

The Demands of Integration: Space, Place and Genre in Berlin

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of
Germanic Languages and Literatures in the Graduate School
of Duke University

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation argues that the metaphor of integration, which describes the incorporation of immigrants into the national body, functions as a way to exclude “Muslim” immigrants from German national identity, as these groups are those most often deemed “un-integratable” (*unintegrierbar*). By looking at cultural products, I explore how the spatial metaphor of integration is both contested and reproduced in a variety of narratives.

One of the recurring themes in integration debates focuses on finding a balance between multiculturalist strategies of population management; the regulation and enforcement of the third article of the German Basic Law, which guarantees gender parity; and the public religious life of conservative Islamic social movements like Salafism, which demand gender segregation as a tenet of faith. Discourses of women's rights as human rights and identity politics are the two most frequent tactical interventions on the integration landscape. My dissertation explores how identity, performance and experience of gendered oppression manifest in the autobiographical novels of Turkish-German women, comic books, journalistic polemics, activist video and the activities of the social work organization *Projekt Heroes*. Reading a broad array of cultural products allows me to explore the tension between the metaphor of integration and the reluctance of some to reenvision German national identity, with specific

attention to how this tension plays out in space and place. Through literary analysis, participant-observation and interviews, I explore how the language of integration shapes the space of the nation and limits what the space of the nation could become. I argue that the tone of integration debates over the past decade has become increasingly shrill, and propose that limited and strategic silence may offer potential as a political strategy for reenvisioning modes of immigration incorporation.

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1. Introduction: The Demands of Integration

In 1978, Heinz Kühn (SPD) was appointed Germany's first Commissioner of Integration. His full title was the somewhat unwieldy "Federal Commissioner for the Promotion of Integration among Foreign Workers and their Family Members" (Göktürk 243). Kühn's 1979 Memorandum entitled "The Present and Future Integration of Foreign Workers and Their Families in the Federal Republic of Germany," declared an urgent need for "unconditional and permanent integration" to be "offered" to immigrants in West Germany (Kühn 247). This memorandum signaled the emergence of "integration" as Germany's primary policy of immigrant incorporation. Although Germany had experienced massive guestworker migration since the early 1950s, a pressing need for labor during the postwar "economic miracle" (*Wirtschaftswunder*) had surpassed all other considerations about migration, such as discussions of religion, schooling and citizenship. In fact, like Switzerland, Germany began its guestworker programs with a foundational rotation principle: workers would stay for several years and then return to their countries of origin. While Switzerland vigorously defended its rotation principle, always conscious of protecting its national identity ("Labour Migration"), German employers soon grew tired of having to retrain their workers. Lengthening contracts led to longer stays in Germany.

When the oil crisis of 1973 slowed down production, the recruitment of guestworkers was formally stopped. The German government, however, recognized that many of its former guestworkers had become long-term residents, and issued a new law permitting residents to bring their families to Germany. Fearing that the end of the guestworker era would seal Germany's borders, immigration to Germany actually increased after the *Anwerbestopp*, although not dramatically (Chin 93).

Until Kühn's appointment in 1978, there was no such thing as a German politics of integration. The rotation principle of the guestworker program made imagining immigration impossible, much less the need to provide these immigrants access to political participation, education and citizenship. Citizenship in Germany (until 1999) was still primarily based on the ethnic body of the nation; even immigrants born in Germany found it very difficult to nationalize. This shift towards integration in public policy, according to historian Rita Chin, "required an entirely new ideological orientation" because "little detailed information existed about [...] foreigner's lives that [was] not directly related to work" (95). The emphasis on "culture" and the "clash of civilizations" that would come to play such a prominent role in the integration debates of the 1990s, according to Chin, can be traced back to the early sociological studies conducted to gather this detailed information about foreigner's lives:

Sociologists who used systems theory overwhelmingly advocated integration as a crucial antidote for the instability created by the clash of the so-called modern

and traditional systems. [...] Because of their liminal status, these researchers surmised, foreign children possessed a greater propensity for social conflict, which could manifest itself in unemployment, delinquency, crime and even violence. [...] Gradually, the terms of debate and recommendations generated by this body of research began to appear in policy proposals and political statements. (97)

Chin's monograph, *The Guestworker Question in Postwar Germany*, is the first English-language history of guestworker migration to Germany. Integration is only a small part of her project, but this particular aspect of political and cultural life is the focus of my research. What I explore in the pages that follow are the effects of *Integrationspolitik* on cultural production. If Chin's narrative includes her attempts to mark both the emergence of integration policy in the 1970s and the shifts of this field in the 1980s and 1990s, what I am attempting here is to look at the veritable explosion of integrationist rhetoric emerging in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. I argue that after Germany's dismal performance on the PISA tests for school pupils prompted the convention of the first Integration Summit (*Integrationsgipfel*) in 2006, integration politics underwent a transformation from federal policy to nationalist performance. As Chin shows, the clumsy attempts to integrate foreigners into German society in the 1970s and 1980s, including the ways in which both the Right and Left took turns alternately claiming and/or coopting integrationist rhetoric, would eventually become the language of a multipartisan and ultimately conservative vision of immigrant incorporation that demanded assimilation as a way to strengthen national identity. As Chin states:

“Ultimately, the terms of integration set out in more progressive circles converged with the conservative logic of cultural incommensurability. By the mid-1980s, both ends of the political spectrum framed integration according to a strict set of parameters, and defined it as a one-way process” (171). Petra Bendel and Mathias Hildebrandt echo and expand this trajectory in their 2006 edited volume *Integration von Muslimen*:

Zwar geht die sozialwissenschaftliche, theologische und politische Auseinandersetzung um die Präsenz und Integration der muslimischen Minderheit im Allgemeinen und der türkischen Minderheit im Besonderen bis in die 70er- und 80er-Jahre zurück und nahm insbesondere während der späten 90er-Jahre rapide zu. Aber erst die traumatischen Ereignisse des 11. September 2001 lieferten den Anlass und das Motiv für die sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung und die breitere Öffentlichkeit, sich intensiver mit der muslimischen Präsenz in Deutschland (und in Europa) und den Fragen der Integration von Muslimen auseinanderzusetzen. (7)

It is true that discussions in the social sciences, theology and politics about the presence and integration of the Muslim minority more broadly and the Turkish minority in particular extends back into the 1970s and 1980s, and increased dramatically during the 1990s. But only after the traumatic events of September 11, 2001 provided an opportunity and a motif for research in the social sciences and the broader public to consider the Muslim presence in Germany (and in Europe) as well as questions about the integration of Muslims.

What was once the concern of individual nations has, with the emergence of the European Union, also taken on a transnational character.

Although the attacks of September 11th may have been an event that pushed concerns about Muslim integration onto a broader global stage, the nationalist energy that strongly positions itself against Muslims has been a German concern since 1992-93,

when right-wing arson attacks on Turkish-German homes in Mölln and Solingen killed entire families, including children. As reunification revived nationalist fervor, the situation for immigrants – many without citizenship – was experienced as precarious (Ateş “Ade”).¹ The loss of industry in West Berlin and the subsequent post-reunification economic difficulties pushed many immigrants who had been unskilled workers into long-term unemployment. National identity, as a construct both strengthened by reunification and simultaneously infused with economic instability, worked to produce a raced underclass of mostly Muslim immigrants who were targeted both by mainstream integration politics and xenophobic right-wing extremists. These boundaries are starting to blur as nationalist citizen movements like *ProKöln* and *ProDeutschland* attract mainstream voters and the center-right FDP (Free Democratic Party) uses similar rhetoric in election campaigns.²

Like “woman,” the mythical subject of feminism in Butler’s *Gender Trouble*, the troubled and ambivalent “nation” emerges here as a performative construct. That the nation is also gendered is clear: the first stanza of the German national anthem performs this gendering of Germany as the *Vaterland* (Fatherland). The consequences of this gendering, alongside the consolidation of “nation” as a subject that is considered to be more or less stable, produce the nation as part of a broader constellation of power which

¹ See also Karapın, Motte, Watts and White.

² See Werning.

Butler, following Foucault, describes as “juridical systems of power” (2). While Butler uses the notion of juridical power to expose the problematic of a feminist politics that represents women as the subject of feminism, a representation which obscures the power relations which produced this subject in the first place, several components of this work can be effectively applied to national, and not just feminist, politics. Wendy Brown and Sabine Hark have certainly shown, in a similar vein, how a politics of identity functions both to mask and freeze the power relations that produce othered subjects. Both national identity and gender have at their core the notion of representation, and all juridical subjects – women and citizens – “are invariably produced through certain exclusionary practices that do not ‘show’ once the juridical structure of politics has been established” (Butler 2).

Perhaps most fruitful for the research that follows is Butler’s engagement with Freud’s research on melancholia and what Butler describes as “the melancholia of gender” (57). Butler seeks, in her analysis of Freudian melancholia, a way “to understand the melancholic denial/preservation of homosexuality in the production of gender within the heterosexual frame” (57). Melancholia is a response to loss which can be overcome by incorporating the other into the self. Butler notes that this identification has long-lasting effects: it “becomes a new structure of identity; in effect, the other becomes part of the ego” (58). When a loved object to which one has an *ambivalent*

relationship is lost, however, “that ambivalence becomes internalized as a self-critical or self-debasing disposition in which the role of the other is now occupied and directed by the ego itself” (58). In Butler’s reading of Freud, this melancholia is a critical process – indeed, it may be the only process capable of consolidating gender identity:

This process of internalizing lost loves becomes pertinent to gender formation when we realize that the incest taboo, among other functions, initiates a loss of love-object for the ego and that this ego recuperates from this loss through the internalization of the tabooed object of desire. In the case of a prohibited heterosexual union, it is the object which is denied, but not the modality of desire, so that the desire is deflected from that object onto other objects of the opposite sex. But in the case of a prohibited homosexual union, it is clear that both the desire and the object require renunciation and so become subject to the internalizing strategies of melancholia. Hence, “the young boy deals with his father by identifying himself with him.” (59).

If we think of immigration as a process which diversifies the nation, breaking down the normative construct that ties the nation to ethnic identity, we might think of contemporary Germany as a nation engaged in a melancholic process in which the lost object has not been fully consolidated. The lost object in the melancholia of the nation is the loss of ethnic homogeneity, the transitioning of a nation into a state. We could argue further, following Butler, that in this case the relationship to the lost nation is particularly ambivalent given that this mythically homogenous nation never existed. The federal and discursive push for integration as assimilation resembles the attempt by the “Father(land)” to deflect the bottom-up desire for a “queer” nation (multiethnic, multicultural, multilingual, multiracial, multigendered) onto more normative objects

(Germany as a nation of shared language and values). Where the boundaries fall between the “object of desire” and the “modalities of desire” in this case are not as clearly defined as they may be within the bourgeoisie heterosexual norms of the family – but the basic constructs of the Law of the Father which masks its own power (seen here in the ambivalent notion of the nation as both “nation” and “state”), and the essentially bisexual ego experiencing melancholia as its desire is limited in its expression, is usefully applied here. Each cultural product I will explore negotiates this melancholic relationship to the nation differently.

There is an intentional slippage here between nation and state, which reflects the kinds of conflicts there are in Germany between the political body of the state and the ethnic body of the nation. State and nation used to overlap before the citizenship reforms of 1999/2000 made naturalization a lot easier for foreign-born residents. But thinking about the state as a nation persists in Germany even when these two terms are no longer synonymous. If you look at the website of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, for instance, they have posted a description of integration politics as a clear series of steps immigrants must take to integrate themselves (*die Zuwanderer sollen sich integrieren*, “Integrationspolitik”). The Ministry's trajectory has several steps: integration courses provide a foundation in language, history and civics; this allows immigrants to

participate in the workforce. Successful integration at this level prompts immigrants to consider naturalization.

They also describe integration as feeling as if you are part of a community. In my interpretation, demanding affect from immigrants is a way to demand feelings of Germanness over the rights of citizenship. Certain groups, such as Muslim-Germans or Roma-Germans, are seen as both different and as invested in maintaining aspects of difference, which means that they are often described as unintegratable or unwilling to integrate. If integration is concerned with Germanness, then those who are not sufficiently integrated are not sufficiently German, irrespective of citizenship. At the same time, anyone with visible ethnic or religious difference is kept outside the boundaries of Germanness through low-level social policing, which questions those immigrants who interpellate themselves as "German." In colloquial terms, this can be expressed in the simple question, "But where are you really from?" or "Where are your parents from?" Through these kinds of questions or interactions, Germanness is maintained as an ethnic category and serves as a prerequisite for full civic participation. The consequence of this kind of rhetoric is the conclusion that only ethnic Germans can be sufficiently secular and democratic to participate fully as citizens.

This dissertation explores a variety of cultural products that have emerged on the landscape of integration politics. In some ways, it attempts to continue a strand of the

work Chin started, pulling her focus on cultural objects and their political instrumentalization into the 21st-century. For Chin's postwar history, the use of cultural objects – primarily literature and film – was necessary in order to give space to voices of ethnic minorities who could only participate in shaping the nation through culture, as naturalization in Germany had been quite difficult before 1999. These voices would have been less prominent in the political and historical record without Chin's attention to cultural production. My work, however, is not historical but rather interpretive. The four chapters that follow read both individual cultural products as well as the metaphor of integration as constructs which allow various actors access to political spaces and imaginative possibilities. Taken as a whole, this collection of cultural products shapes a narrative of the contemporary German nation that is at once both restrictive and open, resistant to and yet already in the process of reshaping national identity.

1.1 Narratives of Integration and Identity

Integration is a common metaphor for the incorporation of immigrants into the national body. It is used in many different countries, not just in Germany. The *Oxford English Dictionary* even includes this politicized usage as a subdefinition of the noun. Definition 1c states that integration can mean “the bringing into equal membership of a common society those groups or persons previously discriminated against on racial or cultural grounds” (“Integration”).

The research that follows explores the tension between integration by means of compelled assimilation to majority norms and integration as a way to counter intuitively exclude certain groups from national identity even while touting the necessity of incorporation. By looking at a critical mass of journalistic op-eds, polemic autobiographies, comic books, activist videos and the activities of *Projekt Heroes*, a social work organization in Berlin, I look at how a variety of actors make use of autobiographical narratives.

Autobiography is not just a narrative form that seems attractive to the highly self-referential *Zeitgeist* fascinated by social media and identity politics. I would posit that the great appetite for autobiographical narratives is a way for collective identities in transition to negotiate the terms of their “scripts,” which Kwame Anthony Appiah defines in *The Ethics of Identity* as “narratives that people can use in shaping their projects and their life stories” (22). According to Appiah, these collective scripts are not only “responses to something outside our selves,” but are also the “products of histories” and ultimately beyond our individual control (21). What I am looking for in any of the various cultural products I read are narratives of identity: what does it mean (or what do we want it to mean) to be German? To be Turkish-German? Kurdish-German? Muslim-German? What options exist for narrating any of the categories to which I claim to belong? What does it mean to be “integrated”? What does it mean to be

a Muslim woman or man? Finally, in the case of *Projekt Heroes*: what does it mean to live an honorable life? To come from a “culture of honor”?

Appiah suggest the following as a way to think about how narrative shapes identity:

So we should acknowledge how much our personal histories, the stories we tell of where we have been and where we are going, are constructed, like novels and movies, short stories and folktales, within narrative conventions. Indeed, one of the things that popular narratives (whether filmed or televised, spoken or written) do for us is to provide models for telling our lives. At the same time, part of the function of our collective identities – of the whole repertory of them that a society makes available to its members – is to structure possible narratives of the individual self. (22)

For those who, in the pages that follow, would see only a random collection of disparate objects with limited opportunities for comparison, I argue that it is the entirety of the collection that gives value to the narrative arc of this research. Each object is different, but taken together, they are an attempt to map a particular moment in the much longer narrative arc of German history and culture. As Appiah states:

It [my story] need not be the exact same story, from week to week, or year to year, but how it fits into the wide story of various collectivities matters for most of us. It is not just that say, gender identities give shape to one’s life; it is also that ethnic and national identities fit a personal narrative into a larger narrative. For modern people, the narrative form entails seeing one’s life as having a certain arc, as making sense through a life story that expresses who one is through one’s own project of self-making. That narrative arc is yet another way in which an individual’s life depends deeply on something socially created and transmitted. (23)

Reading narratives of the nation is hardly a new idea. In the edited collection *Nation and Narration*, Homi Bhabha describes his desire to make visible the ambivalence inherent to ideas of the nation:

What I want to emphasize in that large and liminal image of the nation with which I began is a particular ambivalence that haunts the idea of the nation, the language of those who write of it and the lives of those who live it. It is an ambivalence that emerges from a growing awareness that, despite the certainty with which historians speak of the 'origins' of the nation as a sign of the 'modernity' of society, the cultural temporality of the nation inscribes a much more transitional social reality. (1)

It is this "transitional social reality" that I am attempting to describe in the spaces between each of the various objects that I analyze. Of particular interest to me are how the concept of integration and the field of *Integrationspolitik* affect and are affected by cultural production in contemporary Germany. I see *Integrationspolitik*, like all narratives and political strategies, as a social construct that affects the imaginative possibilities available both to citizens and that collective formation known as national identity. Ultimately, an integrationist narrative limits us in imagining how the nation could develop. Instead, it emphasizes a conservative notion of preserving the nation through values, language and vague desires to protect the nation from decline. This collection of objects is thus an attempt to show how these narratives are shaped by multiple forces and actors within the space of the nation. It also posits that these narratives actively

construct and deconstruct the notion of “nation” and “integration” as each author fashions her own narrative.

By looking at a variety of cultural products, I will map the contours of a national debate that is compelling in the way that it can adapt to a variety of social sites, from culture and values to education; from employment to citizenship. What integration means for the national body, as well as those who compel and those who are compelled to integrate, takes various forms depending on the context. Calls to integrate can protect, villify, demonize or present themselves as a form of goodwill or political necessity. Those who compel, or who desire to compel, others to integrate can mask their power or show it; hide their intentions or reveal them. Those who resist or are refused integration can likewise react by rejecting this compulsion or building a community to protect them from integration's desires and contradictions. Calls for integration can come from any segment of society, from mainstream politicians to successful immigrants to right-wing populists. Actors can likewise reject the call to integrate and advocate for a number of other strategies: tolerance, acceptance, or the expulsion of those deemed “unintegratable” (*unintegrierbar*, White 754). These strategies can find recourse in ideas of race, of linguistic identity, of shared religion or nebulous and ambivalent notions of values and a shared “European” history. Whether read as a one-sided call for the assimilation of immigrants or as a necessary step towards a unified national identity and

health economy, integration is a buzzword that implicates every member of German society. Their responses to and engagements with “integration” place these strategies and tactics on the broader landscape of *Integrationspolitik*. Furthermore, that position gives us valuable information about how national identity, identity politics, immigration debates, culture, racism and social conflicts can be read and understood.

The readings I offer here will thus not only be useful for understanding contemporary controversies, but also for envisioning new ways of thinking this problematic. At a time when aggression, defensiveness, and racist statements have claimed much of the public space for debate, an intervention of this sort aims to articulate how small portions of this space could be reshaped or re-read in ways that could illustrate the consequences of pursuing these discourses. When integration is the dominant metaphor for describing the way the nation-state perceives immigrants, this spatial metaphor not only requires exclusion for it to make sense, but also masks the power of those who compell others to integrate. Rather than functioning to provide democratic access to civil participation, calls for “integration” often endeavor to protect national German identity by marking certain groups as unintegratable, thus excluding them from claiming national identity. The 19th century French philosopher Ernst Renan, whose 1882 lecture at the Sorbonne, “What is a nation?”, is included in Bhaba’s edited

collection, cautioned against using race, language or religion as the foundation for national consciousness, declaring:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form [. . .] More valuable by far than common customs posts and frontiers conforming to strategic ideas is the fact of sharing, in the past, a glorious heritage and regrets, and of having, in the future, [a] shared programme to put into effect, or the fact of having suffered, enjoyed, and hoped together. These are the kinds of things that can be understood in spite of differences of race and language. (19)

To show how the authors, artists and social workers figured here envision this “shared programme” is my goal.

1.2 Methodological Framework

Integration is an inherently spatial metaphor. It not only carries with it the distinction between whole and part, but also between inside and outside. In order to integrate or be integrated, one must thus successfully cross this inside/outside, within/without boundary. Integration is not necessarily a binary – multiple disparate parts can come together and form a new space or object; however, to do so still requires an acceptance of a shifting boundary and the dissolution of internal boundaries. One of the aims of this dissertation is to explore how this boundary marking the spaces of integration shifts: whether it expands or contracts; whether its boundaries are consistent with or diverge from the space of the nation; whether crossing this boundary (if it cannot expand) is met

with resistance; and if crossing itself is resisted, or takes place relatively unproblematically. Considering integration as a spatial metaphor also allows us to explore the spaces and places within the integrated whole, not just how the borders function. We can explore differences in scale, for instance, between the space of the nation and the space of the neighborhood. We can also explore specific narratives of place that serve many functions within the spaces of the nation. We can ponder how or through what kinds of action and agency spaces can be seen to expand and contract, to permit new access or prohibit certain subjects from moving from periphery to center (and back). This dissertation is thus an attempt to read and interpret discourses of integration through a spatial lens. The theories of space and place that have long been constitutive for geography and cultural anthropology offer a strong framework for exploring how language and cultural can be read products in the context of contemporary integration debates.

Henri Lefebvre, in his 1973 work *The Production of Space*, argued for a renewed attention to social space, specifically to the conditions of its production: “ ‘Who produces?’, ‘What?’, ‘How?’, ‘Why and for whom?’ ” (69). These questions, the answers to which can provide “production” with the context it has previously lacked, allow Lefebvre to fashion a dialectic between works and products, between nature and production (70). We could ask the same questions of an integration metaphor: Who

produced it? Who is called to integrate, into whose spaces, on whose terms? How and why did “integration” become the dominant metaphor for immigrant incorporation?

The tripartite production of space which develops from this dialectic – made up of material space, representational space and representations of space – allows LeFebvre to explore the relationship between space and power, language and ideology, metaphor/metonymy and movement. What I find important in Lefebvre's work is his emphasis that “this space was *produced* before it was *read*” (143). Thus various readings of spaces already produced can map the limits of space, especially a space in which ideology has intervened. As Lefebvre points out: “Activity in space is restricted by that space; space 'decides' what activity may occur” (143). I argue that a mixture of spatial configurations of the nation, as well as the language used to describe both these spaces as well as the ideas, actors and events that move through and shape this space, are the two primary ways national discourse about integration restricts how the space of the nation is conceived. Through a mix of examining published texts as well as a fifteen months of fieldwork in Berlin-Neukölln, I will read spaces created and produced by talk of “the nation,” identity politics and political performance; provide an interpretation of the activities and spaces of *Projekt Heroes*, a non-profit social work project in the Rollberg quarter of Neukölln, and offer a dialectical reading of political organization and practice

to examine alternatives to the integration debates which could expand, rather than restrict, what Renan called “the desire to continue a common life” (19).

The kinds of narratives which function to shape space are varied. I include autobiographical novels of second-generation Turkish-German women as well as a comic book commissioned to provide a history of a city. The texts range from activist video satirizing the spatial metaphor of the *Parallelgesellschaft* (parallel society) to objects as mundane as job descriptions and staff handbooks. They may be as sensational as the Rütli School *Brandbrief* (incendiary letter), where vocational high school faculty released a letter to the press asking for help bringing order to their chaotic classrooms, or as traumatic as autobiographical narratives that recount abuse. These cultural products were selected to provide a varied but critical mass of objects that all agitate within the space of German integration debates.

