Between Resurrection and Insurrection: Jesus and the “Deconstruction of Monotheism” in “Von der Zärtlichkeit” by Navid Kermani and “ich, jesus von nazareth” by SAID

Abstract:

The work of Navid Kermani and SAID frequently engages with religious themes and their respective oeuvres foreground the diversity within Islam and blur religious dividing lines. In spite of their differences, the short stories “Von der Zärtlichkeit” (Of Tenderness) by Kermani and “ich, jesus von nazareth” (i, jesus of nazareth) by SAID invite comparison because they share a deconstructive engagement with the figure of Jesus, conveying a spirituality felt in the material, rather than the metaphysical world. Whereas the former depicts a mystical experience in which Jesus’s presence is felt without him being glimpsed, implying an ambiguous sense of the divine in withdrawal and of empty sacred space, the latter is an at times angry monologue delivered by Jesus, in which holiness is located in righteous action against injustice. Hence the former evokes issues of spiritual absence and presence through Jesus’s resurrection, whereas the latter conveys a sense of insurrection, underlining Jesus’s role as a social radical. Both texts, however, shift meaning away from a transcendent God and toward the world, suggesting a religiosity beyond identity and ideology which can be illuminated by bringing Jean-Luc Nancy’s non-dualist concept of the “deconstruction of monotheism” into dialogue with the texts’ Christian and Sufi allusions.

Many contemporary German writers of varying Muslim backgrounds are increasingly engaging with religious and spiritual themes in their work, often highlighting the multifaceted nature of Islam.[[1]](#endnote-1) This trend can be regarded as part of a much wider German cultural paradigm, referred to by Silke Horstkotte as the “religious turn,” in which the religions of old do not return but rather “new, post-secular poetics” are imagined.[[2]](#endnote-2) German Muslims merit particularly close scrutiny in this regard not only due to the relevance of their work in the climate of post-9/11 Islamophobia, but also because of the challenging and unexpected sense of spirituality their fiction often conveys. Coupled with the religious turn, the recent surge in Islamic themes within German literature has been identified by Karin E. Yeşilada as the “Muslim turn,”[[3]](#endnote-3) and in the case of many German Muslim writers this growing focus on Islam is the result both of a genuine interest in religious faith and also of the increasing need to defend themselves against the growing puritanical zeal within Islam, the German media’s prejudices against Islam,[[4]](#endnote-4) and the prestige of secular rationalism in Germany. Indeed, groups such as the right-wing political party Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany), together with its popular wing Pegida (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West),[[5]](#endnote-5) and writers such as the sociologist Necla Kelek[[6]](#endnote-6) contend that Islam is incompatible with German society because it supposedly never underwent a process comparable to the liberalization and secularization of the Christian West. As Katherine Pratt Ewing indicates, such thinking has given rise to a dichotomy that “lines up modernity, secularism, cosmopolitanism, gender equality, and individual rights on one side and tradition, Islam, rural conservatism, patriarchy, and group conformity on the other.”[[7]](#endnote-7)

The German-Iranian[[8]](#endnote-8) writers Navid Kermani and SAID[[9]](#endnote-9) are prominent examples within both the religious and the Muslim turns whose work points beyond the divisiveness of current debates surrounding Islam in Germany. Despite their differences, Kermani’s “Von der Zärtlichkeit” (Of Tenderness) from the short-story collection *Vierzig Leben* (Forty Lives,2004)and SAID’s “ich, jesus von nazareth” (i, jesus of nazareth) from the short-story and essay collection *Das Niemandsland is unseres: West-östliche Betrachtungen* (The No-Man’s-Land is Ours: West-eastern Observations,2010) invite comparison because they share a deconstructive engagement with the figure of Jesus, conveying a spirituality felt in the material, rather than the metaphysical world. Jesus is not only God incarnate for Christians, but also an important prophet for Muslims and a spiritual example for many Sufis, and these texts draw inspiration from both Christian and Islamic traditions. Yet their importance lies not in any attempt to converge the two religions, although connections between them are made by Kermani and SAID. Whereas Helga Druxes and Karolin Machtans maintain that “Kermani pleads for a dialogue between members of various religions that emphasizes similarities in their beliefs,”[[10]](#endnote-10) I will argue that Jesus plays an altogether more destabilizing role for religious identities in both Kermani’s and SAID’s work. In the essay “Ist der Islam integrierbar?” (Is Islam Integrable?, 2009), Kermani questions the binary thinking that underpins the notion of intercultural or -religious dialogue: “The phrase ‘cultural dialogue’ ... in its well-meaning aims unintentionally confirms its opposing model, ‘cultural conflict’: as though there were two subjects, Islam and the West, who must stop feuding and finally get along.”[[11]](#endnote-11) In this regard, “Von der Zärtlichkeit” and “ich, jesus von nazareth” need not be understood as seeking to harmonize Christianity and Islam, but rather as moving radically beyond identity categories, hinting at a less divisive concept of the divine, which can be illuminated by Jean-Luc Nancy’s non-dualist concept of the “deconstruction of monotheism.”

Nancy argues in the essay collection *Déconstruction du christianisme, 1* (2005, *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity*, 2008) that monotheism’s need for a transcendental organizing principle is inherently divisive, in that it aims to homogenize our world, thereby causing identity conflicts and stifling new ways of thinking. Not only religions function via the monotheistic paradigm however, as secular ideologies merely replace God with a sense of Reason that acts as a foundation for their own guiding principles: “‘human rights’ and ‘socialisms’ are the inheritors of Christianity.”[[12]](#endnote-12) Alternatively, Nancy moves beyond a metaphysical understanding of God, proposing a notion of the divine not as “the ‘other world’ ..., but the other of the world”[[13]](#endnote-13) and of “faith” as a relation “to that which cuts off or withdraws access.”[[14]](#endnote-14) Rather than replace the empty sacred space left by an absenting God with another transcendental organizing principle, he thus compels us to confront the alterity within the nothingness of the material world’s origins.[[15]](#endnote-15)

