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'THE CROSSING OF LOVE': THE INOPERATIVE COMMUNITY AND ROMANTIC LOVE IN FERIDUN ZAIMOGLU'S 'FÜNF KLOPFENDE HERZEN, WENN DIE LIEBE SPRINGT' AND *HINTERLAND**

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ABSTRACT

In the short story 'Fünf klopfende Herzen, wenn die Liebe springt' (2004) and the novel *Hinterland* (2009), Feridun Zaimoglu engages with cosmopolitanism and German Romanticism – both characteristic themes of his more recent fiction. A dialogue between the ideas of love presented by Jean-Luc Nancy and the Romantics Fr. Schlegel, Novalis and Kleist can illuminate the non-identitarian nature of Zaimoglu's cosmopolitanism, suggesting a radical openness to the future and an ontological interrelatedness in line with Nancy's 'communauté désœuvrée' ('inoperative community'), rather than a new cosmopolitan identity with its own moral code. Just as the Romantics invested in the power of love to create a harmonious world, love is equally important for Nancy in that it renders the inoperative community more accessible to us. This understanding of cosmopolitanism can be glimpsed in 'Fünf klopfende Herzen', in which falling in love presents the protagonist with the radical possibilities brought about by the interconnected nature of being. Similarly, in *Hinterland*, in which transnational sensibilities create a cosmopolitan web across Europe, it is implied that being-with is not subordinate to being-one. Zaimoglu's engagement with the Brothers Grimm and the more nationalist aspects of Romanticism also requires close scrutiny, and can be illuminated by an appeal to Nancy's concepts of 'myth' and 'literature'.

In der Erzählung 'Fünf klopfende Herzen, wenn die Liebe springt' (2004) und dem Roman *Hinterland* (2009) befasst sich Feridun Zaimoglu mit den für seine neueste Erzählliteratur bezeichnenden Themen des Kosmopolitismus und der deutschen Romantik. Ein Dialog zwischen den Vorstellungen der Liebe von Jean-Luc Nancy und den Romantikern Fr. Schlegel, Novalis und Kleist ist für den nicht-identitätsfundierte Kosmopolitismus Zaimoglus aufschlußreich, der, im Gegensatz zu einer neuen kosmopolitischen Identität mit ihrem eigenen Moralkodex, auf eine radikale Offenheit zur Zukunft und eine ontologische Verzahntheit im Sinne von Nancys 'communauté désœuvrée' ('undarstellbarer Gemeinschaft') hindeutet. So wie die Romantiker ihre Hoffnungen auf eine harmonische Welt in die Liebe setzten, so ist die Liebe ebenso wichtig für Nancy, da sie uns die undarstellbare Gemeinschaft zugänglich macht. Einen Einblick in diese Idee des Kosmopolitismus gibt uns die Erzählung 'Fünf klopfende Herzen', in der das Verliebtsein die Hauptfigur für die wechselseitige Abhängigkeit des Seins empfindlich macht. Auch im Roman *Hinterland*, in dem transnationale

*This article, part of which was presented at the DAAD German postgraduate summer school in Nottingham 2013, is the product of research that started in my MA dissertation and continued into my current doctoral project. I would therefore like to thank my supervisors, Prof. Margaret Littler and Dr Judith Purver, for their invaluable contributions and also those present at the summer school for their questions and observations.

Empfindlichkeiten ein kosmopolitisches Netz über Europa bilden, wird darauf hingewiesen, dass das Mitsein dem Eins-Sein nicht unterordnet werden darf. Zaimoglus Befassung mit den Gebrüdern Grimm und den nationalistischen Aspekten der Romantik benötigen außerdem eine genauere Untersuchung, und Nancys Begriffe von 'Mythos' und 'Literatur' können hier erhellend sein.

Feridun Zaimoglu¹ is a prolific writer who constantly explores new creative avenues in his work. Since his initial publications concerning disenfranchised Turkish-Germans sparked the 'Kanak Attak' subculture movement² and earned him the reputation of the *enfant terrible* of German literature, he has written a further eight novels, a collection of short stories, fourteen plays and two operas, all of which cover a range of different genres and themes – *Leinwand* (2003), for example, is a comedy crime novel set in Kiel, and *Leyla* (2006) is the fictionalised biography of his mother's childhood. His theatre work (the result of a creative partnership with Günter Senkel) includes the successes *Othello* (2003), a reworking of Shakespeare, and *Schwarze Jungfrauen* (2006), a selection of performed monologues by Muslim women. Yet Zaimoglu's controversial debut *Kanak Sprak: 24 Mißtöne vom Rande der Gesellschaft* (1995), with its creative, stylised and often intimidating slang, continues to attract the attention of readers (it is currently available in its eighth edition) and scholars alike,³ leading to an imbalance in our understanding of Zaimoglu's multifaceted oeuvre that needs to be addressed.

A further creative phase in Zaimoglu's later writing is his engagement with German Romanticism, which I will analyse in the short story 'Fünf klopfende Herzen, wenn die Liebe springt' from *Zwölf Gramm Glück* (2004) and the novel *Hinterland* (2009), bringing Jean-Luc Nancy's 'communauté désœuvrée' ('inoperative community') into dialogue with Romanticism and contemporary cosmopolitan thinking – Nancy himself draws upon Romantic thought in his own writing and has published on the philosophical foundations of Jena Romanticism with Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe.⁴ Both texts by Zaimoglu have thus far received little

¹ Although the spelling of Zaimoglu's name in some secondary literature includes the breve, not wishing to impose a marker of difference I have chosen to write his name as it appears in his publications.

² See Tom Cheesman, 'Talking "Kanak": Zaimoğlu contra Leitkultur', *New German Critique*, 92 (2004), 82–99.

³ Scholarly research into *Kanak Sprak* began as early as 1999 (see Manuela Günther, '"Wir sind bastarde, freunde...": Feridun Zaimoglus *Kanak Sprak* und die performative Struktur von Identität', *Sprache und Literatur in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 83 (1999), 15–28) and continues to form a large part of today's scholarship. See Yasemin Yildiz, 'Wordforce: Ethnicized Masculinity and Literary Style in *Kanak Sprak* and *Koppstoff*', in Feridun Zaimoglu, ed. Tom Cheesman and Karin E. Yeşilada, Oxford 2012, pp. 71–91; and Maria Stehle, *Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes*, Rochester, NY 2012, pp. 20–63.

