Introduction
Death Out of Place

The peripatetic nature of migratory life does not end with death. On any given day, the remains of countless deceased migrants travel around the world to be buried or scattered in ancestral lands. These complex cross-border operations involve specialized funeral homes, immigrant associations, municipal and consular agencies, faith-based organizations, and international airlines. Other migrants are laid to rest in the countries where they settled and died, sometimes in cemeteries for ethnic and religious minorities where available. Perennial questions about the meaning of home and homeland take on a particular gravitas in death, especially for immigrants and their descendants. The act of burial confers a final sense of fixity to identities that are more fluid or ambivalent in life. Burial is a means to assert belonging, attachment, and perhaps even loyalty to a particular country, community, or place. When the boundaries of the nation and its members are contested, burial decisions are political acts.

This is a book about the complexities of death, dying, and burial in migratory settings and the role that end-of-life practices play in the negotiation of social, political, and cultural boundaries. My primary focus is on Muslims of Turkish and Kurdish descent in Germany, whose posthumous predicaments resonate with other minoritized populations in Western Europe and beyond. In spite of the great diversity of migratory trajectories, origins, and destinations, I see important commonalities in the experience of what I refer to as "death out of place" that speak to the ambivalent nature of home and belonging in an increasingly globalized world. With this formulation, I am trying to capture something shared by immigrant families confronting difficult end-of-life decisions in countries where they face structural barriers to

political inclusion and equal social standing. The question of what is to be done with their mortal remains takes on added significance when cultural or religious traditions prohibit cremation and mandate burial in perpetuity – in other words, when bodies are expected to remain intact and in one place. How families navigate this complicated terrain offers insight into the stakes of membership in national and religious communities, the scope of sovereign power and authority, and the antinomies of citizenship and identity in contemporary multicultural societies.

Burial in Europe offers a symbolically powerful means for immigrants and their children to assert political membership and foster a sense of belonging. Yet the widespread practice of posthumous repatriation for burial in countries of origin illustrates the continued importance of transnational ties and serves as an indictment of exclusionary sociopolitical orders. In both situations, the corpse is central to grounding political claims for recognition. However, burial decisions unfold within a myriad of overlapping and sometimes conflicting political institutions and cultural value systems. They involve a range of formal actors and informal networks.

Dying Abroad starts from the premise that death and the rituals surrounding it provide an important window into the socioeconomic and political orders and hierarchies that structure human life in the twenty-first century. It argues that states, families, and religious communities all have a vested interest in the fate of dead bodies – including where and how they are disposed of and commemorated – and demonstrates that end-of-life decisions and practices are connected to larger political struggles over the boundaries of nation-states and the place of minoritized groups within them. At a time when a growing chorus of politicians lambast the failures of multiculturalism and call for the fortification of territorial borders, this book elucidates how posthumous practices anchor minority claims for political inclusion and challenge hegemonic ideas about the nation. By analyzing the role that end-of-life practices play in the negotiation of social, cultural, and political boundaries, *Dying Abroad* illustrates how the long-term settlement of racial, religious, and ethnic minorities is transforming Europe, and how Europe is in turn transforming the lives – and deaths – of those former migrants who now call it home.

Migrants, Minorities, and the Foreigners Within

By its very nature, migration is linked to movement across time and space – a litany of comings and goings, farewells and reunions. Anyone who has ever been an immigrant knows the liminal feeling of living between two worlds as well as the difficulty of reconciling different parts of their selves. Identity, as Stuart Hall insisted, is never singular but is multiply constituted across intersecting and antagonistic positions, practices, and discourses. "At the core of the diasporic experience," he argued, "is a variant of what W. E. B. DuBois called 'double consciousness': that of belonging to more than one world, of being both 'here' and 'there', of thinking about 'there' from 'here' and vice versa; of being 'at home' – but never wholly – in both places; neither fundamentally the same, nor totally different."[1]

Hall's ruminations bring to mind those of another itinerant intellectual, Edward Said, who characterized his own life experience as a life lived "out of place."[2] For Said, the phrase "out of place" conveyed not just a geographical reality but an existential condition. In his eponymous memoir, he wrote that from an early age he had difficulty squaring his two halves. Edward, an English name given to him in honor of the Prince of Wales, always seemed disjointed from the Arabic Said. His loyalties and allegiances – his very sense of self – were confused and contradictory. He felt, as he poignantly put it, "out of place."