Nancy’s thought can provide a productive framework for understanding how the religiosities of Kermani and SAID move radically beyond what can be described as monotheism, highlighting both how the Christian and Sufi understandings of Jesus in their fiction act to deconstruct the monotheistic paradigm. In *La Création du monde ou la mondialisation* (2002, *The Creation of the World; or, Globalization*,2007),Nancy draws upon the thought of the Lurianic kabala (and since then he has said that such thinking is present in the mysticisms of all the monotheisms),[[16]](#endnote-16) arguing that if God created the world *ex nihilo*, he subsequently ceased to exist in isolation from it: “the ‘nothing’ of creation is the one that opens in God when God withdraws in it (and in sum *from* it) in the act of creating. God annihilates itself [*s’anéantit*] as a ‘self’ or as a distinct being in order to ‘withdraw’ in its act – which makes the opening of the world.”[[17]](#endnote-17) Nancy’s thought suggests, then, a God that, rather than existing separate to the world, “merges with it,”[[18]](#endnote-18) and this is reflected in his understanding of the Christian Jesus. As Christina Smerick affirms: “In God-becoming-man, God disappears from sight, a man is glorified and anointed, and the world is exposed to itself – not to an outside space, not to something that is Other, but to the Other that is itself.”[[19]](#endnote-19) Although Muslims do not regard Jesus as the son of God, Sufis such as the al-Andalusian poet and scholar Ibn Arabi (1165-1240) do hold Jesus to stand for all the divine beauty that appears in the world and for the human ability to be a vessel for God,[[20]](#endnote-20) and hence similarly view Jesus as embodying a sense of holiness in the material world. This comes across in the poem “The Second Jesus” by the Sasanian Sufi Garib Nawaz (1141-1236), which speaks of the sensation of attaining mystical insight and of feeling a divine presence within oneself, which is linked to the figure of Jesus in the final line:

Some say the path is difficult;

God forgive them! I went so easily:

The Holy Spirit breathes his every breath into Mo'in--[[21]](#endnote-21)

who knows? Maybe I'm the second Jesus.[[22]](#endnote-22)

As Nancy points out in *Noli me tangere: Essai sur la levée du corps* (2003, *Noli me tangere: On the Rising of the Body*, 2008), the word “ἀνάστασις” [anastasis] from the original Koine Greek New Testament can be translated as both “resurrection” and “insurrection,”[[23]](#endnote-23) and these variants characterize “Von der Zärtlichkeit” and “ich, jesus von nazareth” respectively. Whereas Kermani’s text seems to suggest a resurrected Jesus and a sense of the divine in withdrawal, SAID’s depicts Jesus as a rebellious radical with ambivalent ideas of love and wrath. Holiness is, then, fleeting and inaccessible in “Von der Zärtlichkeit,” whereas religious significance is located in worldly acts in “ich, jesus von nazareth.” Both nevertheless shift meaning away from a transcendent God and toward the world in a post-monotheistic sense. Hence the texts under analysis here go beyond mere dialogical negotiations between the conflicting doctrines of Christianity and Islam, in that they not only resist clearly defined identities and ideologies, but also hint at a non-identitarian sense of faith that is felt in the material world and is devoid of organizing principles.

Resurrection: The Departing Divine of Kermani’s “Von der Zärtlichkeit”

Kermani (b. 1967 in Siegen) is perhaps best known in Germany for his journalistic work that often deals with conflicts in the Muslim world and argues for a more cosmopolitan society,[[24]](#endnote-24) and his growing prominence as a public intellectual in this field is evidenced by awards such as the Hanna Arendt Prize (2011) and German Book Trade’s Peace Prize (2015). Yet attention is increasingly turning toward Kermani’s award-winning literary writing, which contributes toward contemporary debates surrounding religion, and Islam in Germany in innovative ways. He can speak with particular authority on the subject of Islam, as he is habilitated in Oriental Studies and has published two highly praised scholarly monographs, both of which have been translated into English: *Gott ist schön: Das ästhetische Erleben des Koran* (2000, *God is Beautiful: The Aesthetic Experience of the Quran*,2015), a study of the significance of the Qur’an’s literary and poetic qualities for worship; and *Der Schrecken Gottes: Attar, Hiob und die metaphysische Revolte* (2005, *The Terror of God: Attar, Job and the Metaphysical Revolt*, 2011), an examination of mystics and dissidents within the three monotheisms, whom Kermani contrasts with “bigots or literalists.”[[25]](#endnote-25)

His recent book *Ungläubiges Staunen: Über das Christentum* (Incredulous Disbelief: On Christianity, 2015) is, although also informed by his scholarly expertise, a highly personal series of responses to important objects and works of art from the Christian world. This publication touches specifically upon the subject of the resurrection, featuring an extended version of his highly provocative article on the painting *Christ on the Cross* by the Italian Baroque painter Guido Reni (1575-1642),[[26]](#endnote-26) originally published in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (2009). Kermani was nominated along with a Catholic, a Protestant and a Jew for the Hessian Cultural Prize in 2009 in order to support and foster interreligious dialogue. However, what was supposed to be symbolic of a harmonious multi-faith Germany quickly became embroiled in controversy, as Kermani’s award was withdrawn because his views on the resurrection sparked criticism from the two Christian awardees, the Cardinal Bishop of Mainz, Karl Lehmann, and the former president of the Lutheran Church in Hesse and Nassau, Peter Steinacker.[[27]](#endnote-27) In the article, Kermani praises the painting for rejecting Christianity’s “excessive, right up to pornographic”[[28]](#endnote-28) obsession with pain, which Kermani views as contributing toward a mostly Catholic tendency to merely lament the state of the world, rather than seek to improve it. Reni’s non-violent depiction of the crucifixion is, in contrast, more acceptable to Kermani: “Precisely because his pain is not bodily, not the result of the most severe, that is to say unusual, inhuman torture conceivable, this Jesus’s death is representative of humans, of all humans: he is every dead person, at every time, everywhere. His gaze is the last before the resurrection, in which he seems to have little hope.”[[29]](#endnote-29)