Every chapter includes an autobiographical narrative: Seyran Ateş' *Große Reise ins Feuer* (Long Journey into Fire); Necla Kelek's *Die fremde Braut* (The Foreign Bride); Anna Faroqhi's *Weltreiche erblühten und fielen* (Empires Rose and Fell); Brigitte Pick's *Kopfschüsse* (Shots to the Head), and the autobiographical narratives invoked in individual interviews with the social work staff of *Projekt Heroes* are all narratives of experience, performance and political and social desire. The site of the autobiographical narrative endows each speaker with a position of power, a standpoint from which they

can claim access to the truth. These kinds of narratives meld experience with suggestions for action (seen most clearly in Ateş and Kelek's novels) and provide a powerful position from which to agitate politically and ground a political performance that demands integration by any means necessary. Ateş and Kelek have become powerful Turkish-German celebrities over the past decade, serving as government appointees to the first German Islam Conference, called into being by Wolfgang Schäuble, then Minister of the Interior, in 2006. (Schäuble is currently the Minister of Finance.) They both have a loud media presence in discourses about integration. Necla Kelek, for instance, is a frequent opinion contributor to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, a center-right newspaper of high critical standing.

Other autobiographical narratives are perhaps less politically influential in terms of direct action, but still serve as forms of legitimation for engagement in the field. The autobiographical narratives of *Heroes* staff members, for instance, qualify them for employment and serve as a necessary resource and requirement in the minority-only spaces of social work outreach with young immigrant men. In interviews with the staff, most articulated a process of individual development through experience that led them to social work and endowed them with the ability to understand and share experiential knowledge with the populations this organization serves.

As Joan Scott notes in her seminal essay "On Experience," experience is both an interpretation of lived events and in need of its own interpretation (797). In integration debates, autobiography serves many functions: as legitimation of the right to speak, as a form of identity politics, as proof of experiential knowledge production, and as the source of political claims to truth and knowledge often mobilized in the service of securing the boundaries of national identity. The focus on genre that runs through this dissertation is thus an intentional attempt to interpret some of the many ways that identity, experience, subjectivity and performance function as prominent features of political discourses on the postmodern and multicultural landscape of German democracy. Within a diverse community with a diversity of needs, values and desires, political claim-making often relies on invocations of experience and on experiential knowledges. How this recourse to experience, however, corresponds to the purported pursuits and desires of this kind of claim-making is one of the questions of this research.

As Scott points out, using experience to legitimate claims to truth often works to naturalize difference rather than to contest processes which produce difference: "The evidence of experience then becomes evidence for the fact of difference, rather than a way of exploring how difference is established, how it operates, how and in what ways it constitutes subjects who see and act in the world" (777). In the narratives explored here, the evidence of experience functions differently depending on how each author

attempts to harness their narrative to a political project. Ateş and Kelek, for instance, often do not emphasize their difference: their self-representation emphasizes their Germanness, disrupting the abstract universalism that would traditionally seek to exclude them. Although their gender and other parts of their narratives often portray these narrative “I”s as female victims, the essential function of their education and professional achievements, their claims to universalist privileges, and the way in which they pit themselves *against* the religious and uneducated members of their ethnic group show these authors to approach elite and masculine power. Their ethnicity and gender interrupts or challenges previous notions of this masculinity as white and male. Sidonie Smith labels this a mimetic strategy:

In this move the autobiographer positions herself as the subject of traditional autobiography: that is, she mimes the subjectivity of universal man. Speaking from this location proffers authority, legitimacy, and readability. It also proffers membership in the community of the fully human. For oppressed peoples, such membership can be psychologically and politically expedient and potent. Unselfconsciously embraced, however, mimesis invites recuperation as well as the promise of power, the maintenance of subjection to the self-definitions that bind. (155)

This will to power becomes intertwined and enmeshed with gender not only because of the claim to “the subjectivity of universal man” but also because of the predominance of narratives of gendered violence characteristic of this specific subgenre. I argue, following Leigh Gilmore, that this violence is a specific kind of rhetorical violence:

The creation of gender is represented as a kind of violence enacted on the body in order to make something visible qua gender which did not previously appear. Only then may the body be interpreted as possessing a female mark of identification and identity. The body is seen as “gender female” once it has been injured; thus, the “creation” of gender is represented [...] as a kind of violence. (*Autobiographics* 164)

Thus, it is the mark of violence that produces gender, a process mirrored by Orientalist tropes of savage men injuring victimized women, which partly makes these narratives legible. The authors must start from the position of “the victimized woman” in order to be able to approach the universality of man. It is the negotiation of this ascendant movement which marks them as elite, successful and bearers of truth.

Much of the scholarship on women’s life-writing explores autobiographers who resist power which attempts to exclude them from full participation. Gilmore and Smith both examine these kinds of narratives in their respective works. According to Gilmore,

Some stories are criminalized from the start when the amount of “truth” one can claim devolves from the amount of cultural authority already attached, within a terrain of dominance, to the person speaking and the place from which s/he speaks. This cultural terrain, in which truth represents both a place where some may not stand and a language that some are not authorized to speak, is mapped onto the practice and study of autobiography [...]. (26)

These two effects – both the authorization to speak granted to Kelek and Ateş by virtue of their education and their ethnicity, as well as their mimetic strategy that subjects both authors to what Smith calls “the self-definitions that bind,” are what I will attempt to analyze here. In contrast to the writers that Gilmore and Smith explore, among them

Audre Lourde, Maxine Hong Kingston, Zora Neale Hurston, Gloria Anzaldúa, Virginia Woolf and Getrude Stein, Kelek and Ateş rarely position themselves in resistance to dominance; instead, they approach it. In this sense, their choice of genre limits their capacity for action.

The much less famous autobiographical narratives I explore in the second half of this dissertation are more varied in their forms of representation. The power they approach or contest comes from multiple sources; it is not simply aligned with national power and cultural dominance.

1.3 Muslim Women's Autobiography

In Germany, as well as in many other European countries, including Denmark, France and Sweden, the genre of Muslim women's autobiography has become both a popular and lucrative genre. A few words must be spent on how the word "Muslim" functions in a contemporary German context. "Muslim" serves as a container category for all immigrants whose country of origin is considered predominantly Muslim: North Africa, the Middle East (mostly Turkey), the former Yugoslavia, the Balkans and Central Asia, as well as German converts to conservative Islamic groups who become visible as Muslims through Islamic dress. In German national statistics, non-Muslim minority populations of these regions, including Yezidi Kurds, Druze, Arab and Balkan Christians, as well as cultural or secular Muslims who do not practice Islam, are

included in national statistics about Muslims. Thus “Muslim” is no longer a category that describes religious affiliation or practice. It has become a symbolic marker or empty signifier that functions much the way racialized signifiers function. By essentializing and attributing “group” characteristics to immigrants with a wide variety of national origins and sometimes visible characteristics (headscarves, beards, physiognomy or skin tones seen as “not German”), “Muslim” has begun to function as a racial category. Combine these essentialized characteristics with the structural inequalities and hurdles faced by immigrants marked as “Muslim” with respect to employment, equal housing opportunity, economic and social justice, and access to citizenship or legal residency status, there is even more support for the argument that racist ideology is a substantial component of discourses of integration. In what follows, I will not bracket every use of the term Muslim within quotation marks; when I speak of Muslim populations or Muslim women's autobiography, it is in the sense of “Muslim” defined here – as a signifier that generalizes and racializes these immigrant and/or religious groups.³

Muslim women's autobiography's mass market appeal is thus a transnational phenomenon in Western Europe.⁴ The critical mass of Muslim women's autobiography in Germany took off after the attacks of September 11th, 2001, but had already existed in

³See Mühe.

⁴See Appendix A for a list of texts characteristic of this genre. The genre has several variations, from traumatic thrillers, activist texts, satirical responses to autobiographers like Ateş and Kelek, as well as the autobiographies of both male and female minority politicians (see Akgün and Özdemir).

various forms before that symbolic event.⁵ Betty Mahmoody's 1980 autobiography, *Not without my daughter!* is often marked as the first version of this genre, which – in its German iteration – serves several symbolic functions in integration politics. One of the characteristic qualities of this literature is its reproduction of Orientalist tropes in order to argue for the need to actively compel Muslim immigrants to integrate. These tropes instrumentalize gender and reproduce the dichotomy between aggressive immigrant men (occasionally referenced in German slang as “Paschas”) and their victimized and oppressed Muslim women. Muslim women's autobiographies often feature traumatic stories of forced marriage, physical and sexual assaults, murder, restrictive fundamentalist religious and/or traditionalist practice, and gender separation or exclusion which confirm the Orientalist essentialization of Muslim communities. The focus on purported gender inequality or even articulated gender difference in Muslim communities is often referred to in polemic texts as “gender apartheid,” which allows the authors to problematize gender separation as an assault on human rights. This characterizes gender separation as an anti-democratic practice which many authors advocate should be aggressively policed through state intervention into private spaces. Protecting the rights of women thus becomes the utmost moral and ethical responsibility of the state, which – in Western European and North American contexts – sees itself as a

⁵See Çileli and Fatma B.

progressive body having achieved gender parity and a respect for human rights which have not yet come to immigrant groups, Muslim societies, Islam or the East.⁶

How Muslim women's autobiography has been able to captivate and sway both the public as well as political actors can be seen in the ways these narratives meld group identity, claims to knowledge and individual experience. The Orientalist tropes noted above do not have to appear in their most extreme form to be effectively utilized. Elements can be selectively isolated or casually invoked; through the melding of these subtler references with the "truth" of experience, narratives successfully legitimate their claims to knowledge production by fusing these claims to identity. The predominance of Muslim women choosing this written form points to a broader trend of cultural essentialism which marks Muslim populations as inherently problematic to elite German understandings of the nation as a once-Christian, now-secular democracy founded on Enlightenment principles of individualism and equal rights. Gender separation, violence and criminality, the oppression of women, high unemployment levels and poverty are all seen as hurdles to the successful integration of these cultural groups into German

⁶ This discourse of Muslim women's rights echoes colonial attempts to justify imperial rule over 'barbaric' societies that "oppress their women" by advocating for women's rights in the colonies. This was often juxtaposed with opposition by these same politicians to campaigns for women's suffrage in the colonizer's home country. Evelyn Baring, also known by his title Lord Cromer, is one of the most often cited embodiments of this contradiction, as he advocated both for promoting Muslim women's rights by calling for the veil to be abolished and also led both the Men's League for Opposing Woman Suffrage in 1908, as well as National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage from 1910-12 ("Evelyn Cromer"). See Amos, Badran, Hasso, McClintock, Okin, Ong and Prashad. Okin's piece "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?" is one of the most famous American examples of this style of argumentation.

society. In its most distressing form, this essentialism turns into explicit racism, seen, for example, in Sarrazin's shocking statements in the summer of 2010 after the publication of his polemic *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (Germany Does Away with Itself).

Finally, the polemic style of many of these texts takes on a manifesto-like quality. Chiding Muslim immigrant groups for isolating themselves from the German majority as well as the German state for its lack of consistent and effective integration policy, autobiographers often take multiple groups to task in polarizing social debates about the role of immigrants in German society; individual and group rights in a multicultural populace; democracy, secularity and freedom; the German Basic Law's commitment to gender parity; and German national identity after reunification.

The corollary to an analysis of writing practices is to consider various practices of reading. The appeal of autobiography, to some extent, lies in the possibility of finding one's reflection in another's self-representation. This can be its own kind of pleasure. As Gilmore articulates her own strategy of reading in her book *Autobiographics*, she points out some of the many politics of identification various strategies of reading can offer. Identifying with a text, for example, permits a reader to "construct an 'imaginary relation' to the situation the text depicts" (23). This identification is "pre-critical" and a "value-laden sorting of autobiographers into 'same as' or 'different from' the reading I" (23). A form of precritical reading that prompts identification, according to Gilmore,

thus reproduces dominant ideology (23). This may even expand notions of the possible, which, as Gilmore points out, has often been the case with gay and lesbian autobiographies. Autobiographies of any minority, potentially, would have the ability to be read “productively” in this vein (24). However, a critical reading practice that reads against identification, “listen[ing] for another’s voice and see[ing] another’s face even where sameness is sought” (24) would restore to reading “the critical effects of that reading which are obliterated through the mechanism of identification” (23).

So what kind of a reading strategy am I hoping to perform here? I am less interested in the construction of “woman” and the exploration of “truth” in representation, the two concerns which drive Gilmore’s attempt to create a feminist theory of self-representation, than in how elite and educated immigrant women in Germany use life-writing to negotiate their relationship to the nation. Furthermore, I am interested in how they invoke freedom and identity as the avenues through which they navigate this relationship and what consequences this has for our understanding of these concepts. To that end, it may be necessary to explain the shifts my reading strategies have taken as I have approached these books over time. When first writing about *Große Reise ins Feuer* and *Die fremde Braut*, my primary reading strategy was identificatory: the “imaginary relation” I created between my reading *I* and the narrative

I was one of staunch sameness. There are reasons as to why this sameness was perceived, which – from the outside – might be considered a rather atypical reaction.

I am neither German nor Turkish nor Kurdish nor Muslim (but rather American and Catholic) and in my home country, I am not a member of an ethnic minority. The sameness I perceived between the authors and my reading self was an identification prompted through situation and a profound misreading of “culture” as it appears in these books. The feeling of “sameness” – just as as Gilmore theorizes it would – prompted an initially uncritical identification with these narratives that flattened these two texts into near unrecognizeability. In this reading, Ateş and Kelek’s autobiographical narratives were accurate representations of what all female foreigners in Germany experience, irrespective of national origin.

Part of this ignorance of difference may in part be due to my American understanding of whiteness. In the United States, Ateş and Kelek would most likely be interpellated as white (this is not true in a German context). I was a white woman reading white women with whom I shared a certain level of experience – what reason was there for me not to identify with them?

Over time, as I was repeatedly drawn back to these texts, I began to understand the degree to which I was, in fact, quite separate from both these authors and their narratives. The initial misreading of national and cultural contexts, however, ultimately

shaped my work with a strong hand: this mistake pointed to key areas of culture, religion, nationality and narrative where there was an active or even intentional slippage, a blank space, a hidden space, a way in which silences surrounding the unsaid haunted each narrative. The relationship of individuals to the nation and national identity became interesting to me through recognizing my mistakes, and intensified when I returned to Germany for a research stay ten years after my high school exchange. As an independent adult, was often called “Frau Schuster”; when introducing myself as “Johanna”, I was read as a German until I made a grammatical mistake; in other variations, I was assumed to have married an American man named “Craig,” the only way – in Germany – to make sense of my double last name (Schuster-Craig is my family name, and the name taken by both of my parents. In Germany, children may not be given a hyphenated last name). Questions about my name, resistance to seeing me as an American, even several strange conversations I had with Germans who stared at my eyes and asked if I were an “American Indian,” forced me to consider how nation, culture and race both function in concert and transform radically in different contexts. When I told them, quite truthfully, that I don’t know where all of my ancestors came from, the reaction was disbelief – irrespective of their own ethnic background.

These misunderstandings were sometimes embodied in a humorous and rather mundane way when I lived in Berlin. Once, while shopping at the greengrocer at the

end of my street, a lost young man who could speak neither English nor Turkish nor German was hanging around the tiny store, where two long aisles stretched back into a long, narrow, urban storefront. The Turkish-German owner of this store asked him in broad, simple English: "You? From?" To which the young man answered "I. Libya." In return the grocer began cheerfully hailing each of us in German: "Du: Libya. Ich: Türkei. Sie: (pointing at me) *Deutsch*." Setting the matter straight just led to more confusion, as I decided – atypically and with a lapse of good judgment, since I usually communicated to the staff in German – that this was the appropriate moment to attempt to communicate in rudimentary Turkish.

JSC: Hayır, amerikalıyım. (No, I'm American.)

GROCER: Amerikalı mısınız? Türkçe nerede öğrendiğiniz? (You're American? Where did you learn Turkish?)

JSC: Amerika'da öğrendim. Duke universitesinde. (In America. At Duke University.)

GROCER: Türk universitesinde? (Turk University?)

JSC: Du-uke universitesinde. (Du-uke University).

GROCER: Türk ? (Turk?)

JSC: Duke.

He then said something long and complicated which I didn't understand, and when I looked at him quizzically, he said in German "Gut, das ist ja sehr gut!", patted me on the shoulder and handed me my tomatoes. We never spoke in Turkish or German directly again, even though I visited this store daily.

A Turkish university that teaches Americans to speak Turkish, understanding domestic violence as something “German,” and the national incomprehensibility of given names (Ateş, Kelek, Schuster) are misreadings that – in their inaccuracy – point to the places where we can start to look for insight into how political spaces and strategies (especially as regards the “nation” and “culture”) provide legibility. This project arose out of my desire to understand what difference means. What is an effect of “culture” and what is an effect of “something else,” whether that be mental illness, poverty, despair, education, manipulation or abuse? What ideologies are reproduced by reading and writing both cultured and gendered selves? Where can we find the logical mistakes which make ideology about the nation, culture and gender transparent? What are techniques that exist and which make it possible for us to be aware of our mistakes?

To this end, this dissertation makes extensive use of close-reading as a method for understanding complexity. Close-reading is a method which, as a literary and cultural scholar, makes sense to me and validates my training. It is also a method which I have found fruitful: it was in the repeated reading and re-reading of the autobiographical texts examined here which led me to question many of the initial tropes, categories and narratives with which I identified.

1.4 Overview of Chapters

This dissertation has four main sections. I begin my study with an analysis of Seyran Ateş' first two books, *Große Reise ins Feuer* (Long Journey into Fire) and *Der Multikulti-Irrtum* (The Multiculti Mistake) in the context of debates about freedom and multiculturalism. In Chapter Two, I explore her conceptualization of freedom as a disciplinary power that is inefficient when *laissez faire* approaches to immigration (including multiculturalism) inefficiently regulate economies of power. Reading these books alongside Chancellor Merkel's widely publicized statement in 2010 that "Multiculturalism has failed" allows me to explore how these ideas are directly invoked on the political landscape.

In Chapter Three, I look at Necla Kelek's extreme politicization of experience in her first book *Die fremde Braut* (The Foreign Bride). First published in 2005, *Die fremde Braut* received both widespread acclaim and criticism; the publication of her subsequent three books secured her fame and fueled her nascent celebrity. A trained sociologist, Kelek's narratives incorporate interviews with "imported" brides or criminals into cinematic narratives that move at a clip. Her literary celebrity is surpassed only by her political one – she contributes op-eds to prominent newspapers, served as a consultant for Baden-Württemberg's citizenship test for Muslim immigrants (also called the "Pascha Test"), and continues to hold gatherings in Berlin for elite journalists and

invited guests to discuss social issues like migration and integration, which serves as a way to maintain a position of power by steering journalistic discourse in a direction that supports her political agenda.

Kelek's intervention into the discourses and politics of integration is a polemic one. By choosing to focus – especially in her first two books, *Die fremde Braut* and *Die verlorenen Söhne* (The Lost Sons) – on isolated women and violent men, two groups distant from the center, Kelek's case studies mobilize support for aggressive integrationist policies designed to compel assimilation from Muslim minorities. Her strident and undifferentiated support for Christianity and Enlightenment values earned her the honor, alongside other women's rights activists like Ateş and Ayaan Hirsi Ali, of being dubbed a “Fundamentalist of the Enlightenment” in 2009. In 2010, critiques intensified as journalists classified this same group as “Preachers of Hate,” a term usually reserved for fundamentalist imams.⁷

When placed adjacent to the analysis of Ateş in Chapter Two, we can begin to explore in these polemic examples what Wendy Brown so eloquently calls “wounded attachments,” the catalysts of identity politics which invest in the reproduction of the

⁷ Kelek is no stranger to this kind of reaction – in 2006, sixty migration researchers signed a public petition condemning Kelek's work which was published in the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*. The authors describe Kelek's work as “nichts mehr als die Verbreitung billiger Klischees über “den Islam” und “die Türken,” angereichert durch schwülstige Episoden aus Keleks Familiengeschichte” (nothing more than the dissemination of cheap clichés about “Islam” and “the Turks,” enriched with bombastic episodes from Kelek's family story, Karakaşoğlu 2).

conditions of social inequity which both produce and freeze identity categories. Kelek's form of identity politics argues that conservative and folk Islamic practice, a propensity of Muslims to violence, and patriarchal understandings of gender roles mark Muslims as an immigrant group resistant to integration. Both authors' strategies perpetuate long-standing Orientalist tropes and exhibit similarities with colonial feminism. In Kelek's narratives, binding to a collective identity is seen as a choice. The possible need for protective behavior in the face of daily discrimination and structural disadvantage is not accounted for in her narratives. Muslim communities bind to an immigrant collective rather than the collective body of the nation and have chosen – rather than have been compelled – to do so.

Kelek performs her own attempt to bind both “integrated” minorities and the ethnic German majority to a collective identity that positions itself against Muslims who “resist” integration by developing a spatial metaphor: *kaza*. *Kaza* comes from the Turkish word for “district” and describes an isolated space of “Turkishness” (White) that is *within* but not *of* the Federal Republic of Germany. This isolated bubble of contained immigrant life thwarts attempts by the state to enter this space, and is characterized as undemocratic, tyrannical and hidden from sight. Kelek's portrayal of *kaza* represents a panoptical desire to illuminate hidden spaces where danger lurks beneath the surface. This characterization of Muslim communities in Kelek's work functions to essentialize

and instrumentalize difference in the service of a nationalist strain of cultural racism.

Integration is thus not only a successful way to promote binding across the right, but is a policy which argues that absorbing separate spaces is the only safeguard against the decline of the nation.

Kelek's concept of *kaza* is a reflection of the spatial metaphors produced by the metaphor of integration. If integration describes the assimilation of parts into a whole, then naming the parts to be integrated is part of the broader integrative process. A "parallel society" (*Parallelgesellschaft*) is a construct created to describe de facto segregation between German and immigrant spaces. These separate spaces are often referred to simultaneously as ghettos, *Problemkieze* (problem neighborhoods), or *Brennpunktviertel* (burning-point quarters). These terms describe spaces that are separate (parallel), quite literally problematic (*Problemkiez*), or the sight of combustion (burning point quarter). Social friction, separation, isolation and violence characterize these spaces. Chapter Four examines these metaphors by analyzing three different cultural products that contest the notion that immigrant spaces are defensively and willfully separate.

The three narratives I examine here use various methods to show that the place of the neighborhood is created by contact rather than isolation. Brigitte Pick's autobiographical novel about the Rütli School affair in 2006 emphasizes the structural

and social disadvantages of the *Hauptschulform* (vocational schooling) as part of a tripartite school system in Germany that disproportionately disadvantages minorities and poor ethnic Germans. Anna Faroqhi's comics history of the district of Neukölln, edited by Dorothea Kolland, uses an autobiographical framework to create a new historical narrative. This narrative uses 650 years of local history (*Heimatkunde*) to argue that immigration has always shaped the district and even tends toward assimilation without outside intervention. Finally, the video "Weißes Ghetto" (White Ghetto) by the subversive performance group *Kanak Attak*, shows how the trope of a ghetto is inverted, capturing defensive white gesture on film which renders the trope of a parallel society absurd.

The cultural products explored in Chapters Two through Four show how discourses of integration instrumentalize gender, most often by instrumentalizing the feminine body; how demanding integration both racializes and compels assimilation from subjects, especially Muslim subjects; and also how accompanying spatial metaphors, like that of the *Parallelgesellschaft*, problematize claims to place through the example of the neighborhood. Chapter Five focuses on the non-profit organization *Projekt Heroes*, and shows how public debates about gender and cultural difference are applied in social work practice. I argue here that *Projekt Heroes* is constantly engaged in a

series of bargains with both the media and financial backers in order to make the project legible to a broader public.

Projekt Heroes is a masculinities project that works with young men from across Berlin in the Rollberg neighborhood of Neukölln. The project attempts to intervene in gendered discourses that paint young immigrant men as criminal and violent by training young men between the ages of sixteen and twenty-three to lead workshops for public schools about oppression in the name of honor, gender roles and traditional expectations, sexuality and sexual orientation, and equal rights for women, among other topics. Their mission statement declares that the project fights “against oppression in the name of honor” and stands for “equal rights” (*Gegen Unterdrückung im Namen der Ehre und für Gleichberechtigung*). Their mission is often framed as targeting young men in order to further equal rights for women.

