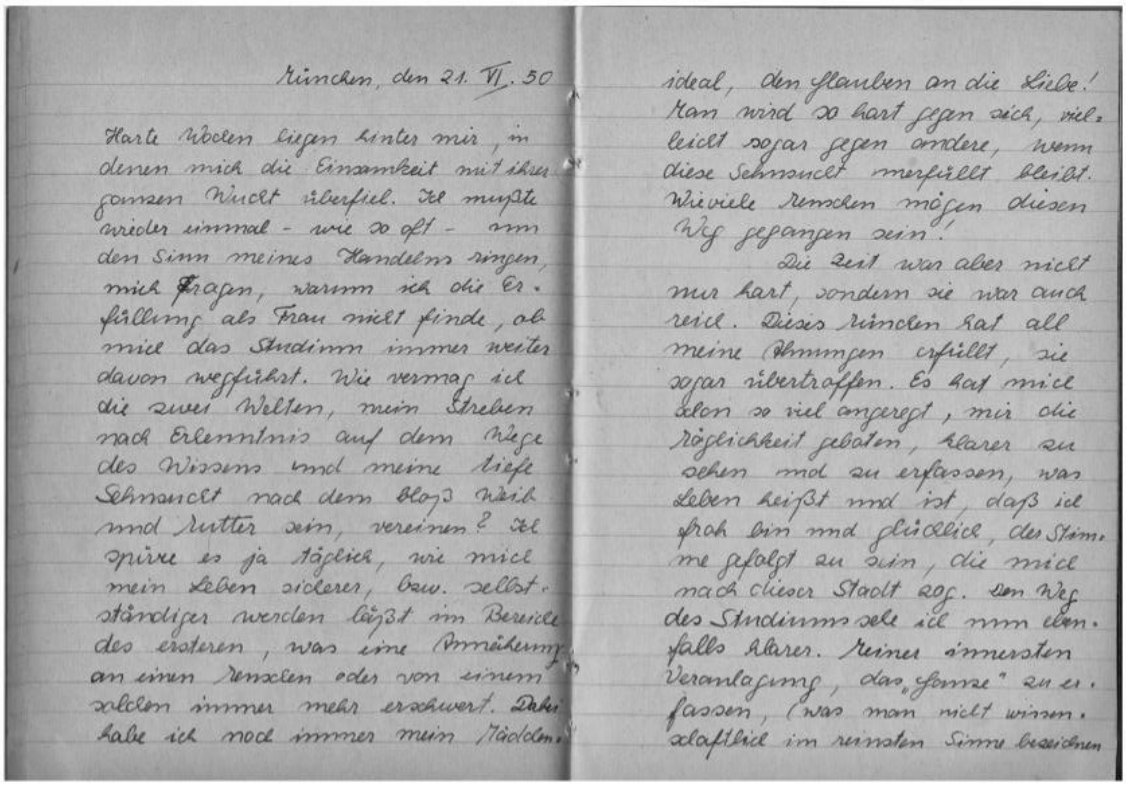
My mother grew up in southern Germany right next to the Swiss border, which was closed during the Second World War. Her parents were both immigrants to this region: her mother hailed from Vienna, her father from Tirol where both German and Italian were spoken. She demonstrated her strong will by putting herself through high school against the wishes of her father, who thought that commercial school was more appropriate for girls as preparation for secretarial work. In an occupied Germany, in the ruins of the Second World War, where food was rationed, it was by no means considered ordinary for a woman to aim for university education. She left her hometown of Konstanz by the lake, crossing the Black Forest to Freiburg. She used to tell us of a gruesome student job: upon arrival, the newly matriculated were dispatched to tile the anatomy building; seeing the corpses in brine gave them nightmares. The young Pia Angela Lorenzi (1927-2020) started her learning adventure under humble conditions, boarding in rented rooms, later continuing in Munich and Heidelberg, with study abroad intervals in London and Paris. During semester breaks, she worked various jobs as a nanny, secretary, or bank clerk to make enough money to be able to continue her education. In a system of higher education which left it largely to the initiative of each student to determine their path, she struggled at times, doubting her decision to study at university. After three semesters in Freiburg, she transferred to Munich and reckoned in her diary on 21 June 1950:

