

**Rachel Ramsay**  
**Re-Configurations of German Cultural Memory**



My project theorises encounters between all things Jewish and Turkish in German literature since the 1980s. As well as examining meetings between Jewish and Turkish figures in German novels, I analyse whether the three cultures are being defined as delineated and separate, or hybridised. Further matters which interest me are self-representation and representation of the other, intertextuality and references to mystical traditions such as Sufism and Kabbala. My fundamental thematic concern is with German cultural memory: the legacy of the Shoah in the German imagination. This legacy provides subject matter not only for German and Jewish writers as might be expected, but increasingly also for writers with a Turkish background. As the Turkish-born German writer Zafer Şenocak asks, ‘does migrating into Germany not also mean migrating into recent German history?’ Despite the fact that the migration of Turks into Germany since the advent of the ‘Gastarbeiter’ in the 1970s has made them the largest minority in post-reunification Germany, they are seldom seen as playing a significant role in the narrative of post-war German history. My project offers a challenge to such a view.

My thesis draws on three clusters of theory: postcolonial theories of hybridity, colonial mimicry and diaspora, theories of representation and representability from studies of Holocaust literature, and theories of cultural memory. In order to avoid an ethnicisation of Turkish and Jewish writers and a reinforcement of the category of ‘Ausländerliteratur’, the writers I focus on come from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

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