
Literature, Migration and the Transnationalisation of Literary Fields – Austria and Great Britain

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the transnationalisation of literary fields that has been taking place since the emergence of literature by migrant writers. This development occurred earlier in some national contexts and later in others. Independent of the historical evolution, however, the presence of migrant authors and their writings caused major changes in literary fields: authors have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds than the majority of their readers, the texts are set in far-away places; thus, also literary critics and scholars start to look into new topics and regions and readers are eventually confronted with new worlds. Consequently, transnationalisation also has political implications. However, it has not encompassed all aspects of the literary field. In fact, the individual and different histories of literature and migration in various national contexts show that the national frame is still a powerful and influential aspect. This paper discusses two examples – Austria and Great Britain – of the described transnationalisation and examines the role still held by national frames in literary fields.

KEYWORDS

transnationalisation, literary field, migrant writers, national frame, Austria, Great Britain

Introduction

This paper focuses on the transnationalisation of literary fields that has been taking place since the emergence of literature by migrant writers. This development occurred earlier in some national contexts and later in others. In this comparative article, I discuss two different examples of this process of transnationalisation, namely Austria and Great Britain, and furthermore examine the role still held after all by national frames in literary fields.

The literary field here refers to Pierre Bourdieu's *Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, in which he analyses the origins and development of the literary field in nineteenth-century France (Bourdieu 1996). Bourdieu's study focuses on the work of Gustave Flaubert, but also postulates from this analysis a detailed theory of the literary field. In doing so, he develops a model for describing the workings of modern literary markets. Bourdieu's model of the literary field enables us to analyse the position and positioning of authors and other protagonists, such as editors, publishers, critics, readers etc.,

who take part in the creation and valuation of literary works. By highlighting the impact of social, cultural, symbolic and economic factors on an author's position within the literary field, Bourdieu has provided researchers interested in the sociological aspects of literary studies with important parameters to analyse strategies and dynamics within the field. In fact, contemporary studies of the literary field have demonstrated the adaptability of this model and its usefulness in productive analysis (cf. Joch, Mix and Wolf 2009; Landerl 2005; Thompson 2010). The present contribution also comes from Bourdieu's model and uses it to discuss the transnationalisation of literary fields induced by migration and migrant writers.

Migration, i.e. a long-term transfer to another place, often across borders, is not just a contemporary phenomenon. Also, authors have always been moving, be it voluntarily or involuntarily, and so have texts. Movement and migration have been a topic of literature since its emergence. Even today, the aftermath of the end of colonialism, the long-term effects of guest worker programmes, the collapse of communism, crises and wars, as well as societal and political discourse have all had a major effect on literature. When Emine Sevgi Özdamar's novel *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei – hat zwei Türen – aus einer kam ich rein aus der anderen ging ich raus* (1992) was published in the Spanish translation, the Spanish writer and intellectual Juan Goytisolo stated that he had long since anticipated that the future of French literature would be in the hands of Maghrebi authors, that of English literature in the hands of authors from Pakistan and India and that of German literature in the hands of Turkish writers (Goytisolo 1994). Even though the current state of these literatures is not completely thus, in fact, the presence of migrant authors and their writings have caused major changes in literary fields: they have had an impact on writers, publishers, critics, literary scholars and readers alike. These changes can be described as a transnationalisation of literary fields: migrant authors have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds than the majority of their readers, the texts are set in far-away places, thus also literary critics and scholars start to look into new topics and regions and, eventually, readers are confronted with new worlds, too. Furthermore, the formation of literary groups by migrant authors, the introduction of new literary prizes and competitions for migrant writers as well as the founding of new publishing houses and initiatives are institutional changes that have transformed literary fields.