> *Harte Wochen liegen hinter mir, in denen mich die Einsamkeit mit ihrer ganzen Wucht überfiel. Ich mußte wieder einmal – wie so oft – um den Sinn meines Handelns ringen, mich fragen, warum ich die Erfüllung als Frau nicht finde, ob mich das Studium immer weiter davon wegführt. […] Die Zeit war aber nicht nur hart, sondern sie war auch reich. Dieses München hat all meine Ahnungen erfüllt, sie sogar übertroffen. Es hat mich schon soviel angeregt, mir die Möglichkeit geboten, klarer zu sehen und zu erfassen, was Leben heißt und ist, daß ich froh bin, der Stimme gefolgt zu sein, die mich nach dieser Stadt zog. Den Weg des Studiums sehe ich nun ebenfalls klarer. Meiner innersten Veranlagung, das ‚Ganze' zu erfassen (was man nicht wissenschaftlich im reinsten Sinne bezeichnen kann, da ein Wissenschaftler sich spezialisieren muß) entspricht das Studium der Geschichte am ehesten, da man in dasselbe alles einbauen kann. Staatswissenschaft, Soziologie und Psychologie interessieren mich, weil sie den Menschen betreffen, die Materie also wieder Leben ist, wie in der Geschichte. So betreibe ich das Studium mehr (oder nur?) um des Erkennens des stets sich wandelnden, immer wieder sich neu gestaltenden Lebens als um der reinen Wissenschaft willen. Ich könnte wohl den*

[3] A short biography can be viewed here: https://www.yapikrediyayinlari.com.tr/yazarlar/aksit-gokturk-2

*Ausspruch Burckhardts auf mich beziehen: „Dem Dilettanten aber, weil er die Dinge liebt, wird es vielleicht im Laufe seines Lebens möglich werden, sich auch noch an verschiedenen Stellen wahrhaft zu vertiefen!“*

*Loneliness hit me full force during the hard weeks that lie behind me. I had to wrestle once again – as I have many times before – with doubts regarding the meaning of my actions: asking myself why I cannot find fulfillment as a woman, wondering whether my studies are leading me further and further away from that. […] But this time has not only been hard, it has also been rich. This Munich has met all my expectations, even surpassed them. It has already stimulated me so much, given me the opportunity to see more clearly and grasp what life could mean and be, that I am glad to have followed the voice that drew me to this city. I also see my path of study clearer in front of me now. My innermost drive to grasp “the whole” (a desire which cannot be deemed scientific in the purest sense, since a scientist must specialize) corresponds closest to the study of history, since all things can be made to fit with that. State science, sociology, and psychology are of interest to me, because they are concerned with the human, their matter is once again life, just like in history. So I pursue my studies mostly (or only?) in order to understand this constantly changing, ever-newly-configuring life rather than for the sake of pure science. I can see myself in Burckhardt’s saying: “The dilettante may, because of his love for things, in the course of his life find possibilities of truly going into depth at various points!”*



München, den 21. VI. 50

Harte Wochen liegen hinter mir, in denen mich die Einsamkeit mit ihrer ganzen Wucht überfiel. Ich mußte wieder einmal - wie so oft - um den Sinn meines Handelns ringen, mich fragen, warum ich die Erfüllung als Frau nicht finde, ob mich das Studium immer weiter davon wegführt. Wie vermag ich die zwei Welten, mein Streben nach Erkenntnis auf dem Wege des Wissens und meine tiefe Sehnsucht nach dem Glück Weib und Mutter sein, vereinen? Ich spüre es ja täglich, wie mich mein Leben sicherer, bzw. selbstständiger werden läßt im Bereiche des ersteren, was eine Annäherung an einen Menschen oder von einem solchen immer mehr erschwert. Dabei habe ich noch immer mein Ideal, den Glauben an die Liebe! Man wird so hart gegen sich, vielleicht sogar gegen andere, wenn diese Sehnsucht verfällt bleibt. Wieviele Menschen mögen diesen Weg gegangen sein!

