

UDC 323.1

*M. Tamcke***VIOLENCE IN THE CLASSROOM. INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS IN GERMANY**

The text reviews a few books, written by muslim migrants in Germany. The kurdish author Balci speaks about the violence in the submilieu of some muslim migrants with special respect to turkish and arab (and kurdish) differences and the violence against the christian migrants. As she had a job in social work with migrants, she relies on facts, but call her book a "novel". The two Iraqis present two ways to think about IS. The one, who never lived for a longer time in the Orient, tries to imagine, how the radicalisation can come into being in Germany among muslim migrants, that leads them to terrorism. The other is coming from this experience, but dont focus on the facts, that pushed him into migration. So the paper give an insight into the sub-milieu of islamists in Germany. Fiction and facts are not easy to differentiate, but each of these books shows aspects of the current debate among them.

Keywords: migrants, violence, radicalisation, islamism, terror, IS, literature, integration.

DOI: 10.35634/2587-9030-2022-6-2-266-269

For citation:

Tamcke M. Violence in the classroom. Integration of migrants in Germany // Bulletin of Udmurt University. Sociology. Political Science. International Relations. 2022. Vol. 6, iss. 2. P. 266–269. <https://doi.org/10.35634/2587-9030-2022-6-2-266-269>. (In Engl.)

Introduction

Literature that used to be called "Gastarbeiterliteratur" (meaning literature by guest workers) has been renamed "Migrantenliteratur" i.e. migrant literature in recent decades. Today, such labels are hardly used any more and literature by authors with a family history of migration have become an integral part of Germany's cultural and intellectual landscape. They have not only found "their" audience as authors, but took leading positions in the literary, cultural, and political world. There is an interesting academic discourse, particularly in literary studies, on what is fictional and whether fiction is not in fact more real than what is defined as material reality itself. This discourse suggests that literature by authors from migrant families should be read with the author's mental state in mind. Their work often reveals political tendencies that are not visible in the general public.

Two books

Here, I will look at two examples that give insight into issues of violence in the context of learning from the perspective of people with a migratory background.

The first is a text from Güner Yasemin Balci, an author whose family immigrated to Germany from Turkey. Her book is called *Arabboy* (2008).

„Arabboy“ is the debut novel of the successful journalist and TV presenter *Güner Yasemin Balci* [1]. Her parents are Alevis and Kurds whose native language is Zaza. Balci was born in 1975, Berlin-Neukölln. Her parents emigrated to Germany from an Eastern Anatolian village in 1960s. After finishing her A-Levels and her university degree in educational and literary studies, she worked with Turkish and Arabic-speaking adolescents in a model project aiming to prevent violence and crime in the Berlin district of Neukölln.

Balci feels uncomfortable when she is identified as Turkish. Her native language is German [1]. Her father worked as a taxi driver, her mother as a cleaner. They planned on returning to Turkey, but ultimately, they remained in Germany and her father was buried in German soil. According to Balci, the arrival of Arabic immigrants also affected the life of Turkish immigrants. The lack of work permits caused tensions to rise among adolescents. *Arabboy* describes the disorientation of a Turkish Lebanese Arabic-speaking boy whose grandparents live in Turkey. The author distinguishes between Turks and Arabs. She admits that Turkish social codes often also apply to Arabs and that Turkish and Arabic adolescents occupy the same spaces within deprived neighbourhoods, yet she differentiates to the detriment of the latter.

The "hero" of her story expresses himself through violence, becomes a criminal, is considered attractive, and becomes addicted to drugs. Following his arrest he is deported to Turkey, where he does not manage to integrate yet again.

In a crucial scene in the novel, the main protagonist encounters a Syrian Orthodox 'antagonist' who is in the same class at school. In the fitting scenery – the parking lot of a supermarket with several possible escape routes – Rashid's gang members are assigned individual jobs. Then the opponent is called to appear at the scene. The Syrian Orthodox boy is called Jakub. Rashid had continuously humiliated him at school and called him a Jew or a homosexual. Jakub has been afraid ever since [1, p. 51].