By examining several cultural products of the organization, including their training handbook, the use of Fadela Amara's *Weder Huren noch Unterworfenen* (Neither Whores nor Submissives) as pre-training reading material, the Powerpoint presentation about honor used to present their organization to the outside, alongside interviews with the staff and young men, I offer a reading of the organization in the context of current integration debates. This reading is invested in exploring how an organization invested in social change makes use of broader discourses of honor, women's rights and

integration to provide a protected space for its target group of young men. The discrepancies between the public face of the organization and the internal workings of the organization illustrate tensions between the organization's purported goals and the benefits of participation described by the young men. This chapter thus explores the theoretical consequences of establishing a social work project focused on masculinity whose expressed goal is the achievement of gender parity.

This chapter deviates most strongly from the literary analysis of the previous three chapters and thus demands its own description of methods and terms. From October 2010 to October 2011, I conducted twelve months of fieldwork as an unpaid intern with the *Projekt Heroes* team. During this time, I was present at most staff meetings, which took place on Wednesdays for anywhere from four to six hours. I was also present at most *Supervision* sessions during that time, which is a German style of team debriefing conducted by a licensed psychotherapist. *Supervision* is common practice in German social work organizations as well as some businesses. The goal of these meetings is to maintain smooth functioning amidst the staff, and to talk about difficulties, misunderstandings, disagreements and tendencies in the work before they threaten to disrupt the team.⁸ It is designed to keep the working environment efficient

⁸ Bärbel Schlummer describes *Supervision* as a way to pull back and view the work from above: "Die berufliche Arbeit wird aus einer Metaebene betrachtet" ("The professional work is observed from a metalevel"; 392). She also lists possible topics for *Supervision*, including the composition of a new team,

and transparent, allowing hidden or repressed conflict a space for expression. These *Supervision* sessions took place every four to six weeks, with the exception of school summer or winter holidays.

I was not present at the training sessions for the boys. *Projekt Heroes* desires to keep this space protected for the young men and we were in agreement that I – as a new intern and a woman – should not attend these sessions. I was present, however, at public events, public workshops, a workshop for adults, and the training session for staff about working with the media on June 1, 2011. I participated in the 40-hour training (*Ausbildung*) for the new staff of *Heroes-Duisburg*, the first project to expand to another city. I traveled with the entire *Heroes-Berlin* team (including the young men) to Izmir and Bergama, Turkey from October 3-10, 2011 as part of their workshop development trip. There I was able to observe the development of new role playing scenes for the school workshop. Individual interviews with several *Heroes* also were conducted there. I also conducted interviews with the *Heroes* staff over the course of the year. One two-hour focus group interview was conducted with the entire staff on May 7, 2011, while on a team retreat in Nice, France. Individual follow-up interviews of fifty to seventy

finding and shaping roles and positions in the organization itself, talking about the perceptions of self and others within the team, and the development of reachable goals, among others (395). These topics were also subjects broached within group *Supervision* at *Projekt Heroes*.

minutes were then conducted in the *Heroes* offices with each staff member in June and July, 2011.

The discursive spaces in which *Heroes* works are contested spaces. Thus, the language I choose to use in describing and interpreting the actors in these spaces is important. I have chosen, after much contemplation, to stick with the word “ethnic German” to describe identities which indicate membership in a collective German identity often defined by language, history, religion, shared origins and/or determined by genetic descent. “Ethnic” becomes a word with blurry boundaries, especially when used to describe white Germans of European heritage who pass for, are accepted by or have assimilated to what is commonly called the *Mehrheitsgesellschaft* (majority society). This term, as Bill Donahue reminded me, carries with it anti-Semitic overtones and a problematic history, given that *ethnische Deutsche* was a term mobilized politically both during the time of Jewish emancipation and during National Socialist rule. While I certainly do not wish to perpetuate this long history, I still find ethnic German to do the work I can find no other term to perform. Immigrants of German heritage from Eastern Europe who immigrated to Germany, both the East Prussian refugees who were driven out of modern-day Poland after the Second World War (*Ostproußen*) and after the collapse of the Soviet Union (*Spätaussiedler*), did and do not face the same kind of othering as immigrants from other origins. This is reflected both in their historical

relationship to citizenship, which they were immediately granted, as well as to language and religion. My aim here is to point to the power of a hegemonic group, and the way that – especially at times of social conflict – those who can pass for “white” or “ethnic German” suddenly have access to power structures which exclude those who are “visibly” different. Differences in skin color, non-German names, accents or other identifying markers, such as headscarves or beards can act to prevent people from gaining access to certain spaces. The use of “ethnic German” also strives to distinguish between group and individual identity. While many immigrants and their descendants identify as German, this individual self-identification may be called into question by “ethnic Germans” due to one’s name or physical appearance. If nationality and ethnicity appear to offer an apparent contradiction, these subjects may not be interpellated as German by others, despite their chosen form of self-identification as German.

While I hope that this kind of interpretive research will not only be useful for generating knowledge about culture and its political and practical application, but also for the *Projekt Heroes* team, I think it is important to acknowledge from the outset that this desire is problematic and may fail. The way that *Projekt Heroes* positions itself discursively may have limited application value, especially in areas of their work to which I have had little access and even less to offer: direct engagement with their target group of young men. *Projekt Heroes* is also currently occupied with monumental

practical tasks: finding a new office with affordable rent; securing consistent funding that will allow them to continue their work; and supervising the expansion of their work in two countries (Germany and Austria) with a staff of five who all hold other part-time jobs. As Carsten Otto writes in his article on social work practice in Germany, part of an edited volume titled *International Handbook on Social Work Theory and Practice*:

It is hard to say if and how much the results of research have influenced the practice of social work. As a matter of fact, practitioners are rarely involved in research; action research exists but it is not the dominant method of research . . . [and] the results of research do not influence the practice of social work much; instead of this, bureaucratic structures and orientations . . . can be seen as a strong factor of influence. (135)

These bureaucratic structures can be seen most clearly, for instance, in *Projekt Heroes* search for new office space. Their previous home in the *Familienkompetenz Zentrum* (Family Skills Center) in the Falkstraße of Neukölln was part of an *Arbeiterwohlfahrt* building (Worker's Welfare Association); when AWO decided to convert these offices into a center for those with disabilities, *Projekt Heroes*' lease was terminated in August 2011 with a little more than ninety days notice. One of their most pressing issues while I was writing this chapter was finding a new office with affordable rent.⁹

⁹ In December 2011, *Heroes* found a smaller office space close to the Hermannplatz subway station. Their salaries have been cut as their funding dwindles. They continue to train expansion projects for other cities, but their continued existence as a social project is uncertain, even though they continue to win prizes. They were awarded the Berliner Tulpe prize on March 19, 2012. The prize is distributed by *Berliner Tulpe für Deutsch-Türkischen Gemeinsinn*, *Radio Metropol FM*, *BEYS Marketing + media GmbH*, the *Werkstatt der*

One of the themes running throughout this work is an interest in how language shapes space. In the conclusion, I turn to a part of language I ignored up until now: sound. Language may play a strong role in the shaping of space, but space also shapes sound, provides it with contours, rhythm and tone. I attempt to explore here how the kinds of spaces shaped by integrationist discourse make it difficult to attend to silence, and try to explore how silence could be used as a political strategy that makes spaces of the nation expand rather than contract. Although not yet fully articulated, this conclusion points towards the possible extensions of the project begun here.

[This introduction was changed from the original version with the permission of my dissertation advisor and Duke Graduate School in 2018.]

Kulturen, the *Senatskanzlei Berlin*, the *Beauftragte für Integration und Migration*, and *BildungsWerk* in Kreuzberg GmbH. The prize is worth 10,000 Euros. See "Presse- und Informationsamt."

2. Critically Untouchable Narratives

What makes a first-person narrative particularly compelling to broad audiences? Leigh Gilmore sees this power as a mix of personal narrative and representative capacity: “The power of the first person witness thus rests on both the singularity and the wide representative capacity of the witness. In speaking to and for many, first-person accounts expand human rights beyond the frame of the individual” (Gilmore, “What am I?” 77).

The ethnic and religious otherness of female Muslim autobiographers in Europe reflects both their individuality and their author’s wider representative capacity. The ability of female Muslim autobiographers to harness their project to political initiatives focused on rights illustrate Gilmore’s claim that this particular kind of narrative is specifically effective at mobilizing *groups*. The uniqueness of authors such as Seyran Ateş and Necla Kelek rests partly on their educational achievements and nation-wide fame. As members of a minority which has faced social, economic and institutional barriers to success, Ateş and Kelek are both public intellectuals and part of the national elite. As elites, they are also called upon to represent the Turkish-, Kurdish- and Muslim-German communities to others – even when the task of representation inevitably creates conflict within the diverse variety of immigrant groups in Germany. Whether they can represent these groups successfully is ultimately moot: their fame

imposes a representative *Drang* on them, much to the consternation of many who share their ethnicity.¹

This conflict of representation points to one of the fundamental questions about the relationship between autobiography and “truth.” Indeed, this relationship drives Gilmore’s quest for a “feminist theory of women’s self-representation” in her book *Autobiographics*: “Whether and when autobiography emerges as an authoritative discourse of reality and identity, and any particular text appears to tell the truth, have less to do with that text’s presumed accuracy about what really happened than with its apprehended fit into culturally prevalent discourses of truth and identity” (viii). The women writers I will examine in this chapter are successful because their narratives “stick,” building on institutionalized convention. Their performances succeed in incorporating identity, experience and expert knowledge, but their claims are not seen to extend beyond their reach. These authors fashion narratives of sensational suffering, but

¹ See Rasche and Karakaşoğlu. The Ballhaus Naunynstraße theater company produced a full-length work called *Lö Bal Almanya* in 2011 which satirizes the historical narrative of guestworker migration to Germany from the postwar period to the modern day. Their piece ends with a vicious satire of Kelek (played brilliantly by Sesede Terziyan) choking on a sausage, dying and coming back to life. “Kelek” then becomes uncontrollable and hysterical at a book reading/award ceremony when talking about Islam in Germany. This “collage” is composed of direct quotations from Kelek’s books. See *Lö Bal Almanya*. In a collection of conversations I had with Turkish-Germans (taxi drivers, my Turkish-language tandem partner, friends, and the staff of *Projekt Heroes*) many expressed the view that Kelek and Ateş not only do not speak for them, but that these women are also only interested in one thing: their own celebrity. As Yilmaz Atmaca, group leader for *Projekt Heroes* stated in an interview: “Kelek, also ich mag’ ihr’n Ton nicht, ich mag’ ihre Art und Weise nicht, ansonsten: ja, ich hab’ mal versucht eins von ihren Büchern zu lesen und, obwohl ich also diese Gesellschaft so kritisiere, hab’ ich mich persönlich angegriffen gefühlt” (Kelek, so, I don’t like her tone, I don’t like the way in which she otherwise: I tried once to read one of her books, and even though I criticize this society in the same way, I felt personally attacked” (Atmaca, “Personal Interview”).

control the excesses of pain and emotion by keeping the disciplinary function of institutions, ideologies and collective identity in sight.

When looking critically at claims to truth, it is important to note that the emphasis of my analysis lies in investigating each author's *claims* to truth rather than evaluating what is or is not "true." Claims to truth – especially as they build a critical mass through their repeated performance in the form of Muslim women's autobiography – can be read as a number of truths and truth claims. All autobiographical narratives "filter" in order to create a cogent story; the sorting of lived events into a narrative plot is already an interpretation of experience. Critique follows as the interpretation this first version of experience needs, according to Scott.

The task of critiquing the German genre of Muslim women's autobiography has not yet been undertaken on a large scale by other researchers, although work about this genre in France, North America and the Middle East is rapidly proliferating.² This chapter will provide one attempt to interpret some of these texts; it will be successful if this interpretation is later revised by others researchers. Interpretation is necessary not only for understanding these individual narratives, but also for analyzing their importance as cultural products with the ability to affect the material realities of political life. Saba Mahmood, for instance, has looked at the French and North American versions of this genre to explore how the stated aims of Muslim women's autobiographies often

² See Abu-Lughod, "Social Life"; Bahramitash, Ewing, Koonz, Mahmood and Weber.

either fall short of their purported goals or collaborate with forms of power that seem counterintuitive, such as the imperial project of the War on Terror. Roksana Bahramitash examines two North American examples of this genre also against the backdrop of the War on Terror to explore the functions and distinctions of “feminist Orientalism” and “Orientalist feminism.” Beverly Weber postulates that the autobiographical work of Seyran Ateş (whose work I will examine in this chapter) and Necla Kelek (whose work I will examine in the chapter that follows) may be so successful in garnering public attention and celebrity for its authors that their voices prevent others from entering these debates. This gatekeeping hinders others from being able to participate fully and to develop polyvocal narratives which could enter integration debates. What the three sections of this chapter will show is how Ateş invokes certain arguments about freedom, individuality and multiculturalism in the service of an integration apparatus.

Seyran Ateş is one of the most prominent autobiographers in Germany and has written three books. Her autobiography, *Große Reise ins Feuer* was published in 2003, and was followed by two books of cultural commentary, *Der Multikulti-Irrtum* (2007) and *Der Islam braucht eine sexuelle Revolution* (2009). Her autobiography in particular generated a strong public personality for this former women's rights lawyer, to the extent in 2006 that she was forced to close her law offices due to death threats from extremist groups who found her social engagement and legal representation of women threatening (Lau). The German government continues to provide her with two bodyguards whenever she

appears publicly (Ateş “Ade”). Ateş hopes to start a political movement, bringing people together in order to pursue freedom, democracy, women's rights and a reformed interpretation of Islam. She has led an independent life since she ran away from home at seventeen. Although her parents are now practicing Muslims, she has never been part of a conservative Islamic movement nor has she ever worn a headscarf.

In this chapter, I will investigate how Ateş' autobiography, *Große Reise ins Feuer*, and her second book of cultural commentary, *Der Multikulti-Irrtum: Wie wir in Deutschland besser zusammen leben können* (The Multicultural Mistake: How We Can Live Together Better in Germany), invoke freedom as a way to compel normativity within a disciplinary economy of power. Ateş' two books narrate a search for freedom that begins with autobiographical experience, draws from her position as a lawyer for women's rights, and articulates and lays claim to desired normative behaviors through suggestions for public policy. In these writings, freedom results from successful normalization through the psychological acceptance of the individual as the organizing framework for society.³ Disciplinary mechanisms that compel adherence to social norms, according to Ateş, are effective tools currently misapplied in German society. “Integrated” individuals, for instance, are free because they have been successfully disciplined; those who remain in excess or invisible to these disciplinary mechanisms

³ See Kymlicka for a different kind of engagement with multiculturalism that attempts to structure conditions within liberal democracy for group rights.

forgo the experience of freedom as well as prevent others from experiencing it. Although frequently grouped together with Kelek, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, and other “critics of Islam” (*Islamkritiker*), Ateş' polemics take a somewhat different tone. Certain themes (abuse, oppression, human rights, gender inequity through headscarves, violence as something particular to Muslims) are discursive constants. But Ateş is invested in modifying the conditions which currently interfere with an efficient economy of power so that both state and individual benefit. “Freedom” – psychological, physical, political or otherwise – turns out to be a by-product of the successful organization and management of a diverse citizenry. Multiculturalism, then, becomes a “mistake” precisely because it abdicates the state’s mandate to discipline all of its subjects.

This chapter begins with a Foucauldian framework, through which I attempt to read Ateş’ notion of freedom as a form of disciplinary power. I then examine Ateş’ autobiography *Große Reise ins Feuer*, and her search for freedom through this disciplinary lens. I analyze her second book, *Der Multikulti-Irrtum*, as a way to explore how German multiculturalism is seen to inhibit freedom by privileging group over individual rights.

2.1 Freedom as a Disciplinary Power

In *Discipline and Punish and The Birth of the Prison*, Foucault traces the development of modern technologies of disciplinary power through an economy of bodies, from torture on the scaffold as a sign of the omniscient power of the sovereign to the penitentiary as a

site of power that extracts clinical knowledge and economic power from detained and docile bodies. The shifts in crime and punishment which begin in early modernity occur through reforms which both attempt to mitigate the excess of public punishment and to transform the exercise of power into highly efficient institutions (disciplines) that compel bodies to act in ways that conceal power in operation and extend power's reach over its subjects. One of the intermediary steps from public spectacles of punishment to private, rehabilitative detention in prisons, requires a metamorphosis of the signs and representations of crime and punishment – not so much from a desire to be more “humane,” but rather from a desire for efficiency: “The criticism of the reformers was directed not so much at the weakness or cruelty of those in authority, as at a bad economy of power” (79). One characteristic of an efficient economy of power is what Foucault calls “the rule of sufficient ideality,” which requires the expectation of crime's benefits to be linked directly to an aversion to crime's punishment: “If the motive of a crime is the advantage expected of it, the effectiveness of the penalty is the disadvantage of it. This means that the 'pain' at the heart of punishment is not the actual sensation of pain, but the idea of pain, displeasure, inconvenience – the 'pain' of the idea of 'pain.' Punishment has to make use not of the body, but of representation” (94).⁴ In contrast to

⁴Scarry traces out a similar ideality embodied in everyday objects which then become instruments of torture. The relationship between the tortured and the torturer which she articulates in *The Body in Pain* also includes similar interactions that rely on the representation and expectation of pain and relief. Scarry focuses much more intensely on the psychological bond created from the dependency of the tortured on the torturer, which is different from the dynamic Foucault sketches out for us. Because of the

the excessive display of agony brought forth in public torture, “what now must be maximized is the representation of the penalty, not its corporal reality” (95). It is the memory or the imagined experience of punishment that serves as one characteristic of a power to punish that hopes to course through “the entire social body, capable of coding in all behaviour and consequently of reducing the whole diffuse domain of illegalities” (94). A scalpel rather than an axe, a finely-tuned instrument rather than an erratic display of power, produces compulsory norms much more efficient at ordering complex groupings of individuals.⁵ Bound together by the three mechanisms Foucault marks as the “modalities according to which the power to punish is exercised,” all three reform in the service of discipline:

We have here the three series of elements that characterize the three mechanisms that face one another in the second half of the eighteenth century. They cannot be reduced to theories of law (though they overlap with such theories), nor can they be identified with apparatuses or institutions (though they are based on them), nor can they be derived from moral choices (though they find their justification in morality). They are modalities according to which the power to punish is exercised: three technologies of power. (131)

I cite this framework not because I believe that 21st-century Germany is caught in an 18th-century apparatus, but rather because the theoretical shift in punishment Foucault

erratic and manipulative nature of torture, the direct relationship of crime:punishment (pain) is distorted – the source of pain also becomes (in this state of depravity) the source of pleasure and relief. All power of representation in this instance lies with the torturer, as opposed to the Pavlovian immediacy of crime = pain Foucault describes. See also Hron for an analysis of pain in immigrant literature.

⁵ See also “Docile Bodies” 135-39; “The Carceral” 301-08.

describes here may be useful for understanding how Ateş attempts to map the social body of groups in Germany which fall under the designations “Turkish,” “Kurdish,” or “Muslim” (78).

In her own way, Ateş articulates what she understands to be the most pressing social issues for these immigrant groups as a way of linking “problems” to these technologies of power. Ateş invokes each of these modalities: she cites both German laws and the quasi-legal frameworks of human rights declarations; criticizes German institutions, such as schools and religion; and argues from a position of moral authority, often reverting to tragic case studies that justify her urgent tone. Foucault describes the discursive associations which accompany shifts in techniques of punishment in 18th-century France as follows: the perception of lawlessness, especially in the lower classes (83), the self-interest of the bourgeoisie and its corresponding “belief in a constant and dangerous rise in crime” (76), and invocations of criminal populations as “enemy troops spreading over the surface of the territory” (77), which are all argumentative tactics remarkably similar to the ways in which Muslim populations are portrayed in contemporary German and European debates. The shift Ateş makes from a multiculturalism based on group rights to a system of population management that focuses on individual rights and freedoms is also strikingly similar to the discursive shifts Foucault describes in French history – only this time, disciplinary regimes in contemporary Germany are already firmly entrenched and thus must become cognizant

of group divisions created from an unequal and uneven subjection to power. I see the emergence of Muslim-German autobiography as a popular mass-market genre in the early 2000s as an attempt to represent immigrant spaces previously ignored by the ethnic German majority. These spaces include private spaces in which domestic and gendered abuse occurs, as well as the less often invoked spaces in which cultural racism is experienced. These ignored spaces also constitute gaps in representation and surveillance, where authors claim the German state permits “oppressive” cultural practices to continue or sees non-German groups as separate due to protections of group religious and cultural rights. Needless to say, this panoptic desire to illuminate “hidden” spaces also creates conflict within the immigrant community for airing dirty laundry in public.⁶

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault first shows the elegance of disciplinary power in a chapter entitled “Docile Bodies.” Disciplinary methods, Foucault writes, predate pervasive disciplinary power and had been a component of monastic life, the army and artisan workshops (137). He marks the 17th- and 18th-centuries as the point where “the disciplines became general formulas of domination [which were] different from slavery because they were not based on a relation of appropriation of bodies; indeed, the elegance of the discipline lay in the fact that it could dispense with this costly and

⁶ See Rasche and Karakaşoğlu.

violent relation by obtaining effects of utility at least as great" (137). Discipline as a strategy of organization was efficient, and formed

a policy of coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures, its behaviour. The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it [...] Thus discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies. (138)

Foucault marks two qualities of discipline that stand out in his analysis: "Discipline is a political anatomy of detail" (139) and "Discipline organizes an analytical space" (143).

To call Muslim women's autobiography a political economy of detail may not be an interpretive choice that is immediately legible. Ateş' second book, however, makes this label more clear. The suggestions that Ateş offers often propose state intervention into the most basic areas of life: language spoken in school, a zero-tolerance approach to headscarves, state interventions into domestic spaces. The many examples of this genre create a critical mass of life-stories that both validate and valorize the submission to disciplinary power as a mark of freedom. This narrative of freedom colludes with many characteristics of an integrationist discourse.⁷ This disciplinary apparatus that "explores," "breaks down" and "rearranges" the human body haunts the production of this mass-market genre, especially those texts whose authors desire secularism and "Enlightenment" values as the way to prevent pain, seeing the root of suffering in Islamic practice. The mass of autobiographical narratives available to the German

⁷ Ewing explores this collusion in detail in *Stolen Honor*, looking at the abjection of Muslim men in relation to governmentality. See Ewing.

reading public thus organizes the analytical spaces available for thinking and writing about “Muslims” and the integration of immigrants who may have been disciplined differently. By close-reading Ateş’ autobiography and first book of cultural commentary, we can explore this (re)organization of analytical space in more detail.

2.2 *Große Reise ins Feuer* (Long Journey into Fire)

Ateş’ autobiography was one of the first to appear in the wave of autobiographies published after 2001.⁸ Her autobiography, published in 2003, builds on the extremely traumatic, sometimes rambling narratives of her precursors and has a strong narrative drive organized around a search for freedom. Her narrative is unique because of the sensational shooting Ateş suffered while working at a women’s center in Berlin as a young adult. Ateş and her co-workers were shot by a Turkish nationalist threatened by the women’s counseling and empowerment work at TIO. This experience of extreme and targeted violence from *outside* the family or direct community adds another layer to

⁸ Various sources mark September 11th as a turning point in debates, a shift that both made certain speech possible as well as intensified animosity towards Muslims. Serap Çileli had tried to get her autobiography published in the early nineties, finally succeeding in 1999, however, public awareness of Muslim women’s issues did not really open up until after the September 11th attacks. On her website, she has posted her remarks from the award ceremony of the *Bund Deutschen Kriminalbeamter*, which honored her for her activist work on behalf of Muslim women in 2007. In her speech, she calls the failure of integration the best-kept secret in the country until September 11th (“Oder ist das Konzept der Integration gescheitert? Die Antwort darauf war bis zum 11. September 2001 das bestgehütete offene Geheimnis im Lande,” see Çileli, “Bu-le-mérite”). On March 7, 2006, during a panel discussion on the theme of “Integration of Women of Turkish Descent in the European Union Member States” at the Representation of the Free State of Bavaria to the European Union in Brussels, Çileli stated “Between 1994 and 1999, however, the journalists and television channels I approached turned down my offers of interviews, claiming that I would only stir up xenophobia with my views, but since 2005 I have been able to speak openly about the problems that continue to beset Muslim women immigrants although such communities have been living in Europe for over 50 years” (see Chameleon).