However, transnationalisation has not encompassed all aspects of the literary field. In fact, the individual and different histories of literature and migration in various national contexts show that the national frame is still a powerful and influential aspect. For instance, in many circumstances national initiatives that are financially supported by a nation state, such as literary prizes, publishing initiatives etc., have supported the literature of immigrants. Below, I shall provide two examples – Austria and Great Britain – of the described transnationalisation and discuss the role still held by national literary fields, not least in the process of transnationalisation. I chose a comparative approach for my analysis as it allows me to demonstrate that my thesis is valid also across different cultural, national and linguistic contexts. There are a number of reasons for the selection of Austria and Great Britain as examples. Firstly, they are two national contexts with different histories of immigration and thus also with different histories of migrant writing. Whereas in Great Britain, authors of immigrant origin have been publishing and have been acknowledged since the 1970s at the latest, this development in Austria only started in the late 1990s. This difference renders them good examples to demonstrate that - despite different historic contexts - the literary production of immigrants led to similar developments in the literary field. Secondly, I argue that the transnationalisation of the literary field has taken place in both cases. The comparison of these two cases with very different points of departures illustrates and supports my argument. Thirdly, there are also differences with regard to the reception of migrant writing in both contexts: the relatively early developments in Great Britain led to an important and potent theoretical framework, particularly in the

realm of post-colonial studies. Such a development of theory is absent in the Austrian context. There, it happens that theories, for instance from the Anglophone world, have been taken over rather than developed anew. Due to the different histories of migrant writing as well as the differences in the processes of transnationalisation in the two national contexts, I chose different foci for the discussion of the two examples. In the case of Austria, I concentrate on the emergence of migrant writers and the institutional changes in the literary field. In the section on Great Britain, on the other hand, I centre on the reception of migrant writing by literary scholars and the effect of the various designations on this literature.

In literary studies, the term 'transnational' is more often than not used to describe a particular corpus or particular characteristics of texts. For instance, Azade Seyhan defines transnational literature as “a genre of writing that operates outside the national canon, addresses issues facing deterritorialized cultures, and speaks for those in [...] 'paranational' communities and alliances” (Seyhan 2001, 10). In a recent volume on transnationalism in German-language literature, the term 'transnational' is mostly used to refer to themes and topics dealt with by German-speaking authors in response to globalisation and current transnational phenomena in the world (Herrmann, Smith-Prei, Taberner 2015). In a similar vein, in a recent monograph, Stuart Taberner discusses transnationalism in German-language literature and analyses how authors incorporate and deal with current global issues such as migration and flight, the terrorist threat post-9/11, neoliberalism etc. in their works (Taberner 2017).

From these approaches, I take up the idea of de-territorialisation by Seyhan and argue that opposed to the idea of a national literature, strongly related to a specific geographical and linguistic context, the notion of transnationalisation of literature stresses the idea that literature is influenced by migratory movements and that its products (literary texts) and subjects (authors, but also publishers, critics, readers) are affected by these movements. Thus, the straightforward assignment to specific contexts is no longer possible: writers are born in one place, move to another and possibly write in yet another place. They primarily use languages for their writing that are not their first languages or write in more than one language. Migrant writers bring with them new topics, characters or discourses that come from one literary tradition and are introduced to another. However, in contrast to the approaches cited above, in this article I do not refer to a specific genre of transnational literature or particular aspects that are discussed in the texts, but rather to the process of transnationalisation of literary fields caused by migrant writers. This transnationalisation is procedural; it describes the opening of national literary fields and the increased forms of national, linguistic, cultural, poetic etc. border-crossings. In doing so, it makes visible the netlike structure of entities, such as culture and literature. Thus, the concept of 'transnationalisation' approaches 'transculturation', a term introduced by Fernando Ortiz in the early 1940s (Ortiz 2002 [1940]) and taken up by Wolfgang Welsch in order to describe societies (Welsch 2000). The process of transnationalisation I refer to by stressing the act of border-crossing reveals the fact that societies and cultures do not have any clear-cut boundaries. Rather, they are interdigitated and cannot be distinguished or separated.