For Kermani, Reni’s painting is more readily identifiable with other deaths and is therefore closer to our world: “Look here, he seems to cry. Not only look at me, but look at the earth, look at us. Jesus does not suffer like Christian ideology wants him to, in order to absolve God; Jesus does not lament, why have you forsaken me, but rather why have you forsaken us?”[[30]](#endnote-30) Despite the conclusions that the board of the Hessian Cultural Prize drew in withdrawing Kermani’s award, the argument put forward in his discussion of Reni is what make Kermani’s writing so important for contemporary debates surrounding religion and cosmopolitanism, namely its questioning and world-affirming spirituality that seeks to challenge God’s injustices, placing emphasis on how we can transform our world for the better. This imperative can be found in most of Kermani’s work, be it scholarly, journalistic or literary.

As the above controversy evidences, Kermani’s scholarly inquiries are frequently focused on a broad understanding of the monotheisms that is unafraid of challenging established doctrines. Mysticism is the central focus of much of his scholarly research and this has fed into the skeptical religiosity of his fiction, making mystical themes essential for understanding the often strange and surprising occurrences in his literary work. For instance, the short story collection *Du sollst* (Thou Shalt,2005) and the novel *Gro­ße Liebe* (Great Love,2014) both engage with Sufi thought and other religious sources in order to explore humankind’s relationship with the divine in terms of love and desire. As Karolin Machtans affirms, both these texts locate a sense of the divine in the world: “not only does human love serve as a metaphor for divine love, it also – more importantly – functions as a *medium* of the beauty and terror of divine love.”[[31]](#endnote-31) “Von der Zärtlichkeit,” in which an apparent sighting of Jesus by a friend is discussed, has a similarly world-orientated spiritual theme. The story engages with deliberately ambiguous elements of Islam and Christianity, which Jim Jordan regards as a tolerant gesture that leaves room for the competing claims of both Christianity and Islam.[[32]](#endnote-32) Yet “Von der Zärtlichkeit” not only allows space for competing identities, but it also more radically evokes a worldly spirituality outside of doctrines and ready-made identities.

“Von der Zärtlichkeit” is one of forty stories from *Vierzig Leben*, all of which are inspired by a variety of religious and mystical themes taken from the Persian Sufi text *Stations of the Sufi Path* by Abdullah Ansari (1005-89), which recounts the journey toward the divine. The ambiguous religiosity of *Vierzig Leben* is highlighted by the significance of the number forty in the Torah, the Bible and the Qur’an: rain fell for forty days and forty nights in the story of Noah’s Ark (Genesis 7:4), the period between Jesus’s resurrection and ascension lasted forty days (Acts 1:3), and Muhammad first received the revelation as a forty-year-old.[[33]](#endnote-33) Chapters in the collection include, for example, “Von der Liebe” (Of Love), a story about a talented santur[[34]](#endnote-34) player and the spiritual dimension of losing oneself in music; and “Vom Gehorsam” (Of Obedience), in which a youth finds freedom in submission as he is forced to water plants for forty days as a punishment for pretending to ejaculate on the family Bible. As previously mentioned, “Von der Zärtlichkeit” focuses on the figure of Jesus; it is the story of a friend with Sufi tendencies who claims to have felt Jesus’s presence during an art exhibition in a disused factory in Cologne. As clarified in the text, Jesus is the son of God for Christians, something that Muslims reject whilst still venerating him as an important prophet. Yet the protagonist’s acquaintance becomes unsure of this distinction after his experience. The conversation about Jesus begins as they discuss the appearance of the narrator’s cousin on a televized philosophical debate about God. As the narrator states: “He changed the topic from God to Jesus Christ, a short way for a Christian, a somewhat longer one for a Muslim with mystical tendencies such as my acquaintance.”[[35]](#endnote-35)

Jesus is characterized by a holiness of sorts in the text – the people present at the exhibition are overcome by sensations of tenderness and feel “almost as if floating”[[36]](#endnote-36) (*K*,184) –, but also by a paradoxical sense of present absence: “My friend decided to tell me about his encounter, which strictly speaking ... well, what should it be called, when two people do not meet each other, but know that they find themselves in close proximity to one another?” (*K*, 179) Kermani raises the point in *Ungläubiges Staunen* that we do not know what form the resurrected take and that he himself rejects the idea of bodily resurrection associated with Jesus within institutionalized Islam.[[37]](#endnote-37) The narrator’s friend’s awareness of Jesus without seeing him thus leaves this theological question open, whilst also implying an ephemeral understanding of the divine and a sense of the sacred in withdrawal, which can be brought into dialogue with Nancy’s deconstruction of monotheism. As B. C. Hutchens affirms, for Nancy it is not a question of “whether a God exists, or what essential properties it possesses, but rather *how* it figures in empty sacred places.”[[38]](#endnote-38)

The uncertainty surrounding the strange encounter with Jesus in “Von der Zärtlichkeit” does not reflect the dualistic separation of God and humankind that Nancy views as characteristic of monotheism,[[39]](#endnote-39) as the physical feeling of Jesus’s breath on the friend (*K*, 180-81)hints at a post-monotheistic sense of the divine experienced in the material world, calling to mind Sufi associations of Jesus and the breath of the Holy Spirit, as expressed in the above poem by Nawaz. Although the narrator’s friend identifies as a Muslim, albeit an unorthodox one, this experience leads him to associate Jesus with the divine, which nevertheless reaffirms his own mystical outlook: “One of my friend’s certainties even began to unravel, namely his belief in the prophecy, which includes the refusal of any divine sonship [Gottessohnshaft], but he nevertheless experienced his encounter with Jesus ... as a validation of his own religiosity, which is shaped by Islam and by Sufism in particular” (*K*, 184-85). Although this new sense of the sacred gives Jesus some form of holiness, it is arguably compatible with the acquaintance’s Sufi-inspired Islam, both because Sufis regard Jesus as conveying the appearance of God in humans and for all the divine beauty that appears in the world, and because it chimes with Sufism’s non-dualist blurring of the sacred and the profane more broadly.