Ateş' description of Turkish/Kurdish communities as particularly violent and threatened by feminism. The restrictions this injury placed on her freedoms of movement, independence, self-care and the ability to begin her university studies – and all this *after* she had found a way to leave home and start an independent life – create an urgent need to free herself from all oppressive structures.

It is foreseeable that Ateş then begins her autobiography, *Große Reise ins Feuer: Die Geschichte einer deutschen Türkin* (Long Journey into Fire: The Story of a [Female] German Turk), with this dedication: “Für alle Frauen, die nicht frei und selbstbestimmt leben können und dürfen” (For all women who can not and may not live free and self-determined lives, n.p.). The use of “können” and “dürfen,” two German modal verbs that translate respectively as “to be able to” and “to be permitted to,” allow Ateş not just to gesture toward an authority, presumably patriarchal, who intervenes in women's lives. The women Ateş addresses here are not just thwarted from living freely: they are *incapable* of living freely.

Ateş' autobiography is driven by the pursuit of both psychological and physical freedoms. Her dedication, as well as several sections of the text, engages with a psychological movement from a position of oppression – where freedom is so far away as to be inconceivable – to a position where embracing emancipation becomes a significant personal struggle. For Ateş, physical and psychological freedom arise from victorious struggle against the subtleties of inequity in daily life. This inequity can be

contested through political involvement, personal practice, and legal challenges; freedom can be learned. At the end of her autobiography, Ateş thus proposes reforms in policy and law which function both to socialize and channel the energies of Muslim groups more effectively, and also to better facilitate the individual search for physical and psychological freedoms. Ateş is thus invested and inscribes herself into an active reorganization of economies of power.

From the very beginning of her autobiography, Ateş plays with the interpretation of “freedom” by invoking a situation distinctively un-free: kidnapping. Beginning not with her birth, but rather with the marriage of her grandparents, Ateş starts off her first chapter with the following provocative sentences: “Mein Großvater Ahmet war ein richtiger kurdischer Patriarch. Er regierte über drei Ehefrauen, neun Kinder und vier Schwiegertöchter. Seine ersten beiden Frauen musste er entführen, weil man sie ihm nicht freiwillig gab” (My grandfather Ahmet was a true Kurdish patriarch. He ruled over three wives, nine children and four daughters-in-law. He had to kidnap his first two brides, because no one would give them to him freely, 7).

One could not produce a better hook for a feminist immigrant autobiography. Patriarchy (*ein Patriarch*), cultural difference (*richtiger Kurde*), oppression of women through possession (*weil man sie ihm nicht freiwillig gab*) – are all introduced in the form of a character description of three sentences. As Ateş continues, her second paragraph further teases out the lack of freedom in kidnapping by showing us the different

inflections of “consent”: “Dabei gibt es zwei Varianten: die Entführung mit Einverständnis der Braut und die Entführung gegen den Willen der Braut” (Here there are two variations: kidnapping with the consent of the bride, and kidnapping against the bride's will, 7). But Ateş has to concede, “Entführung mit Einverständnis der Braut ist sprachlich nicht ganz korrekt. Stattdessen müsste es eigentlich heissen, dass das Paar gemeinsam abgehauen ist, was einen aktiven Anteil der Braut an dem Geschehen voraussetzt. So wird es in der türkisch-kurdischen Gesellschaft jedoch selten bezeichnet” (Kidnapping with the consent of the bride is not quite linguistically correct. Instead it would actually have to be said that the pair ran away together, which requires active participation of the bride in the event. In the Turkish-Kurdish community, however, it is rarely described in this way, 7). The willingness of a bride – better yet the freedom of a bride to participate in the “kidnapping” – is, according to Ateş, invisible to the Turkish-Kurdish community. The formulation “mit Einverständnis der Braut” (with the consent of the bride) still requires a willing submission, a concession to relational “un-freedom.”

Grandfather Ahmet, Ateş assures us, kidnapped his brides with their consent – although this did not necessarily lead to their emancipation. Even his third wife, Gülperi, who made several attempts to escape the oppressive female hierarchy within the family, initially agreed to her marriage. Freedom within this formulation only goes so far, Ateş implies. Ateş' parents – due to the stubbornness of both their fathers against a Kurdish/Turkish marriage – also kidnapped each other on a sunny day in 1954 (19-20).

Both to escape xenophobia in their village and for Ateş' father to escape the financial exploitation of his older brother, Ateş' parents move to Istanbul, build a *gecekondü* (squatter apartment built overnight), and Ateş' father works for forty lira a week in the coloring department of a plastic shoe factory (24-27). Although forty lira did not eliminate economic obstacles, the move to Istanbul allowed Ateş' parents to free themselves of collective social and economic pressures within their immediate families. The boundaries created through the construction of a private home in the Istanbul slums protected Ateş' parents from the co-dependency of sharing living space with their extended family. It was the first step towards a disciplinary model that was based on smaller and smaller units, pointing a way towards the individuality that Ates sees as the foundation of freedom. This strategic distance, however, also proved an effective strategy for maintaining social relationships: "So wohnten meine Eltern nun in Istanbul bei der türkischen Großfamilie. Sie wurden besser behandelt als in der Familie meines Vaters, denn Sie hatten einen eigenen Hausstand. Die Tatsache, dass mein Vater Kurde war, wurde meist höflich übergangen" (In that way my parents now lived in Istanbul within a Turkish extended family. They were treated better than [they had been] in the family of my father because they had their own household. The fact that my father was a Kurd was mostly politely ignored, 27).

As Ateş' narrative progresses, her parents' attempts to reorganize their social space proves incomplete by the time Ateş is born. She continues on the same page,

ending her chapter with the succinct declaration: “Eigentlich war alles ganz in Ordnung./Und dann kam ich” (Actually everything was all right./And then I came, 27). Ateş introduces herself with this sentence as the most important character to influence her narrative – a move illustrative of the necessary narcissism in autobiography.⁹ Ateş the character, however, is not only the most *important* figure in what follows; she is also represented as more *rebellious* – i.e. more freedom-seeking – than any other character. The qualities of her rebellion – a desire for movement, as well as the reorganization of space and the stretching of boundaries – are characteristics present from the moment of Ateş' birth. Ateş was almost born in the taxi her mother took to the hospital. Hospital births were not common in Turkey in the 1960s, but Ateş' mother had waited for hours for a midwife who simply did not come (28). The birth in a hospital makes her the first member of her family to be accurately inscribed into disciplinary structures of power (her birth certificate lists her correct birthday, not the later, somewhat random day families chose to register their children when it was convenient). This anecdote also characterizes Ateş as someone who innately – since the active participation of a newborn is limited – resists tradition and stasis:

Irgendwie muss das [her almost-birth in a taxi] mein Leben geprägt haben, jedenfalls bin ich immer noch ständig unterwegs. Entweder zieh ich gerade um oder ich verreise oder bin sonst wie auf Achse. Von einem ruhigen Leben träume ich zwar, aber bis heute ist nichts daraus geworden. Schliesslich nannten sie mich auch noch Seyran, nach meiner Großmutter, was “große Reise, Ausflug,

⁹For an account of narcissism in minority autobiography see Chow, 128-153.

Feiern" bedeutet. Ein Name, der verpflichtet. Mein Nachname Ateş bedeutet übrigens "Feuer, Fieber."

Somehow this [her almost birth in a taxi] must have shaped my life, in any case I am still constantly out and about. Either I am about to move or I'm travelling or am otherwise on the go. Admittedly, I dream of a quiet life, but to this day nothing has come of it. After all, they also named me Seyran, after my grandmother, which means "long journey, expedition, celebrating." A name that binds. My last name Ateş means "fire, fever," by the way. (29)

A name like this requires Ateş to constantly be on the move, to push forward into the boundaries of unexplored spaces a long way off. Ateş is a pioneer, an explorer and charter of undiscovered territory.

The clever translation of her own name as the title of her book is an extension of how books in this genre are routinely packaged. The text of the autobiographical novel becomes an extension of the author's own personality, a fusion that occurs when the cover of the book is designed around a close-up portrait of the author, usually a recent photograph. Ateş intensifies this personification by interpellating her person in three ways: her name as author, her name as title, and her picture on the book jacket. The content of Ateş' long journey into herself, a journey of self-discovery, is a common theme for an autobiography. It resembles the genre of the *Bildungsroman*, which makes use of similar features for fictional protagonists. The standard generic form of a *Bildungsroman* begins with the frustration with and subsequent escape from familial or societal hierarchy, followed by an ensuing period of trial and error, which often includes extensive travel or other independent activities. In the most classic examples, the

narrative ends with a resolution in which the protagonist is re-absorbed as an adult into the social structures she rejected at the start.¹⁰ The pursuit of freedom is both the catalyst for escape and the protagonist's constant companion as she travels forth – worth noting is also the tendency for these protagonists to be successfully absorbed into the systems they once left. Ateş' narrative fits very well into this mold, which may also show how her narrative is a particular reflection of a German literary tradition.

Ateş migrates with her family to Berlin when she is six years old. The loss of the freedom she experienced while living in an extended family in Istanbul is one of Ateş' strongest memories: “Unser neues Zuhause gefiel mir nicht, ich fing sogar sehr schnell an, es zu hassen. Vom ersten Tag an wurde ich eingesperrt. Ich durfte nicht zum Spielen hinausgehen, ich hätte mich ja verlaufen können. Die Jungs durften aber hinaus – als ob sie sich nicht ebenso hätten verlaufen können” (I didn't like our new home, I even started – very quickly – to hate it. From the first day I was locked in. I wasn't allowed to go out to play, I could have gotten lost. But the boys were allowed to go out – as if they couldn't have gotten lost just as easily, 52). When outside, Ateş could only move within a 100-meter stretch of sidewalk which could be observed from the apartment above. Any attempt to move beyond these clearly defined boundaries resulted in punches from her brothers, who were entrusted with her safety. The dream of adult freedom establishes

¹⁰ See, for example, Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*; Mann, *Der Zauberberg*, Hesse, *Demian*, among others. The pursuit of freedom is different in each of these examples – Wilhelm Meister, for instance, seeks freedom to explore his aesthetic ideals; Hans Castorp seeks freedom from the compulsions of daily work and social life; Emil seeks freedom from illusion.

itself early in Ateş' imagination: "Sie können mich nicht mein Leben lang einsperren. Wenn ich gross bin, werde ich selbst bestimmen, wohin ich gehe und wie lange ich dort bleibe./'Das Haus meines Vaters,' so wird das Elternhaus in der Türkei genannt, erschien mir immer wie ein Gefängnis" (They couldn't lock me up my whole life long. When I am big, I'll determine myself where I go and how long I stay./'The house of my father,' that's what the parents' house is called in Turkey, always seemed like a prison to me; 52).

The first half of *Große Reise ins Feuer* – quite literally the first 125 of 250 pages – focuses on the extreme restrictions and physical and verbal abuse Ateş experiences at home, as well as her attempts as a teenager to escape the domestic environment of her family. Her home life is characterized as restrictive, static, and abusive over and over again: her older brother treats her as his "persönliche Sklavin" (personal slave, 53), she is irritated by the "ständige Kontrolle" (constant control, 55) through gossip that resulted from living near the Turkish relatives who also immigrated; and she is astounded "wie viel mehr Freiheiten meine Cousinen in der Türkei hatten" (how many more freedoms my cousins in Turkey had), cousins who don't need to be protected from "evil" (*böse*) Germans, she says (66). Ateş' describes this constant "protection" as stifling:

Ein Bekannter sagte einmal, wir Mädchen seien so wertvoll wie Gold. Am schönsten sei es, wenn wir poliert und in die Vitrine gestellt würden, damit wir nicht beschmutzt werden könnten. Bei der Vorstellung, den Rest meines Lebens in der Vitrine zu verbringen, wurde mir angst und bange.

An acquaintance said once, we girls were as valuable as gold. It would be best when we could be polished and put in a display case, so that we couldn't get dirty. I was terrified to death by the thought of spending the rest of my life in a display case. (67)

This anecdote describes an objectification of women as a delicate object of value easily dirtied. Life in a display case is a condition frightening for Ateş not only because it would not only preclude freedom, but also because it would result in permanent stasis and constant surveillance.

Ateş, with the help of a social worker and a schoolteacher, leaves home at seventeen. Although she has dreamed of freedom, and has succeeded in leaving her parents' home, she is shocked by the challenges individualized freedom presents her with: "In meiner Familie wurde mir nicht beigebracht, was Freiheit ist." (In my family I wasn't taught what freedom is, 127). Ateş' way of understanding what freedom means is a process she calls learning how to really live ("ich lebte nicht wirklich," 165). She interprets her psychological instability in the months directly after leaving home as a failure to understand – or, as hinted at above, of not having been taught – what freedom means. The way she clings to the teacher who helped her escape (who is also her boyfriend), hoping he will visit her everyday; her confusion in learning how to seek out cultural events and develop her own interests; and her fear that the world, as she has constructed it, will shatter at any moment; are marked by Ateş as the symptoms of years of oppression. She works through this paralysis by analyzing what freedom is, first

critiquing her family's understanding of freedom and then expanding her definition to fit different areas of social life.

For her family and community, freedom was “gleichbedeutend mit sexueller Freizügigkeit” (equivalent to promiscuity), which “Islam” prohibited (127). Ateş, however, finds this association unconvincing, or at the very least inadequate. She charts several phases of questioning what freedom means after she runs away: immediately after leaving home, she panics that her family will find her, and wonders if she has made the right decision. She tries to understand how running away will free her if the consequences of her escape are living in hiding and being constantly gripped by fear (128). As she attempts to reestablish contact with her family, she encounters resistance from her German friends and roommates. The freedom to structure and limit her contact with her family on terms suitable to her is critiqued and limited by those who cannot understand how she could ever want to have contact with people who treated her so unfairly (130). Finally, Ateş has to sort out what individualized freedom means for her daily life. Ateş reports the difficulties she has with developing her own interests, with understanding the language of event listings in the newspaper: “Ich musste üben, Interessen zu entwickeln” (I had to practice developing interests, 131-32). In an interview with the American radio program *Morning Edition*, Ateş describes in English the process of learning to make her own decisions: “To open the magazine and looking for a movie what you want to see, these were really big problems for me in the first half-

year, I need to understand I can open magazine and look for a movie, and say in this cinema I want to go. In the age of 18 I have to learn that" (Poggioli).¹¹

One of the interests Ateş develops during this period is political activism, and as Ateş becomes involved in the feminist movement in the early 1980s, she reports that her greatest experience was attending the first International Women's Convention (*Frauenkongress*) in Frankfurt in 1983: "Ich fühle mich am wohlsten unter Frauen aus aller Frauen Länder. Diese Erfahrung trug dazu bei, dass ich eine Vorstellung davon entwickeln konnte, wohin ich gehörte. Ich fühlte mich endlich frei" (I feel the best among women from every country. This experience contributed to my being able to develop an idea of where I belonged. I finally felt free, 143). Once free, Ateş sets her sights on helping others achieve their freedom. Through her work at the women's organization TIO (*Treff- und Informationsort für Frauen aus der Türkei/Meeting and Information Center for Women from Turkey*), Ateş works with clients who are fighting for freedom: women in domestically violent partnerships, women newly arrived from Turkey, women threatened with forced marriage or other difficulties. She completes her *Abitur* (college preparatory diploma) and plans to study law – a dream she has had since

¹¹ In this same radio program, Ateş reiterates the importance of learning freedom: "Western world can be very horrible for such a girl. She will come into a cultural shock when she come out of a traditional family and everybody say you are free now, do what you want. And that can be big identity conflict because she never learned to be free." See Poggioli. This form of argumentation also appears in narratives about those who leave highly structured or restrictive social environments, seen for instance in the narratives about leaving the Fundamentalist Church of Latter Day Saints in the United States. See Jeffs, Carolyn Jessop, Flora Jessop, Schmidt, Solomon, Spencer, and Wall.

serving as *Schulsprecher* (class president) in high school: “In dieser Zeit als Schulsprecherin beschloss ich, Rechtswissenschaften zu studieren und Rechtsanwältin zu werden. Ich hatte begriffen, dass Ratlosigkeit nicht Rechtlosigkeit bedeutete. Man musste seine Rechte nur kennen, um sie vertreten zu können.” (In this time as class president I decided to study law and become a lawyer. I had understood that helplessness does not mean [that I had] no rights. One just had to know one's rights, in order to be able to defend them, 83). By leading a sit-in to protest classroom facilities that lack proper lighting and adequate air circulation, Ateş develops an understanding of institutional policy and grievance, which gives her a sense of satisfaction and confirms her desire to become a lawyer (82-83). These activities also provide her with a sense of social belonging and leadership. In effect, the law serves as an apparatus that promotes sociability and conflict resolution. Most profound, however, is the way in which political activity serves as a healing slave against injustice, which Ateş finds pervades her life.

Ateş' newly found freedom, however, is precarious. Having finally adjusted to living away from home, having decided to end her work at *TIO* to begin her university studies, Ateş is shot by an ultranationalist Turkish member of the Grey Wolves the morning of her last day at work (144-156).¹² Her hard-won independence is meaningless during her long recovery – she can barely move her left arm, and the left side of her face

¹²The Grey Wolves (*Bozkurtlar*) are a Turkish ultranationalist group that also has a presence in Germany.

is left slack, unable to participate in smiling or laughing. Freedom – the normal, everyday freedoms of movement and bodily integrity – are to be kept at arm's length. She even returns home to her family because they are more able to adequately take care of her than her partner alone (163-70).¹³

Ateş' long-term recovery is only hinted at in the chapters that follow. Ateş chooses to use coverage of the criminal trial as a bridge to starting law school and becoming a lawyer. The lack of information about the slow process of recovery satisfies the demands of plot and is a silence that drives the narrative action. With or without a narrative account, Ateş does heal and becomes a lawyer for primarily Muslim women seeking emancipation from abusive husbands or families, from collective social pressure, for women who want a divorce. Ateş even eventually finds the personal freedom she spent so many years seeking:

Die Wohnungstür war ein Symbol dafür, dass ich kaum eine Entscheidung frei treffen durfte, die mein eigenes Leben betraf. Physisch durchbrach ich diese Tür, aber sie blieb noch sehr lange in meinem Kopf. Meine Seele war zu lange eingesperrt gewesen, um sich schnell umzugewöhnen. Das begriff ich erst Jahre nach meinem Ausbruch.

Ich bin frei und kann tun und lassen, was ich will. Außerdem bin ich erleichtert und spüre, wie schön es ist, frei zu sein. Ich bin einfach unendlich

¹³ In an interview with Thea Dorn in Dorn's book *Die neue F-Klasse: Wie die Zukunft von Frauen gemacht wird* (The New F-Class: How the Future Will Be Made by Women), Ateş presents a somewhat different portrayal of her return home after the accident, where Ateş admits that she thought about returning home and did so "für ein paar Tage" (for a few days). According to this interview, however, she quickly noticed that "Das ist nicht mehr meine Welt. Ich gehe da geistig zu Grunde. . . Meine Eltern waren ganz klar bereit, mich wieder aufzunehmen, damit ich bei ihnen genesen kann – aber ich habe mich dagegen entschieden" (That is not my world. Spiritually I'd fall apart there. . . My parents were of course ready to take me in, so that I could recover at their house – but I decided against it, 91). This discrepancy shows that Ateş explicitly leaves out many of the details of her recovery in order to keep her narrative moving.

glücklich. Ich weine nur noch vor Freude, nicht mehr, weil ich verletzt werde. So hatte ich es mir immer vorgestellt, wenn ich davon träumte, endlich abzuhausen und weit weg von meiner Familie zu leben. Ich lebe, jetzt erst lebe ich.

The apartment door was a symbol [for the fact that] I was barely allowed to make a decision about my own life freely. Physically I broke through this door, but it remained in my mind for a long time. My soul had been locked up for too long to break this habit quickly. I first understood this years after my escape.

I am free and can do and ignore whatever I want. Additionally, I am relieved to feel how nice it is to be free. I am simply infinitely happy. I only cry from joy, not because I have been hurt. This is how I had always imagined it, when I dreamed of finally running away and living far away from my family. I am living, I have just now started to live. (128)

Once free, she can focus her efforts – through the law – on seeing that others find their way to freedom. In the last chapter of *Große Reise ins Feuer*, entitled “Die Welt der Vielfalt” (A World of Diversity), Ateş traces out her suggestions for reform as well as her own position within a pluralist environment.

There are two points in this chapter that are noteworthy. The first is to be seen in Ateş' political positioning against visible signs of Muslim piety, specifically headscarves. The second is her explicit and detailed descriptions of the cultural racism she experiences in German society, a topic noticeably lacking in other polemic autobiographies about Muslim migration to Europe.¹⁴ Racism always enters Ateş' narrative as an obstacle to freedom. The last stop of our “long journey” with Ateş takes place when she finishes her law degree. The employment prospects for lawyers are slim.

¹⁴ See Chin, et. al for a discussion of how this is an absence not just particular to autobiography, but is pervasive throughout postwar Germany.

Ateş wards off queries as to whether she will “go back” to Turkey and look for a job there. She then compares the way these questions are posed to her and an imaginary West German woman from a rural area. Such a woman, she states, would be asked “ob sie sich vorstellen könnte, ins Ausland zu gehen, also irgendwo 'hinzu'gehen.' Nach vorne gehen, sich nach 'vorne' bewegen. Wir sollen immer 'zurück gehen,' uns 'zurücknehmen,' nach 'hinten' bewegen.” (if she could imagine going abroad, i.e. to go 'to somewhere.' To go up front, move oneself 'forward.' We should always 'go back,' 'withdraw' ourselves, move to the 'back,' 249). Ateş is wrestling here, in spatial form, with the question of belonging in a discriminatory environment. Expected trajectories of movement (forwards, backwards) combine with questions of being bound to a place – here a place defined by origins and/or national boundaries: “Können Menschen nur dort leben, wo sie geboren wurden, oder sonst wie kulturell angeblich mehr verbunden sind als an anderen Orten?” (Can people only live there, where they were born, [to a place] to which they are otherwise – supposedly culturally – more bound than other places?, 249).

What is noteworthy is that Ateş herself seems unsatisfied or at least ambivalent about what this place looks like, and chooses an orientation in time rather than space: “Ich [gehöre dahin], wo ich gerade bin.” (I belong wherever I am at the moment, *Feuer* 250) She also rejects a bicultural, i.e. binary, fixation in space:

Die berühmten zwei Stühle, zwischen denen wir angeblich sitzen sollen, existieren nicht. . . Als Migrantin habe ich gelernt, mich auf vielen Stühlen wohl zu fühlen. Wir setzen uns mal dort- and mal dahin. Dieses Hin und Her

zwischen den Kulturen ist keine Zerissenheit, es bring uns nicht in ständige Konflikte, sondern bereichert unser Leben.