⁴ See Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *L'absolu littéraire: Théorie de la littérature du romantisme allemand*, Paris 1978.

scholarly consideration.⁵ Yet, their debt to Romanticism is significant to understanding Zaimoglu's cosmopolitanism as more than simply a bid for acceptance in the German literary canon. The cosmopolitan nature of Zaimoglu's early literature 'is tied to the globally popular subculture of hip-hop and rap',⁶ as Tom Cheesman asserts. However, moving away from the now popularised and domesticated⁷ 'Kanak Kultur', Zaimoglu's more recent writing can be read, as Margaret Littler argues in her Deleuzian interpretation of the novel *Liebesbrand* (2008), as cosmopolitan 'in its thinking *beyond* identity'.⁸

Although Nancy dismisses the term 'cosmopolitanism' due to its associations with universalism and its ideological nature,⁹ I would argue that Nancy's reconceptualisation of community allows for a new, non-identitarian understanding of cosmopolitanism. According to Nancy, our self-perception as absolute individuals, closed off from the outside world, is incompatible with our ontological interrelatedness and has subsequently led to conflict between closed communities, characterised by their misguided fusional and communal self-perception. It is only by recognising ourselves as 'singular beings', characterised by our being outside of ourselves,¹⁰ that the interconnected nature of our 'being-in-common' can be glimpsed. This being-in-common is what Nancy refers to as the inoperative community, which is a non-identitarian and non-foundational understanding of community. This is not a political programme, but something that, although always present, occurs to us in flashes and can perhaps never be fully achieved. 'La fusion communautaire,' Nancy states, 'au lieu de propager son mouvement, reconstitue la séparation: communauté contre communauté. Ainsi, l'accomplissement de la communauté en est la suppression.'¹¹ Rather than the communal fusion of individuals with a supposedly common identity, Nancy's understanding

⁵ Tom Cheesman briefly notes the 'romantic desire' of the protagonist of 'Fünf klopfende Herzen': Tom Cheesman, *Novels of Turkish-German Settlement: Cosmopolite Fictions*, Rochester, NY 2007, pp. 76–7; Cheesman also mentions *Hinterland* in relation to Ulrich Beck's *Der eigene Gott* (2008) and the 'cosmopolitanisation' of religion: Tom Cheesman, 'Nathan Without the Rings: Postmodern Religion in *Nathan Messias*', in *Feridun Zaimoglu*, pp. 117–44 (pp. 120–21 and pp. 123–24). Michael Hofmann devotes a paragraph to *Hinterland* in his study, viewing it as 'a dead end': Michael Hofmann, 'Romantic Rebellion: Feridun Zaimoglu and the Anti-bourgeois Tradition', in *Feridun Zaimoglu*, pp. 239–58 (p. 253).

⁶ Cheesman, *Novels of Turkish-German Settlement*, p. 74.

⁷ Cheesman, 'Talking "Kanak"', pp. 98–9.

⁸ Margaret Littler, 'Between Romantic Love and War Machine: *Liebesbrand*', in *Feridun Zaimoglu*, pp. 219–38 (p. 220).

⁹ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Être singulier pluriel*, Paris 1996, p. 161.

¹⁰ In this respect, Nancy's philosophy is indebted to the ecstatic consciousness of Heidegger's concepts of 'In-der-Welt-sein' and 'Mitsein'.

¹¹ Jean-Luc Nancy, *La communauté désœuvrée*, 3rd edn, Paris 1999, p. 151; 'The fusion of community, instead of propagating its movements, reconstitutes its separation: community against community. Thus the fulfillment of community is its suppression' (Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, ed. Peter Connor, tr. Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland and Simona Sawhney, Minneapolis

of community involves the spacing¹² of singular beings who are radically open to one another and who are in a constant state of change as a result of this.

It is only recently that scholars have begun to comment on Zaimoglu's 'Romantic turn'.¹³ By bringing together Nancy's philosophy and Romantic thought, I will develop the discussions of Zaimoglu's engagement with Romanticism and cosmopolitanism, highlighting the part Nancy's and the Romantics' understanding of love can play in a non-identitarian cosmopolitanism that acts as an alternative to cosmopolitan ideologies based on an a priori notion of reason. I will first discuss how in 'Fünf klopfende Herzen' the protagonist Fernando's attempts at life as an absolute individual are foiled as he falls in love with Lulu, opening him up to new, unknown possibilities. Second, I will investigate the cosmopolitan alternative to compartmentalised multiculturalism suggested in the transnational sensibilities of the novel *Hinterland*. Here, I will draw upon Nancy's concepts of 'literature' and 'myth' in relation to early and late Romanticism respectively in order to analyse Zaimoglu's critical engagement with the overtly nationalist aspects of the tradition.

'FÜNF KLOPFENDE HERZEN, WENN DIE LIEBE SPRINGT' AND THE ESCAPE FROM THE PHILISTINE WORLD

The critical literature on Zaimoglu's short story cycle *Zwölf Gramm Glück*¹⁴ has focused overwhelmingly on the story 'Gottes Krieger', arguably because its depiction of a young Islamist's disillusionment with his terrorist cell reflects the current media focus on religious extremism. The other stories, almost all of which deal with young men's quests for love, have been sidelined, perhaps because the religiosity that they present is harder to pin down, such as 'Gottesanrufung II' and 'Der Kranich auf dem Kiesel in der Pfütze', or due to their seemingly simplistic love-story narrative, as in 'Fünf klopfende Herzen'. Thus, the Romantic aspects of 'Fünf klopfende Herzen' have hitherto gone unnoticed. The narrator, Fernando, is a self-professed 'Romantiker'.¹⁵ However, disillusioned with the bourgeois world, he elects to live as a recluse in the hope of minimising the

1991, p. 60; subsequent translations will be taken from the same edition, henceforth abbreviated to *IC*).

¹² By 'spacing', Nancy means that being occurs neither in the form of the individual nor communal fusion, but is spread out and shared.

¹³ See Frauke Matthes, 'Männliche Sehnsucht in (türkisch-)deutscher Gegenwart in Feridun Zaimoglu's *Liebesbrand*', *Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 24/2 (2010), 85–102; Littler; and Hofmann.

¹⁴ The story 'Häute' won the prestigious Ingeborg-Bachmann-Preis in 2003 and was later included in *Zwölf Gramm Glück*.

¹⁵ Feridun Zaimoglu, *Zwölf Gramm Glück*, 3rd edn, Cologne 2008, p. 14; subsequent references will be provided in the text with the abbreviation *ZGG*.

intervention of chance occurrences and other people in his life. The tale opens with a declaration of his planned suicide: 'Ich hatte noch achtunddreißig volle Tage zu leben, und dann wollte ich, ohne Rücksicht auf eine mögliche gute Wendung, einfach nach Plan Selbstmord begehen' (ZGG, p. 11). In Nancy's terms, this can be understood as trying to live as an absolute individual, a 'pour-soi absolument détaché'.¹⁶ Indeed, it is only in death that we cease to participate in the 'communication' of the inoperative community, which is our fundamental shared exposure to finitude. Nevertheless, Fernando's circumstances change dramatically when he is hit by a car and immediately falls in love with the driver, Lulu, who comes to his aid (ZGG, pp. 15–16).