Die Zeit war aber nicht nur hart, sondern sie war auch reich. Dieses München hat all meine Hoffnungen erfüllt, sie sogar übertroffen. Es hat mich schon so viel angeregt, mir die Möglichkeit geboten, klarer zu sehen und zu erfassen, was Leben heißt und ist, daß ich froh bin und glücklich, der Stimme gefolgt zu sein, die mich nach dieser Stadt zog. Den Weg des Studiums sehe ich nun ebenfalls klarer. Meiner innersten Veranlagung, das „Ganze“ zu erfassen, (was man nicht wissenschaftlich im reinsten Sinne bezeichnen

Fig. 3 Pia Angela Lorenzi’s diary entry on May 21, 1950.

The quote from Jakob Burckhardt's *Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen,* a book published in 1905, exploring the links between state, religion and culture, encapsulates an important facet of my mother's worldview. As a woman in academia in the 1940s and 1950s, she did not see herself as an academic who was pursuing her studies with a narrow specialization only to secure a career and well-paying job. It was curiosity and a hunger for learning that motivated her to keep her horizon wide. For those who have been written out of dominant epistemologies—such as women and representatives of minorities and racialized groups—the quest for the totality of knowledge, in which they cannot find themselves fully represented, is not uncommon: they seek to grasp the big picture in order to re-assemble pieces of their own identity. At a time when women were not granted the same respectability and status as men in the academy, the young Pia Angela Lorenzi saw herself first and foremost as a human being and was not ashamed to call herself a "dilettante" in Burckhardt's sense. These qualities come to mind when I think about my mother: her reluctance to content herself with commonplace solutions, her self-questioning, her indefatigable curiosity to learn new things, her empathy for others, irrespective of social status, her zest for sharing, and a deep joy of life in the face of all adversities. Among her papers, I found an essay that she had written in typescript "Die Intellektuellen in Europa und in der Türkei," published for the first time posthumously in the volume that honors her. (Reference) This analysis on the role of intellectuals in Europe and Turkey feeds not merely on abstract theory, but on her personal quest for individual free thought.

After having studied literature, history, psychology, and economics, my mother decided to focus on *Staatswissenschaft* (state science), what would today be called sociology. With a dissertation titled *Die ökonomische Geschichtsauffassung und Justus Möser: Eine soziologische Studie* [The economic concept of history and Justus Möser. A sociological study] she graduated in 1958 from Heidelberg University. Heidelberg was a world-renowned center for *Kultursoziologie* in the vein of Alfred Weber (1868-1958) back then, which attracted many international students. The Turkish philosopher Bedia Akarsu (1921-2016), later a professor at Istanbul University, also studied there with Alfred Weber in those years. Pia Angela Lorenzi became friends with students from Turkey and Iran, and started to learn Persian. Her dissertation adviser Alexander Rüstow (1885-1963), had served in the Ministry for Economic Affairs in the Weimar Republic. As an emigré from Nazi Germany, he came to the University of Istanbul where he worked as a professor from 1933 to 1949, while writing his three-volume *Ortsbestimmung der Gegenwart: Eine universalgeschichtliche Kulturkritik.* As one of the founders of social market economy, he critiqued narrow-minded, inward looking nationalism's turn to fascism, while promoting a model of liberalism built on the conviction that the free market had to be regulated by the state. This quest for a bigger picture, always aware of economic constraints and institutional organization in the formation of societies, shaped my mother's worldview.