Yet this depiction of Jesus’s (dis)appearance also resonates with a Christian understanding of his resurrection, which Nancy discusses in terms of the deconstruction of Christianity in *Noli me tangere*. As Nancy argues, Jesus’s demand that Mary Magdalene not touch him suggests a conflation of presence and absence and an ungraspable sense of the sacred in departure:

To see what is not to be seen, to see what gives itself to be seen only to a capable gaze ...: such are the stakes whose central motif is *Noli me tangere*: ‘You see, but this seeing is not and cannot be a touching, if touching [or touching him, *le toucher*] itself had to figure the immediacy of a presence; you see what is not present and you touch the untouchable that holds itself beyond the reach of your hands, just as he whom you see before you is already leaving this place of encounter.’[[40]](#endnote-40)

Here Nancy expands upon what Jesus means by “touch me not,” relating it to his post-monotheistic notion of the divine as not part of an Other world, but rather as withdrawing within our world: “No, nothing is available here: don’t try to seize upon a meaning for this finite and finished life, don’t try to touch or hold back what essentially distances itself and, in distancing itself, touches you with its very distance (in both senses: touches you with and from a distance).”[[41]](#endnote-41) As Laurens ten Kate asserts, Nancy understands *parousia* quite literally as “a presence (*ousia*) that remains close but at a distance (*par*-).” “God’s presence in Christ is,” for Nancy, “a presence of *retreat*,”[[42]](#endnote-42) that is to say, it is a fleeting and ungraspable encounter that leaves one with a sense of alterity. The spirituality of Kermani’s text is similarly caught between presence and absence and can therefore be illuminated by Nancy’s non-foundational idea of meaning that is “without a transcendent Giver, who would be outside the world,” but rather is unstable and “simply ‘happens’ in a moment, a place, caught between presence and absence.”[[43]](#endnote-43)

“Von der Zärtlichkeit” thus draws upon both Islamic and Christian tropes in order to hint at a post-monotheistic and kenotic (self-emptying) sense of the sacred that occurs and withdraws in the world, serving to deconstruct the monotheistic understanding of God as the world’s Other who confers meaning upon it. Indeed, the event does not result in any of the witnesses converting to the orthodox Christian ideas of monotheism (*K*, 184), which itself implies a religiosity beyond ready-made identities, rather than a sense of the sacred that functions as an organizing principle with clear meaning. Moreover, the site of the occurrence at an exhibition in a disused factory locates this mystical experience firmly outside of institutionalized consecrated places, like churches or mosques, while also suggesting the role the arts can play in imagining and conveying new ideas of spirituality.A similarly post-monotheistic religiosity can be located in SAID’s “ich, jesus von nazareth,” albeit for differing reasons.

Insurrection: Holiness in Action in SAID’s “ich, jesus von nazareth”

Whereas Kermani is a second generation German-Iranian, SAID (b. 1947 in Tehran) is of the first. He was twice exiled from Iran, once escaping Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi and once again fleeing from Ayatollah Khomeini, and a large part of his work recounts the terror of these despotic regimes and the difficulties of the migratory experience, acting both as a powerful critique of these Iranian regimes and as a pedagogical tool for the German audience. His political activism led him to participate in the ‘68er student movement in Germany as the general secretary of the Confederation of Iranian Students’ National Union[[44]](#endnote-44) and his work continues to be politically engaged. From fear of assassination by the Iranian authorities, he publishes under his first name only (normally written in block capitals) and initially would only use childhood photos on the sleeves of his books in order to avoid recognition. In *Der lange Arm der Mullahs: Notizen aus meinem Exil* (The Long Arm of the Mullahs: Notes from my Exile,1995), in which SAID writes about the death of friends and fellow activists, and his powerlessness to change his native Iran, the real danger of assassination becomes apparent in his diary entry on October 17, 1992: “Four Iranian members of the opposition – amongst them three leaders of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan – were murdered in Berlin.”[[45]](#endnote-45)

SAID’s diverse oeuvre consists of radio plays, poetry, imagined conversations, short stories and children’s literature, and he has also published autobiographical essays, essays on literature, diary entries and transcribed interviews. He was elected president of the German PEN association in 2000, the first time in its history that a non-German citizen held the organization’s highest office,[[46]](#endnote-46) and although he has won various prestigious awards for his writing, such as the Chamisso Prize in 2002, there is a distinct lack of scholarly research into SAID’s work, perhaps because the notion of identity in his writing can often be understood as drawing upon the much criticized “two-worlds paradigm,” of which Leslie A. Adelson is the most forceful critic: “Envisioning migrant cultures ‘between two worlds’ as a delimited space where two otherwise mutually exclusive worlds intersect is not especially helpful ..., since the presumption of originary, essentially intact worlds ... applies.”[[47]](#endnote-47) Much of SAID’s work can be read as supporting such a dualistic understanding of identity, as Thomas Baginski affirms: “This intermediate position in a foreign society, expressed in images of an uprooting from his native culture and of an inability to put down roots in a foreign culture, is repeatedly thematized in SAID’s work since for him exile is always a question of a mental and political transition and of a process of development.”[[48]](#endnote-48) The autobiographical short story “ein kind auf der suche nach europa” (a child in search of europe) from *In Deutschland leben* (Living in Germany,2004 – also republished in *Das Niemandsland is unseres*)is exemplary of this dialectical “betweenness”: “the aged refugee – now caught between two worlds [zu einem zwischending geworden aus zwei welten] – continues to love and search for his europe.”[[49]](#endnote-49)