The recent transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field

While texts by immigrant writers have been published and researched in Germany since the 1980s, it was only much later, starting in the late 1990s, that a similar development took place in Austria, even though historically, similar migratory movements (guest workers, refugees) can be observed (for a detailed account of the emergence of migrant writing in Austria see Vlasta 2011, Vlasta 2013 and Sievers and Vlasta 2018). In a comparative study, Wiebke Sievers has analysed possible reasons for this discrepancy (Sievers 2008). Referring to Pierre Bourdieu's literary theories as well as the opportunity-structure approach, she argues

that different structures within the two countries account for the differences in the reception of migration literature. Whereas in Germany, immigrants (so-called guest workers) began to organise politically in the 1970s, authors and critics established in Austria had been holding their respective positions since the interwar/war period. Thus, the younger generation of writers had to struggle for a public and for opportunities to publish (cf. also Sievers 2016). In such a competitive field, there was hardly any room for immigrant writers.

Most Austrian immigrant writers came to the attention of a wider public only in the year 2000, despite exceptions such as the Persian born author Hamid Sadr, the Czech writer Zdenka Becker or the Turkish immigrant author Serafettin Yildiz, who all started publishing in the 1990s, albeit with small local publishing houses, with the exception of Hamid Sadr, due to a very 'Austrian' topic, i.e. a novel on the final days and weeks in the life of Franz Kafka in hospitals around Vienna.

According to Bourdieu's theory, protagonists in the literary field have to be aware of the structures and mechanisms impacting the field in order to successfully position themselves within. Young writers have to learn about the particular structures of the literary field in the country in which they want to start their career. This process can be difficult for those born in the country; however, it is even more formidable for someone coming from a different cultural background, with a different literary tradition that references other writers and styles. Such writers may also have insufficient information on publishers, agents, critics and possible readers. One way of compensation is the establishment of an institution which acts as an agent for immigrant authors. In Austria, the publishing house *edition exil* – which is part of the *verein exil*, a Vienna-based centre which promotes intercultural communication – decided to start a literary prize, *schreiben zwischen den kulturen* [writing between cultures] (cf. Schwaiger 2016) in 1997. The competition is held annually and aims to promote literature by authors who have a different cultural and linguistic background and write in German. There are eight prizes in all, which are awarded at a ceremony in autumn each year; the winning texts are published in an annual anthology. It is the intention of *edition exil* to enable young authors from migrant backgrounds to enter the literary market by offering them a platform for their works. It is hoped that, in doing so, they will become more visible for other protagonists in the market (cf. the *edition exil*'s website www.zentrumexil.at). In this spirit, *edition exil* also offers workshops for writers (called *exil-schreibwerkstätten*) and publishes the first works of immigrant authors. This way, *edition exil* addresses an issue which has long troubled immigrant writers – how to access the Austrian literary field (cf. Vlasta 2012).

In fact, the new initiative created opportunities for immigrant writers: some authors have published books with *edition exil* after having participated in the competition. So, for instance, Dimitr  Dinev, who took part in the competition in 2000 and subsequently had his first book *Die Inschrift* [The Inscription] published by *edition exil* in 2001. The publication of his novel *Engelszungen* [Tongues of Angels] by the Viennese publisher Deuticke in 2003 was a major turning point in the public perception of literature by immigrant authors in Austria. The publishers became aware of Dinev at a reading organised by the *edition exil*; thus, the organisation's intention to be a platform for immigrant authors had proven to be successful. Indeed, the novel was very well received by literary critics, both in Austria, Germany and Switzerland, as detailed by Michaela B rger-Koftis (B rger-Koftis 2008). Most reviews mention two aspects of the novel: firstly Dinev's autobiographical background – he is a Bulgarian who left his country for Austria at the age of 22 – and secondly, his talent for producing a compelling narrative. Critics and writers alike often attribute this talent to the experience of migration or simply the unusual background of non-German-speaking authors. For instance, the writer Vladimir Vertlib says in one of his lectures on poetics that an important aspect of the reception of novels such as Dimitr  Dinev's *Engelszungen* and his own *Das besondere Ged chtnis der Rosa*

Masur (2001) is the fact that there is little knowledge of the historical and cultural background of immigrants living in German-speaking countries (Vertlib 2007, 112). He thus stresses the fact that migrant writers like Dinev and himself (Vertlib was born in Russia and emigrated with his family at the age of five) bring with them transnational literary topics, i.e. topics that have travelled borders and are new to the receiving audience.