Migrants must reconcile the absences generated by their emigration with reactions to their presence in new societies. Between these two poles, some have found themselves in a position of double absence, both from their countries of origin and arrival. In his discussion of the double absence of North African migrants in France, Pierre Bourdieu suggests that the immigrant is *atopos*. S/he "has no place, and is displaced and unclassifiable … Displaced, in the sense of being always incongruous and inopportune, he is a source of embarrassment … Always in the wrong place, and now out of place in his society of origin as he is in the host society, the immigrant obliges us to rethink completely the legitimate foundations of citizenship and of relations

[1] Stuart Hall, *Familiar Stranger: A Life between Two Islands* (Durham, NC; London: Duke University Press 2017), 140.
[2] Edward W. Said, *Out of Place: A Memoir* (New York: Vintage, 2000).

between citizen and state, nation or nationality."[3] In Europe, heated debates about the legitimate foundations of citizenship and the meaning of nationhood and nationality have only intensified in conjunction with technocratic efforts to create an "ever closer union" through deeper economic and political integration.

Writing in the 1990s, Étienne Balibar had already observed that European conversations about immigration and national identity were structured by a strange logic of "racism without races" – a racism whose "dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences, a racism, which at first sight, does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions; in short … a *differentialist* racism."[4] The ongoing militarization of Europe's internal and external borders, a process that expanded dramatically in the wake of the so-called "migration crisis" from 2015 onwards, belies longer histories of national and cultural chauvinism through which the figure of the immigrant has come to appear as "inopportune" or "out of place," simultaneously unsettled and unsettling.

In recent decades, a sort of collective amnesia about Europe's imperial past and multicultural present has taken hold in many parts of the continent in what Paul Gilroy calls "postcolonial melancholia."[5] Politicians routinely question the appeal and efficacy of multiculturalism, blaming migrants for everything from wage stagnation and unemployment to sexual predation and terrorism.[6] European conversations about collective identity and social cohesion are remarkably confused about histories of empire and circuits of labor migration, a confusion that leaves some people astonished by the presence of racial, religious, and ethnic minorities within Europe's borders. As Stuart Hall wrote

[3] Pierre Bourdieu, "Preface" in Abdelmalek Sayad, *The Suffering of the Immigrant* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), xiv.
[4] Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (New York: Verso, 1991), 21.
[5] Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
[6] Neeraj Kaushal, *Blaming Immigrants: Nationalism and the Economics of Global Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019); Sasha Polakow-Suransky, *Go Back to Where You Came From: The Backlash against Immigration and the Fate of Western Democracy* (New York: Nation Books, 2017).

with reference to the United Kingdom, "there has been a 'black' presence in Britain since the sixteenth century, an Asian presence since the eighteenth."[7] But the scope and scale of migration into Europe from the nonwhite global periphery, which has challenged and destabilized notions of European identity and given rise to "the multicultural question," is largely a post–World War II and postcolonial phenomenon.[8]

Reflecting on the relationship between empire, amnesia, and the politics of identity, Hall argued that historic relations of dependency and subordination – marked by 400 years of colonization, slavery, and imperial rule – were *reconfigured* when colonizers and formerly colonized populations reconvened on European soil. As he put it, "[I]n the wake of decolonization, and masked by a collective amnesia about, and systematic disavowal of 'empire,' this encounter was interpreted as a 'new beginning.' Most British people looked at these 'children of empire' as if they could not imagine where 'they' had come from, why, or what possible connection they could possibly have with Britain."[9] Extending Hall's analysis, Fatima El-Tayeb asserts that the complex interactions of race, religion, migration, and colonialism continue to haunt the presence of minorities in Europe today, placing them outside of the imagined postnational community.[10] In her view, the exclusion of communities of color from the European imaginary is a form of "invisible racialization" that manifests in the awkward coexistence of colorblind discourses that deny racial difference alongside regimes that construct nonwhiteness as non-European. In a twist on Balibar's racism without race, El-Tayeb argues that Europeans possessing visual markers of otherness are not simply out of place but also out of time. They are "eternal newcomers, forever suspended in time, forever 'just arriving,' defined by a static foreignness overriding both individual experience and historical facts."[11] Irrespective of their citizenship status, long-standing