Among those who came to Turkey as refugees were prominent names such as the architect Bruno Taut, the composer Paul Hindemith, the politician Ernst Reuter, who later became mayor of Berlin, the legal scholar Ernst Hirsch, the philologist of Romanic literature Erich Auerbach, and the founder of the department of pathology at Istanbul University Philipp Schwartz, who helped many academics escape Nazi persecution through his Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland. These émigrés had significant input in the foundation of modern research universities in Ankara and Istanbul. At Istanbul University, established in 1933 in its modern structure, they created

departments and provided direction for research. While many of them moved back to Germany or to the United States after the War, their influence lasted, and some were still living in Istanbul when my mother moved there in the late 1950s. Fritz Neumark wrote about these exiles in his book *Zuflucht am Bosporus* (1980). In 2000, the Akademie der Künste Berlin documented their lives in the exhibition *Haymatloz: Exil in der Türkei 1933-1945*, capturing the migration of the German word "heimatlos" into the Turkish language, long before Emily Apter's discovery of the conception of comparative literature with Auerbach in Istanbul. More recently, Eren Önsöz featured descendants of five emigrant families in her documentary film *Haymatloz* (2015) produced in Germany, investigating their legacy in present day Turkey.

In Turkey, very few research publications have been devoted to traces of these exiles in the higher education system. In a climate of rising inward-looking nationalism and neo-Ottomanism, where history is being rewritten and the logo of İstanbul University has back-dated its founding year to 1453, when Fatih Sultan Mehmet conquered Constantinople and founded a religious school, the contributions of Turkey's foreign scholars seem to have faded into oblivion. The Turkish German University that started to admit students in 2013, could have created an archive and research center devoted to investigating Turkish academy's connections to German traditions, but it has not shown any interest in such a pursuit.

Pia Angela Lorenzi's arrival in Turkey makes sense against this backdrop. When she came to Istanbul in 1958 on a research grant, she was moving within a circuit of knowledge that was already in place. She set out to research social, economic, and legal histories of Middle Eastern countries, traveled on her own to Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan with fellowships from UNESCO, and visited Iraq and Iran in 1961, as she was doing research for the Arnold-Bergsträsser-Institut in Freiburg. Her main interests were social and governmental structures, societal transformations, and education. Her journeys on board the mailboat from Istanbul along the Adriatic and Mediterranean coast remained a vivid memory for her. She took one of these trips in 1959 onboard the Iskenderun, a steamer departing from Istanbul that traveled ten days outbound to Mersin and ten days return. This journey inspired her to draw a map of Turkey, entering her stops at the ports of Tekirdağ, Gelibolu, Çanakkale, İzmir, Küllük, Bodrum, Datça, Marmaris Fethiye, Kalkan, Kaş, Finike, Antalya, Alanya, Anamur, Kilindire and take notes on a writing pad.