As with the other protagonists of *Zwölf Gramm Glück*, Fernando's existence is initially devoid of any intensity of emotion; his instant soup (ZGG, p. 13) and instant coffee (ZGG, p. 16) suggest that even an intensity of flavour is missing from his insipid life. He laments: 'während sich andere Leute besaufen, bekiffen und verlieben, sitze ich auf meinem Arsch und tippe Seiten voll' (ZGG, p. 13). Lulu laughs when he orders the Quattro Stagioni 'Spießerpizza', seeing it as the indecisive philistine choice (ZGG, pp. 22–3), and in Romantic terms, Fernando is indeed part of the philistine world. Zaimoglu's 'Spießer' is the Romantics' 'Philister' – a prominent theme in Zaimoglu's writing, as pointed out by Michael Hofmann¹⁷ who nevertheless omits this text from his study of Zaimoglu's engagement with Romanticism.

Instead of a simple portrait of a feckless modern youth, I see in Zaimoglu's protagonist a parallel with Novalis's portrayal of the philistine in the collection of fragments *Blütenstaub* (1798):

77. Unser Alltagsleben besteht aus lauter erhaltenden, immer wiederkehrenden Verrichtungen. Dieser Zirkel von Gewohnheiten ist nur Mittel zu einem Hauptmittel, unserm irdischen Daseyn überhaupt, das aus mannichfaltigen Arten zu existiren gemischt ist. Philister leben nur ein Alltagsleben. Das Hauptmittel scheint ihr einziger Zweck zu seyn. Sie thun das alles, um des irdischen Lebens willen; wie es scheint und nach ihren eignen Äußerungen scheinen muß.¹⁸

Like Novalis's 'Philister', Fernando initially lives only for mundane everyday life, enjoying no heightened emotion – an existence reflected in his dreary apartment. The philistine world, however, stands in contrast to the street where he meets Lulu, which is transformed into a magical, otherworldly setting, demonstrating that Fernando has reached a more Romantic intensity of existence through their relationship. The use of

¹⁶ Nancy, *La communauté désœuvrée*, p. 16; 'absolutely detached for-itself' (IC, p. 3).

¹⁷ Hofmann, p. 240.

¹⁸ Novalis, 'Vermischte Bemerkungen und Blütenstaub', in *Schriften*, ed. Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel, 6 vols, Stuttgart 1960–2006, II, pp. 399–470 (p. 447).

the colour blue here has Romantic connotations, echoing Novalis's 'blaue Blume':

Der Himmel hatte sich ergossen, und ein stumpfes Perlmutter durchmischte das kalte Winterblau, der Eisglanz ließ die Straßen wie Fabelpfade erscheinen, da und dort, wie Rußstreifen auf der Haut, der Gummiabrieb von Reifen. (ZGG, p. 28)

Alongside Novalis, allusions to Kleist can also be found in 'Fünf klopfende Herzen', anticipating the Kleistian motifs of *Liebesbrand*.¹⁹ Though Kleist is an outsider to Romanticism, I would argue that these references are still connected to Zaimoglu's Romantic turn. Despite Benno von Wiese's reluctance to classify Kleist as a Romantic,²⁰ I would argue that Kleist is a Romantic by intellectual conviction, as he shared their critique of the Enlightenment. For instance, Kleist wrote in a letter to his half-sister Ulrike von Kleist on 12 November 1799: 'Das Glück kann nicht wie ein mathematischer Lehrsatz bewiesen werden, es muß empfunden werden, wenn es da sein soll',²¹ privileging emotion over reason. According to Tim Mehigan:

Kleist sieht in der ungeminderten Erweiterung des kantischen Formalismus einen Rationalismus, gegen den kein gesunder Menschenverstand, keine inspirierte Kreativität und keine Spontaneität mehr ankommen können. Kleists Anliegen ist es, zu unterstreichen, dass es die Aufgabe einer gesunden Rationalität ist, nicht nur die Motivation einer Handlung auf ihre regulative Logik hin zu befragen, sondern den Erfolgsaspekt einer Handlung zu berücksichtigen, die gerade in der Irrationalität [...] verwurzelt sein mag.²²

Contrary to the Enlightenment paradigm that human rationality and logic govern our actions, Kleist's fiction (not unlike Zaimoglu's) illustrates, especially when the power of love is concerned, that our actions are seldom governed by reason and are, in fact, often irrational. Furthermore, Kleist's and Zaimoglu's dismissals of the Enlightenment master narrative of the autonomous reasoned individual also appear to question the sovereignty of subjectivity in a manner compatible with Nancy, implying a limit to individual autonomy.²³

Lulu is a Kleistian figure – prone to uncontrollable physical displays of emotion, she repeatedly bursts into laughter or erupts into blushes

¹⁹ Littler, pp. 229–35.

²⁰ Benno von Wiese, 'Heinrich von Kleist', in *Deutsche Dichter der Romantik: Ihr Leben und Werk*, ed. Benno von Wiese, Berlin 1971, pp. 225–52 (p. 229).

²¹ Heinrich von Kleist, 'Briefe 1793–1811', in *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, ed. Klaus Müller-Salget and Stefan Ormanns, 4 vols, Frankfurt a. M. 1987–97, IV, pp. 9–522 (p. 45).

²² Tim Mehigan, 'Kleist, Kant und die Aufklärung', in *Heinrich von Kleist und die Aufklärung*, ed. Tim Mehigan, Rochester, NY 2000, pp. 3–21 (pp. 15–16).

²³ *Das Erdbeben in Chili* (1807) also thematises our powerlessness against outside forces, and Fernando shares a name with Don Fernando of Kleist's novella.

(ZGG, p. 16). According to Cheesman: '[the language of 'Fünf klopfende Herzen'] is constantly surprising, rhythmically musical, and mingles contemporary jargon with self-consciously old-fashioned diction, in an unforced fashion',²⁴ and Fernando's admiration of Lulu's old-fashioned manner of speaking (ZGG, p. 22) seems to link them both to a past era. References to Kleist (especially his biography) in 'Fünf klopfende Herzen' include both Fernando's profession as a poet (ZGG, p. 11) and his planned suicide. Kleist is well known for his 'Lebensplan', which he discusses in another letter to Ulrike in May 1799:

Was der Reiseplan dem Reisenden ist, das ist der Lebensplan dem Menschen. Ohne Reiseplan sich auf die Reise begeben, heißt erwarten, daß der Zufall uns an das Ziel führe, das wir selbst nicht kennen. Ohne Lebensplan leben, heißt vom Zufall erwarten, ob er uns so glücklich machen werde, wie wir es selbst nicht begreifen.²⁵

According to Gerhard Fricke, Kleist's life plan was an attempt to master fate and chance.²⁶ Kleist speaks of a master-slave relationship between Man and the 'Launen des Tyrannen Schicksaal', claiming: 'Ein freier, denkender Mensch bleibt nicht stehen, wo der Zufall ihn hinstößt; oder wenn er bleibt, so bleibt er aus Gründen, aus Wahl des Bessern.'²⁷ In a way that perhaps mythologises Kleist's life, his suicide (especially in older Kleist scholarship²⁸) is often viewed as part of this struggle to overcome fate.