[7] Stuart Hall, "Conclusion: The Multicultural Question," in B. Hesse, ed., *Unsettled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions* (London: Zed Books, 2000), 209–241.
[8] Rita Chin, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe: A History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).
[9] Hall, "Conclusion: The Multi-Cultural Question," 218.
[10] Fatima El-Tayeb, *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).
[11] *Ibid,* xxv.

minority populations – be they the descendants of Caribbean and South Asian migrants in Britain, North African migrants in France, or Turkish and Kurdish migrants in Germany – remain outside of dominant national imaginaries.

In Germany, a country with a troubled history of prioritizing blood and ethnicity as the basis of a shared identity and political community, minority populations face considerable challenges in achieving equal social standing as cocitizens.[12] My own usage of the qualified phrase "Muslims of Turkish and Kurdish descent in Germany" to describe my interlocutors is meant to underscore a fundamental tension at the heart of public debates surrounding immigration, race, religion, citizenship, and identity in Europe today. In a political climate marked by rising xenophobia and Islamophobia, such qualifiers are an effect of what many believe to be the incommensurability of categories such as German and Muslim or Muslim and European.[13] Similar to what Lisa Lowe has indexed with reference to Asian Americans in the United States, people of Turkish and Kurdish descent in Germany are seen by many Germans as *perpetual immigrants*, as the "foreigner within."[14] While it would be misleading to characterize these communities as immigrants, especially since many generational cohorts were born in Germany and

[12] Nonethnic Germans were ineligible for German citizenship until the year 2000. See Marc Morjé Howard, "The Causes and Consequences of Germany's New Citizenship Law," *German Politics* 17, no. 1 (2008), 41–62.

[13] Esra Özyürek, *Being German, Becoming Muslim: Race, Religion, and Conversion in the New Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Ruth Mandel, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008). See also Jean Beaman, *Citizen Outsider: Children of North African Immigrants in France* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017); John Bowen, *Can Islam Be French? Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secular State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Mayanthi Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); and Paul Silverstein, *Postcolonial France: Race, Islam, and the Future of the Republic* (London: Pluto Press, 2018) for a discussion of these issues in the French context. For debates in the United States, see Neda Maghbouleh, *The Limits of Whiteness: Iranian Americans and the Everyday Politics of Race* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017), and Erik Love, *Islamophobia and Racism in America* (New York: New York University Press, 2017).

[14] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996).

hold German citizenship, this sense of the foreigner within is pervasive in public discourse.[15] It is reflected in banal practices of demographic bookkeeping, like the German Federal Statistics Office's use of the category "persons with a migration background" (*Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund*). First introduced in 2005, this category refers to anyone who did not acquire German citizenship by birth or who has at least one parent who did not acquire German citizenship by birth. In practice, this category includes first-, second-, and parts of third-generation "immigrants." More than half of those whom the German Federal Statistics Office counts as a "person with a migration background" are actually German citizens.[16]

The idea that ethnic and religious minorities in Germany are eternal newcomers, perpetual immigrants, or forever foreigners is also a well-worn trope among far-right politicians like Alexander Gauland, cofounder and honorary chairman of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, whose platform explicitly states that "Islam is not a part of Germany." Gauland has come under fire on several occasions for his inflammatory rhetoric. In one speech, he suggested that Aydan Özoğuz, the Hamburg-born Bundestag member and Commissioner for Immigration, Refugees, and Integration in the third Merkel cabinet, should be "disposed of in Anatolia."[17] AfD members proudly reject what they see as "political correctness." At a speech in a village near Dresden, André Poggenburg, who was at the time the state chairman of the AfD in Saxony-Anhalt, told his supporters that "these camel drivers should go back to where they belong, far beyond the Bosphorus to their mud huts and multiple wives."[18] While such blatantly racist statements are a mainstay on the German right, many politicians have expressed concern with the growing diversity of Germany's population, including

[15] In this book, I prefer to use the term "minority" or "minoritized" to describe the successive generations of Turkish and Kurdish origin communities in Germany. Though they are labeled as immigrants by some, and may also be characterized as diasporas (especially by the Turkish government), many are in fact German citizens.

