

**Kate Roy**

**Cartographies of Identity: Co-ordinates of ‘East’ and ‘West’ in the works of  
Emine Sevgi Özdamar and Leïla Sebbar**



I'm a New Zealander, born and bred in Dunedin with an MA by thesis, on language in Emine Sevgi Özdamar's works, from the University of Otago. My PhD project is comparative, focusing on two diasporic writers based in Europe: Emine Sevgi Özdamar, a Turkish-born author who has lived in Germany for more than thirty years and writes in German, and Leïla Sebbar, an Algerian-born author who has lived in France since her late teens and writes in French, calling herself *'une croisée'* ('cross-breed'/'crusader'/'at the crossroads'). The most important basis for this comparison is their texts' concern with hybridity and complex, non-binary notions of identities. Currently a thematic structure is envisaged, around topics such as 'Intertextuality as assemblage', 'Location' and 'Language' and my thesis will explore the ways in which both authors construct hybrid German and French identities in their writing, through analysis of the deterritorialising (and reterritorialising) dynamics of their prose in these areas.

The concept of deterritorialisation denotes exactly the process of 'freeing up' fixed relations. Importantly, I am not interested in working out how German or French or Algerian or Turkish they are, but rather in considering them as always already hybrid products of societies that are always already hybrid and therefore interested in looking at the connections their works make to all 'traditions' and what these connections 'produce.'

I am borrowing much of my theoretical vocabulary from Deleuzian theory, because Deleuze's emphasis on how things 'connect' rather than how they 'are' is important for conveying the notion of identity as a dynamic continuum. The significance of this for study of minority writers is that it permits a departure from binaries such as margins/mainstream, diaspora/metropolis.

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