With the success of Dinev's novel, literary works by immigrant writers began to be discussed widely in the media, opening up new opportunities for other authors. *Edition exil* and its publications obtained greater visibility and importance for the protagonists within the Austrian literary field. The profile of the competitions also increased, with other publishing houses and the media paying greater attention to the participants and winners. This means that the protagonists of the literary field became aware of the ongoing transformation (or, at least, the novel processes). Vladimir Vertlib's new novels, for example, received a lot of attention, while Hamid Sadr published his second work also in German. South Korean born Anna Kim's first prose work *Die Bilderspur* [Trace of pictures/images] was published by the small, but renowned, Graz-based literary publisher Droschl. Furthermore, the well-known Viennese publisher Deuticke repositioned itself as a publishing house for immigrant writers. Dimitré Dinev's short story volume *Die Inschrift* was re-published by Deuticke in 2005. The same publisher also issued new novels by Hamid Sadr, Vladimir Vertlib and Julya Rabinowich. Thus, the publishing house actively participated and promoted (and gained from) the transnationalisation of Austrian literature and, in doing so, became an important actor in the literary field.

In 2008, migrant writing in Austria received further institutional support when the Austrian writer Michael Köhlmeier, in collaboration with the city of Hohenems, founded a prize for immigrant writers, the *Hohenemser Literaturpreis* [Literary Prize of Hohenems]. This biannual award aims to promote the work of authors writing in German, although it is not their first language. In 2011, the German-Turkish writer Zafer Şenocak, was invited to speak at the awards ceremony, where he dealt with the 'margin' and argued that borders in literature had become 'communicable'. Şenocak did not refer directly to transnationalism; however, by stressing the crossing of borders, he referred to a similar notion he saw enforced by the writings of migrants. Beyond that, the Hohenems Prize certainly increased the communication about borders in literature and once more raised the awareness of authors with a different first language in German literature and the Austrian literary field, in particular.

Austrian migrant writing itself has become increasingly international: writers such as Vladimir Vertlib (in 2001), Dimitré Dinev (in 2005), Magdalena Sadlon (in 2007), Michael Stavarič (in 2008 and in 2012), Ilir Ferrà (in 2012) and Barbí Markovic (in 2017) have received the German Adelbert von Chamisso prize, awarded by the *Robert Bosch Stiftung* [Robert Bosch foundation]. From 1985 to 2017, this prize was awarded annually to writers whose first language is not German and represented the most important literary prize for migrant writers in Germany. Furthermore, well-known German publishers such as Suhrkamp began publishing books by Anna Kim, Michael Stavarič and Doron Rabinovici. Thus, these writers also gained access to the German literary field and became known across the border. What is more, works by Julya Rabinowich, Radek Knapp, Doron Rabinovici, Hamid Sadr and others have been translated into various languages. Finally, migrant authors have become intermediaries for other literatures: Dimitré Dinev introduced Bulgarian authors to a German-speaking readership, for instance by choosing short stories by Dejan Enev for a volume in German. These individual processes of internationalisation have an effect on the image of Austrian literature that is increasingly seen as characterised by migration and migrant writers. For instance, authors such as Julya Rabinowich, Ilija Trojanow and Vladimir Vertlib have been included in

recent volumes on transnationalism in German-language literature (Herrmann, Smith-Prei, Taberner 2015; Taberner 2017).

Besides the activities by the *edition exil* and their repercussions described above, the Austrian literary field also went through other fundamental changes at the beginning of the 21st century. Publishing, for example, underwent a process of internationalisation. The larger publishing houses Zsolnay and Deuticke were bought by the German publisher Hanser, while the publisher Residenz was taken over by the *Niederösterreichisches Pressehaus* [Lower Austrian Publishing House] (to be sold again later). Bookselling has also changed significantly in Austria during the past two decades. In 2002 the German bookseller Thalia bought out the bankrupt Austrian chain Amadeus and has become the biggest bookseller in Austria, both in terms of retail outlets and sales (cf. Landerl 2005).