[16] Anne-Kathrin Will, "The German Statistical Category 'Migration Background': Historical Roots, Revisions, and Shortcomings," *Ethnicities* 19, no. 3 (2019), 535–557.

[17] Jon Stone, "German Right-Wing Populists AfD Launch 'Racist' Attack on One of Angela Merkel's Ministers," *The Independent*, August 29, 2017.

[18] "Germany's Turks Plan to Sue over AfD Politician's 'Camel Drivers' Rant," *Deutsche Welle,* February 16, 2018.

former chancellor Angela Merkel, who in a well-known 2010 speech claimed that German multiculturalism had "utterly failed."[19]

Unlike in Britain or France, the onset of labor migration from Turkey to Germany was not directly connected to histories of colonization. However, South–North migratory flows to Western Europe must be understood as part of a broader set of political and economic processes linking core, peripheral, and semiperipheral regions in the world capitalist system. Between 1955 and 1973, more than 2.5 million foreign workers immigrated to Germany through the Gastarbeiter (Guest Worker) program, a temporary and cyclical labor recruitment initiative established by German policymakers to overcome shortages in domestic labor markets and to ensure the steady rotation of cheap manpower throughout the German economy, particularly in low-skilled and industrial sectors.[20] Similar labor recruitment programs were implemented throughout much of Western Europe, in countries such as Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.[21]

[19] "Merkel Says German Multicultural Society Has Failed," *BBC News*, October 17, 2010. In her speech, Merkel said that at "the beginning of the 1960s our country called the foreign workers to come to Germany and now they live in our country … We kidded ourselves a while, we said: 'They won't stay, sometime they will be gone,' but this isn't a reality … And of course the approach [to build] a multicultural [society] and to live side-by-side and to enjoy each other … has failed, utterly failed."

[20] The first bilateral agreement for the recruitment of foreign laborers was signed with Italy in 1955 and served as a model for subsequent treaties with Spain and Greece (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964), Tunisia (1965), and Yugoslavia (1968). It set the legal parameters and procedures for West German businesses hiring non-German workers. Though initial recruitment was slow, the onset of rapid economic growth in the 1950s coupled with demographic bottlenecks following the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, which cut off a crucial source of cheap labor from the East, resulted in the acceleration of foreign migration to Germany. The number of Turkish workers grew steadily and eventually outstripped other national groups. See Rita Chin, *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Jennifer Miller, *Turkish Guest Workers in Germany: Hidden Lives and Contested Borders 1960s to 1980s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018); and Raymond Rist, *Guestworkers in Germany: The Prospects for Pluralism* (New York: Praeger Publishers Inc., 1978).

[21] As Chin notes in *The Guest Worker Question in Postwar Germany*, there were important differences between these programs, especially in terms of the role of employers in recruiting laborers (Switzerland, e.g., relied on employing firms to find their own workers and regulated incoming flows of foreigners on

Despite the steady growth of the immigrant labor force, official government rhetoric maintained that "Germany is not a country of immigration," and successive administrations from the mid-1950s onwards adopted policies that increased the number of foreign laborers in Germany while simultaneously barring pathways to naturalization and integration into Germany society. Convinced by the "myth of return" – the idea that immigrants would stay for a few years, earn some money, and eventually go back home – German policymakers made little effort to integrate foreign workers and were uninterested in creating any sort of pathway to permanent residency or citizenship. As the name of the Guest Worker program implies, policymakers believed that the presence of foreign laborers would be a temporary phenomenon primarily motivated by economic necessity.[22] But labor migration is never merely about economic considerations or cost–benefit calculations. As the Swiss poet and playwright Max Frisch declared during the height of labor recruitment initiatives in Western Europe, "We called for labor, but people came instead."[23]