Similarly, Fernando's self-imposed isolation can be viewed as an attempt to reduce outside influences and gain control in a world where his will is not the deciding factor in his destiny, his rationally calculated suicide being an extreme method of doing away with chance altogether. Nevertheless, although at first reluctant to let outside factors determine his life, chance, in the form of Lulu, ultimately intervenes in his suicidal plans, setting him on a different course and ending the biographical link to Kleist, who took his own life in 1811. The car crash, a typically Kleistian 'event', serves to emphasise the dramatic nature of the incident which leads Fernando to end his isolated existence in the philistine world and begin instead to succumb to exposure to the other: 'Die Hauptströmung erfaßte mich, ich trieb ab von der Böschungskante und konnte noch knapp den Kopf über Wasser halten' (ZGG, p. 25). In terms of Nancy's non-foundational ontology,

²⁴ Cheesman, *Novels of Turkish-German Settlement*, p. 77.

²⁵ Kleist, p. 40.

²⁶ Gerhard Fricke, *Gefühl und Schicksal bei Heinrich v. Kleist: Studien über den inneren Vorgang im Leben und Schaffen des Dichters*, Berlin 1929, p. 8.

²⁷ Kleist, p. 38.

²⁸ See Fricke, p. 208. Though biographical interpretations such as these have fallen out of fashion, I would argue that such readings are nevertheless significant as they have had a lasting effect on how Kleist the person is viewed.

Fernando's subjectivity is 'lacerated', exposing him to the radical and transformative openness of the inoperative community.

Thus, the transformative power of love changes Fernando's life, evoking another of Kleist's letters written to Wilhelmine von Zenge in January 1801:

So viele Erfahrungen hatten die Wahrheit in mir bestätigt, daß die Liebe immer unglaubliche Veränderungen in dem Menschen hervorbringt; ich habe schwache Jünglinge durch die Liebe stark werden sehen, rohe ganz weichherzig, unempfindliche ganz zärtlich; Jünglinge, die durch Erziehung und Schicksal ganz vernachlässigt waren, wurden fein, gesittet, edel, frei [...]; und hierbei blieb es, wenn die Liebe nicht von der höheren Art war; aber war sie es, so kam nun auch die große Revolution an die Seele; Wünsche, Hoffnungen, Aussichten, alles wechselte; die alten rohen Vergnügungen wurden verworfen, feinere traten an ihre Stelle; die vorher nur in dem lauten Gewühl der Gesellschaft, bei Spiel und Wein, vergnügt waren [...]; tausend schlummernde Gefühle erwachten, unter ihnen die Wohltätigkeit meistens am lebhaftesten; wo ein Hülflöser lag, da gingen sie, ihm zu helfen; wo ein Auge in Tränen stand, da eilten sie, sie zu trocknen; alles was schön ist und edel und gut und groß, das faßten sie mit offener, empfänglicher Seele auf, es darzustellen in sich; ihr Herz erweiterte sich, die Seele hob sich ihnen unter der Brust, sie umfaßten irgend ein Ideal, dem sie sich verähnlichen wollten.²⁹

Kleist states that a person enflamed with passion will go to the aid of the helpless, and this is reflected both in Lulu's actions after the crash and Fernando's subsequent behaviour. At first, Fernando can only watch passively from his window as an oppressive police force bullies a homeless man, thinking: 'wer sich beteiligt, nimmt Schaden' (ZGG, pp. 19–20). Yet, when consumed with love for Lulu and happy with the direction in which outside forces have carried him, he remarks: 'Zum ersten Mal seit langer Zeit hatte ich das Gefühl, wirklich zu leben und zu erleben, denn meist verhielt ich mich in guten wie in schlechten Situationen passiv' (ZGG, p. 26).

This can equally be viewed in connection with Nancy's understanding of love. Nancy singles out love in particular as acting against fusional views of community and our self-perception as individuals:

L'amour re-présente *je* à lui-même brisé (et ce n'est pas une représentation). Il lui présente ceci: lui, ce sujet, a été touché, entamé, dans sa subjectivité, et il *est* désormais, pour le temps de l'amour, ouvert par cette entame, brisé ou fêlé, si légèrement que ce soit.³⁰

Love brings our ontological interrelatedness to the fore, rendering the inoperative community more accessible. Nancy refers to this as 'la traversée

²⁹ Kleist, pp. 177–8.

³⁰ Jean-Luc Nancy, *Une pensée finie*, Paris 1990, p. 247; 'Love re-presents *I* to itself broken (and this is not a representation). It presents this to it: he, this subject, was touched, broken into, in his subjectivity, and he *is* from then on, for the time of love, opened by this slice, broken or fractured, even if only slightly' (JC, p. 96).

de l'amour',³¹ arguing that the singular being 'est traversé par l'altérité de l'autre, qui ne s'arrête ni ne se fixe nulle part, ni en "lui" ni en "moi", car elle n'est rien d'autre que le venir-et-partir'.³²

In a way reminiscent of Kleist's comments about the altruism of the lover, Nancy discusses the Heideggerian concept of 'Fürsorge' in relation to love:

Le monde partagé comme monde du souci-de-l'autre est un monde de la traversée des êtres singuliers par ce partage lui-même, qui les constitue, qui les fait être en les adressant l'un à l'autre, c'est-à-dire l'un par l'autre au-delà de l'un et de l'autre.³³

It is when he is no longer in the mindset of the absolute individual that Fernando lives up to his name (the meaning of which is 'adventurer'), going out into the street with the people of the occupied Rote Flora³⁴ in confrontation with the oppressive police and fighting against the injustices of capitalism (*ZGG*, p. 26).³⁵ The story can, therefore, be regarded as part of Zaimoglu's 'Romantic rebellion', which, as Hofmann proposes, involves 'a phenomenology of love concerned with the spectrum from pure sexuality to sentiment and passionate enthusiasm' and 'the staging of "Romantic" heroes who oppose social expectations'.³⁶ Furthermore, like Ana Luszczyńska's Nancian interpretation of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987), Fernando and Lulu's participation in the demonstration at the end of the story can also be read as 'an event of community', which 'underscores both a movement forward that is nonrecuperable as well as the meaningless meaning of the movement'.³⁷ Their behaviour is meaningless as it is not motivated by a desired outcome, such as a Kleistian life plan, that would constitute a clearly defined ideology and weigh against the inoperative community by establishing a shared identity; instead, their actions constitute a non-foundational openness. The end result is not significant (they expect defeat); rather, the meaning lies in their participation in the spontaneous flows of community.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 249; 'the crossing of love' (*IC*, p. 98).

³² *Ibid.* p. 249; 'is traversed by the alterity of the other, which does not stop or fix itself anywhere, neither in "him," nor in "me," because it is nothing other than the coming-and-going' (*IC*, p. 98).

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 258; 'The shared world as the world of concern-for-the-other is a world of the crossing of singular beings by this sharing itself that constitutes them, that makes them be, by addressing them one to the other, which is to say one by the other beyond the other and the other' (*IC*, p. 103).