The famous “two chairs” between which we supposedly sit don't exist. . . As an immigrant I have learned to feel comfortable on many chairs. We sometimes sit here and sometimes sit there. This back and forth between cultures is not an inner conflict [condition of being torn], it doesn't put us permanently in conflict, but rather enriches our lives,” (250)

Ateş fixates on movement as a positive, as a richness, but describes an experience she refuses to name explicitly. The rejection of inner conflict (*Zerissenheit*) allows Ateş to interrogate moral or psychological judgment that attempts to pathologize her as broken or split. The refusal to name her experience, to label herself with identity or other kinds of markers, allows Ateş a kind of movement both within and through other's spatial boundaries.¹⁵ This moment is noteworthy for the way in which we can see a visible break in Ateş' methods for inscribing experience and certain bodies into regimes of disciplinary power. Although she visibly critiques and names experiences of racism for what they are, refusing to let these experiences remain invisible, she simultaneously rejects calls to identify as hybrid, split, in conflict or in pieces. Even if there is no clear identity category or name which she would like to claim, no *eindeutiges* (unambiguous) label that would make her available for inscription into a disciplinary structure, Ateş reasserts an intact and consistent self-image.

¹⁵ While she starts in this chapter to articulate a bicultural identity, she will later transition into a “transcultural” identity. See *Irrtum* and “Ade.”

This tension between the disciplinary mechanism that could perhaps regulate, through the law, a more efficient economy of biopower, and Ateş' difficulty with accepting the (inadequate) options offered to her by the current economy of power illustrates the tension between Ateş' investment in discipline and her conflicts with it.¹⁶ Ateş' narrative is both shaped by and contests the current discursive patterns used to discuss immigrant populations in Germany. By bearing witness through autobiographical experience, Ateş first describes private spaces which remain outside the reach of contemporary disciplinary modalities (i.e. protections for individuals against domestic abuse or from social pressure stemming from religion and/or culture). She then both advocates for these spaces to be assumed into disciplinary modalities of power (legislating behavior previously invisible to the state) as well as resists the assumption that support for disciplinary power extends blindly to those forms of disciplinary power she finds unproductive in daily life (socio-cultural expectations of ethnic Germans towards Turkish immigrants). Mapping Ateş' position vis-a-vis arguments that are frequently repeated and gather considerable critical mass in debates about the politics of integration are most evident in this last chapter.

Ateş' arguments against the headscarf or her critique of homophobia in the Turkish/Kurdish community are two examples of arguments that have proliferated

¹⁶Although this section could point to a larger body of feminist literature which critiques the law as androcentric, Ateş never engages with this idea. The law is never problematized as an instrument which may enact a significant bias against women, children and those bearing any mark of difference. See Lutz and Volpp.

directly before and certainly since the publication of her autobiography in 2003.¹⁷ Women's rights and gay rights are often invoked as reasons for Christian European nations to criticize a conservative interpretation of Islam as as “unintegratable” with their “secular” and democratic laws and culture.¹⁸ Ateş, like many elites, rejects headscarves as a sign of women's subordination, and finds the “Gewaltbereitschaft” (readiness for violence) of the Turkish-Kurdish community to be a cultural characteristic that must be regulated more strongly. Her engagement with the Koran as a religious book of law is an obvious point of reference for a lawyer, and differs substantially from polemics that simply criticize Islam as a religion oppressive to women. Ateş' constant search for freedom here requires the skill set of interpretative capabilities and clear understandings of one's rights. Anything less – including culturally fashionable or traditional religious practice – is restrictive.

When writing about the headscarf, Ateş includes an anecdote about a conversation she had with six Turkish girls between the ages of twelve and thirteen. Three wore headscarves. Three did not. The girls gave varying responses when asked why they do or do not wear one: some refer to morphological difference, a desire to be

¹⁷ The literature about headscarves, both in Germany and across Europe, is numerous and perhaps best exemplified in Joan W. Scott's monograph *The Politics of the Veil*. The German headscarf debate has been raging at least since 1998, when Fereshta Ludin, an immigrant to Germany of Afghan heritage, was refused employment as a teacher (considered a state employee in Germany or *Beamte*) by the state of Baden-Württemberg. See “Reize bedeckt.” Testing homophobic attitudes of Muslim youth is also a topical theme in sociological literature, and has been criticized by feminists as a way to play out minorities against each other. See Bernd, Buijs, et al., and Rommelspacher “Ungebrochene Selbstidealisierung.”

¹⁸ See Taylor (*Secular*); Mahmood (“Secularism”); Grewal and Kaplan; and Puar's polemic *Terrorist Assemblages*.

outwardly different than men and faithful to God's vision of sexual difference by wearing headscarves (247). Some reject headscarves but admit that they will eventually have to cleanse themselves of the sin of not wearing one (248). For Ateş, oppression arises from the fact that none of the girls could say whether or not the Koran explicitly requires headscarves (248). These girls were neither able to articulate their rights, nor were they able to articulate with any certainty the legal knowledge contained within the Koran. This conversation makes it clear to Ateş that Islam is a religion, "deren Buch die wenigsten Anhänger gelesen oder verstanden haben. Wie kann ich ein Gesetz befolgen, das ich selbst nicht lesen und verstehen kann? Und das nur von einem Geschlecht interpretiert wird?" (whose book the fewest adherents have read or understood. How can I follow a law which I cannot read and understand myself? And which is only interpreted by one gender?, 248). Her invocation of religion as law marks two institutions – religious and legal practice – which can easily be harnessed to disciplinary technologies of power, but which require knowledge and comprehension about the law to be used in the service of freedom.

If we look at the suggestions Ateş lays forth in the last chapter of her autobiography as well as throughout *Der Multikulti-Irrtum*, what becomes clear is how Ateş' writings are also a way to map the social body with the subsequent aim of reforming the corresponding disciplinary institutions in contemporary Germany. Ateş also makes use of pain and the representation of pain in order to compel others to act.

The physical abuse she recounts experiencing at home, in conjunction with the randomness of being shot at her workplace, work on two levels. First, domestic abuse helps to confirm the stereotype of violent Turkish/Kurdish family life, and the need of Turkish women and children for protection. Second, the unpredictability of the attack Ateş experienced both disrupts and intensifies the portrayal of Muslim women as victims. Ateş' account of her attempted assassination is atypical – honor killings, family violence, domestic abuse are all forms of relational violence, where the dynamics of intimate relationships devolve into violent action and/or reaction. What Ateş experiences at the hand of a man with ultranationalist political leanings – who found the work of *TIO* to be threatening – allows Ateş to extend the boundaries of violent threats beyond the confines of the private space of the home and into the public sphere, where the violence can be described as human rights violations. This move is an important one, for it allows Ateş to make the jump to widespread social reforms and permits the invocation of a language of representation about crime and pain analyzed by Foucault.

Ateş marks a space in which those who reside in the spaces between the criminal and the protected cultural spheres lack sufficient idealities of pain because their crimes are outside the boundaries of the law's imagination. They thus escape punishment. Those behaviors Ateş wishes to label as criminal and thus punishable include domestic violence, forced marriage, honor killings, gender oppression and threats from Islamic fundamentalist or other conservative voices. Ateş' suggestions for reform aim to make

certain crimes visible and thus repair the policy Ateş identifies as having become an inefficient and morally suspect economy of power: multiculturalism.

2.3 Multiculturalism and Integration

On October 16, 2010, German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared to a group of young Christian Democrats (*Junge Union*) at the end of *Deutschlandtag* (Germany Day) that “multiculturalism has failed” (Siebold). In the video of the entire German speech available on YouTube, Merkel declares “Multikulti: dieser Ansatz ist gescheitert, absolut gescheitert” (Multikulti: this approach has failed, absolutely failed) her right hand accentuating her speech with the fist-pumping punctuation of politicians. In the German context, this declaration was widely believed to be a political move that resulted from internal CDU/CSU pressure on Merkel to take a harder line on immigration and integration reforms (Siebold). This declaration made headlines across the world. The timing of this remark is also important. Coming at the peak of the Thilo Sarrazin scandal after his racist statements about Turks and Arabs, and also after President Christian Wulff earlier declared Islam to be a “part” of Germany, Merkel’s declaration that multiculturalism has failed was part of a series of events at the federal level that showed how Germany continues to grapple with accepting its identity as a multiethnic, multicultural and multiracial nation (Schlegel).

The notion that this particular form of societal organization has “failed” is not new. In fact, its declaration seems to be a rite of passage for contemporary European

heads of state. Spanish ex-president José María Aznar may have been the first to make this kind of declaration, which he uttered in 2006 during a visit to Georgetown University: “el multiculturalismo divide y debilita a las sociedades” (multiculturalism divides and debilitates society, Agencias). John Howard, the former conservative Prime Minister of Australia, one of the countries often described as a model of multiculturalist policy, declared on September 2010 during a talk at the Heritage Foundation in Washington that multiculturalism had been confused with what he calls “multiracialism,” which he described as a process by which immigrants assimilate to the values of the receiving nation (Malkin).

Merkel’s comment in 2010 at the *Deutschlandtag* followed these events, but seemed to be a direct response to the publication of Maria Böhmer’s (CDU) 8th Report about the Situation of Foreigners in Germany (*8. Bericht über die Lage der Ausländerinnen und Ausländer in Deutschland*) on October 7, 2010. Böhmer currently serves as the Integration Commissioner of the Federal Government of Germany. The report, originally published in July 2010, declares that during the period between the spring of 2008 and the spring of 2010 gains have been made in integration, especially in education (“Die Beauftragte” 5). Coverage in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* about the release of this report quotes Böhmer as defending the integrationist policies of the FDP-CDU coalition with the very statement that would make headlines when Merkel uttered it the following week:

Zugleich sagte sie [Böhmer], dass die Grundlage des Wertesystems und des Grundgesetzes die christlich-jüdische Tradition bleibe. "Und klar ist auch: Für einen radikalen Islam, der unsere Werte infrage stellt, ist kein Platz in unserem Land," sagte Böhmer. Die CDU-Politikerin verteidigte den Grundsatz schwarz-gelber Integrationspolitik, wonach Migranten gefordert und gefördert werden müssten. "Multikulti ist gescheitert. Das ist die Wahrheit." (FAZ.net/dpa).

At the same time she [Böhmer] said that the foundation of the system of values and the Basic Law remains a Christian-Jewish tradition. "And it is also clear: there is no place in our country for a radical Islam that questions our values," Böhmer said. The CDU politician defended the basic approach of black-gold [CDU/CDU/FDP coalition colors] integration politics, according to which migrants must be called to integrate and assisted in integrating. "Multiculti has failed. That is the truth."

At the convention in Potsdam for the Young Union (the youth arm of the CDU), Merkel was ushered in amongst a flurry of sign-waving and handshakes as a German cover band blasted Fleetwood Mac's "Don't Stop." The attendees are pictured on the video clapping in time to the music as German-language signs waved in the background, stating "Die Zukunft beginnt jetzt!" (The future begins now!) Although Merkel's statement that "Multiculturalism has failed" would make global headlines, there is little remarkable about the entirety of Merkel's speech. The transcript of this talk is typically conservative in its argumentation, and she shares argumentative techniques with Ateş, in that she begins her speech with a discussion of freedom, declaring "Freiheit ist die Aussetzung für Demokratie" (Freedom is the prerequisite for democracy, Merkel). Although this remark is specifically contextualized in terms of the irresponsibility of the freedoms the financial markets enjoyed before the economic crisis

of 2008, this kind of argumentation echoes Ateş' characterization of multiculturalism as "organized irresponsibility."

Merkel specifies her definition of freedom: "Die Freiheit, wie wir sie verstehen, ist eine Freiheit nicht *von* etwas, sondern das ist eine Freiheit *zu* etwas. Eine Freiheit, Verantwortung zu übernehmen" (Freedom as we understand it is not freedom from something, but rather freedom to [do] something, a freedom to take responsibility, Merkel). She declares Germany's identity to be founded on the regulation which is an intrinsic part of a social market economy:

[...] wenn wir Freiheiten haben, die keinerlei Verantwortung mehr kennen, und in dem Fahren der Finanzmärkten hat ein solches Freiheitsbegriff geherrscht. Und deshalb heißt es auch, Finanzmärkte müssen reguliert werden; auch dafür gibt es eine Verantwortung, Exzesse der Märkte dürfen nicht passieren. (Merkel)

[...] if we have freedoms that no longer know responsibility, and in steering the financial markets, it was this definition of freedom that reigned. Therefore this means that financial markets must be regulated – there is also a responsibility to do so: excesses of the markets should not be allowed to happen.

Freedom has its limits, she seems to be saying, but willing submission to the rules of the game is a prerequisite for freedom and responsibility in any context.

Over the course of her forty-five minute speech, Merkel seeks to establish the mandate for CDU rule. With Stuttgart 21 activists successfully impeding the construction of a new train station, and the rapid ascent of the Green party in local elections (which would only accelerate after the nuclear disaster in Fukushima six months later), the legitimacy of the CDU/CSU/FDP coalition in the federal government

was under attack. She starts by referencing the role of the CDU in winning the 1990 election leading to reunification, calling this history an "Erfolgsgeschichte" (success story). Merkel uses this success to articulate her party's vision of freedom, justice, and financial conservatism at the beginning of the Eurozone debt crisis. Finally, she congratulates the party on having transformed the five million unemployed inherited from Schröder's government into a mere three million unemployed.

The underlying social market and capitalist politics of the CDU can be seen in this trajectory: Merkel contextualizes "freedom" first as financial freedom, and "justice" and "solidarity" in the context of a growing European debt crisis. Even immigration is cast, ultimately, in the language of economics. Before calling for renewed immigration as a solution to declining birth rates and rising health costs, Merkel declares that efforts must be made to put long-term unemployed back to work, especially those over fifty years of age. In this section, immigration is always referenced in the language of economics. When she declares "Wir waren immer ein weltoffenes Land" (We were always a cosmopolitan country, Merkel), she does so in the context of calling Germany the world leader in exports. When she talks about positive immigration, it is in the context of only allowing specialized workers to enter, not those who could become a burden by requiring social welfare. Finally, integration is necessary not for civic participation but rather because the country needs business to find Germany to be an attractive place to work. She later declares immigration to have its place, since the nation

needs scientists, engineers and other skilled workers. Furthermore, “Offenheit ist von uns erwartet” (Openness is expected of us, Merkel)¹⁹ What journalists did not mention in their headlines in most coverage about this performative event, was that Merkel – even when taking a hard line against multiculturalism – also cautioned against a populist xenophobia that could hurt the nation’s image:

Das heißt, wir dürfen auch kein Land sein, was nach außen den Eindruck vermeidet, jeder, der nicht sofort Deutsch spricht und mit Deutsch sozusagen als Mutterprachler aufgewachsen ist, der ist uns hier nicht willkommen. Das wird unserem Land sehr stark schaden. Dann werden Unternehmen woanders hingehen, weil sie bei uns keine Arbeitsplätze mehr finden. Das heißt, die Forderung nach Integration ist eine unserer Hauptaufgaben für die nächste Zeit. Aber den zu sagen, wir sind ein Land, das den Menschen in unserem Land eine Chance gibt, das muss auch immer das Markenzeichen Deutschlands sein. (Merkel)

This means, we should not be a country that gives the impression to outsiders that anyone who does not speak German immediately and who has not grown up as a native speaker is not welcome here. That will greatly damage our country. Then companies will go somewhere else, because they will no longer find jobs for us. That means, demanding integration is one of our main tasks in the near future. But to tell them we are a country that gives people in our country a chance: that must always be the trademark of Germany.

She then declared CDU/CSU politics to be characterized as “eine Politik von Maß und Mitte” (a centrist and mainstream politics)²⁰ in which immigrants are both “gefordert” (called to integrate) and “gefördert” (assisted in integrating). Although girls must be allowed – indeed must be compelled – to participate in class trips, gym class and be

¹⁹ Whether Germany has always been an open, tolerant land – as Merkel states – is problematic, of course, but this statement serves more to accentuate the short view of history Merkel uses by starting her speech from the reference point of reunification in 1990.

²⁰ This phrase seems to be a quote from Confucius often translated as “the doctrine of the mean.”

protected from forced marriages; although she states that those who want to integrate *must* be able to speak German, Merkel's comments about Islam, Muslims, or culture are relatively sparse. She references the buzz words – “girls,” “gym class,” “language,” “Islam” – but refrains from speaking directly about groups. She tries to accommodate as large a group of potential voters as possible. At the same time her remarks keep “others” – the Greens, the Muslims, the neoliberal capitalists – outside of the conversation.

Even with these caveats, the underlying emphasis on demographic shifts that require the ethnic German population to care for their own, and her call for Christian Democrats to remember and discuss what it means to have a “christliche Bild von Menschen” (Christian image of human beings) echo many of the populist statements of groups farther to the right than Merkel's CDU: members of the ProKöln movement, the incipient ProDeutschland movement, even Thilo Sarrazin will hear his politics as the subtext to Merkel's speech.²¹

After Merkel declared multiculturalism's failure on October 16, 2010, Great Britain's prime minister David Cameron followed suit in his first speech as prime minister on February 5, 2011. Cameron declared that under the “doctrine of state multiculturalism,” cultural groups had been encouraged to live apart, creating conditions that allowed groups promoting Islamist extremism to flourish. Cameron

²¹ Especially Sarrazin: his book *Deutschland schafft sich ab* argues for a ruthless economic efficiency standard to be applied to migrant groups which he has essentialized, evaluating and essentializing groups based on their contributions to the GNP. See Sarrazin.

proposed a strengthening of national identity as the solution to this 'problem' ("State Multiculturalism"). Nicholas Sarkozy followed suit five days later, when he responded to a television interviewer's question about immigration policy with similar rhetoric: "My answer is clearly yes, it [multiculturalism] is a failure" (afp). The emphasis on national identity in Sarkozy's response echoed that of Cameron's speech: "If you come to France, you accept melting into a single community, which is the national community, and if you do not want to accept that, you cannot be welcome in France" (afp). Merkel's remarks about Germany are slightly coded, given the German public's unease with blunt nationalist rhetoric. She still, however, invokes the idea of strengthening the nation by appearing at an event called "Germany Day," asserting Germany's need to take care of long-term German unemployed, and tracing the CDU's right to lead based on the success of Germany's reunification, *Land* is repeatedly uttered.

Declaring multiculturalism to be a failure is a conservative political response to contemporary multiethnic societies; given the context of these statements within larger speeches and interviews where those speaking declared a need to strengthen the national identities of Spain, Australia, Germany, France and Great Britain points to a right-moving shift in public policy that advocates assimilation and nationalism. In contrast to states that engage in specific and programmatic ways to develop multiculturalist policies as a strategy of population management, such as Canada and Australia, Merkel's insistence that multiculturalism has failed in Germany is somewhat

perplexing. “Failed at what?” would be an appropriate follow-up question.

Furthermore, it is important to note that integration was previously also seen as the strategy that had failed: Ateş, for instance, calls integration, not multiculturalism, a failure in *Der Multikulti-Irrtum*: “Das sind deutliche Belege für eine gescheiterte Integration“ (This is clear proof of failed integration, 36). Serap Çileli, another autobiographer, said something similar during an award acceptance speech: “Ist das Konzept der Integration gescheitert?“ (Or has the concept of integration failed?, Çileli, “Bu-le-mérite”).

Multiculturalism in Germany was never institutionalized as a governmental strategy that sets out to articulate group and individual rights for members of different groups. In fact, group rights are particularly difficult to argue for in Germany, given that the very first article of the German Basic Law perceives the individual to be the construct upon which the nation rests. Formulating group rights that take precedence over the individual subject would be tricky. Given the fact that naturalization and citizenship laws based on the principle of *ius sanguinis* were not changed until 1999, arguing for the rights of non-citizens, not to mention enforcing those rights, would also have been difficult.

At the same time, if we look more closely at all of these remarks, we can see that articulating the rights of a collective or a group is not actually the construct being criticized. Multiculturalism has failed because it has failed to produce a collective

identity tied to the German nation, an identity that includes a notion of civic participation and investment in national goals. Arguments about Christian values or the need to strengthen national identity are using the same argumentative structure that minority groups often use to argue for group rights: our values, our language, our “way of life” is threatened; therefore, we demand protection from the state to preserve our identity. Ultimately, both strategies can be understood as a form of identity politics. The difference between group claims to rights and the need to preserve or strengthen the nation are the differences in the power ascribed to each group. Whereas one’s position as a minority allows groups to request protection due to a lack of power, claims by heads of state who are *not* minorities is a blatant exercise of power in opposition to those minority groups seen as threats to national identity. Even more troubling is the insistent racialization by Merkel, Howard, Cameron and Sarkozy of their Muslim populations.

The declaration that multiculturalism has failed (whether or not this policy has been explicitly pursued by the federal and local governments) is a political maneuver. This maneuver allows Merkel – once multiculturalism has been deligitimized – to demand integration or assimilation from immigrants with renewed fervor. At the heart of both claims – either majority claims to preserve national identity, or minority claims to need protections for group identity – is an articulated need to conserve and preserve the socially constructed categories that are recognizable today.

In *Der Multikulti-Irrtum*, Ateş takes similar steps to delegitimize multiculturalism. She too has, at the heart of her polemic, a desire for the assimilation and incorporation of Muslim immigrants. The concordances here between a self-declared feminist leftism and an Islamophobic nationalist conservatism is fairly common. I will explore this as it applies to Necla Kelek's work in the following chapter as well.

Der Multikulti-Irrtum has a table of contents that is practically a list of key words for discursive analysis about *Integrationspolitik*. Some titles and subtitles chart shifts in the past sixty years of migration, for instance "Vom 'Gastarbeiter' zum 'Muslim'" (From Guestworker to Muslim). Others pick up on social anxiety ("Zwangsheirat – Zwang, Tradition und Arrangement" [Forced Marriage – Compulsion, Tradition and Arrangement] or "Die überwachte Ehre" [Guarded Honor]).²² Any topic of debate that has been referenced in a national context about immigration, integration and assimilation can be found here, from "Häusliche Gewalt in Migrantenfamilien" (Domestic Violence in Migrant Families) to "Der Streit ums Kopftuch" (The Headscarf Debate) to "Bildung" (Education) or "Die Scharia" (The Sharia). What compelled Ateş to write this book is what she describes as a false interpretation of multiculturalism, tolerance and *Zusammenleben* (coexistence):

²² *From Guest Workers into Muslims* is the title of a scholarly monograph by Gökçe Yurdakul, a professor at the Humboldt University. Yurdakul is not mentioned specifically by Ateş.

Viele Deutsche, vor allem viele Linke, glauben noch immer, der Traum von der multikulturellen Gesellschaft werde irgendwann Wirklichkeit, wenn man den Dingen nur ihren Lauf lässt. Doch das ist ein Irrtum. Multikulti, so wie es bisher gelebt wurde, ist organisierte Verantwortungslosigkeit.

Many Germans, above all many leftists, still believe that the dream of a multicultural society will someday become reality if one lets things run by themselves. This is a mistake. Multikulti, as it has been lived until now, is organized irresponsibility. (9)

Multiculturalism as a policy of population management *an sich* is not a flawed strategy, Ateş implies. What Ateş points to is a policy which, in practice, is impossible to operationalize without harnessing *Multikulti* to a disciplinary display of power willing to make use of regimented, persistent, subtle coercion and surveillance. In Ateş' formulation, the dream of multicultural society falls short precisely because of the lackadaisical and erratic implementation of the policy itself: "man [lässt] den Dingen nur ihren Lauf" (one lets things run by themselves). Note also that Ateş is very specific in her definition of terms and subsequently invokes multiculturalism with the qualifier "so wie es bisher gelebt wurde" (as it has been lived until now). Multiculturalism has failed in Germany because it is effectively "clunky" – erratically invoked, implemented and inadequately "lived."²³

²³ See Bermann and von Dirke, who offer interpretations of the German debate about multiculturalism in the 1990s. Von Dirke describes the debate as "a discursive battle which reflects the German quest for a collective identity and returns to questions of the ethnicity of culture and the legitimacy of assimilation" (515). Bermann describes multiculturalism in 1999 as "an alternate concept to the idea of an ethnically homogeneous German nation-state" and emphasizes the multiple and conflicting interpretations of multiculturalism as intrinsic to the idea (34). Both authors emphasize that the German variant of multiculturalism is based strongly on a particularly German understanding of the word "culture": "According to one definition, *Kultur* refers primarily to cultural production, often even primarily to

Ateş' forward, from which the citations above come, as well as her table of contents, perform both functions. Ateş' forward illuminates how the German variant of multiculturalism has failed to develop into a sufficiently detailed political anatomy, partly by ignoring spaces in which what Ateş calls "Islam" is permitted to extend into or occupy spaces outside the reach of mainstream German disciplinary power:

Aber kein Mensch hat das Recht, über das Leben eines anderen Menschen zu entscheiden. Das ist mein Verständnis vom Islam. Mit diesem Buch will ich auch versuchen, den Kulturrelativisten zu sagen, dass sie einen ganz elementaren Fehler begehen, einen folgenreichen Irrtum, wenn sie die aktuellen Grausamkeiten, die im Namen des Islam geschehen, verharmlosen oder gar dem Westen zuschreiben.