Jakub appears to be a perfect victim, because of his religious inferiority. As a member of a vilified minority in the Islamic world he is an ideal target. Jakub attempts to distinguish himself from the Jews and hopes to elevate his position by siding with the Christian majority in Germany, but to no avail. It makes no difference to Rashid whether he belongs to one victimised group here or there, to the Jews or the Christians. People of Jewish and the Syriac Orthodox faith have been equated like this during the events in Turkey 1915. [1, p. 52]

German eyewitnesses stood by and observe instead, enjoying for the "sensation"[1, p. 52]. "Nobody interfered [1, p. 52]." Balci lets her readers participate in the psycho drama of violence from the perspective of the perpetrators, but also take part in the experience of the victim [1, p. 52]. Jakub is brought to the ground by a kick to lower back by the only German member of Rashid's gang. He grabs Jakub's bomber jacket [1, p. 53]. The boys flee, but Rashid stays and helps Jakub off the ground [1, p. 54]. A symbolic act of condescension towards his victim: "I will punish you, if you don't do as I ask. But I am fair – you better let your mother buy you a new jacket,' he says to Jakub with a superior grin [1, p. 54]."

It is not a religious conflict. Rashid thinks himself above Islam as well, but drug addiction is 'haram', pork is to be avoided, God's omnipotence is a possibility, and a visit to the mosque is rare, but a matter of discussion. Religion is merely an element of social behaviour that is used as a pretext for aimless destructiveness.

The controversial aspect of this novel is that the author claims it is by no means a work of fiction, but based on her experience as a social worker in the same district. According to her, the main protagonist is actually a boy from her neighbourhood whom she met when he was only ten years old [1, p. 19]. The text is therefore not a novel, but rather drawn parallel to one: "I decided to tell the story of Rashid and his friends like a novel. I have changed people's names [1, p. 19]." This was necessary to protect herself and the people involved [1, p. 20].

Balci made public what was already known for specific milieus, but could not be generalised as a characteristic of respective migrant in their entirety. It is possible that her own Kurdish Alevi background might have covertly influenced her descriptions of the ethno-religious conflict and resulted in some inconsistencies in assessing the different ethnicities.

The absence of functional acting morals or ethics in Balci's novel highlight their necessity, but with her focus on this cycle of violence without any antidote in sight, the reader is left with the impression that German values and civil behaviour cannot effectively prevent such biographies of violence. The novel might have been written for just such a purpose, a wake-up call, in its unusual form. Not a novel in the usual sense, it moves between reality and fiction, and under the guise of a novel, the fictional need not be declared as such and hides within the portrayal of reality.

Sherko Fatah's novel *Das dunkle Schiff*/"The dark Ship" can be called a novel in the traditional sense [4]. It is full of literary devices and points to the philosophical, religious, and existential background of violent biographies. Fatah himself is an Iraqi Kurd, who grew up in Germany and has not experienced the war in Iraq first hand.

He describes Kerim's childhood. A son of Alevi parents who run a restaurant in northern Iraq, his childhood ends abruptly when his father is killed by the secret service. Kerim has to take responsibility for his family and the restaurant. He is abducted by "religious warriors" and taken to the Kurdish mountains. He falls under the spell of a charismatic teacher and seems to accept his fate until he flees shortly before he is recruited for an attack. He returns home emaciated to a family who believed him to be dead. Confronted with the danger of being persecuted by religious warriors, Kerim decides to leave the country. The third part of the novel relates his illegal crossing on a ship to Europe as a stowaway in a dark and claustrophobic cargo hold. Kerim manages to get to Berlin, where he meets his uncle Tarik and applies for asylum. He soon learns what that entails: it meant telling a good story, or how it is described in the novel: "It was important to

construct palpable danger to life and limb" [4, p. 264]. Kerim patiently complies and follows the system. He learns to speak German, moves out of the accommodation for asylum seeker and into the home of his uncle, he meets a woman, and his memories catch up with him. It is about dealing with traumatic experiences of violence.

When Kerim returns from the camp where he was held by the religious warriors, his family understands his need to stay silent [4, p. 153]. When his memories start to assault him in Berlin, he, conversely, becomes more and more detached from his family at home [4, p. 318]. His new acquaintances in Berlin hang on his every word when he tells them about the war and his escape. They sit "with their mouths half-open" [4, p. 319]. Kerim is puzzled by Amir, who seeks him out and is particularly captivated by his story [4, p. 346]. This mystery of Amir's behaviour is solved. Kerim is keen to "start afresh," when he receives a positive response and becomes a recognised refugee: "I want nothing to connect me to the past aside from the people I truly love." [4, p. 350]. The reader knows, of course, that Kerim does indeed have a past that haunts him. "I have not brought anything with me," says Kerim, only to be reminded at once of a suicide squad that he was part of. [4, p. 361]. A dialogue with his uncle shows his main strategy. "Do you remember the picnic we had in the mountains, when the helicopters came and took the women? What did I tell you back then? Kerim thinks: "If I never talk about it, it will become something like a dream." "And was it like that?" Kerim answered in the affirmative [4, p. 79].