³⁴ The Rote Flora, formerly a theatre in Hamburg's Schanzenviertel, is a squat which serves as a meeting place for anarchist and left-wing groups. See <http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/roteflora/> (accessed 7 September 2013).

³⁵ Love has a similar effect on the 'Mietbügler' in *Hinterland*: 'An meinem Menschentag blieb ich meistens stumm, sagte der Wilde, aber seitdem ich bei der schönen Franziska bügeln darf, helf ich den Schwachen und den Kranken' (Feridun Zaimoglu, *Hinterland*, 2nd edn, Frankfurt a. M. 2011, p. 403; subsequent references will be provided in the text with the abbreviation *H*).

³⁶ Hofmann, p. 250.

³⁷ Ana Luszczyńska, 'The Opposite of the Concentration Camp: Nancy's Vision of Community', *The New Centennial Review*, 5/3 (2005), 167–205 (p. 201).

They reach Fernando's home only to notice that a fire has broken out. Lulu smiles and ambiguously says: 'Bei dir brennt's' (ZGG, p. 32), hinting at both the house fire and Fernando's enflamed passion – 'mein Herz stand in Flammen' (ZGG, p. 17). The last paragraph can also be read in two ways:

Wir würden verlieren, keine Barrikade und kein Versteck schützte uns, und am Ende der kleinen Schlacht würden wir uns schämen wegen der Angst, die wir fühlten von der ersten Minute unserer Ausschreitung an. Wir haben uns richtig entschieden: was hätten wir sonst tun sollen? (ZGG, p. 32)

Here, it is not clear whether it is Fernando and Lulu's passion or the riot that is being referred to. Nonetheless, both readings suggest that Fernando's new openness and departure from the philistine world, whilst allowing him access to a Romantic intensity of feeling, expose him to danger.

Fernando's initial disregard for the confrontation with the homeless man and his subsequent participation in the demonstration stand in contrast to one another, reflecting love's power to draw attention to the relations between people, as outlined in Kleist's letter and Nancy's philosophy. Fernando's love for Lulu exposes him to his connectedness to others, leading him to take part in the uprising and to give in to forces whose outcomes and aims are unknown. In line with Nancy's philosophy, this indicates that the fallacy of an atomised existence, immune to the influence of others, is revealed by the crossing of love. Additionally, viewed within the Romantic/philistine binary, Zaimoglu seems to suggest that this radical openness to others, although carrying greater risk, is the key to a higher intensity of feeling. This ontological interrelatedness will be further explored in the following section on *Hinterland*.

HINTERLAND: A COSMOPOLITAN KUNSTMÄRCHEN

Zaimoglu has been a vocal critic of multiculturalism, commenting: 'Man möchte hier Kulturen gegeneinander stellen, ja und dann was? [...] dann kommen die Passanten und sie gehen durch diese Kulturen und wieder raus. Diese Kultur hat einen Eingang und einen Ausgang.'³⁸ In the introduction to *Kanak Sprak*, he refers to this as the 'Märchen von der Multikulturalität',³⁹ in which people are encouraged to act as mere exotic wallpaper, rather than to participate in genuine and transformative cultural exchange. *Hinterland* can be read as a cosmopolitan alternative to multiculturalism, in which relationships transcend national borders,

³⁸ Eren Güvercin and Feridun Zaimoglu, "Für mich war der Islam in meinem Leben immer eine Kraftzufuhr": Begegnung mit dem Schriftsteller Feridun Zaimoglu', *Islamische Zeitung*, 28 October 2004, <http://erenguevercin.wordpress.com/interviews/> (accessed 7 September 2013).

³⁹ Feridun Zaimoglu, *Kanak Sprak: 24 Mißtöne vom Rande der Gesellschaft*, 7th edn, Berlin 2007, p. 11.

hinting at the inoperative community beyond identity. The novel (arguably Zaimoglu's most challenging to date) has no conventional beginning or end, and is divided into interlinking episodes that are themselves further divided into fragmentary stories, returning intermittently to the central narrative. Set in post-Wende Europe, it suggests that ideological, national and other identitarian divisions still remain despite the removal of the Iron Curtain, whilst also hinting at an underlying interrelatedness.

Hinterland, in which dwarves, witches and other supernatural beings serve to create the feeling of a modern fairy tale, has obvious superficial evidence of an engagement with Romanticism. Texts by individual authors which are heavily influenced by fairy tales are considered *Kunstmärchen* in order to distinguish them from the *Volksmärchen* of the oral tradition. The *Kunstmärchen* is central to Romanticism as it encapsulates the Romantic ideal of limitless fantasy, and can be linked accordingly to its critique of the Enlightenment's emphasis on reason and logic. Nevertheless, taste shifted during the Late Romantic period, when vernacular culture was deployed to bolster nationalism and create a sense of German uniqueness, such as the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812) compiled by the Brothers Grimm.

Although this shift must be viewed within the context of the recently ended Holy Roman Empire in which Napoleon's forces were an occupying presence, the relationship between Zaimoglu's work and the more overtly nationalist Romantics requires close scrutiny. An appeal to Nancy's use of the terms 'literature' and 'myth' can shed light on the division between early and late Romanticism in this regard. 'Literature' is ambiguous in nature; in Jed Deppman's words, 'an "offering" which does not hold, found, or seize our common essence'.⁴⁰ Therefore, it is not conducive to the foundation of a fusional community, and can be linked with the early Romantic *Kunstmärchen*. Conversely, 'myth' relates back to the apparent origin of a closed community and often provides a hero in which members of such a community can commune, and can be linked to the late Romantic enthusiasm for *Volksmärchen* accordingly.

As in 'Fünf klopfende Herzen', the archetypal Romantic theme of love is central to *Hinterland*; however, rather than being expressed through a single protagonist, it is shared across a host of different characters. Although Ferda and Aneschka feature most prominently, there are large swathes of the novel where both are absent, such as the second chapter, 'ritter', which largely deals with Franz, a recently released convict who is searching for his denouncer. Thus, there is arguably no conventional main protagonist in *Hinterland*, with love itself assuming the central role, which suggests, as indeed does Nancy, that being-one is not prioritised over being-with. Ferda is described as '[e]in dunkelhaariger braunäugiger Deutscher' (*H*, p. 13) – similar to Zaimoglu, he lives in Germany though his parents are from Turkey. Aneschka is from Prague and is labelled a

⁴⁰ Jed Deppman, 'Jean-Luc Nancy, Myth, and Literature', *Qui Parle*, 10/2 (1997), 11–32 (15).

dreamer (*H*, p. 23). Both protagonists have Romantic character traits: he is described as ‘das Gegenteil von einem Bürokraten, nämlich ein träumender Schuhmacher, ein machender Traumschuster’ (*H*, p. 99); and she, the daughter of the composer Antonin, experiences life through musical notes and song rather than images (*H*, p. 41), perhaps referencing Novalis who refers to the fairy tale as ‘eine *musicalische Fantasie*’.⁴¹ They fall in and out of love throughout the novel, spending time apart (such as when Ferda becomes implicated in a feud between the followers of the mystical ‘Rosenstreuerin’ and Hungarian patriots), but finally reuniting in Berlin. With Ferda at the epicentre, the character constellation of *Hinterland* explodes exponentially, spanning Berlin, Prague, Istanbul, Ankara, the North-Frisian island of Föhr, Budapest and Cracow. Characters come and go, some only to appear briefly, yet minute details are provided for all of them and all are connected to the wider world through transnational relationships. Rather than the novel focusing on one specific character’s Romantic longing, all the characters have their own passions that form an interconnecting and disorderly cosmopolitan web across Europe,⁴² leading to an intensification in the portrayal of desire as a ‘depersonalised force’⁴³ seen already in *Liebesbrand*.