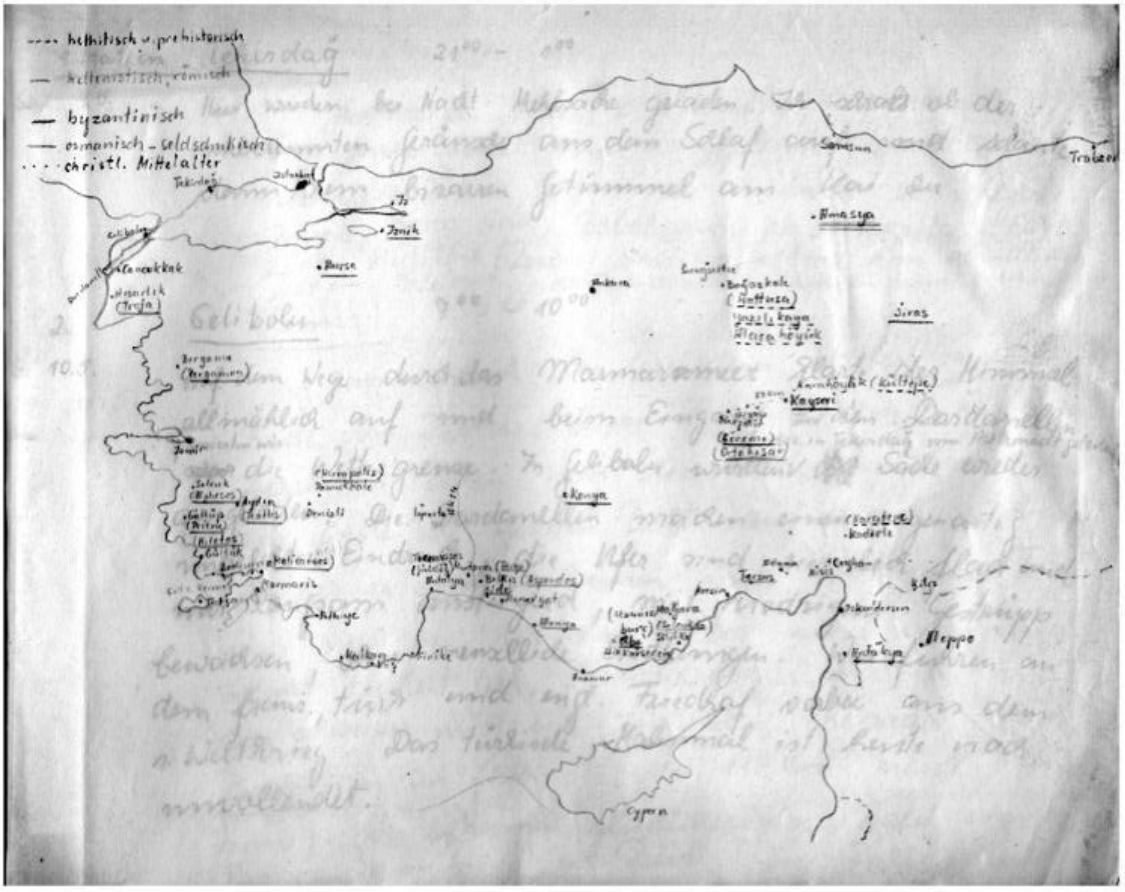



Fig. 4 Map drawn by Pia Angela Lorenzi in her travel notes

On 14 May 1959, she wrote:

> *In Marmaris besichtige ich die erste Schule – eine ausgezeichnet eingerichtete Volks- und Mittelschule. (İlkokul 5-jährig; Ortaokul 3-jährig, nicht obligatorisch.) In einer Zweitklässler-Klasse nahm ich am Unterricht teil. Etwa 45 Kinder, alle in ihren schwarzen Schulkitteln mit den weißen Krägen, auf der einen Seite die Jungen, auf der anderen Mädchen, standen sehr diszipliniert zum Gruß auf, überall Blumen, Zeichnungen, Muscheln, das nirgendwo fehlende Atatürk-Bild, in der Mitte des Zimmers ein großer Sandkasten, in dessen Mitte ein großer Strauß stand. Hier wurde in sehr anschaulicher Weise die Geographiestunde abgehalten. Man konnte immer von neuem ein Stück Erde, das durchgenommen werden sollte, selbst in den Sand eingraben. Das Schulhaus selbst stand auf festem Fundament (Erdbebengebiet), war gut gegliedert und machte einen sehr freundlichen Eindruck. Als wir es verließen, kam ein Soldat angetrabt, von dessen Schultern ein kleiner Junge fröhlich herunterlachte, so als wäre er ein kleiner König, der zur Schule getragen wurde. Mir erstarb das Lächeln – der Kleine war ein Opfer der Kinderlähmung. Immer wieder fällt mir auf, wie hier Krankheit, Anormalität viel natürlicher hingenommen werden – als etwas vom Schicksal Gegebenes, gegen das nichts zu machen ist. Wir Europäer sind geborene Revolutionäre, ungeduldig, daß alles seinen richtigen, d.h. von uns gewünschten Weg läuft, wenig anpassungsfähig und irgendwie verweichlicht, von einem Menschenbild ausgehend, dem nur wenige*

> *Variationen gestattet werden. Hier ist die Mannigfaltigkeit des menschlichen Seins eines der reizvollsten Erlebnisse!*
>
> *In Marmaris, I visited a school for the first time, an excellently equipped primary and middle school (ilkokul: first five years, mandatory, ortaokul: three years, not mandatory). I took part in instruction in a second grade class. Approximately 45 children—all in black school coats with white collars, boys on one side, girls on the other—stood up very disciplined to greet the teacher. Flowers, drawings, sea shells everywhere, Atatürk's omnipresent portrait, and in the middle of the room a large sandbox with a big bunch of flowers in the middle. This was used for lively geography lessons. The part of earth that was covered in class could be dug into the sand. The school building itself stood on a firm foundation (it was an earthquake-prone area); it was well structured and made a very welcoming impression. As we were leaving, a soldier arrived, carrying on his shoulders a small boy who was laughing merrily as if he was a little king being carried to school. My smile froze when I realized that the little one was a victim of polio. I have noticed repeatedly how illness and anomaly are accepted much more naturally here – as something determined by fate, which cannot be avoided. We Europeans are born revolutionaries, impatient for everything to take its right course according to our wishes, with little flexibility for adaptation—somehow pampered. Our human image allows for little variation. Here, the plurality of human life is one of the most appealing experiences!*