However, a religiosity that moves beyond the two-worlds paradigm has been a constant feature of SAID’s writing,[[50]](#endnote-50) and it has become particularly prominent in his post-9/11 work.[[51]](#endnote-51) “ich, jesus von nazareth” is exemplary of this complex engagement with religion, hinting at a world where the divine is felt without acting as a guiding principle, suggesting a non-identitarian alternative to organized religion and fundamentalism. Yeşilada identifies SAID as an author of the Muslim turn[[52]](#endnote-52) and he expounds upon his relationship with Islam at length in *Ich und der Islam* (Me and Islam,2005), a collection of autobiographical essays and diary entries. In the title essay he positively evaluates uninstitutionalized forms of religiosity, in contrast with his negative experience of state Islam in Iran and with the Islamic terrorism of the present. A meeting with a rabbi was particularly influential for his understanding of religion in this regard:

the rabbi’s religiosity was stronger than his belief in the letters of the religion. for religion is emotional [eine ergriffenheit]. it has little to do with a prayer book or a holy war. it can only ever be noble – removed from dogmatism and squabbling institutions – and full of respect for the feelings of others. religions are only intolerant once they are defined through a closed system that must then be defended from outsiders. a religious attitude does not require any casing [gehäuse].[[53]](#endnote-53)

This critique resonates with similar criticism of organized religion and closed identities from Nancy,[[54]](#endnote-54) and it is the open religiosity suggested above that will be examined in “ich, jesus von nazareth.”

Much like the religiosity I have discussed in connection with Kermani’s writing, SAID too hints at a holiness that does not concern itself with unifying claims to universalism and that draws inspiration from the Sufi and Christian traditions. Alongside the fictional short-story “ich, jesus von nazareth,” *Das Niemandsland ist unsers* also contains essays on Islamic mysticism, such as the discussion of the Persian mystical poet Hafez (c. 1315-1390) and his influence upon Goethe entitled “hafis, du entschlüsselst alle geheimnisse” (hafez, you unlock every secret) and the essay “afschane” (afšana), in which SAID explores the contributions of Islamic thinkers, principally the Persian polymath known in the West as Avicenna (c. 980-1037, born Ibn Sina in Afšana, now within the territory of Uzbekistan), to the philosophy and science that underpins Western ideas of modernity. Hence *Das Niemandsland ist unsers* is, similar to Kermani’s *Vierzig Leben*, characterized by an engagement with mysticism, yet unlike “Von der Zärtlichlichkeit,” “ich, jesus von nazareth” is more overtly political. This Jesus is not the withdrawing Christ of the resurrection, but rather the radical Jesus of the other meaning of “anastasis”: insurrection.

SAID’s text is in the form of a speech given by Jesus in order to stoke the flames of rebellion. He states, echoing the terminology of Kermani’s text: “my resurrection is a tender and radical attempt to approach people, without any tiara or crimson. i need citoyens who do not follow the law, but rather struggle without reproach for justice.”[[55]](#endnote-55) SAID thus reminds us – here through allusions to the French Revolution specifically – of the radical nature of Jesus’s behavior, which is often forgotten by contemporary institutionalized Christianity and conservative Christian parties. As Terry Eagleton asserts in his published lectures *Reason, Faith, and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate* (2009):

Jesus … appears not to work, and is accused of being a glutton and a drunkard. He is presented as homeless, propertyless, celibate, peripatetic, socially marginal, disdainful of kinsfolk, without a trade, a friend of outcasts and pariahs, averse to material possessions, without fear for his own safety, careless about purity regulations, critical of traditional authority, a thorn in the side of the Establishment, and a scourge of the rich and powerful.[[56]](#endnote-56)

Just as the Biblical Jesus can be thought of as anti-Establishment, the Jesus of SAID’s text critiques both institutionalized religions and contemporary politics, disparaging them as coercive ways of organizing society: “your guards that you have marshaled against me – together with your priests, lawmakers and politicians. they will all achieve nothing against my voice when it heralds the new world” (*S*, 57-8). In an article for *Die Zeit* from the same year SAID points out the difference between what Jesus preached and his contemporary instrumentalization. Just as the Jesus of “ich, jesus von nazareth” states: “you have put me on this pedestal in order to rob me of my subversive power” (*S*, 65); SAID too argues in *Die Zeit*: “Christianity was once a religion of slaves. Today it has become a badge for the CDU and CSU.[[57]](#endnote-57) The Jesus of Nazareth who acted so ‘irrationally’ in the Garden of Gethsemane would be a firebrand today.”[[58]](#endnote-58)

SAID further asks in the article:“what is Christian about this Europe? The way in which the EU destroys the economies of African countries through subsidies for its own products, conceiving an army of the starving? Or the shameful manner in which the midget-continent welcomes the starving when they land exhausted as refugees upon its shores?”[[59]](#endnote-59) These themes also emerge in “ich, jesus von nazareth” as Jesus once again threatens to throw money lenders out of the temples (*S*, 60) and criticizes the EU’s refugee policy: “so dazzled [were you by your own magnificence] that you received foreigners with hatred and bent their rights” (*S*, 68). In contrast to Europe’s uncaring politics, the heart of Jesus’s radical message in the text is love, as it is in Christianity and Islam. For Eagleton, Jesus’s brutal treatment despite this outlook is one of the most poignant aspects of his story: “The New Testament is a brutal destroyer of human illusions. If you follow Jesus and don’t end up dead, it appears you have some explaining to do. The stark signifier for the human condition is one who spoke up for love and justice and was done to death for his pains. The traumatic truth of human history is a mutilated body.”[[60]](#endnote-60) In “ich, jesus von nazareth” too, Jesus describes himself as “the guardian angel of lovers” (*S*, 61) and ends his speech with an emphatic call for love: “i am simply proclaiming my love throughout the world until it becomes a revolt and seizes you” (*S*, 72).