The arrival of new migrants from Southern Europe and the Mediterranean into Germany brought different peoples, cultures, ideas, social practices, and ways of life into contact with one another.

an ad hoc basis), and in terms of countries of recruitment (Switzerland relied primarily on its immediate neighbors, especially Italy, whereas Austria and Germany signed bilateral treaties with countries from Europe's southern and southeastern periphery). Moreover, there were notable differences with respect to host countries' efforts to integrate newcomers. Scandinavian countries such as Sweden and Denmark gave foreign workers and their families the right to vote and stand for local and regional elections as early as 1975. Sweden encouraged immigrants to naturalize.

[22] The term "guest worker" underscores the real tension that migrant laborers faced as non-German residents in a country that was officially opposed to immigration. On a temporal level, "guest" connotes a state of transience or liminality. Furthermore, "guest" implies that the individual lacks a certain degree of autonomy and should abide by the norms and cultures of her host. On a functional level, "worker" defines the individual on the basis of her economic utility. The worker has no history or identity outside of her function as a producer of surplus value for the national economy. Gastarbeiter, then, indicates a subaltern status – one enshrined in law via policies of temporary residency and rotation that meant that no commitment beyond a limited contract would be required for employers or the host society at large.

[23] Max Frisch, *Überfremdung: Offentlichkeit als Partner*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1967). For a discussion of this quote in the context of German labor migration, see Mandel, *Cosmopolitan Anxieties: Turkish Challenges to Citizenship and Belonging in Germany*, especially Chapter 2.

Unlike postcolonial migrants, who possessed at least a rudimentary knowledge of the languages and cultures of the metropole, most first-generation migrants to Germany had little familiarity with the country. Though the Gastarbeiter program facilitated labor migration from Spain, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia, and Yugoslavia, immigrants from the Turkish Republic constituted the largest share of the guest worker population. When the program was officially abolished in 1973, Turkish-origin migrants accounted for 23 percent of the country's immigrant labor force.[24]

In the decades following the termination of the Guest Worker program, German public opinion on immigration was decidedly mixed. Surveys conducted in the early 1980s found that as many as 79 percent of respondents felt that there were "too many immigrants living in Germany."[25] One 1982 study comparing German attitudes about Turkish- and Italian-origin immigrants in West Germany discovered that 69 percent of survey respondents thought that Turks "behaved totally differently" than Germans (as opposed to 47 percent who thought the same about Italians).[26] As historian Sarah Thomsen Vierra has argued, "[D]ue to their larger numbers and to Germans' perception of them as particularly 'foreign' culturally, Turks became more visible and controversial than any of the other *Gastarbeiter* groups."[27]

Meeting minutes from a private discussion between newly elected chancellor Helmut Kohl and British prime minister Margaret Thatcher in 1982 confirm that such views were held at the highest levels of government. Unveiling a plan to reduce the number of Turks in West Germany by 50 percent within four years, Kohl told Thatcher that Turks "came from a very distinctive culture and did not integrate well."[28] Describing

[24] Rist, *Guestworkers in Germany: The Prospects for Pluralism*.
[25] Allensbach Archives, IfD Surveys 3099. Quoted in Oya S Abali, *German Public Opinion on Immigration and Integration* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2009).
[26] Allensbach Archives. IfD Survey 4005. Quoted in Abali, *German Public Opinion on Immigration and Integration*. The same study found that only 8 percent of respondents believed that Turks made for "good neighbors" while 13 percent thought that Turks were "hardworking people."
[27] Sarah Thomsen Vierra, *Turkish Germans in the Federal Republic of Germany: Immigration, Space, and Belonging, 1961–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 4.
[28] Quoted in Miller, *Turkish Guest Workers in Germany: Hidden Lives and Contested Borders, 1960s to 1980s*, 162. See also Claus Hecking, "Secret