Politically, 2000 was a decisive year in Austria. The *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* [FPÖ, Freedom Party] joined the government for the first time under the leadership of Jörg Haider. There was strong public opposition to the coalition between the FPÖ and the conservative ÖVP [*Österreichische Volkspartei*, Austrian People's Party], with immigrant intellectuals at the forefront. I agree with Allyson Fiddler and Wiebke Sievers, who argue that immigration became a major topic within the public discourse under the FPÖ (cf. Fiddler 2006, 266 and Sievers 2016, 30-31). Many authors were prompted to express their opinion, leading to an increased awareness of immigration issues in the literary field.

These institutional and political developments are part of what I call the transnationalisation of the Austrian literary field, which comprises the following aspects: the emergence of migrant writers, their growing visibility and success, the internationalisation (or globalisation) of Austrian publishing, and the growing awareness for immigrant issues due to the political discourse. However, as the impact of *edition exil* and the publisher Deuticke has shown, national and local organisations were needed to support this process of transnationalisation. Thus, the national frame and the national constitution of the literary field are still necessary for its protagonists in order to transcend boundaries. Locally funded institutions, such as the *edition exil*, serve as a platform for writers that can, firstly, transcend the culture and language boundary and publish their writing and, secondly, bring new themes into a national literature. Thirdly, these opportunities then give the authors the chance to transcend the borders of the national literary field and promote their work in other national contexts.

Great Britain – a long history of transnationalisation

Writing by immigrants in Great Britain has a longer and different tradition than in Austria due to the country's colonial history (for a detailed account of the emergence and history of immigrant writing in Great Britain, see Gunning and Vlasta 2018). From the late 1940s, an increasing number of migrants from the Caribbean islands and South Asia began to settle in Britain (Mead 2009); at that point, British citizenship was still granted to people born within British colonies. Furthermore, the country soon started to actively recruit a work force in the Caribbean in order to rebuild the country after the war. In the 1950s and 1960s, also immigration from India and Pakistan increased. Although legislation was later significantly restricting the right to citizenship, by the late 1970s, immigrants had become an important part of Great Britain's population. This is also true for literature, as writers, such as Mulk Raj Anand, James Berry, George Lamming, Una Marson, V.S. Naipaul or Sam Selvon, had also arrived from the Caribbean, India, Pakistan and African countries. Although immigration and particularly black immigration and presence in Great Britain have a much longer history dating back to Roman times (cf. Fryer 1984), it is usually this group of authors that is regarded in literary studies as the first generation of migrant writers in the