Yet, although the Biblical Jesus demands unconditional love of his followers and even that we love our enemy as well as our neighbor, he also shows anger toward injustice on occasion: “But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath” (Romans 2:8). SAID’s Jesus, much like the Biblical one, also gets angry about injustice and even threatens violence against it, demonstrating an ambivalence about love and wrath.[[61]](#endnote-61) Here, Jesus threatens to melt false idols and pour the molten liquid down his enemies’ throats (*S*, 58) and to burn cities to the ground (*S*, 70), suggesting that in some cases force is justified. Just as Jesus is reported in the Bible as declaring: “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34); the Jesus of “ich, jesus von nazareth” similarly demands: “those that have a cloak should sell it for a sword” (*S*, 59).

SAID’s portrayal of Jesus as a man of action resonates with Friedrich Nietzsche’s concept of the “redeemer,” who demonstrates his significance through his struggle against suffering and his love. In *Der Antichrist: Fluch auf das Christenthum* (1894, *The Antichrist*,1918) Nietzsche outlines his redeemer figure as someone whose message is in her/his behavior: “This ‘bearer of glad tidings’ died as he lived and *taught* – *not* to ‘save mankind,’ but to show mankind how to live.”[[62]](#endnote-62) However Nietzsche’s redeemer also shuns the world in order to retreat into an inner world, as her/his “extreme susceptibility to pain and irritation” leads to an instinctive hatred of reality:[[63]](#endnote-63) “The fear of pain, even of infinitely slight pain – the end of this *can* be nothing save a *religion of love*....”[[64]](#endnote-64) Despite sharing Nietzsche’s criticisms of Christianity’s and wider society’s decadence, the Jesus of “ich, jesus von nazareth” does not display the same fear of pain and rejection of the world as Nietzsche’s “redeemer type,” which would reinforce the world-transcending monotheistic paradigm by placing faith in divine providence. In fact, a possible textual reference to Nietzsche’s redeemer is implied in SAID’s text in order to reject this world-denying notion of Jesus: “for i arise again [“auferstehe wieder”] against the redeemers that you invented in your wretched rooms to erase any memory of me” (*S*, 66-7) – here, as throughout the text, the ambiguity of the verb “auferstehen” reminds us of the dual meaning of “anastasis.” Thus the Jesus of SAID’s text reflects to a certain extent the redeemer type’s emphasis on the significance of behavior, although he does not shy away from the injustices of the world. As Nancy asserts, the redeemer’s “faith is behavior, not the adherence to a message. He is in the act and not in the significance, or again, his significance, his sense is wholly in his act.”[[65]](#endnote-65) The impact of SAID’s Jesus is similarly in his actions rather than any ideological message, as he seeks to effect change in the material world, rather than wait for God’s transcendental intervention.

This importance placed on Jesus’s behavior mirrors the Sufi understanding of Jesus as a paragon of good conduct. As Kermani outlines in *The Terror of God*: “This is a constantly recurring pattern in Sufi logic, especially in Attar,[[66]](#endnote-66) and is often applied literally: showing leniency towards enemies, repaying hatred with love, rewarding attacks instead of avenging them.”[[67]](#endnote-67) This dimension of Sufism was often referred to as “following the way of Christ,”[[68]](#endnote-68) just as he refers to himself as “the way, the truth and the life” in John 14:16 and also in SAID’s text (*S*, 60-1). Despite the same emphasis on behavior in SAID’s text, his Jesus differs noticeably from this Sufi image, displaying both “tender and radical” (*S*, 63) tendencies, just as Sufis understood these contrasting notions as characteristic of God.[[69]](#endnote-69) Although Jesus’s violence appears at odds with the text’s equally important message of love, it can be elucidated by SAID’s own suffering under violent regimes, and also by Nancy’s post-monotheistic understanding of Jesus’s parables. Nancy sees a refusal of straight-forward meaning-making in Jesus’s remark: “By hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive” (Matthew 13:14). According to Nancy, these ambiguous comments mean that the aim of the parables is “to sustain the blindness of those who do not see. It does not proceed out of a pedagogy or figuration (of allegory or illustration) but, to the contrary, out of a refusal or denial of pedagogy.”[[70]](#endnote-70) Thus when Jesus says: “For whosoever hath, to him shall be given; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath” (Matthew 13:12), Nancy argues that Jesus is referring to the concept that “there is no ‘message’ without there first being ... an address to a capacity or an aptitude for listening.”[[71]](#endnote-71) Nancy does not regard this as an “exhortation,” but rather as a “warning” that “if you do not understand, do not look for the reason in an obscurity of the text but only within yourself.”[[72]](#endnote-72) The speech of “ich, jesus von nazareth” similarly need not be interpreted as the affirmation of a set of guiding principles about how to live, but rather as both a message to those with the capacity to hear – those who love unconditionally – and a (at times violent) warning to those who cannot – unethical politicians, institutionalized religions and “the eternally pious who seek to divide” (*S*, 58). Although the monologue perhaps seems coercive in its condemnation of injustice, at its end Jesus rejects both religious and atheist ideologies that can be described as conforming to the monotheistic paradigm in their attempts to guide us: “i bow neither to him [god] nor his negation” (*S*, 72). Instead, SAID’s text points beyond any ideological drive to determine identities, suggesting a concept of faith based on actions against injustice.

Thus the importance of Jesus’s behavior in SAID’s text for our understanding of him need not necessarily mean that he acts via the monotheistic paradigm as an example for a new religious community. His monologue is rather the deconstruction of monotheism, in that it shifts meaning away from a transcendent God that directs behavior on earth and toward the ethics of our own choices in the material world. For SAID’s Jesus there are not only no institutionalized rules, but also no sin (*S*, 67). As Nietzsche argues: “In the whole psychology of the ‘Gospels’ the concepts of guilt and punishment are lacking, and so is that of reward. ‘Sin,’ which means anything that puts a distance between God and man, is abolished—*this is precisely the ‘glad tidings.’*”[[73]](#endnote-73) Yet whereas for Nietzsche it follows that the Christian “offers no resistance, either by word or in his heart, to those who stand against him. ... He is angry with no one, and he despises no one. He neither appeals to the courts of justice nor heeds their mandates,”[[74]](#endnote-74) SAID’s Jesus figure does indeed resist injustice, whilst still being against the prescriptive nature of institutionalized religions that function via the monotheistic paradigm.