But no human being has the right to control the life of another human being. This is my understanding of Islam. With this book, I also want to try to tell the cultural relativists that they are making a very basic mistake, a consequential mistake, when they trivialize the current atrocities which happen in the name of Islam or attribute them to the West. (10)

If Ateş' forward points out the shortcomings of disciplinary power in multicultural policies, her extensive table of contents attempts to map, fill, and reorganize spaces outside disciplinary power's grasp. Each "hot" topic in Ateş' table of contents is isolated

highbrow culture, such as literature, music, art, food, and dance, and does not extend to social forms of life, such as the organization of the relationship between the sexes or the influence of religion on people's lives. The other definition of *Kultur* uses it as a synonym for "race," inscribing cultural difference onto people as something inherent and unchangeable" (Bermann 36). Von Dirck calls the argument which uses *Kultur* and race as synonyms a "biologist-nationalist argument [which] serves first and foremost to assert the allegedly insurmountable differences between ethnic cultures and peoples" (von Dirck 518). This conservative interpretation of *Kultur* as an example of "insurmountable difference" is what Ateş contests here, as it privileges the development of separate spaces in which the collective right to survival prevents individuals from thriving in majority society. See also Chin, *Guestworker Question*, 141-190; Cohn-Bendit/Schmid, and Leggewie.

and subdivided into several sections designed to illuminate specific components of a complex social phenomenon. Forced marriage, for instance, is analyzed under the main heading “Zwangsheirat – Zwang, Tradition und Arrangement” with the following sub-headings: “Eine religiös begründete Tradition?” (A Religiously Based Tradition?), “Die Folgen der Zwangsheirat” (The Consequences of Forced Marriage), and “Was können wir tun?” (What can we do?). Each heading breaks up “Forced Marriage” into a smaller, more manageable topic. These subdivided headings then organize the space of her analysis into manageable three to five page sections. German academic convention also follows this format and having many chapters with multiple headings and subsections is partly cultural convention. Although the erratic logic of Ateş’ argumentation would not pass muster in academic circles, this patterning shows Ateş’ attempts to characterize her text as a research narrative (if not as *Wissenschaft* [scholarship] then at least as a *Sachbuch* [nonfiction]). Necla Kelek’s books, for example, also have extensive tables of contents. What is different about Ateş’ table of contents is that her contexts are both tightly bound to and intertwined with discursive controversy, and also how accurately and incredibly thoroughly she has been able to mark and list almost every buzz word, debate and topic from the past thirty years of integration politics and multiculturalism in Germany, from forced marriage to the nationalism of Turkish youth. Kelek’s titles are poetic; they introduce story lines in her books. Ateş’ subtitles are nothing short of a detailed mapping of an integration apparatus.

The section on forced marriage is an excellent example of the ways in which Ateş sheds light on an extant gap between legislated spaces of freedom and their perceived inability to reach – or discipline – Muslim residents and citizens. Ateş maps these spaces in several ways. Her introductory section, “Zwangsheirat – Zwang, Tradition und Arrangement,” introduces the idea of forced marriage as a question of freedom and a human rights violation. She uses what little statistics are available about forced marriage in Germany to justify her characterization of forced marriage as a “massive societal problem” (ein massives gesellschaftliches Problem, 49) and then repeats the common move of linking the practice to Turkish and Kurdish communities. The second section, “Eine religiös begründete Tradition?” makes use of religious and secular sources to root the origins of forced marriage (or this particular variant of forced marriage) in Islam. The third section investigates “The Consequences of Forced Marriage” (Die Folgen der Zwangsheirat) as well as the implications this practice carries in terms of the freedom of those affected. The fourth and final section, “Was können wir tun?” (What Can We Do?) proposes introducing forced marriage as a punishable offense in Germany (although it is already technically prevented by the human rights protection cited above).²⁴ Other

²⁴ The Madonna girl's club in the Berlin district of Neukölln published an interesting postcard campaign against forced marriage in 2004. The photograph on this postcard was later picked up as the image for a district-wide educational pamphlet about the rights and services available for those threatened with forced marriage. The image on the pamphlet is worthy of its own analysis: teenage girls have been photographed playing both roles, bride and groom, on the right and left sides of the sheet respectively. When folded together, the two sit next to each other in a bridal gown and black suit, the “man” holding both prayer beads and a semi-automatic pistol stuck into his belt. Under the image of the wedding pair runs the text “Bis dass der Tod uns scheidet” (Till death do us part), implying that forced marriage is not only directly linked to

societal changes Ateş sees as necessary for enforcing this punishable offense include “correcting” the immigration code to allow German residents forcibly married while on vacation in Turkey re-entry to Germany; prevention work; sufficient shelter spaces and crisis assistance for those in need; crisis counseling for young men and women threatened with forced marriage; as well as specific professionalization programs and trainings for social workers, lawyers, teachers and doctors (65-69).

The trajectory and chronology of Ateş' prescriptions in this section are notable. She first rejects the privileging of group rights over individual rights within a multicultural framework, drawing once again from her notion of freedom as well as Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948):

Auch bei dem Thema Zwangsheirat geht es wie bei der Kopftuch-Frage um Freiwilligkeit und sexuelle Selbstbestimmung. In Artikel 16 der Allgemeinen Erklärung der Menschenrechte von 1948 heißt es: 'Die Ehe darf nur aufgrund der freien und vollen Willensbildung der zukünftigen Ehegatten beschlossen werden.' Es ist also ein Menschenrecht, sich seinen Partner selbst auszusuchen. (48)

The topic of forced marriage, like the headscarf question, is also about voluntary participation and sexual self-determination. In article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 it says: 'Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.' It is therefore a human right to choose one's partner for oneself.

honor killing, it is the expected consequence. This postcard campaign was developed by the girl's club and appears to have been supported by *Terres des Femmes*. See Madonna Mädchen Kultur e.V.

Ateş bemoans attempts to restrict an expansion of the space of human rights to spaces of religion, tradition and culture: “Aber mit den Menschenrechten ist das ja bekanntlich so eine Sache. Was zählen sie schon im Verhältnis zu Religion, Traditionen und kulturellem Selbstverständnis?” (But with human rights that's a generally well-known thing. What do they matter in relationship to religion, traditions and cultural self-understanding?) Since choice of a partner is an individual right that can be overshadowed by claims to group survival, Ateş pleads for a shift in definition:

Das Menschenrecht auf freie Partnerwahl gehört noch nicht dazu. Ich sage bewusst 'noch nicht,' weil ich die Hoffnung habe, dass sich das in den nächsten Jahren ändern wird. Damit sich aber etwas ändert, muss das Problem zunächst einmal als solches erkannt werden. (48)

The human right to freely choose one's partner does not yet belong to [this group]. I say 'not yet' consciously, because I hope that this will change in the next few years. In order for something to change, the problem must be recognized as such.²⁵

Having isolated forced marriage as a human rights violation and categorized it as a problem, Ateş' next step is to illuminate forced marriages' inner workings through statistics, verses from the Koran, *hadiths*, an internet *fatwa*, and personal anecdotes – three techniques that produce or contribute to a “political anatomy of detail”

²⁵ Charles Taylor and K. Anthony Appiah have written extensively on the ethics of multiculturalism and group identities. In his essay “The Politics of Recognition,” Taylor explicitly takes up the question of survival in the context of Quebecois identity. Appiah comments on Taylor's approach in the same volume (*Multiculturalism*) and engages thoroughly with the ethics of group vs. individual identity in his book *The Ethics of Identity*. Although not mentioned by Ateş, Susan Moller Okin problematizes the privileging of group rights over individual women's rights as a way in which multiculturalism continues to exact a cost from female bodies and facilitates the perpetuation of patriarchal and oppressive structures in the name of group survival.

characteristic of discipline. Ateş' use of statistics to achieve this end is particularly interesting, because this section is introduced with a disclaimer that declares her analysis has to proceed without empirical evidence, since certified studies have yet to be conducted (49) Ateş is also aware of the incipient critique that will be directed at her for trying to expand the reach of state disciplinary power into private spaces, especially from those who already consider themselves obedient subjects. She curiously leads her discussion of forced marriages with a culturally relativising sentence:

Zwangsverheiratungen kommen überall auf der Welt vor, in allen Kulturen und Religionen. [...] Daher fühlt sich die muslimische türkische und kurdische Community durch die Diskussion in Deutschland zu Unrecht ausschließlich ins Visier genommen. Natürlich findet auch in ihren Reihen die Tradition, Männer und Frauen gegen ihren Willen miteinander zu verheiraten, keine hundert prozentige Akzeptanz. Viele Muslime lehnen sie als veraltet und menschenverachtend ab.

Forced marriages occur everywhere in the world, in all cultures and religions. [...] Consequently the Muslim Turkish and Kurdish community feels unjustly and singularly targeted in the discussion in Germany. Of course, among their ranks, the tradition of marrying men and women against their will is not accepted one hundred percent. Many Muslims reject it as antiquated and inhuman. (51)

Ateş, however, defends her – and the discursive – association of forced marriage with Turks and Kurds, declaring that they are the largest communities practicing forced marriage in Germany (51). Ateş justifies this analytic organization of space through recourse to identity: “Auch ich kann zum Thema Zwangsheirat in erster Linie aus dem türkisch-kurdischen Milieu berichten, das ganz überwiegend muslimisch ist, da ich selbst und auch der größte Teil meiner ehemaligen Mandantinnen aus diesem

Kulturkreis stammen“ (I too can report about the topic of forced marriage first and foremost from the Turkish-Kurdish milieu, which is predominantly Muslim, because I, as well as a large proportion of my former clients, come from this cultural group, 51).

Ateş' next step is to debunk the myth of forced marriage as a Muslim tradition. After having illuminated through statistical evidence those spaces outside the reach of the state in need of surveillance, Ateş marks “religious tradition” as a second, *false* disciplinary power because it dominates *too* well. Religion is too successful a disciplinary power partly because of the excessive psychological force of its doctrine (both cultural and religious) that shames individuals into acting against their best interests. This force is also applied unevenly with respect to gender, which makes it a power whose effects are inefficient because they are imbalanced. Ateş first compares Islam to other world religions, noting that forced marriage is not religiously determined (52). All religions, according to Ateş, prohibit the expression of sexuality outside the bounds of marriage, and here is where Ateş marks the point of confusion between religion and tradition: “je strenger dieses Verbot religiös begründet und gelebt wird, desto mehr fördert die Religion die Zwangsehe” (the stronger this prohibition originates and is lived in religion, the more a religion demands forced marriage; 52). Disciplining and channeling the energy of sexuality falls to religion; therefore, Ateş investigates religious control in order to critique and redirect the social reach of religion.

Ateş begins with the religious foundations of the word “Zwang” (force or compulsion). The compulsion to marry stems directly from the word of God, and therein lies its force (52). She emphasizes this compulsion by citing *hadiths* that call marriage “half of religion” and which declare those who do not marry to no longer be Muslims (52). Another source of force/compulsion can be found in *hadiths* and *fatwas* that describe silence or tears as an expression of the bride's agreement (53). Ateş then investigates the production of shame as a form of disciplinary power that is too efficient, and therefore too powerful, to be tolerated: “Schweigen ist eine sehr verbreitete Reaktion muslimischer Frauen auf die Frage, ob sie diesen oder jenen Mann heiraten möchten. Schweigen, weil sie nie gelernt haben, wirklich auf Fragen zu antworten, weil sie sich schämen” (Remaining silent is a widespread reaction of Muslim women to the question as to whether or not they would like to marry this or that man. They stay silent because they have not learned how to really answer the question, because they are ashamed, page).

The inability to move beyond this compulsion to silence has many unwanted side effects, from tearing apart families to sexual exploitation, rape, domestic violence and the societal burden of unwanted children who are at risk of becoming less than disciplined citizens (55-57). As Ateş describes it, the controlling function of the “clan” determines the choice of partner, the trivialization of domestic violence, and the right to divorce and sexual self-determination (58; cf. 55-63). Once again, it is the lack of freedom

that requires disciplinary intervention on behalf of the state (59). And Ateş is particularly detailed in the kinds of reforms she would like to enact – her suggestions encompass a broad spectrum of strategies, as mentioned above, from laws to amendments to training programs and the extension of available services. What Ateş is really invested in is a change in the representation of crime and the pain linked to punishment that Foucault aptly described as the rule of sufficient ideality:

Auch die überwiegende Zahl der Menschen, die an Zwangsverheiratungen mitwirken, ist im Übrigen der Überzeugung, etwas Rechtes zu tun. [...]

Die Tradition ist so verbreitet und kulturell gefestigt, dass sie sich nur auflösen lässt, wenn sie unter anderem auch schärfer unter Strafe gestellt wird. Nur so wird Familien, die ganz selbstverständlich ihre Töchter verkaufen und nebenan in einem Zimmer sitzen, während diese vergewaltigt werden, deutlich gemacht, dass sie ein Verbrechen begehen. Hier gilt es also, ein Unrechtsbewusstsein zu schaffen, was die bisherigen Sanktionsmöglichkeiten offensichtlich nicht vermocht haben. Das Thema Zwangsverheiratung muss in Gerichtssälen verhandelt werden, die Justiz muss gezwungen werden, sich mit dem Thema auseinanderzusetzen.

Also, the overwhelming majority of people who are complicit in forced marriages, are – by the way – convinced they are doing the right thing. [...]

The tradition is so widespread and culturally rooted that it will only dissipate when, among other things, it is more heavily punished. Only in this way will it be made clear to families who sell their daughters as a matter of course and sit in the next room while she is raped that they have committed a crime. What is necessary here is to create a consciousness of wrongdoing, of which the extant sanctions have not yet been capable. The topic of forced marriage must be negotiated in courts of law; the judiciary must be forced to engage with the topic. (64)

Fully unaware or insufficiently conscious of the consequences of their crime, those complicit in it neither fear the consequences nor do they understand the gravity of

the assault. They are not able to idealize the punishment they should incur by committing such a crime, precisely because no punishment exists under current laws and policies, Ateş believes. Ateş also faults the courts for fumbling in their enforcement of disciplinary power in the face of cultural difference:

Der Umgang mit den Straftatbeständen Nötigung, Körperverletzung, Vergewaltigung, Freiheitsberaubung etc., welche bei einer Zwangsverheiratung oftmals gleichzeitig verwirklicht werden, ist den Gerichten zwar geläufig, doch zeigen diese sich meist überfordert, sobald vermeintlich kulturelle Eigenheiten für den Rechtsfall eine Rolle spielen könnten. Ein eigener Straftatbestand würde das Thema in angemessener Form in die Gesetzeskommentare bringen und der Justiz mehr Sicherheit im Umgang mit Zwangsverheiratungen verschaffen.

Dealing with the punishable offenses of assault, bodily harm, rape, deprivation of liberty, etc., which are often charged in conjunction with forced marriage, is admittedly common in the courts, but most of them [courts] show themselves to be overwhelmed as soon as supposedly cultural particularities appear to play a role in the case. Creating an independent punishable offense [for forced marriage] would bring the topic in appropriate form into the legal commentary and would provide the judiciary more confidence when dealing with forced marriages.²⁶ (64)

The development of an appropriate “forced marriage consciousness,” therefore, is not merely the responsibility of those active in its execution – the complicity of the courts must be sufficiently accounted for in order to be a partner in successfully disciplining subjects. In the above paragraph, Ateş notes the additional charges that can be brought in cases of forced marriage, articulately and explicitly noting the appropriate

²⁶ One of the more outrageous cases to which Ates may be referring took place in 2007, when a Moroccan woman filed for divorced after sustaining injuries from serious domestic assault. The judge denied her request citing cultural precedent: “In this cultural background, it is not unusual that the husband uses physical punishment against the wife” (Landler, “German Judge”). After public uproar, judge Christa Datz-Winter was removed abruptly from the case by the court (Landler, “Furor.”)

disciplinary categories of extant legal procedure (assault, bodily harm, rape and deprivation of freedom) as well as detailing the process by which legal action would change the law's own consciousness: "Creating an individual punishable offense [for forced marriage] would bring the topic in appropriate form into the legal commentary and would provide the judiciary more confidence when dealing with forced marriages" (64). Criminalizing behavior brings behavior into the disciplinary mechanism. Once inscribed in the mechanism, disciplinary behavior can produce punishment. Reports of punishment are a form of representation that then produces an ideal: criminals are deterred from crime by anticipating the process of punishment. Ateş would take this a step further than Foucault, however, and would say that the last and final step of the disciplinary process is the successful protection of freedom and free will which will extend – after these crimes are identified as such – to victims, or, as is common in German parlance, "those affected."

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how Seyran Ateş' texts narrate her personal construction of identity as an individual in relentless pursuit of freedom. The protection of individual – in contrast to group – freedoms also structures Ateş' critique of German multiculturalism. According to Ateş, German multiculturalism works against the mandate to protect the freedoms of individuals enshrined in the Basic Law, in part because multicultural policy in practice is reluctant to harness itself to regimes of

disciplinary power. By rejecting multiculturalism as an inefficient economy of power, Ateş illuminates spaces of private criminality (seen here in the example of forced marriage) so that they can be better inscribed and incorporated into extant structures of German disciplinary power (primarily the law, but also education, social work and medicine).

Ateş' fervent and unyielding support of disciplinary power, however, shows signs of strain in her autobiography when personal experiences of racism – themselves an instance of disciplinary inscription – threaten her psychological survival as the bearer of an organic, “unsplit” self-image. This rupture in Ateş' portrayal of disciplinary power as universally positive also points to a tangential, strategic omission in Ateş' books: to what degree is “freedom” compatible with a desire to support power that restricts individual agency? What does it mean to pursue collective desire instead of individual ones?

Ateş would describe both situations as instances of “un-freedom”: the first – at least in the German context – because the secular state privileges the individual above the collective; thus restricting individual agency is quite literally illegal. The second is “unfree” because – at least in the Turkish, Kurdish or Muslim structures as Ateş portrays them here – “free” pursuit of collective desire is a contradiction in terms. Those desiring to satisfy religious or community demands are characterized as “ratlos” (clueless) or unable to sufficiently articulate what freedom means. Ateş cites freedom,

free will and human rights as motivating concepts in her personal and political life. Can a conceptualization of freedom linked to a disciplinary power which precludes the possibility of choosing group sustaining (rather than self-sustaining) freedom really be a universal freedom? Or does it define freedom only through accepted docility in the service of nationalist desires for assimilation?

3. Enlightenment Fundamentalists and Preachers of Hate

On November 2, 2004 Dutch filmmaker and provocateur Theo van Gogh was murdered in Amsterdam in broad daylight by Mohammed Bouyeri, a 26-year old Moroccan-Dutch man. Bouyeri shot Van Gogh several times, slit his throat, then pinned a letter to van Gogh's corpse with a knife. Bouyeri walked away calmly to a nearby park before being caught in a shootout with police, and was subsequently arrested (Buruma, "Amsterdam" 2-3, de Winter).

In 2006, Ian Buruma, a Dutch-American journalist, published an account of this murder called *Murder in Amsterdam: The Death of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance*. Buruma's book explores the Dutch national mood in 2004, which he describes as "unhinged" (10), through portraits of controversial figures, including flamboyant right-wing politician Pim Fortuyn, also assassinated; van Gogh; Islam critic and former Dutch MP Ayaan Hirsi Ali; Iranian-Dutch lawyer Afshan Ellian; and Mohammed Bouyeri, van Gogh's murderer. What emerges is a portrait of Holland still coming to terms with its passivity under German occupation, where the smug satisfaction of the ruling elite is deteriorating into public hysteria in a standoff between conservative Muslims, Muslim extremists, and indigenous Dutch no longer willing to tolerate difference, especially the difference of Islam.

Buruma's book was reviewed by Timothy Garton Ash in the *New York Review of Books* on October 5, 2006 as part of a double review of *Murder in Amsterdam* and Ayaan

Hirsi Ali's English-language biography *The Caged Virgin: An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam*. Garton Ash reviews both books, but in the service of what reads like an editorial summary of the past half-decade of debate since the Twin Towers attack in 2001. Are the Enlightenment and Islam compatible? Are Muslims interested in or unwilling to participate in democracy? How can Europeans retain a national identity in the face of continued immigration and membership in the European Union? How do fundamentalists become radicalized in Europe? While searching for an answer to this last question, Ash pathologizes Muslim immigrants in Europe, christening them "what [he] calls the Inbetween People" (33). The term orientalizes a fairy-tale like description of the hybridity metaphor often invoked to describe second and third-generation immigrants in Europe. Garton Ash's newly coined term is, to me, the most offensive section of his review, as it reduces the "immigrant" experience to a confusing state of suspension. The term also dehumanizes an entire group by assigning them an identity that sounds as if it came from a science fiction cartoon. Garton Ash would be targeted not for this turn of phrase, but for a label already in circulation before either text was published: "Enlightenment Fundamentalist."

"Enlightenment Fundamentalist" is a category that opens up a new narrative angle about critical strategy and European collective identity in the twenty-first century. Female Muslim activists in Europe and North America – such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali in Holland and Necla Kelek in Germany, who have made use of their insider identities as

Muslims and women to criticize Islam and the often relativistic behavior of democratic states with multicultural policies – are subject to growing backlash, both from the Left who initially supported their celebrity and from Muslim extremists no longer simply critical of their work, but actively targeting some for assassination.¹ What “Enlightenment Fundamentalist” does – by incorporating two terms that circulate widely and which produce visceral reactions – is simultaneously to draw lines in the sand between two ideologies (Islamic fundamentalism and Enlightenment universalism), only to blur their boundaries by placing elements of each within individual personalities. The desire to legislate human rights violations supposedly committed under religious pretexts with stricter policies also finds itself – in its execution – in conflict with other democratic freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of language being the most salient.

Murder in Amsterdam's “Enlightenment Fundamentalist” is Ayaan Hirsi Ali. The note Bouyeri pinned to van Gogh's lifeless body was addressed to her, and she is the most famous Dutch critic of Islam. Buruma, however, makes it clear that he neither coined the term “Enlightenment Fundamentalist” nor does he subscribe to this categorization of Hirsi Ali's work. The first mention of the term appears on page twenty-seven, when Buruma writes: “[Afshan] Ellian, and others like him, including Ayaan

¹ Seyran Ateş, for instance, closed her law offices in 2006 after being attacked by a client's ex-husband after exiting the courtroom of the couple's divorce trial (“Irrtum” 113). Ayaan Hirsi Ali has been under the care of permanent bodyguards since Van Gogh's murder in 2004.