Further allusions to Novalis can be found in *Hinterland*, such as the nameless character from Berlin who makes a passing comment about his amazement at the blue feathers of a jay’s wings.⁴⁴ This character is in a complicated relationship: his girlfriend, Sandra, wishes to maintain a relationship with a woman named Iris as well. He ultimately decides to end his relationship with Sandra, electing instead to search for the blue of the jay’s wings (*H*, p. 84). Ironically, however, it is his brother Franz who begins a relationship with the woman Jacinta, whose name derives from the blue flower, the Hyacinth (*H*, p. 78). Another reference to Novalis takes place on the aptly named ‘Hardenbergstraße’⁴⁵ (*H*, p. 407), where Ferda undergoes a strange supernatural experience:

Was machte mich vergessen? Ein Herzmedikament? Das Töpfchen mit Hirsebrei, das ich wie im Märchen leer aß, dann fiel ich in einen Schlaf, und ich wäre vergiftet, ich wäre vergangen. Ich wachte auf und sähe Nebelschleier. Kein Tageslicht, nur blauer Schein. (*H*, p. 408)

⁴¹ Novalis, ‘Das Allgemeine Brouillon (Materialien zur Enzyklopädistik 1798/99)’, in *Schriften*, ed. Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel, 6 vols, Stuttgart 1960–2006, III, pp. 207–478 (p. 454).

⁴² This mirrors how, in Cheesman’s words, the folk beliefs of *Hinterland* create ‘an implicitly mutually reinforcing network of alternative faith’: Cheesman, ‘*Nathan* without the Rings’, p. 121.

⁴³ Littler, p. 220.

⁴⁴ This can also be read as a reference to the Belgian Symbolist author Maurice Maeterlinck’s play *L’Oiseau Bleu* (1908), the dramatisation of a brother and sister’s search for happiness, as represented by a blue bird. Maeterlinck’s own engagement with Novalis is evidenced by his published translations of the Romantic’s writing, *Les disciples à Saïs, et les Fragments de Novalis* (1895).

⁴⁵ Hardenbergstraße carries additional significance for Turkish-Germans as the place where the Ottoman politician Talaat Pasha was assassinated in 1921 by a survivor of the Armenian Genocide.

The blue light can again be linked to Novalis, but also to the Grimm fairy tale 'Das blaue Licht', in which a soldier steals a magical blue light from a witch and uses it to light his pipe, thereby summoning a dwarf to do his bidding. Moreover, Ferda was previously warned about a witch known as 'die hexende Dagmar' (*H*, p. 410), and is told on the Berlin underground: 'Blauen Schein kann sie, auch in der Stadt, auch hier bei uns, anblasen dem Tageslicht' (*H*, p. 406).

These examples from *Hinterland* provide evidence of an engagement with Novalis, and also demonstrate Zaimoglu's use of Volksmärchen motifs. Furthermore, the erratic structure of *Hinterland* can be regarded as the implementation of Novalis's 'Märchentheorie', as Novalis wrote on the subject: 'Ein Märchen ist eigentlich wie ein Traumbild – ohne Zusammenhang – Ein *Ensemble* wunderbarer Dinge und Begebenheiten',⁴⁶ and: 'In einem echten Märchen muß alles wunderbar – geheimnisvoll und unzusammenhängend sein – alles belebt.'⁴⁷ Thus, the confusing changes in location, character and perspective (the novel's narrative technique regularly oscillates between first and third person) echo Novalis's pronouncements that fairy tales should be dreamlike and jumbled. Novalis further states that if meaning and coherence can be brought to a fairy tale, it then becomes 'ein höheres Märchen',⁴⁸ and the unifying theme of love in *Hinterland* elevates the novel to this status. Novalis's paradoxical notion of a fairy tale at once chaotic and yet ordered creates a link between Novalis's 'Märchentheorie' and Fr. Schlegel's 'Romantheorie'. Indeed, Novalis's concept of 'ein höheres Märchen' and Fr. Schlegel's 'progressive Universalpoesie', in which the chaos of the world is unified by love, appear almost interchangeable in this specific instance.

It is then love that transcends the continuously extending and chaotic network of relations in *Hinterland*, transforming the novel into 'ein höheres Märchen' or 'progressive Universalpoesie'. Fr. Schlegel's 'Romantheorie' also accounts for the large scale of *Hinterland*, since the Romantic novel, according to Athenäums-Fragment 116, should act as 'ein Spiegel der ganzen umgebenden Welt'.⁴⁹ This resonates with contemporary scholarship on cosmopolitanism, such as Berthold Schoene's current theory of the British 'cosmopolitan novel', whereby the connection between the novel and the rise of the nation state in Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1982)⁵⁰ is expanded as contemporary novels renew themselves 'by imagining the world instead of the nations'.⁵¹ However, just as a great deal of Romantic writing was either unfinished or intentionally a fragment, so too must *Hinterland* remain a fragment, for the depiction of the entire

⁴⁶ Novalis, 'Das Allgemeine Brouillon', p. 454.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 280.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 455.

⁴⁹ Friedrich Schlegel, *Kritische Schriften*, ed. Wolfdietrich Rasch, Munich 1956, p. 37.

⁵⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, London 1991, pp. 25–6.

⁵¹ Berthold Schoene, *The Cosmopolitan Novel*, Edinburgh 2010, p. 12.

universe within a novel is impossible, as Fr. Schlegel of course knew. Zaimoglu does, nevertheless, provide us with a much larger fragment than the average novel with transnational ambitions.