Jesus also makes a point of denying his status as God’s son here, highlighting his low social standing by affirming his position as “the son of a jewish tradesman” (*S*, 65). He also refers to his own crucifixion (*S*, 58) and thus cannot be linked to institutionalized Islamic doctrine, which teaches that Jesus ascended bodily into heaven and consequently could not have died on the cross. Instead of associating Jesus with either Christianity or Islam (or ambiguously leaving the question of religious denomination open like Kermani’s text), Jesus is outside all established religions in “ich, jesus von nazareth,” but nevertheless retains a sense of holiness. He echoes SAID’s comments on the rabbi from *Ich und der Islam* quoted above, declaring: “for i, jesus of nazareth, the envoy of god, i am receptive to all tongues. no headscarf, no veil, no cross, no bonnet, no wailing wall; i come barefoot and have no need for casing [gehäuse]. and that is why i kneel before no one and wish to see no one kneel before me” (*S*, 60).

Conclusion

Just as the Jesus of SAID’s text describes his followers as “searchers” (*S*, 66) and himself as a “fragment”(*S*, 67), implying a religiosity without an endpoint or a stable sense of meaning, the acquaintance of “Von der Zärtlichkeit” feels his faith strengthened as it is cast into doubt (*K*, 185). The spirituality of these texts therefore implies a transformative openness toward the divine in the world and not the firm and unquestioning belief of organized religion, and in doing so act to deconstruct the monotheistic separation of the material and the metaphysical world. As Nancy argues, it is the ability to be open to and changed by alterity that characterizes the destabilizing aspect of faith: “While belief sets down or assumes a sameness of the other with which it identifies itself and in which it takes solace (he is good, he will save me), faith lets itself be addressed by a disconcerting appeal through the other, thrown into a listening that I myself do not know.”[[75]](#endnote-75) “Von der Zärtlichekeit” and “ich, jesus von nazareth” therefore involve faith rather than belief, in that their ambiguous post-monotheistic intimations of the divine stem from unsettling confrontations, rather than a clear message that would lead to a closed religious identity.

These texts can therefore be regarded as important contributions to the post-9/11 debates surrounding Islam in that they undermine the Islam-West dichotomy. Suspicion of Islam has grown substantially in Germany in the post-9/11 era, as evidenced by the recent rise of Pegida and also by Thilo Sarrazin’s controversial best-seller *Deutschland schafft sich ab: Wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen* (Germany is Abolishing Itself: How We are Gambling with our Country, 2010), in which Germany’s contemporary societal problems are solely attributed to the infiltration of Islam and Islamic culture.[[76]](#endnote-76) Although Kermani does admit to feeling compelled by the Islamophobic media to group himself with other Muslims out of solidarity, in the face of such negative generalizations he ultimately “does not want to belong to any public ‘we.’”[[77]](#endnote-77) This willingness to think beyond identity is conveyed by the complex religiosity of Kermani’s “Von der Zärtlichkeit,” and the same can be said of the way in which SAID’s “ich, jesus von nazareth” undermines divisive established identities by reworking Nietzsche’s redeemer figure.

Like other writers of the religious turn, Kermani and SAID are not responding with a resurgent and orthodox Islamic identity, or by jettisoning their Muslim background in order to subscribe to what are perceived as “enlightened” German values. The texts discussed here rather suggest an ambiguous and mystical religiosity that moves beyond the dualism and divisiveness of the closed identities associated with organized religions and other ideologies, be they national or political. Hence, although Jesus figures in both organized Christianity and Islam, I do not view these texts as part of the ahistorical interfaith discourse surrounding the so-called “Abrahamic religions.” The adjective “Abrahamic” has historically been used by the separate monotheisms to put forward their competing claims to be Abraham’s sole heirs and is thus rooted in supersessionism, rather than in the ecumenism with which it is increasingly associated in the post-9/11 era.[[78]](#endnote-78) In contrast to this, in Aaron W. Hughes’s words, “artificially constructed universal”[[79]](#endnote-79) that would provide a flimsy basis for a religious dialogue, “Von der Zärtlichkeit” and “ich, jesus von nazareth” deconstruct the monotheistic paradigm that dualistically positions God as the world’s transcendent giver of absolute, universal meaning. Likewise, it is not my intention to create a separate “Muslim-German”[[80]](#endnote-80) or “German-Iranian” canon that would alienate these authors from wider German or Islamic culture, which as these texts demonstrate are not mutually exclusive categories. Clemens Pornschlegel has critiqued the performative role of the term “Turkish-German” for establishing a canon that both obscures links with other writing and groups disparate texts,[[81]](#endnote-81) and although my chosen texts are linked by their deconstructive gestures and the prominence of Jesus, their religiosity is markedly different and highly ambiguous, undermining ideas of homogeneity.

Albeit in distinct ways, the religiosity of the literature under analysis here avoids clear-cut identities by hinting at a post-monotheistic sense of holiness. Whereas “Von der Zärtlichkeit” evokes a destabilizing and fleeting sense of the divine in withdrawal through allusions to Jesus’s resurrection, raising theological issues of presence and absence, “ich, jesus von nazareth” is the monologue of a rebellious Jesus whose spiritual significance lies in his actions, underlining Jesus’s insurrection as a social radical. Whereas the former reinforces the idea of an absent(ing) God while still locating a sense of the divine in the world, and the latter argues that we must seek to change the present and not wait for God’s intervention, both ultimately constitute a rejection of monotheism’s divisive transcendent meaning-making, while also retaining a post-monotheistic sense of the sacred, emphasizing how “the world,” as Nancy puts it, “is a possibility before being a reality, reversing the perspective from the given to the giving.”[[82]](#endnote-82)