Hirsi Ali, are sometimes called 'Enlightenment Fundamentalists'" (27). His use of the passive ("are sometimes called") shows that the term was already in circulation: it is Garton Ash who uses the term without context and sets the stage for the 2007 polemic debate that began on the Berlin *Kulturmagazin* website, *Perlentaucher.de*.² Garton Ash describes Hirsi Ali as follows: "Having in her youth been tempted by Islamic fundamentalism, under the influence of an inspiring teacher, Ayaan Hirsi Ali is now a brave, outspoken, slightly simplistic Enlightenment fundamentalist" (34). This framing of Islamic and Enlightenment fundamentalism within one paragraph as well as within one body is the kind of glib equation that will outrage French essayist Pascal Bruckner enough to submit an editorial to *Perlentaucher* in January 2007. Prominent German personalities, including Necla Kelek and Bassam Tibi, will join the debate.

The phrase "Enlightenment Fundamentalist" was recast and sharpened in 2010 in an editorial by Thomas Steinfeld in the Munich newspaper *Die Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Steinfeld identified Necla Kelek in this editorial as a "Hasspredigerin," or "preacher of hate." Currently, this term is used most frequently to describe fundamentalist imams.³ In contrast to "Enlightenment Fundamentalist," "Hassprediger" eliminates any juxtaposition of radical Islam and European universalism. The connotative value of

² Articles in the *New York Times Magazine* in 2005 and in the *New York Sun* in 2006 either cite the Dutch use of "Enlightenment Fundamentalist" or adopt it to describe Hirsi Ali. See Caldwell and Bernhard.

³ Another version of "Hassprediger" ("Prediger des Hasses") was used by reporter Matthias Mattusek in 1994 in an article in *Der Spiegel* about fundamentalist Christians in the United States.

“Hassprediger” equates rather than contrasts any kind of strident critique about values with the threat to national security of terrorism.

What is at the heart of both polemics are concerns about national identity in Europe when previous models of identity based on language and indigenous European origin are no longer (or never were) tenable. Forced assimilation to a vague ideal of “secular Europeans,” however, also carries with it the lingering fog of European fascism and National Socialism. Diverse political factions emerge in the crossfire, producing as many kinds of identity politics as there are identities. In Europe, a contemporary politics of identity no longer functions to bring the concerns of the margin to the attention of the center. Rather, it attempts to mimic the binding activity of previous identity movements, where groups agree to work together toward a common goal (women's rights, for instance). In what follows, I will examine the polemics cited above in detail, and will use these texts to place discourses about identity in the twenty-first century on a landscape of multiple collective identities. In order to develop a critical mass that provides them with sufficient and efficient claims to power, these collective identities must bind across group divisions. These polemics also show how this attempted binding activity disintegrates, however, as critics offer values in the place of strategy and rigidly police identity boundaries, producing unlikely political allies.

I have taken and adapted “binding” as a description of the activity of political organizing from a very short essay by Cornel West in the edited collection *The Identity in*

Question (1995). In his essay "A Matter of Life and Death," West asks us to consider what the political consequences of our identities are (15). West is interested in what he calls "the radical democratic project" – a democracy that provides access to all participants irrespective of an unequal distribution of resources. When proposing that we examine the moral content of our identities, he defines identity as "about binding, and it means, on the one hand that you can be bound – parochialist, narrow, xenophobic" (16). With an image particularly fitting for European debates about Muslims and the moral judgment they often invoke, West then counters this negative portrayal of "bound" identity with a positive spin on collective strength: "But it also means that you can be held together in the face of the terrors of nature, the cruelties of fate and the need for some compensation for unjustified suffering: what theologians used to call the problem of evil" (16). West's position as a prominent scholar of ethics and civil rights activist provides an American frame for this discussion, where race relations fall so often on a black-white binary and are haunted by the specter of slavery. To apply this statement to the European critics of Islam I will explore here – who are binding around majority, rather than minority, culture – may seem contradictory to the spirit of his thesis. But developing a term that can describe the tactics and strategies of political actors irrespective of their own political position is a useful tool. Tactics and strategies, according to West, are something "the Left rarely talks about." "How do you go about

binding people?," he asks, "What is the political version of the *ligare* activity, which is to say, mobilizing and organizing?" (18).⁴

Argumentative writing is one way of mobilizing public support – especially in Germany, which boasts a strong reading public and multiple first-rate national newspapers. In these texts, the polemic style is used both to generate controversy, and as an invitation to bind. My morals and my politics can be your morals and your politics – irrespective of identity categories commonly invoked in identity politics, like race or gender. Whether you bind with a collective that's Muslim, secular, or vehemently nationalistic, the essence of the binding activity is similar: all you have to do is believe in the power of collective strength. While the promise of binding is deceptively simple, the tactics and strategies these polemics employ are varied. Understanding the methods of argumentation employed here can become a helpful tool with which to analyze discourse, thus providing us with an understanding of the effects these techniques produce on readers – and by extension – on political actors.

The most salient technique these polemic writers employ is claiming identity-based experiential knowledge, which functions both as proof of expertise and asserts the author's claim to truth or "reality." The prominence of these "insider" claims is the main reason I describe these tactics as a kind of *identity* politics. Second is the frequent use of historical comparisons that attempt both to measure and equate the "threat" of Islam in

⁴ See Kymlicka, Chin and Appiah for further discussion of binding.

Europe with previous militaristic and ideological threats to European states.

Communism and fascism are the two most frequent comparisons. Third is the use of reductive logic in different kinds of contexts that equates groups or specific political strategies with negative moral judgment. Kelek's equation of Islam with Islamism; terms like "Hassprediger" and "Enlightenment Fundamentalist," which equate strident critique with jihad; and the ill-defined use of "racism" to reproach various kinds of theoretical arguments are all examples of this reductive logic. Finally, the metonymic use of Muslim women and their bodies as both justification for political engagement as well as a visual symbol of social conflict, is pervasive. Taken together, these techniques can help us to map the landscape of public European debates, which we can then examine in a German context.

After analyzing the 2007 and 2010 polemics, I will turn to Necla Kelek's first book, *Die fremde Braut: Ein Bericht aus dem Inneren des türkisch-muslimischen Leben in Deutschland* (The Foreign Bride: A Report from the Inside of Turkish-Muslim life in Germany) as a German literary case study. Kelek participates in both polemics, and holds a position in public German discourse similar to Ayaan Hirsi Ali's Dutch celebrity. Named by several polemicists as an "Enlightenment Fundamentalist," Kelek is also directly targeted by Steinfeld in 2010 as an example of a "Hassprediger." More importantly, her public engagement and writing offer a unique snapshot of identity politics that questions historical models of politicized identity as a group's desire to

move from the margin to the center in order to participate in the project of liberal humanism. What Kelek's politics propose is that the center expand in order to subsume the margin, touting secularism and gender parity as ideologies which can eliminate difference and thereby strengthen a collective, secular, national German identity.

3.1 The 2007 Polemic

On January 24, 2007, French essayist Pascal Bruckner, member of the *nouveaux philosophes* intellectual circle in Paris, published a lengthy polemic called "Enlightenment Fundamentalism or Racism of the Anti-Racists?" on Perlentaucher.de which uses each of the four methods described above. In order to claim an implicitly progressive male voice for himself, Bruckner slams Garton Ash's review as saturated with "outmoded machismo." Bruckner then criticizes and dismisses both Buruma and Garton Ash as "inquisitors who saw devil-possessed witches in every woman [here: Hirsi Ali] too flamboyant for their tastes" – precisely because Bruckner sees women as the locus of the family and of social order. Bruckner's own gender essentialism remains unexamined amidst his critique of Buruma, as he declares that the first line of defense against Islamic fundamentalism must thus come from women. With a flamboyant jump, Bruckner's article then makes use of reductive logic when he damns multiculturalism, which he calls "a racism of the anti-racists: it chains people to their roots" (Bruckner).⁵ Scornful of

⁵ The contradiction evident in identity politics (that politicized identity reifies and perpetuates identity categories brought into existence by the unequal distribution of power that identity politics hopes to

group rights, Bruckner describes the behavior of a Europe unwilling to “foster an enlightened European Islam” as an act of capitulation in the battle for European identity. Bruckner then proposes homogeneity as Europe's most effective weapon: “Against the right to difference, it is necessary to ceaselessly reaffirm the right to resemblance. What unites us is stronger than what divides us” (Bruckner). Enlightenment values and the right to “resemblance” are the collective values Bruckner hopes will function as a binding mechanism, fortifying national identity against the threat of Islam.⁶

In his polemic, Bruckner touches on most of the dominant narratives in debates about Islam in Europe. He distinguishes good Muslims from bad Muslims (Islamic fundamentalists vs. secular Muslims), and makes the leap from a context-specific term like “Enlightenment Fundamentalist” to multiculturalism, group rights and identity (especially national identity). He also points to the Woman question as Europe's first line of defense against the “attack” of Islam, to which Europe will necessarily “capitulate” if not able to defend itself with the weapons of the Enlightenment. Bruckner flits and jumps from issue to issue and reverts often to polarizing definitions inimical to polemic

remedy) is often leveled as a critique against identity politics as a political strategy. See Brown, Hark, Rajchman, and Martin Alcoff. For an interesting public health perspective about cultural competency functioning as racism, see Lee and Farrell.

⁶ The German translation of this article (which was originally written in French) uses the word “Ähnlichkeit” as a translation of “resemblance.” This is not a mistranslation, but other possible translations of “Ähnlichkeit” are “similarity” or “aliqueness,” which carry far stronger connotation of homogeneity than “resemblance.” The French text is not available at Perlentaucher.de or signandsight.com.

argumentation: by calling Ash and Buruma inquisitors, he equates them with the medieval inquisitors of the Crusades.⁷ Bruckner's polemic is an elegy of hysterical loss, a frenzied lament for the post-EU loss of national identity and ideological homogeneity. His provocative style, which offers little by way of practical political strategy, is designed to provoke and inflame, and in their separate rebuttals, Buruma and Garton Ash will use similar strategies. Bruckner, who portrays France as a model multicultural and secular nation, claims an "insider" identity as a French citizen. Buruma counters this claim by fashioning cosmopolitan identities for himself and Garton Ash, arguing that their worldliness provides them with claims to knowledge superior to Bruckner's:

It is an interesting sensation, by the way, to be called an armchair philosopher by Mr Brucker. And here I can also speak for Timothy Garton Ash; while he was spending years with Central European dissidents, and I with Chinese and South Korean rebels, Bruckner, so far as I know, rarely strayed far from the centre of Paris. But this is by the by. (Buruma "Freedom")

Garton Ash will then attempt to reduce Bruckner to an irrational idiot: "Pascal Bruckner is the intellectual equivalent of a drunk meandering down the road, arguing loudly with some imaginary enemies" (Ash "Better Pascal"). In arguments about the value of the Enlightenment, irrational becomes a pointed, strategic insult.

Necla Kelek appears as the next contributor to the debate on February 5, 2007 in an editorial entitled "Die Stereotype des Mr. Buruma" (The Stereotypes of Mr. Buruma).

⁷ I suspect that Bruckner resorts to a medieval analogy because of the tendency to describe conservative Islamic practice as "medieval" and "backward" in mainstream media.

Kelek uses both techniques cited above. She claims insider status (as a Muslim), and describes her opponent as irrational (seen here in her use of “stereotype” as a reproach). According to Kelek, Buruma's response to Bruckner “führt ihm [...] nur noch weiter in den Sumpf des Kulturrelativismus” (just leads him further into the swamp of cultural relativism). Kelek doesn't just admonish Buruma and Ash as individuals: she argues that their argumentation is “durchaus repräsentativ, gerade zu exemplarisch in ihrem politisch bedenklichen Kulturrelativismus” (representative through and through, particularly exemplary in their politically-alarming cultural relativism). Buruma and Ash are common, she implies – and therein lies the threat. According to Kelek, cultural relativism is to blame for assaults on the European way of life, and Buruma and Ash are the voice of a naïve majority that weakens Europe's ability to defend itself against attack.

In advancing her arguments *against* the variability of Islamic practice and declaring that Islam is *not* a religion, Kelek quotes from the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights and the Quran. By doing so, she establishes herself as an Islamic “expert.” This authority, combined with her identity as a female Turkish-German, sets her up as an expert with insider knowledge superior to Bruckner, Buruma and Garton Ash. It is an expert tactical move, although dizzyingly irrational. Kelek shifts the context from Islam in Europe to politics in the Middle East in the blink of an eye. Kelek then cites Article 24 and 25 of the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights, a document signed by sixty nations which declares that the sharia is the only appropriate frame of reference for human

rights.⁸ Kelek cites from this declaration and the Quran in order to prove that Islam – contrary to Buruma's insistence to the contrary – is monolithic and oppressive.

In choosing the Quran and the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights as her texts, Kelek intentionally chooses two highly controversial texts that owe much of their power to disagreements of interpretation. But Kelek rejects the idea of multiple interpretations and presents her argument in a declarative tone precludes the negotiation of meaning. Kelek rejects negotiation as a method because of its perceived relativism. All relativistic logic is intolerable to Kelek because it ignores an urgent need for freedom:

Was ist – um nur ein Beispiel unter vielen möglichen Beispielen zu nennen – mit den Frauen in über 60 Ländern, in denen das Gesetz der Scharia herrscht, die nicht ohne Wali, das heißt ohne die Genehmigung eines Vormund, heiraten dürfen? Wo ist die Vielfalt, Mr. Buruma?

What is [there to say] – to name one example amidst many possible examples – to the women in over 60 countries in which the law of the Shari'ah rules, who without *wali* – that means, without the permission of a legal guardian – are not allowed to marry? Where is diversity, Mr. Buruma? (Kelek "Stereotypes")

⁸The Cairo Declaration of Human Rights, which was created by the Organization of the Islamic Conference as a Muslim response to Western declarations of human rights, has been criticized for not explicitly providing freedom of religion in its dictates. It has also been criticized for portraying men as superior to women. In using this document as evidence, Kelek has picked an already controversial document that has been criticized on the same grounds that support her argument. The two articles quoted by Kelek are the last two articles of the document, and read: "Artikel 24: Alle Rechte und Freiheiten, die in dieser Erklärung genannt werden, unterstehen der islamischen Scharia. Artikel 25: Die islamische Scharia ist die einzig zuständige Quelle für die Auslegung oder Erklärung jedes einzelnen Artikels dieser Erklärung." (Article 24: All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic Shari'ah. Article 25: The Islamic Shari'ah is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration. Translation from United Nations.)

Kelek favors strong, declarative intervention, the kind that can “produce” liberation for women – because, as she points out, women are suffering *now*.⁹

Human rights violations against women are also a way for Kelek to invoke historical comparison. When Kelek calls gender separation “die Apartheid der Geschlechter” (gender apartheid), she does so intentionally, projecting racially driven minority rule on religious and cultural models of gender inequality. Whether or not the comparison is accurate is less interesting than the outraged emotional response the comparison is intended to produce, and the frequency with which authors make use of this argumentative method. On February 6, 2007 Paul Cliteur will compare Islam in Europe to imperialism. Two and a half weeks later, Ulrike Ackermann will invoke Communism and totalitarianism (February 25, 2007), and Ackermann will then be critiqued for her comparison by Polish writer Adam Krzemininski on March 10, 2007. The 2010 polemic will continue in this vein, comparing the Swiss minaret ban to 19th-century antisemitism (Benz), feminist criticism of Kelek to National Socialism (Mönch), and discrimination against Muslims to the persecution of Sinti and Roma in Europe and of Catholics in 19th-century America (Jessen).

What is at stake in these comparisons is an attempt to mark the severity of the integration “problem” and to accurately understand the intensity of the threat. That

⁹ What is interesting about Kelek’s example is the implicit link between human rights for women and sexual liberation as the litmus test for women’s rights. For a more thorough exploration of this connection see Scott’s French case study *The Politics of the Veil*.

there *is* a threat is not questioned by the contributors. Indeed, each of the four methods I mapped out at the beginning of this chapter require a tacit acceptance of growing Muslim populations as problematic, if not threatening. The complexity of the “problem” requires experts to step in and solve it (often simultaneously invoking claims to insider status); this problem must be recognized as an existential threat (using comparisons to historical atrocities); persuading policy makers and politicians to abandon the status quo is often based on emotional appeals (using reductive logic to make moral judgments) and the problem must be conveyed as in conflict with extant legal protections against human rights violations (the symbolic use of Muslim women as living violations of the German constitutional guarantee of gender parity). But none of these methods examine the heart of the question behind the image of the Islamic “threat”: to what degree is conservative Muslim religious practice antagonistic to the functioning and national identity of European states?

This question distinguishes – in contrast to Kelek’s article – between conservative Muslim religious practice and Islamic fundamentalism. What Kelek’s conflation of Islam with Islamic terrorism demands is for the German state to crack down on violent behavior disproportional to the actual incidence of large-scale violent acts. The myriad subtle, flexible solutions required to manage a diverse population are rejected by Kelek as part of the “swamp” of cultural relativism which makes Europe and European identity vulnerable to the demands of violent Islamism. Her all-or-nothing logic is a

reactionary argument which makes sense only if we accept Kelek's conflation, and begin to see any practice of Islam as just as violent as fundamentalist extremism. With that jump – and only with that particular jump – do Kelek's suggestions seem obvious.

Violent terrorism has as its goal a desire to disrupt the security of daily life. Random violent attacks give populations a feeling of danger, as if they could be targeted at any moment. Another effect of terrorism is to undermine citizen support for and trust of a government which doesn't seem to be any more effective at protecting their citizens than the terrorists. In times of threat, citizens will often abdicate personal freedoms (privacy, mobility) in exchange for a broader show of force and surveillance by the government so that the violence can be contained and then eradicated. The question with this analogy becomes: why would Kelek – who lives in a country which has seen none of the physical violence of riots, bombings or assassination of public figures experienced in other European countries, France, England, Spain, Denmark and the Netherlands among them – react as if she had experienced numerous violent attacks?

At the end of her essay, Kelek traces her argumentative logic out for us. Rather than violent extremism in the form of bombs or violent insurgencies, for Kelek it is everyday cultural relativism that has allowed violent attacks to be waged on the German way of life: "Kulturrelativisten wollen nichts mehr von arrangierten Ehen, von Ehrenmorden (allein in Istanbul im letzten Jahr 25 Tote) und anderen Menschenrechtsverletzungen hören" (Cultural relativists don't want to hear any more

about arranged marriages, honor killings [in Istanbul alone 25 dead last year] and other human rights violations; Kelek, "Stereotypes"). Gender parity is the value most threatened by relativism: "Der politische Islam will, mit dem Kopftuch, mit der geschlechterspezifischen Trennung öffentlicher Räume die Apartheid der Geschlechter in den freien europäischen Gesellschaften etablieren" (Political Islam, with headscarves, with gender-specific separation of public spaces, wants to establish gender apartheid in free European society; Kelek, "Stereotypes").

Kelek's essay is a direct response to Buruma's retort, which in turn was written in response to Bruckner's instigating essay. Reading Kelek and Buruma in reverse order shows us the contradiction evident in Kelek's argument: attempts to produce freedom through rigid force, psychological or otherwise, contradict the aims of freedom. In his response to Bruckner, "Freedom cannot be decreed," Buruma points to the interpretation of religion as one activity from which the state must abstain: "There are many reasons why it would be desirable for Muslims, or anybody else, to feel free to reinterpret their religious texts, and for all of us to challenge dogmas. But this surely is not the business of the state, for that opens the way to authoritarianism" ("Freedom"). Rigid policing – whether of the rights of a population or the boundaries of an identity – produces both the pressure to conform and the subsequent fragmentation of identity that follows the rejection of conformist demands. The tightrope walk in multicultural democracies between freedom and state order directly affects the kinds of claims citizens

make and the political methods invoked for making such claims. Identity politics – as one method of political engagement – is a useful framework for understanding this particular constellation of political engagement in 21st century Europe.

The subtext that courses beneath Kelek's and Buruma's arguments are questions of freedom, which political theorist Wendy Brown treats at some length in her book *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*. Brown acknowledges that politics is "saturated with countless aims and motivations other than freedom" (4), but still wonders: "Might the desire for some degree of collective self-legislation, the desire to participate in shaping the conditions and terms of life remain a vital element – if also an evidently ambivalent and anxious one – of much agitation under the sign of progressive politics?" (4). Noting the protean qualities of freedom, that its definition is shaped negatively "in opposition to whatever is . . . conceived as unfreedom" (6), Brown tries to imagine what she calls a "postindividualist" concept of freedom. But freedom's (reactionary) links to identity (feminists pitted against men; Muslim enclaves pitted against German *Leitkultur*) expose what Brown describes as "the paradox in which the first imaginings of freedom are always constrained by and potentially even require the very structure of oppression that freedom emerges to oppose" (7). What I am interested in exploring in Kelek's politics is precisely this contradiction: the more Kelek's demands for freedom and emancipation expand, the more severe her suggestions appear. The more strident her demands for equality, the more it seems as if her suggestions function

as state surveillance, invasions of privacy, forced assimilation and racial or religious targeting.

In her chapter “Wounded Attachments,” Brown explores the contradictory relationship between identity politics and the project of liberal humanism:

just as the mantle of abstract personhood is formally tendered to a whole panoply of those historically excluded from it by humanism's privileging of a single race, gender and organization of sexuality, the marginalized reject the rubric of humanist inclusion and turn, at least in part, against its very premises . . . Refusing the invitation to absorption, we insisted instead upon politicizing and working into cultural critique the very constructions that a liberal humanism increasingly exposed in its tacit operations of racial, sexual and gender privilege was seeking to bring to a formal close. (53)

Insistence on the power of wounds to shape not only our identities, but also our identity's desire, seems to Brown to “breed a politics of recrimination and rancor, of culturally dispersed paralysis and suffering, a tendency to reproach power rather than aspire to it, to disdain freedom rather than practice it” (55). This disintegration of successful “binding” within an identity movement does not mean that the desire to bind is no longer there: binding in identity politics instead becomes less and less plastic, resulting in rigid policing of the boundaries of identities and subsequent splintering into multiple groups.

One of the external responses to the 2007 polemic takes up this question of identity and collectivity directly. Francis Fukuyama, professor of International Political

Economy at Johns Hopkins University, posits in "Identität and Migration"¹⁰ that modern liberal societies not only have weak collective identities, but that "their identity is to have no identity" (Fukuyama). Fukuyama, following Oliver Roy, posits that radical Islam is one form of identity politics that is a reaction to "the gap between one's inner identity as a Muslim and one's behavior vis-à-vis the surrounding society [i.e. European society]" (Fukuyama). He describes radical Islamism and Jihadism as ideologies that provide young Muslims in Europe with an answer to the who-am-I question, much in the same way Kelek insists on secularity and human rights as the answer to the same question posed collectively to Europe. Both identity-answers attempt to "bind" individuals to broader collective entities. The European formulation subsumes identity into human rights discourse while the Muslim formulation imagines a collective identity that is both religious and transnational. These collectives also offer the possibility of what Brown describes as "the desire for some degree of collective self-legislation," or, more simply put, a desire to work together in a way that permits, or even produces, freedom (even if that freedom is couched in reactionary logic). The

¹⁰There is a discrepancy in the way Fukuyama's article is listed on the German Perlentacher website and the English sister-site Signandsight.com. On the German chronology of the debate, where I first encountered it, Fukuyama's article appears as a direct contribution to the polemic, like Kelek's article. On the English website, it's much clearer that the article, which was previously published as "Identity, Immigration and Democracy" in the *Journal of Democracy* in 2006 and later reprinted in *Prospect* magazine, is part of an extended debate about Islam and Muslims in Europe. I include it here as part of the polemic because of its inclusion on the German website – which means that it would have been accessible and seen as part of the debate to the German contributors that followed. Fukuyama is probably best known for his book *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) that posited "the end of culture."

process of “binding” is, I propose, the activity that produces anxiety at all points on the political spectrum in contemporary Europe. The fractured Left parties are seen as “cowardly” because they are unable to bind effectively. In Germany, for instance, the decline of the SPD (Social Democratic Party) in both popularity and political power after building coalitions with *die Linke* (the former East German socialist parties) is one example of ineffective binding. But the hysteria Buruma and Kelek point to is also a result of the failure of the Right to bind across religious and ethnic difference. Christopher Caldwell's article about Ayaan Hirsi Ali, “Daughter of the Enlightenment,” which appeared in the *New York Times Magazine* on April 3, 2005, quotes Hirsi Ali addressing just this issue: “If we don't take effective measures now . . . the Netherlands could be torn between two extreme rights: an Islamic one, and a non-Islamic one” (6).