You will not forget your memories by never talking about them. On the contrary, it makes them grow to reach monstrous dimensions. The escape to Germany is less of a solution than part of the problem, because although the new surroundings might help to create distance from the past, they do not help to process it. In fact, the experience of migration can be traumatic in itself. The foreign environment calls for the creation of an inner home.

In a struggle of self-preservation, the immigrant has to hold on to the different elements that connect him to his homeland (familiar objects, regional music, memories and dreams that express various aspects of his native country), in order to still experience the "feeling of self." [2].

And so Kerim finds relief in joint prayers "in a bare room lit by neon lights" at the university. He answers the "call of faith." Memories of the traumatic massacre still haunt him. It seems, he cannot escape them. It is Amir of all people, the one who had followed his story so tentatively, is doing, what Kerim did not: in the end it leads him to join ISIS in Iraq.

In his books Sherko Fatah is not interested in depicting the violent acts of "others" as a form of irrational barbarity. He rather sees the self within the other and vice versa, but without supporting a form of relativism. "In the unruly outskirts of civilisation," as he once said, "we can observe what is truly at its core: barbarism".

Conclusion

The two examples of German literature by migrants from the Near East addresses both "new Germans" and "old Germans (terminology coined by Sezen Tatlici). It supplements observations made of radicalised Muslims in Germany.

Outlook by one, who changed the side: Ahmed Mansour was a radical Islamist himself. Today, he studies and teaches as a Psychologist, Sociologist, and Philosopher in Berlin and is working as an advisor in politics [3]. He was alarmed by the radicalisation among young Muslims. They remind him of his own past. He thinks that the focus on violence and violent language in Germany is insufficient. Structural violence should instead be addressed at an earlier stage. A debate about values, also inside Islamic circles, is imperative in order to arrive at an interpretation of Islam that is ready for democracy. "I am a Muslim, but the extremists are no longer my brothers and I am not part of an imaginary Muslim community that is oppressed around the world," he counters the phenomenon. "Fanatics do neither represent me as an individual nor as a human." Literature can help to recognise and understand the phenomenon, which still poses a challenge for democracies, individuality, and social humanity by telling a „story“ between reality and fiction and searching for solutions.

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Received 10/20/2020

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НАСИЛИЕ В КЛАССЕ. ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ МИГРАНТОВ В ГЕРМАНИИ

DOI: 10.35634/2587-9030-2022-6-2-266-269

В статье содержится обзор нескольких книг, написанных мигрантами-мусульманами в Германии. Курдская писательница Балчи рассказывает о насилии в среде некоторых мигрантов-мусульман, затрагивая различия между турецкими и арабскими (и курдскими) мусульманами, а также о насилии в отношении христианских мигрантов. Поскольку автор проводила социальную работу с мигрантами, она опирается на факты, но называет свою книгу «романом». Два иракских автора представляют два взгляда на ИГ. Тот, кто никогда не жил долгое время на Востоке, пытается представить, как в Германии среди мусульманских мигрантов может возникнуть радикализация, приводящая в итоге к терроризму. Другой опирается на свой опыт, но не уделяет должного внимания фактам, подтолкнувшим его к миграции. Таким образом, статья дает представление о субсреде исламистов в Германии. Вымысел и факты нелегко отличить, но каждая из этих книг раскрывает определенные аспекты текущих споров между ними.

Ключевые слова: мигранты, насилие, радикализация, исламизм, террор, ИГ, литература, интеграция.

Ссылка на статью:

Tamcke M. Violence in the classroom. Integration of migrants in Germany // Вестн. Удм. ун-та. Социология. Политология. Международные отношения. 2022. Т. 6, вып. 2. С. 266–269. <https://doi.org/10.35634/2587-9030-2022-6-2-266-269>

Поступила в редакцию 20.10.2020

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