Love connects and drives all the characters in *Hinterland*, portraying the chaotic nature of our diverse world and yet also its underlying harmony. These intricate relations can all be traced back to Ferda, demonstrated in the following example: The character Frerk (first introduced as Robert) breaks into Cora's apartment and invites her on a holiday to Föhr. She owns a bar in Berlin and is a friend of Helen, the daughter of the photographer Niklas Heldt who is Franz's accomplice. Helen is Aneschka's pen friend and Aneschka is Ferda's girlfriend. These characters are in turn connected to others, and so the network of loving relationships spreads across Europe and Asia Minor, echoing Fr. Schlegel's comments:

Aber die höchste Schönheit, ja die höchste Ordnung ist denn doch nur die des Chaos, nämlich eines solchen, welches nur auf die Berührung der Liebe wartet, um sich zu einer harmonischen Welt zu entfalten.⁵²

Hinterland depicts a world in which no culture or person, regardless of how remote their home may be, can exist in isolation, either culturally or as an absolute individual. Referring to the various forms of love (charity, passion, friendship, etc.), Nancy states:

L'amour au singulier et pris absolument n'est peut-être lui-même que l'abondance indéfinie de toutes les amours possibles, et l'abandon à leur dissémination, voire au désordre de ces éclats.⁵³

As previously stated, it is the disorderly explosions of love that allow our ontological interrelatedness to be glimpsed, and this is highlighted in *Hinterland* through the various relationships that emerge without any basis in a common identity – as the narrator says of Ferda's experiences: 'wieder einmal hatte er sich in einer fremden Stadt verirrt, wieder einmal fand man ihn und brachte ihn in Sicherheit' (*H*, p. 431).

As love forms a constant theme connecting the novel's numerous plots, *Hinterland* resists a reading based on the absolute individual. Despite the various national, ethnic and ideological groups which militate against our ontological interconnectedness, as exemplified by the Georgian Gretá who honours Stalin and longs for a return to the Soviet past (*H*, p. 286), the text's emphasis on love points towards the ever-present inoperative community, which is further emphasised by its erratic structure. The separation of characters is arguably blurred in a manner that reflects an interrelatedness rather than an absolute separation, such as in the

⁵² Schlegel, p. 307.

⁵³ Nancy, *Une pensée finie*, p. 227; 'Love in its singularity, when it is grasped absolutely, is itself perhaps nothing but the indefinite abundance of all possible loves, and an abandonment to their dissemination, indeed to the disorder of these explosions' (*IC*, p. 83).

first chapter, when the pronoun 'sie' is frequently used without initially specifying if it refers to Vlasta or Edita (*H*, pp. 10–11). Passages occur throughout the text in which the character and location must initially be assumed or simply remain obscure, and these disorientating techniques prevent the establishment of distinct character profiles, which in turn impedes our reading of the novel in terms of absolute individuals. Moreover, the interlocking nature of the novel's subplots, which make up the novel as a fragmentary whole, seems to mirror and accentuate the manner in which the respective characters are 'répartis et partagés le long des lignes de force, de clivage, de torsion, de chance, etc. dont le réseau fait leur être-en-commun'.⁵⁴

B. Venkat Mani has analysed Orhan Pamuk's references to Novalis in *The New Life* (1994) as the 'effort [...] to emancipate literature from its material, moralistic, or regional (nationalistic) allegiance[, restoring] a fantasy-filled, albeit not depoliticized cosmopolitanism',⁵⁵ and I have been arguing for a similar reading of Zaimoglu's novel. However, Zaimoglu's Romantic repertoire is not limited to the early Romantics. He is seemingly undeterred by the nationalist convictions of the Brothers Grimm, incorporating material from the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* into *Hinterland*, such as the character Vlasta, a family friend of Aneschka's father, whose character portrayal is heavily influenced by *Volksmärchen*. She lives in a house on the edge of a wood, a familiar setting for fairy tales, and the narrator's warning that '[e]ine Frau geht nicht im dunklen Wald spazieren' (p. 6) reflects the moral of many a Grimm tale.⁵⁶ Vlasta regularly sees dwarves and other supernatural woodland creatures approaching her house, and her ironic question to Ferda reflects the strong link between Germany and the folkloristic forged by the Brothers Grimm: 'Was ist ein Zwerg? Sie sind deutsch, Sie müssen es wissen' (p. 31).

Zaimoglu does not, then, dismiss the work of the Brothers Grimm for its mythic, identity-founding character. Rather, I would argue that he disempowers the collection's nationalist agenda by both internationalising and ironising it, which, in Nancy's terms, converts it from 'myth' into 'literature'. It seems unlikely that a cosmopolitan author such as Zaimoglu would reference the Brothers Grimm who, according to Louis L. Snyder, 'regarded all their work, including the fairy tales, as deriving its strength from the soil of the Fatherland'.⁵⁷ Snyder argues that the *Kinder- und*

⁵⁴ Nancy, *La communauté désœuvrée*, p. 187; 'spread out and shared along lines of force, of cleavage, of twisting, of chance, whose network makes up their being-in-common' (*IC*, p. 75).

⁵⁵ B. Venkat Mani, *Cosmopolitical Claims: Turkish-German Literatures from Nadolny to Pamuk*, Iowa City, p. 176.

⁵⁶ Vlasta is also a Bohemian warrior maiden of Slavic mythology: see Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, *Beauty or Beast?: The Woman Warrior in the German Imagination from the Renaissance to the Present*, Oxford 2010, pp. 74–111.

⁵⁷ Louis L. Snyder, *Roots of German Nationalism*, Bloomington 1978, p. 35.

Hausmärchen instilled values that would later become associated with the German national character, including:

respect for order, belief in the desirability of obedience, subservience to authority, respect for the leader and the hero, veneration of courage and the military spirit, acceptance without protest of cruelty, violence, and atrocity, fear and hatred for the outsider, and virulent anti-Semitism.⁵⁸

These characteristics made the tales useful propaganda tools for the NSDAP. As Nancy states, the 'Nazi myth' was founded upon the 'volonté de régénérer la vieille humanité européenne par la résurrection de ses plus anciens mythes'.⁵⁹

Yet Zaimoglu's work characteristically lacks the overt moral guidance of the *Volksmärchen*, choosing instead to exercise a more subtle criticism of characters, often by exposing them as hypocrites. Just as Zaimoglu adopts religious motifs whilst ignoring their ethics in much of his other work, here he appears to be comfortable borrowing fairytale motifs whilst also dismissing their moral guidance. Contravening the unambiguous division between good and evil found in *Volksmärchen*, some of the novel's characters with criminal backgrounds are depicted in a positive way. For instance, the criminal accomplice Niklas Heldt's reservations regarding his daughter Helen's Spanish boyfriend seem to have their roots in xenophobia and stereotypes, as Niklas accuses him of domestic abuse, combing olive oil into his hair and cursing him in Spanish behind his back (*H*, pp. 76–7). However, it becomes apparent that Niklas was right when the Spanish boyfriend arrives at their apartment wielding a pistol and Niklas must confront him (*H*, p. 219).

A further characteristic of Zaimoglu's fiction is a profound scepticism towards those in positions of authority, directly contravening the *Volksmärchen* which often serve to teach obedience. Nor are the fairy tales of *Hinterland* limited to one nation, extolling the purity and importance of its vernacular culture and fostering a communal view of national unity. Rather, stories and superstitions are derived from numerous areas. Therefore, just as Schoene claims that Anderson's link between the nation and the novel has been superseded, I would argue in a similar vein that *Hinterland* internationalises the Grimms' concept behind the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, portraying a cosmopolitanism with an emphasis on local culture, which all the while blurs the boundaries between cultures. For instance, similarities occur amongst the folktales of *Hinterland*, reflecting the reality of recurring plots across the globe that have been identified and tracked using the Aarne-Thompson classification system

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁵⁹ Nancy, *La communauté désœuvrée*, p. 116; 'wish to regenerate the old European humanity by resurrecting its most ancient myths' (*IC*, p. 46).