These observations from her visit to a school in Marmaris on the layout of the building, educational practice, and the inclusion of disability demonstrate her engagement already during her first year in Turkey. Through her observation she articulates a critique of modern civilization's tendency to standardize, streamline, and obliterate diversity. As a German woman traveling alone to small towns in Anatolia at a time before mass tourism took hold, she apparently did not feel like a stranger out of place, and was able to connect with locals based on mutual curiosity. As a researcher from Europe, she enjoyed privileges of travel that many women living in the small towns and villages she visited would not have had. However, it is also important to remember that in the still young and modernizing republic of Turkey, more women were employed on the academic career ladder than at German universities at that time. A female friend, the archeologist Nezahat Baydur, also a Heidelberg connection, who later became a professor at Istanbul University, regularly traveled with groups of students for digs in Central Anatolia, where she might have been regarded with similar respect by villagers. Compared to today's landscape shaped by mass tourism, interactions with strangers in those days appear to have been more genuine, open, and hospitable, however class conscious.

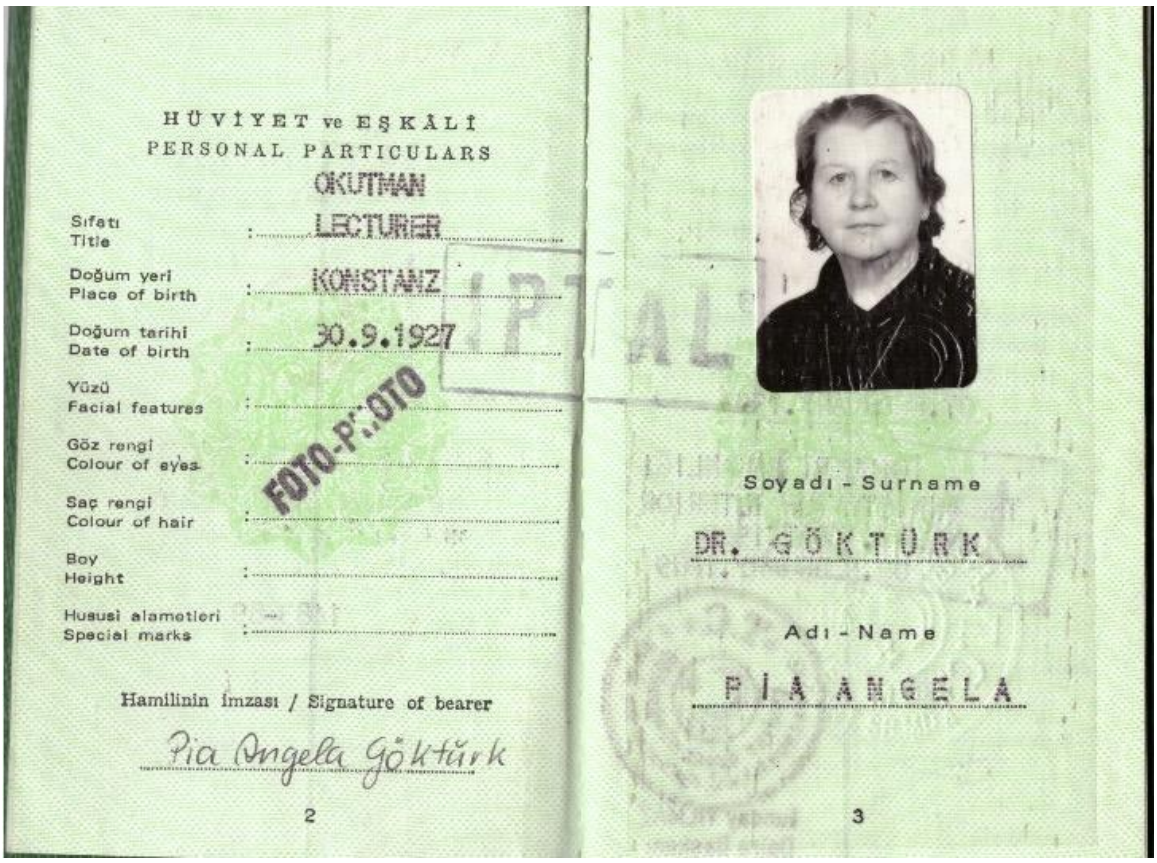


Fig. 5 Expired Turkish passport with invalid stamp

Postcolonial and decolonizing critiques of racialization have increased awareness of white European scholars studying "Oriental" societies being implicated in projects of cultural imperialism supporting uneven power relations. Any project of knowledge production about another culture has to withstand that scrutiny. However, categories of facile polarization might elide nuances of dedication, participation and contribution on the ground. My mother's engaged desire to learn and understand continued throughout subsequent years, her marriage with my father, my childhood and school years, and her interactions with colleagues as she worked at the language center of Istanbul University, first as lecturer and then as head of the German language department. Struggles with the university bureaucracy that failed to recognize her German Ph.D. and kept her in a low-paying lecturer position for most of her career were also part of this story. Traveling to university on public