country, although they were usually referred to as Commonwealth writers at the time. The early label 'Commonwealth Literature' used to define, as Salman Rushdie noted, 'a body of writing created in the English language, by persons who are not themselves white Britons, or Irish, or citizens of the United States of America.' (Rushdie 1991: 62). Thus, the term referred to the writers' origin and created a distinct category rather than seeing this writing as part of British literature. For instance, Salman Rushdie criticised that it marginalised the writers and made sure that their writings would not be included in the body of English literature (Rushdie 1991). This means that the actual transnationalisation of British literature that had begun at least then was not acknowledged by the other protagonists in the literary field. Rather, it was slowed down by their reactions. However, it has to be noted that this grouping of the authors also had political implications, as it happened in response to the exclusion of and racism towards blacks in general and black writers in particular. It was important to be recognised as a distinct group in order to fight for visibility. This led to the formation of movements such as the Caribbean Artists Movement (CAM; 1966-1972), a writers' initiative. It also generated institutional support, for instance by the founding of awards, such as the Fontana/Collins Book Prize for Multi-Ethnic Britain or the African-Caribbean Educational Resource (ACER) Black Penmanship award (launched in 1978). Through these activities, the demographic changes within Britain were also represented in the literary field. Despite the fact that many of the authors were British citizens at the time, their origin, the fact that they were black and the fight against the exclusion and racism that came with this (often they were treated as *Second Class Citizen*, a designation Emecheta Buchi used as the title of her 1974 novel) made their arrival in and their impact on the British literary field a transnational event. What is more, the works by these authors writing in the 1950s had the potential to rewrite English literature. Like in the Austrian context, new protagonists, new milieus, and thus a new way of being British, but also linguistic innovation (such as in Sam Selvon's *Lonely Londoners* of 1956) formed part of this rewriting (Sandhu 2003; McLeod 2004). However, it took more than twenty years for this trend to become a major movement with works by authors who were born or raised in Britain, such as the St. Kitts-born but Leeds-raised Caryl Phillips, Hanif Kureishi, born in Britain to Pakistani / English parents, or Salman Rushdie, born in India but educated in Britain. In the 1980s and 1990s, more and more authors who were either born outside Britain or born to parents who had immigrated to Britain came to the attention of critics and readers alike. The rise of these authors went hand in hand with the discussion on how to categorise their work. 'Commonwealth Literature' has always been a contested term, described as being patronising and anachronistic. The term black British literature was introduced later and is, alongside with British Asian writing, used in some of the most recent and important studies on this corpus of literature (Procter 2003; Stein 2004; Arana and Ramey 2004; Gunning 2010). The term black British literature (that first included British Asian writing, which only later became a category on its own) reflects the transformation of British literature: the word 'black' refers to writings by non-white authors; the designation 'British' stresses the fact that this writing is part of British literature. A large number of publications on black British writing have undermined the view that it is no longer a separate corpus. The discussion on terminology from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s was held parallel to (and as part of) the readings of the works in light of postcolonial studies which questioned white superiority. These readings also promoted the opinion that writing by immigrants and their descendants had become an integral part of British literature. Thus, the process of transnationalisation of the British literary field had been recognised and advanced also by literary scholars. Perhaps, by stating that immigrant writing is now part of British literature and can no longer be seen as an entity on its own, literary scholarship has even brought an end to the process of transnationalisation in the British context.

What is more, the reception of literature by immigrants as well as the interest in literature on migration is closely linked to a society's self-perception. As early as 1995, A. Robert Lee stated that multicultural Britain was no longer restricted to the country's urban centres (Lee 1995: 70). By then and even more so today, the myth of a white, mainly Christian rural Britain that had been propagated by the media for a long time, has been overhauled by the presence of a non-white population of about thirteen percent (Census 2011). To Lee, this transformation of British society could be experienced in all areas of public life as early as in the 1990s: in art, in new hybrid styles such as in Jatinder Verma's Indian version of the *Tartuffe*, in modern pop music, in British mosques and Hindu temples, in Chinese and Indian restaurants and takeaways, in schools, in sports and, last but not least, in the media, for instance in television where black news presenters and announcers today are a matter of course (Lee 1995: 71-73). Yet, Lee reminds us that there is still nostalgia for the classical image of England (and Britain) especially in high culture that is also expressed in documentaries on English/British history in television, but also in the literary scene, where authors whose works are rooted "in English ways and irony" (Lee 1995: 74) have been in the foreground for quite some time, and texts by immigrant writers were perceived to be on the margins.

Today, however, the process of transnationalisation is also represented in the texts of a younger generation of mostly non-immigrant authors but whose family history can be traced back to the former colonies. As in earlier examples from the 1950s, also more recent texts tell of the transnationalised life of Bengali immigrants in London (Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*, 2003) or the (intermingling) stories of an English-Jamaican family, a family of Bengali Muslim origin and a Jewish-Catholic white middleclass family in London's 1970s to 1990s (Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, 2000), to name only two examples. What is more, the number of female voices – both with reference to the authors themselves and the protagonists in the novels – has increased. This is another side of the political aspect of the process of transnationalisation: whereas it is not new in English literature that a novel is set in India, or Bangladesh (just think of Rudyard Kipling's works or E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, 1924), it is relatively new that such a story is narrated from an underprivileged, for instance female, perspective. This development came about with the emergence of migrant writers in Britain.