(AaTh).⁶⁰ Whilst Ferda is visiting relatives in Turkey, we discover that the old men of Istanbul believe the fireflies around the Galata Tower are the souls of 'empfindsamen Männer[n]' who committed suicide by jumping off it (*H*, pp. 141–3). They speak of 'die Hummel, deren kaltes Feuer Löcher in die Nacht und in den Wind brannte' (*H*, p. 141). This imagery resurfaces in Poland during a passage narrated from the perspective of a deceased woman's soul, watching over those praying for the dead. She similarly describes souls as 'Löcher [...] im azurblauen Samt des Himmels' (*H*, p. 396). Here we meet with Tomás (*H*, p. 398), a member of a Prague theatre group who committed suicide (*H*, p. 115). Thus, Zaimoglu creates a parallel fairytale or spiritual world that acts as a foil to the empirical world, both in its supernatural elements and in its disregard for human territorial divisions, expressed in the free movement of spirits between Turkey, Poland and the Czech Republic.

As in many Romantic *Kunstmärchen*, the division between the worlds of fantasy and reality is unclear in *Hinterland*. This adds a humorous fantasy dimension to one of the novel's main themes: the alterity that already exists in our towns and cities, even before recent mass immigration and globalisation. Vlasta must live alongside dwarves, just as Berlin may be separated into the former FRG and GDR, Budapest into Buda and Pest, Istanbul into city-dwellers and the poorer people of the hills, and Cracow into Poles and Tartars (a historic example of Islam in Europe, dispelling common misconceptions of the recent arrival of Muslims). Remoteness provides no defence against this either, since the small island community of Föhr is also diverse, being home to island-dwellers, people from the mainland and, of course, dwarves. Moreover, the minute details of everyone's superstitious behaviour, even strangers to the plot, including an unknown man who believes double knots act as a charm against vertigo (*H*, p. 33), create characters whose peculiarity and singularity echo Nancy's understanding of alterity based on plurality, rather than the dichotomy of same/different.⁶¹ Thus, *Hinterland* suggests that we should already be prepared to live alongside 'the other', both because of the heterogeneity of apparently homogeneous communities, and more fundamentally because of our singular and ecstatic ontological state within the inoperative community.

Consequently, I would argue that Zaimoglu's engagement with fairy tales better reflects Fr. Schlegel's and Novalis's poetic theories than the nationalist ambitions of the Grimms, highlighting the interrelatedness of the world through love, though this is not entirely clear cut. The folklore in *Hinterland* can be likened to Fr. Schlegel's 'neue Mythologie',

⁶⁰ See Alan Dundes, 'The Motif-Index and the Tale Type Index: A Critique', *Journal of Folklore Research*, 34/3 (1997), 195–202.

⁶¹ Christopher Watkin, 'A Different Alterity: Jean-Luc Nancy's "Singular Plural"', *Paragraph*, 30/2 (2007), 50–64 (p. 53).

which was intended to act as an inspirational mythology for the new Romanticised world. Yet Nancy categorically states that there is no myth for the community of singular beings, as this would lead to a finishing of identity. Myth interrupts community, as opposed to founding it.⁶² However, instead of the founding myth of a single ethnic group, the new mythology was aimed at the whole universe and linked to Romantic Irony as the artistic depiction of Man's problematic relationship with the absolute.⁶³ Thus, Romantic irony removes any finishing of identity from the new mythology, as the new Romanticised world it would herald is merely an unachievable ideal to be striven towards.

However, although the Romantic *Kunstmärchen* can be read in various different ways and were perhaps never intended to provide a foundation for a single ethnic group in separation from another, Romantic texts with an emphasis on Germanic folklore became myth through their misappropriation. Nancy affirms the dangerous connection between the invention of myth and the use of its power, referring specifically to the new mythology as not only dangerous but also futile in its rejection of the logic that myth 'implode dans sa propre fiction'.⁶⁴ Yet this threat is arguably muted in *Hinterland*, as the reader is not presented with one single foundational myth or hero in which they are supposed to commune. Zaimoglu utilises various mythical motifs, as advocated by Fr. Schlegel, yet his work remains 'literature' in Nancy's sense – the never ending 'voix de l'interruption'⁶⁵ – because of the organic cosmopolitan interrelatedness of the characters. Thus, to combat the 'Märchen von der Multikulturalität', Zaimoglu creates what could be described as his own 'Märchen vom Kosmopolitismus', rehabilitating the Märchen despite his earlier pejorative use of the term.

CONCLUSION

Hofmann asserts: '[Zaimoglu's] work draws upon concepts of literary Romanticism in original ways, uncovering their productive potential in the context of early twenty-first-century postmodernism.'⁶⁶ The reconciliation of the individual with the community was one of the Romantics' central aims, and remains relevant today. Nancy's concepts of the singular being and the inoperative community can be viewed as a present-day response to this philosophical exigency, and I have demonstrated how an appeal to Nancy's writing sheds light on the contemporary significance of Zaimoglu's Romantic turn in terms of its non-identitarian cosmopolitanism. In

⁶² Nancy, *La communauté désœuvrée*, p. 147.

⁶³ Paul Kluckhohn, *Das Ideengut der deutschen Romantik*, Tübingen 1953, p. 19.

⁶⁴ Nancy, *La communauté désœuvrée*, p. 142; 'implodes in its own fiction' (*IC*, p. 56).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 157; 'voice of interruption' (*IC*, p. 63).

⁶⁶ Hofmann, p. 239.

'Fünf klopfende Herzen' and *Hinterland*, Zaimoglu's engagement with Romantic love provides inspiration for an organic and non-foundational cosmopolitanism based on human relationships that can be illuminated with reference to Nancy's inoperative community. Just as love disturbs Fernando's attempts to live as an atomised individual, opening him up to the flows of the inoperative community, it is also the crossing of love that weaves together the chaotic narratives of *Hinterland*, equally implying that being-with is not subordinate to being-one. This radical openness is coupled with an excitement and intensity of feeling, whilst also carrying with it a greater risk of harm. Yet, contrasted with the isolated and numbing philistine world, Zaimoglu presents this openness as a risk worth taking.

It has been suggested that Zaimoglu's Romantic turn can be viewed as an attempt to write himself into the German literary canon, responding to the marginalisation of non-ethnic German authors, yet also undermining nationalism through its 'ambivalence towards national literatures'.⁶⁷ I have further outlined how Zaimoglu is paradoxically both indebted to the German literary canon whilst also disturbing its very Germanness, deploying Romantic references to undermine fusional views of community and drawing inspiration from the cosmopolitan nature of some early Romantic thought. Thus, what could be seen as an assimilatory or even nationalist gesture, can also be viewed as a cosmopolitan one.

⁶⁷ Littler, pp. 235–7.