buses, always loaded with heavy bags of books, she developed programs for specialized languages in major fields of study, encouraged lecturers in the department to continue their education in graduate programs, and created summer programs for visiting international students, aiming to introduce them to Turkish culture. In this context, she edited the volume *Der Werdegang der modernen Türkei* (1983) and wrote chapters on social and governmental structures, institutions of education, children's literature, the popular figures of Nasreddin Hoca and Karagöz. She also prepared a detailed historical chronology from 1072 to 1982, which she concluded with the following reflection:

> *Überall in dieser Stadt stoßen Sie auf die geschichtlichen Spuren von Griechen, Römern, von Byzanz, vor allem auf die des Osmanischen Reiches. Alle diese Relikte sind eingebettet in die moderne Gestalt dieser heute wohl 5,5 Millionen zählenden Stadt, in der sich auch die Einflüsse der westlichen modernen Zivilisation widerspiegeln. Natürlich ist dieser geschichtliche Überblick voller Lücken. […] Keineswegs war es […] möglich, […] die verschiedenen Denkrichtungen und Bewertungen zur Frage der Modernisierung, Laizisierung, Demokratisierung einerseits, der Islamisierung und Restaurierung andererseits zu zeigen. Geht die zukünftige Entwicklung des Landes weiter in Richtung Westen oder kommt wieder eine größere Hinwendung zur traditionellen Welt des Islamischen Ostens, werden Säkularisierung oder Islamisierung, Demokratie oder autoritäre Herrschaft sich auf Dauer durchsetzen? Ist eine Synthese möglich?" (27/28)*
>
> Everywhere in this city, you will come across historical traces of Greeks, Romans, the Byzantine Empire, and especially of the Ottoman Empire. All these relics are embedded in the modern shape of the city of likely 5.5 million, which also reflects influences of western modern civilization. Of course, the presented historical overview is full of gaps. [...] It was by no means possible [...] to show all the different schools of thought and evaluations on questions of modernization, secularism, democratization on the one hand, and Islamization and restoration on the other. Will the future development of the country move further in the direction of the West or will it turn to the traditional world of the Muslim East, will secularism or religion, democracy or authoritarian rule prevail in the long run? Is synthesis possible?