Furthermore, transnationalisation is also evident in the aesthetic level of texts. Sam Selvon's introduction of Trinidadian Creole English (TCE) into literature, the language spoken by the Caribbean immigrants portrayed in his *Moses-Trilogy*, is an early example for this aesthetic innovation (Nasta 1988; Wyke 1991; Looker 1996; Salick 2001). More recently, Xiaolu Guo has used a kind of broken English in her novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* (2007). Guo was born in China in 1973 and came to Great Britain in 2002. She works as film-maker and author and has written books in both Chinese and English. Her novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers* (2007), written in English, is both a personal dictionary as well as a diary of the protagonist Z, a Chinese girl who comes to London for one year in order to learn English. The novel is written in Z's learner's English, i.e. a broken English full of mistakes, and in a basic style. However, it improves throughout the book – for instance, the grammar becomes more correct and more complex structures are used. Still, it remains the language of a person not completely proficient in English. The fact that the author herself is not a native speaker and thus might be compared to the protagonist makes for a particular situation for the reception of this book. What is more, Guo also introduces Chinese characters and words into the book, making it a multilingual text. Guo, though, in the broken English of her novel, makes it clear that minor linguistic competence must not be confused with reduced analytic competence. In fact, Z succeeds in asking critical questions with which she is confronted during her time in Great Britain, particularly with regard to cultural concepts. Thus, the broken English Guo uses in her novel is also a political statement on the situation of immigrants and their

possibilities to participate and thus on the transnational and transcultural realities in Europe today. Authors writing in English even though it is not their first language are still a relatively new phenomenon in English literature, albeit one that has been accepted by the canon, as recently confirmed by the awarding of the Nobel Prize for Literature to the Japanese-British writer Kazuo Ishiguro. The fact that non-native writers in the English language bring innovation to English literature also on a formal and aesthetic level as in case of Guo is an even more recent phenomenon that, in my opinion, is a sign for the advanced transnationalisation of this literary field.

Résumé

This contribution dealt with the transnationalisation of literary fields as a result of the emergence of migrant writers and literature on migration. I chose two national contexts for my comparative approach in order to prove that migrant writers and their literature have brought about a transnationalisation of the respective literary fields also in two cases with very different historical and socio-political developments, such as Austria and Great Britain. As I have demonstrated, not only the literature by migrants is transnational, but also the processes that occurred - at times parallel to, at times triggered by new authors who entered the literary field - can be considered transnational. These processes include the formation of groups of authors or their affirmation by literary critics and/or publishers (such as Commonwealth writers or *MigrantenautorInnen* (migrant writers) in the Austrian context), the founding of new literary prizes and competitions (such as *schreiben zwischen den kulturen* or the Fontana/Collins Book Prize for Multi-Ethnic Britain), the specialisation of publishing houses (such as *edition exil*, Deuticke or HarperCollins), but also the globalisation and internationalisation of the publishing market and the development of literary studies that impacted authors and literature itself. On an aesthetic level, transnationalisation shows itself not least in linguistic innovative texts that play with the language of immigrants, such as Xiaolu Gu's novel or, in the Austrian context, Israeli writer Tomer Gardi's novel *broken german* (2016), which, similar to Guo, uses broken German full of mistakes to tell his story about immigrants in Berlin. Multilingualism is also an aesthetic sign of transnationalism that is often used by immigrant authors who are themselves bilingual.

A number of these developments of transnationalisation, however, are closely tied to the frame of the national state and are thus hardly transnational themselves. For instance, *edition exil* in Austria has received public funding. Furthermore, literary prizes are more often than not awarded within a national frame: for example, the Fontana/Collins Book Prize for Multi-Ethnic Britain is aimed at the British literary field. Thus, although we can observe a process of transnationalisation on the whole, i.e. a crossing of linguistic, cultural and political borders in literary fields that is caused by migration, amongst other aspects, this does not signify that the nation state has become superfluous. On the contrary, it seems as if its impulses are needed to launch the process of transnationalisation.

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