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1. Aside from the authors discussed in this article, see, for example, Fatah, *Das dunkle Schiff*;Özdamar, *Mutterzunge*; Şenocak, *Der Erottomane*;Şenocak, *Übergang*,Zaimoglu, *Zwölf Gramm Glück*; and Zaimoglu and Senkel, *Schwarze Jungfrauen*. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Horstkotte, “Poetische Parusie,” 269. All translations are my own unless otherwise stated. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Yeşilada, “Gottes Krieger und Jungfrauen,” 175. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. This can be seen in the popularity of attacks on religion (mostly Islam) by so-called “New Atheists” such as Michael Schmidt-Salomon and by Anti-immigration polemicists such as Thilo Sarrazin. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Alternative für Deutschland recently voted in favor of a motion that denied Islam’s capability of Enlightenment and reform: Jakobsen, “AfD spricht Islam Fähigkeit zur Aufklärung ab.” [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Kelek, “Wir müssen den Schleier lüften.” [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Pratt Ewing, *Stolen Honor*, 79. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Both Kermani and SAID enjoy dual nationality since the Iranian State does not recognize the renunciation of citizenship. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. SAID often writes in all lower case, with the exception of his name. There is often inconsistency in how his book titles are written between the cover, the inside title page and the list on his official website. For this reason, I have chosen to follow normal capitalization rules when writing the book titles here. Citations and the titles of essays and short stories will be written as they are printed. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Druxes and Machtans, “The Intercultural Project of Navid Kermani,” 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Kermani, *Wer ist Wir?*, 122. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Nancy, *Adoration*, 57. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure*, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Ibid.,62. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. This non-foundational religiosity ties in with Nancy’s notion of the “inoperative community,” which involves an understanding of community not based on a common identity or a shared ideology, but rather an interrelatedness of being. See Nancy, *The* *Inoperative Community* and Nancy, *Being Singular Plural*. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure*,69-70. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Nancy, *The Creation of the World*, 70. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Smerick, “Monotheism,” 162. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Kermani, *Ungläubiges Staunen*, 91. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. The poet is referring to himself here, as his actual name is Moinuddin Chishti. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Wilson and Pourjavady (eds), *The Drunken Universe*, 111. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Nancy, *Noli me tangere*, 18. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. See, for example, Kermani, *Strategie der Eskalation* and Kermani, *Ausnahmezustand*. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Kermani, *The Terror of God*, 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. The painting, currently in the Church of St Lawrence at Lucina in Rome, can be viewed online here: <http://www.akg-images.co.uk/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult&VBID=2UMESQLWANC6L&SMLS=1&RW=1366&RH=662&POPUPPN=4&POPUPIID=2UMDHUSJWVOG> [accessed January 30, 2017]. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Assheuer, “Interreligiösität.” [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Kermani, *Ungläubiges Staunen*, 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid. 67. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. Ibid. 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Machtans, “The Beauty and Terror of Love,” 87. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Jordan, “Für eine kämpferische Toleranz,” 252-53. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Adil, *Muhammad, the Messenger of Islam*,129. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. The santur is the Persian variant of the hammered dulcimer, a stringed percussion instrument. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Kermani, *Vierzig Leben*, 180 [hereafter cited by page number and abbreviated to *K*]. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Kermani mentions that in his imagination the righteous after the resurrection are always “redeemed, placid, benevolent and so light that [they] float over the ground”: Kermani, *Ungläubiges Staunen*, 160. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid., 59-60. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Hutchens, *Jean-Luc Nancy and the Future of Philosophy*,87. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure*,35. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Nancy, *Noli me tangere*, 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Ibid., 16. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Kate, “God Passing By,” 137. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid., 143. Nancy’s thought is indebted here to Jacques Derrida’s unstable sense of endlessly deferred meaning, “différance.” [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. SAID, *In Deutschland Leben*, 51-71. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. SAID, *Der lange Arm der Mullahs*, 127. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Baginski, “SAID (1947-),” 442. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. Adelson, *The Turkish Turn*, 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. Baginski, “Von Mullahs und Deutschen,” 28-9. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. SAID, *In Deutschland leben*, 121. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. See SAID, *Sei Nacht zu mir*. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. See SAID, *Psalmen*. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Yeşilada, “Gottes Krieger und Jungfrauen,” 178. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. SAID, *Ich und der Islam*, 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. Nancy, *Inoperative Community*, 136. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. SAID, *Das Niemandsland ist unseres*, 63 [hereafter cited by page number and abbreviated to *S*]. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. Eagleton, *Reason, Faith, and Revolution*,10. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. The Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) and its sister party the Christian Social Union in Bavaria (CSU) are center-right conservative political parties. SAID refers to them here by the slightly pejorative term “C-Partein” (C-Parties, as in Christian Parties). [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. SAID, “Das ist mir heilig.” [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Eagleton, *Reason, Faith, and Revolution*, 27. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. It is worth noting that God’s wrath is also an important focus for both Kermani’s scholarly and literary writing. See Kermani, *The Terror of God*; Kermani, *Du sollst*; and Machtans, “The Beauty and Terror of Love.” [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 106. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Ibid., 94. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Ibid., 95. As his article on Reni suggests, Kermani is, like Nietzsche, also critical of the Christian obsession with pain and fixation on the symbolism of the crucifixion, arguing that it encourages people to lament their circumstances instead of improving the world. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure*, 77. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Attar of Nishapur is a medieval Persian Sufi poet and theologian whose most famous text is the long poem *The Conference of the Birds* (1177). [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Kermani, *The Terror of God*, 150. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 135. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. Nancy, *Noli me tangere*, 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Ibid., 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*,102. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. Ibid. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. Nancy, *Noli me tangere*, 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. Sarrazin, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*, 260. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. Kermani, *Strategie der Eskalation*, 59. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. Hughes, *Abrahamic Religions*,19. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. Ibid., 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. The label “German-Muslim poetry” is already in circulation. See Löffler and Willer, Nachwort, 226; and Gellner, “Islam in Texten von Zafer Şenocak,”159. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. Pornschlegel, Vorwort, 9. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. Nancy, *The Creation of the World*, 65. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)