Reading these questions about the rise of authoritarianism, written in 1983 and addressing the future, makes us realize just how much Turkey and the world have changed in the past forty years. My parents' generation was still invested in Turkey's modern nation-building project with its Western orientation motivated by the ideals of the European Enlightenment. While that nationalist project certainly had its blind spots and limitations, it also held some promises of common good and solidarity, notable in the face of current divestment from public education and autonomous academic research in Turkey and elsewhere. In our days of full-blown neoliberalism, happily fused with flag-waving nationalism, Neo-Ottomanism, and autocratic rule, trust in "the West" as a system of aspirational values has been severely shaken. Meanwhile, "the East" holds no viable alternative either. Pia Angela Göktürk sensed the impasses of modernity with lucid foresight. After my father's untimely death and her retirement from Istanbul University, she started commuting by bus to Edirne University near the Bulgarian border, where she founded a new German department. She recaptured some of her initial excitement of exploration and discovery from her early years in Turkey, probably remembering some of the trips she took across Anatolia and the Balkans. She taught students whose families had returned from Germany to Turkey, "killing their passports," as the saying goes, so they could no longer travel back and forth. These students, who were often belittled as *Almancı* (Germanized) in Turkey, had been raised in a different school system and spoke fluent German, though they could not revisit the places of their birth and childhood in Germany because the German residency permit in their passports had been stamped "invalid." She

understood the bitter irony created by a border security and residency regime, instituted in 1983 under Chancellor Helmut Kohl and designed to promote repatriation of former guest workers and their families. As a German woman, she saw Turkish life, culture, and history in ways that were perhaps completely opaque to her, but she did her best to support them in determining their path in life. She dedicated much of her life to fostering interaction and mutual understanding between cultures: explaining the Germans to the Turks and the Turks to the Germans.

Fig. 6 Angela Göktürk on her balcony in 1989

If she had not been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in 2008, she would have continued to live on the steep hill in Cihangir, on the fourth floor without an elevator, overlooking the old city and the water from her balcony as from a captain's bridge. But her progressing illness required her to make one more big move. In 2012, at the age of eighty-five, she traveled to San Francisco to be near me, her only child. As I recall, in her last years in California, once again with water views of the Bay from the El Cerrito Hills, she maintained her curiosity and engagement with her environment as much as possible despite her impaired mobility. She made German, Turkish and Armenian friends, conversed with American and Chinese neighbors, had African American, Mexican, Salvadorian, Indian, and Tibetan caregivers, listened to all their life stories with interest, trying to understand.

She continued reading *Die Zeit* weekly and watched the German news bulletins *heute-journal* and *Tagesthemen*. She enjoyed outings in her wheelchair and compared her views of the Bay sometimes with the Bodensee and sometimes with the Bosporus.

Fig. 7 Angela Göktürk at San Francisco Bay

Fig. 8 Angela Göktürk at a German department party in El Cerrito, CA, in 2013

Turning to memories of my parents at this point in my life is certainly a factor of aging. However, their migration histories as two unusual figures, who left the towns where they were born to study and subsequently kept moving reveals an engagement with the world and a curiosity that transcends rigid categorizations of identity that have become en vogue today. Both entered the education systems in their respective countries as outsiders and had to forge their own paths. Hearing about their discoveries and struggles might complicate narratives built on clear-cut oppositions and remind us of possibilities of

encounter, exploration, and collaboration. Their stories were driven by endeavor, never entitlement.

Remembering and forgetting begins to matter in the gaps between private family memories and collective public commemoration. These gaps interrupt commanding stories about the past and enable us to ask questions. Retracing traffic across borders and moments of contact and collaboration in the gathering of collective knowledge is an important task at hand for a future beyond ossified group identities. Perhaps we could conceive of the documents of lives that transcend national accounts of history—lives that are both native and foreign—as a traveling archive. As we travel between languages, the task of keeping these memories alive falls largely to the imagination of writers and readers. Though archives never deliver complete stories, they remain an important resource for remembrance. Archives—public or private—open up gaps, inviting further investigation in an unfinished process of reading, tracing, and imagining those who are in danger of being forgotten. The gaps in documentation might serve as conditions of possibility for rethinking supposedly stable parameters regarding the past as we look for orientation toward the future. Creative remembrance in traveling archives might be a way to step out of the hamster wheel of mindless repetition.

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