This confusion about what constitutes Right and Left will be one of the subtexts of the 2010 polemic debate. In contrast to the international variety of the Perle-Taucher debate in 2007, the 2010 polemic is confined to German conflicts and German contributors. The local confines of the debate see little change in argumentative methods, however: claims to identity-based knowledge, reductive equative logic, historical comparison and the metonymic use of women all appear again in this constellation. These similarities suggest that the particular politicized identities emerging here are of transnational, rather than national, significance.

3.2 The 2010 Polemic

On January 4, 2010, Wolfgang Benz, director of the *Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung* at the Technical University of Berlin, compared “critics of Islam” to antisemites of the 19th century, proclaiming that both use similar methods based on reductive portrayals of an enemy: “Feindbilder bedienen verbreitete Sehnsüchte nach schlichter Welterklärung, die durch rigorose Unterscheidung von Gut (das immer für das eigenen steht) und Böse (das stets das Fremde verkörpert) sowie darauf basierender Ausgrenzung und Schuldzuweisung zu gewinnen ist” (Images of the enemy serve widespread longing for simple world views, which are achieved through rigorous differentiation between Good (which always stands for one’s own) and Evil (which consistently embodies the Other) as well as social marginalization and pointing fingers [lit. attribution of blame]).¹¹ Benz’s argument is that this kind of panic in its contemporary form produces not only discrimination against Muslim-German citizens, but that the “symbolic discourse” against minarets is “eine Kampfansage gegen Toleranz und Demokratie” (a challenge to tolerance and democracy, “Hetzer”). Benz’s article is a tactical intervention after the Swiss minaret ban was passed as a voter referendum on November 29, 2009. In his article, Benz both explains an argumentative strategy and shows the strategy’s similarity to his area of historical research. This intervention marks the entry of a method that Birgit Rommelspacher will also make use

¹¹ Sabine Schiffer is a German communications scholar who has explored these similarities in detail. See Schiffer.

of two weeks later: an attempt to point to the strategic and tactical argumentative forms taken by identity politics as “threatening” in their own right. This dialectic of harm is exaggerated and distorted as the debate continues.

On January 10, 2010 – six days after Benz’s article appeared – Claudius Siedl’s review of Henryk M. Broder’s book *Hurra, wir kapitulieren!* (Hooray, we surrender!) appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. In this review, Siedl ironically calls critics of Islam “Unsere heiligen Krieger” (“our holy warriors”). He mentions Kelek and Hirsi Ali by name. Siedl’s argument is that critics such as Kelek, Broder and Hirsi Ali conflate Islamism with Islam, and that this conflation, combined with strident declarations of engagement on behalf of (women’s) human rights aims not only to control the behavior of certain groups, but is “ein Rassismus, der sich seiner selbst nur nicht bewusst ist” (a racism that isn’t aware of itself as such; Siedl). Accusation of racism in post-World War II Germany is no small charge, and Siedl’s insistence on distinguishing between Islam and Islamism is duly noted. What is of interest with regards to the debate, however, are the details of Siedl’s dialectical inversion (critics of Islam = holy warriors) which Steinfeld later both employs and overlooks.

Steinfeld’s editorial appeared in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* on January 14, 2010. Frustrated by the way arguments against Islam and for Islamism resemble each other, Steinfeld uses “Hassprediger” to describe both. This twist of phrase is both a sharper variation of Siedl’s “holy warrior” and, taken in the context of his argument, is the

inevitable synthesis of Siedl's dialectic. For Steinfeld, there is no longer a difference between a radical imam and activists like Necla Kelek:

Wenn man aber mit den 'westlichen Werten' ebenso kämpferisch umgeht, wie es der radikale Islam mit seinen heiligen Schriften tut, dann verhält man sich wie der, den man sich zum Feind erkoren hat. Und schlimmer noch: Man zerstört sozialen und moralischen Einrichtungen, die man zu verteidigen vorgibt.

But when “western values” are thrown around as militantly as radical Islam does its holy texts, then this behavior mirrors that of the chosen enemy. Even worse: the social and moral constructs one pretends to defend are destroyed.

Steinfeld, like Benz, offers us a critique of a political tactic, however, “Hassprediger” then resorts to name-calling rather than offering a new strategy. What irritates Steinfeld is the self-destructive tendency of the Right to make its own values meaningless.

Steinfeld criticizes this tactic because the consequence of accepting a defensive position can lead only to an authoritarian regime. Steinfeld then predictably invokes a historical comparison to prove his point: Kelek and Hirsi Ali's argumentative methods propose state behavior similar to Atatürk's “forced modernization” of Turkey in the 1920s and 30s.

The appropriation of ideology as a political tactic also irritates the next commentator, Birgit Rommelspacher, who is frustrated by “colonial feminism” or alliances between feminism and right-wing populism. Seyran Ateş, Necla Kelek and Julia Onkin, the famous Swiss feminist who supported the minaret ban, are examples of “colonial feminists.” Rommelspacher points out previous “chauvinistische Tendenzen” (chauvinistic tendencies) in feminist movements in Germany: feminists against Jews in

the 1970s (because Jews were seen as colluding with religious patriarchy); against “Ostfrauen” (East German women) who set the women's movement back twenty years (“die die Frauenbewegung um zwanzig Jahre zurückwarfen”); and now against Muslims as prototypical male oppressors (“Nun sind es die Muslime, die den Prototyp des Unterdrückers zu geben haben”; Rommelspacher “Selbstidealisierung”). Rommelspacher deliberately praises Kelek and Ateş for speaking out against taboos, however, she criticizes their equation of women's oppression with a specific culture, religion or tradition, and the subsequent movement toward secularism as the only possible theoretical option (which Rommelspacher describes as equally patriarchal in its tendency toward biological essentialism).

Rommelspacher, like Benz, points out the reactionary qualities of repressive measures like minaret and headscarf bans. Rommelspacher also makes a necessary distinction previously lacking from these two polemics, pointing out that “Der Einsatz für Frauenrechte und der Kampf um Hegemonie sind also nicht per se Antagonismen” (The engagement for women's rights and the struggle for hegemony are not per se antagonisms, “Selbstidealisierung”). Rommelspacher then cites the ways in which the Iraq War and political debates about the deportation of Dutch Muslims have masqueraded under justification rhetoric about protecting democracy and gay rights, respectively. Rommelspacher also points out that “diese Affinität des antimuslimischen Feminismus mit rechten Strömungen nicht ganz zufällig [ist]” (this affinity of anti-

Muslim feminism with right-[wing] movements isn't completely coincidental). To Rommelspacher, binding between feminists and the Right is less a reaction to the “cowardice” (*Feigheit*) of the Left than with “argumentative Konkordanz zu geben, die neue politische Konstellationen hervorbringen” (presenting argumentative concordances, which bring forth new political constellations). Rommelspacher thus proposes an interesting hypothesis: that the Right (seen here in the coalition between feminists and populists) binds over “eine ungebrochenes Selbstidealisation, die auch den Stolz auf das Deutschsein gern pflegt” (a seamless self-idealization, which happily nurtures pride about being German). This hypothesis points to a particular twenty-first century condition: the boundaries of “Germanness” have expanded. Rommelspacher implies here that Kelek and Ateş – as feminist subjects of critique – qualify without question as German. The acceptable “group” behavior promulgated by the Right, however, is still idealized as that which qualifies as *Deutschsein* and is inextricably linked to the self-other dichotomy characteristic of nationalism.

Rommelspacher's article appeared in the liberal Berlin newspaper *die tageszeitung* on January 18, 2010. Regina Mönch's *Gegenpolemik* followed in the slightly right of center *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on January 20, 2010. Regina Mönch refuses to entertain Rommelspacher's logic, dismissing her outright for inadequately defining who the “Right” is (“genau ist sie nicht”), and condemns Rommelspacher for discriminating against Muslims when she “ [ihnen] jedes Recht auf kritische Reflexion abspricht”

(denies them every right to critical reflection; Mönch "Gegenpolemik"). Mönch's argumentation is simplistic: Kelek, and Ates can't be "western Fundamentalists" because they are "türkische Frauen" (Turkish women). This defensive categorization does not share Rommelspacher's understanding of "Deutschsein," and Mönch is unable to see that categorizing Ates and Kelek as "türkische Frauen" relegates them to a one-sided identity based in their country of origin. Mönch's reductivist charge that Rommelspacher that "immer dichter an den National Sozialismus rückt" (slides closer and closer toward National Socialism) when she describes "antiislamische Feminismus" (anti-Islamic feminism) is another instance of commentators charging others with racism in order to force an increasingly arbitrary order on a political spectrum binding across parties, identities and ideologies. Benz, Steinfeld, Rommelspacher and Mönch all invoke racism in their polemics; they simply disagree as to whom this charge applies. Racism certainly can and does play a part in many of these debates, but its use here is so widespread that the only thing these authors seem to agree on is that "racist" is an epithet, and that it applies – in reductive exaggeration – to everyone.¹²

Indiscriminate charges of racism and fascism in the context of this polemic shows the disintegration of successful binding across the political spectrum. More importantly, it shows a spectrum circled in on itself that has relatively little investment in exploring

¹² See Bonilla-Silva for a discussion of "racism without racists."

what Brown describes as identity's "desire," thus limiting a politics of identity to a repetitive, autistic loop:

What I want to consider, though, is why this strikingly unemancipatory political project emerges from a potentially more radical critique of liberal juridical and disciplinary modalities of power. For this ordinance [a city council anti-discrimination ordinance] is not simply misguided in its complicity with the rationalizing and disciplinary elements of late modern culture; it is not simply naïve with regard to the regulatory apparatus within which it operates. Rather, it is symptomatic of a feature of politicized identity's *desire* within liberal-bureaucratic regimes, its foreclosure of its own freedom, its impulse to inscribe in the law and in other political registers its historical and present pain rather than conjure an imagined future of power to make itself. (italics in original, 66)

Brown, in her subsequent application of Nietzschean *ressentiment* to politicized identity, describes the tactics of the above polemics perfectly: "Conversely, a strong commitment to equality, requiring heavy state interventionism and economic redistribution, attenuates the commitment to freedom and breeds *ressentiment* expressed as neo-conservative anti-statism, racism, charges of reverse racism, and so forth" (67). In the short argumentative bursts of polemic writing analyzed above, a politics of "recrimination and rancor" can emerge partly because the highly condensed nature of editorial retort often works against nuanced analysis. But the methods infused with *ressentiment* analyzed here also emerge in longer works by public intellectuals who participate in the debate. Necla Kelek's first book, *Die fremde Braut*, is one full-length literary example of identity-desire that forecloses the freedom it could offer to "foreign brides" by inscribing a specific and gendered pain into the "liberal-bureaucratic regime"

of a German state who could, and should, according to Kelek, regulate social spaces with hard(er) power.

3.3 Necla Kelek's *Die fremde Braut*

Necla Kelek is perhaps the most prominent, and most vocal, critic of Islam in Germany.

Her rise as a public intellectual came after the publication of her first book, *Die fremde*

Braut, in 2005. Part journalistic expose, part autobiography, part travelogue and part

Islamic history, the book was an immediate best-seller and won the Geschwister-Scholl

prize that same year for being a new book that "von geistiger Unabhängigkeit zeugt und

geeignet ist, bürgerliche Freiheit, moralischen, intellektuellen und ästhetischen Mut zu

fördern und dem verantwortlichen Gegenwartsbewusstsein wichtige Impulse zu

geben." (testifies to an independence of spirit and shows itself worthy of bolstering civic

freedom, and moral, intellectual and aesthetic courage, and to further in important ways

the responsible consciousness of the present moment," "Geschwister-Scholl Preis").

Kelek has since published four books, and frequently contributes articles and interviews

to German newspapers. She is a member of Wolfgang Schäuble's *Deutsche*

Islamkonferenz, and was a consultant to the state of Baden-Württemberg in 2006 when

that state was developing a citizenship test for immigrants wishing to nationalize.

Kelek's books are remarkable for their cinematic qualities and authoritative tone.

Die fremde Braut is not a masterpiece of world literature, and – as Saba Mahmood has

pointed out – Azar Nafisi's *Reading Lolita in Tehran* is by far the most exceptional

example of aesthetic mastery in this genre.¹³ *Die fremde Braut*, however, is well-crafted, especially in comparison to the many ghost-written memoirs which simply bear witness to extreme suffering.¹⁴ Kelek weaves together history, current events, autobiography and interviews with cinematic flair and narrative action that runs at a clip. She recounts, for example, her great-grandfather's arrival in Turkey during the Circassian exodus of 1858-1867 as historical fiction, providing the reader with a portrait of a shrewd businessman who made his fortune selling women to the harem. After a nervous meeting with Sultan Abdülhamit II, Kelek's forefather finds himself pouring buckets of sweat out of his shoes on the steps to the palace (27-33). These mythical narratives, which Kelek hints are rooted in her family's oral traditions (21-22), feed off an exotic fascination among European readers who – since the advent of travel writing – have been consistently fascinated with reports from the “interior,” both geographic and social. The subtitle to *Die fremde Braut* even reads: “Report from the Interior of Turkish Life in Germany.”

Kelek also includes interviews with Turkish-German women in *Die fremde Braut*, real-life “*import-gelin*” (imported brides) whose inclusion in the text gives weight and credibility to Kelek by extending the reach of her autobiographical focus. A trained

¹³ Mahmood's article primarily focuses on French examples of this genre, which seem to have been more heavily ghost-written than their German counterparts. She acknowledges the genre's appearance in England and the Netherlands, but does not mention German texts. Germany also has its own group of ghostwritten memoirs. What I am interested in here, however, are books written by elites that profit on the establishment of this ghostwritten subset, but which have garnered their authors both celebrity and power. It is also important to point out how how Kelek and Ateş' narratives are far *less* traumatic than these kinds of texts.

¹⁴ See Çileli for an example of a testimonial of suffering without exceptional aesthetic qualities.

sociologist, Kelek will later describe her work as “qualitative social research,” (“qualitative Sozialforschung,” *Söhne* 21) scientific study that uses a relatively small sample size to draw conclusions about the group as a whole.¹⁵

Including direct speech from interviews serves Kelek’s project in several ways. First, incorporating experiential knowledge from multiple sources allows Kelek to establish herself as an expert on Turkish-German identity broadly conceived. It also shows that Kelek has linguistic and social access to spaces “hidden” from majority culture, establishing her as an expert with a high level of perceived authenticity. Second, despite a wide body of critical academic literature arguing against this assumption,¹⁶ experience and eyewitness testimony is often considered synonymous with truth writ large. Especially for a topic featured prominently in newspapers and the evening news, this perception of direct speech as truth, rather than interpretation, is a fact of the discursive landscape. Kelek makes use of this association expertly, incorporating shocking or brilliant dialogue as literary sound bites that persuade or manipulate the

¹⁵ Kelek was criticized in 2005 by a group of 60 “Migrationsforscher” in a petition to the newspaper *Die Zeit* for failing to adhere to rigorous scientific standards (see Karakaşoğlu). This controversy came on the heels of Kelek being criticized, along with Seyran Ateş and Serap Çileli, by the Turkish-language newspaper *Hürriyet* for portraying “Turkish men as violent brutes” and for “making the Turkish community look bad” in their respective autobiographies (Rasche). Kelek in particular has been criticized for abandoning the academic work she developed as a doctoral student, during which she wrote her dissertation on the religious practices of adolescent Turkish Germans in Hamburg (see *Islam im Alltag*). She is criticized for contradicting herself, since her dissertation concludes with the statement that religious practices did not strongly affect her subjects’ behavior, while her polemic autobiographies portray Islam as a violent religion incapable of incorporating reasoned interpretation or modern practices. Her dissertation was printed in 2002. *Die fremde Braut* appeared in 2005.

¹⁶ See Scott (“Experience”) and Mohanty (“Feminist Encounters”).

reader. Finally, direct speech is often a way for Kelek to narrate intense displays of emotion. Appeals to emotion compel the reader to react to Kelek's political text emotionally, rather than critically, grabbing our attention with tears, physical pain or psychological suffering. The reader's emotional response then bleeds over into Kelek's appeals for changes in federal policy or social and cultural logic. There are two sections late in *Die fremde Braut* that illustrate the relationship between Kelek's use of emotion, direct speech and political appeals, as well as the implications this has for her specific brand of identity politics.

Late in *Die fremde Braut*, Kelek travels to a small town to meet with Shaziye, whose son is celebrating his tenth birthday. For this occasion, Shaziye has invited her female friends, "import-brides" between eighteen and thirty-five years old, to socialize. Asuman, another interview subject, hopes Shaziye and her friends will agree to talk with Kelek. Kelek explains her project, and the women express interest. Most, however, retreat from their initial enthusiasm, explaining that they will need to check with their husbands and mothers-in-law before committing. Shaziye is different. She declares she is "sofort bereit, und . . . müsse niemanden fragen" (immediately ready and . . . doesn't have to ask anyone, 204-05). Kelek describes Shaziye's narrative as one she's heard over and over again: "Ein Mädchen vom Dorf, das im Alter von 17 mit einem Verwandten verheiratet wurde, der in Deutschland lebte" (A girl from the village, who is married at 17 to a relative who lives in Germany, 206). When Kelek asks Shaziye about her

impressions of Germans, Shaziye doesn't know what to say. She doesn't speak German. Besides, Kelek recounts using the grammar of reported speech, "sie [seien] so furchtbar pünktlich und entschlossen" (they are so horribly punctual and decisive, 207). Over the course of the interview, Shaziye does not express any interest in Germany. She describes her marriage into a Turkish-German family "als zöge sie in der Türkei um" (as if she had moved house within Turkey, 208). She even rejects outright the possibility of participating in German civic and social life: "Meine Zukunft war die Familie, in die ich kam. Mit Deutschland hatte das gar nichts zu tun, das war eine Sache unter uns Türken" (My future was the family into which I came. It didn't have anything to do with Germany, it was something under us Turks, 208).

When looking at the structure of Kelek's narrative, Shaziye's story functions as "the exception that proves the rule." She does not wear a headscarf, she loves her husband, she does not report marital rape on her wedding night, and she exhibits a level of independence unseen in many of the other interviews. In contrast, Emine, another "import-bride," sobs as she tells Kelek about her suffering: miscarriages, a brain tumor, and crippling depression that causes her to beat her children (187-191). Fadime, who came to Germany in 1993 and has remained illiterate because she was forbidden to learn how to read by her mother-in-law, has a husband in prison for murder. She asks if Kelek can get him released, and starts weeping when Kelek explains that is not in her power (184-86). Emine and Fadime are typical interviews from *Die fremde Braut*: emotionally

saturated and visibly painful. Shaziye is atypical – and her bold declarations that map her position (“as if I had moved house within Turkey,” “we don’t need the Germans”) are notable for their lack of articulated pain. They still contain emotional content – anger or defensiveness are two qualities that stand out. But Shaziye refuses both to be victimized *and* to share her pain with Kelek.

Shaziye later asserts that she can live in Germany and have nothing to do with Germans: “Wir haben unsere eigenen Vorstellungen. Wir haben hier doch alles, wir brauchen die Deutschen nicht” (We have our own views. We have everything here, we don’t need the Germans, 211). What immediately follows this anecdote is a section entitled “Kaza findet man auf keiner Landkarte” (Kaza can’t be found on any map, 211). Kelek begins her description of Shaziye’s neighborhood rather unremarkably. She describes the population (10,000), the sights (factories, a castle, a pedestrian zone, a beautiful park and schools) and colloquially approximates the position of the city (“mitten in Deutschland,” in the middle of Germany; 211). Then Kelek declares: “Aber sie leben nicht wirklich in Deutschland. Sie leben in einer türkisch-muslimischen Kleinstadt, einer Parallelwelt, die ich mit Oriana Fallaci die “zweite Stadt” oder “Kaza” nenne” (But they don’t really live in Germany. They live in a small Turkish-Muslim town, a parallel world, which I – along with Oriana Fallaci – call the “second city” or “kaza,” 212). Then, as if there had been no tonal break, she continues describing the city, which is idyllic. The surroundings are green, with forests and lawns and front yards;

most of the inhabitants live in single-family homes (which, Kelek notes, house extended families of up to twenty people, 212). Many men have work, for which they travel into the city.

For Kelek, this city is not located in Germany not because of its location, but because it is undemocratic. This subterranean threat courses deeply beneath the verdant landscape, masking un-democratic values just as extended families hide behind the façade of bourgeois single-family homes. “Kaza,” Kelek writes,

hat keine eigene Polizei und kennt keine Demokratie. Alles wird untereinander und miteinander nach den Regeln der türkisch-muslimischen Umma geregelt. Die Gemeinschaft ist in sich geschlossen, die Berührungen mit Deutschen sind zufällig und nicht weiter von Bedeutung. (212-13)

doesn't have its own police [force] and knows no democracy. Everything is ordered in accordance with the rules of the Turkish-Muslim umma [the community of Muslim believers]. The society is turned in on itself, contact with Germans is coincidental and of no further importance.

As they ride home from this outing, Kelek ponders her young son's question, which pops up as they read *Harry Potter* on the train: “Mama, wann haben die Türken diese Stadt erobert?” (Mama, when did the Turks conquer this city?; 213).

In contemporary Germany, *Integrationspolitik* makes use of a majority/minority discourse predicated on a binary division between ethnic Germans and Turkish immigrants.¹⁷ *Parallelgesellschaft* (parallel society) is one of the most frequently used

¹⁷ That Germany has immigrant populations that fall outside of the Turkish/German binary (Kurdish, Bosnian, Moroccan, Tunesian, Albanian, Italian, Greek, Korean and South Asian) has often been a blind spot for contemporary discourses about immigration and integration in Germany. Some of these groups have

words to describe the collective formation of Turks who resist assimilation to the German mainstream. Here, Kelek performs the final step to authenticate this characterization of the Turkish community: she gives it a Turkish name. Giving *kaza* a Turkish name is a brilliant way to mobilize a German narrative of captivity¹⁸ and development that portrays the Turkish community as stagnant, regressive or defensively separate. It is a discourse produced by conservative German ideologies, which Kelek then projects as *an essentially Turkish phenomenon*.¹⁹ Kelek also creates *kaza* as a way to

complained that there is no political space available for the needs of their smaller communities in the face of the nearly 2 million people of Turkish descent living in Germany today.

¹⁸ For an in-depth analysis of captivity narratives in minority autobiography, see Chow.

¹⁹ Ayşe Simseh-Çağlar includes an interesting counter discussion of *kaza* in her dissertation *German Turks in Berlin: Migration and their Quest for Social Mobility* (1994). According to Çağlar, *kaza* is part of a specifically Germanized Turkish: Turkish as spoken and developed within the context of migration to Germany and which is beginning to develop independently of Turkish spoken in Turkey. *Kaza* is one example of this linguistic shift examined by Çağlar, and she cites its use in a conversation with 20-year-old Dogan: “When I first met him, I was struck by the expression he used for Kreuzberg – he referred to Kreuzberg as a province distinct from Berlin (Berlin’in Kreuzberg kazası) as if there were Berlin on one hand and Kreuzberg on the other. It is noteworthy that he never uses this term for other municipalities in Berlin” (52). Çağlar then goes on to explain a number of Turkish-German place names for sites in Berlin which are so named not because these place names “make sense” in Turkish, but rather because the phonetics of the Turkish words resemble the phonetics of the German expressions (53-54). I include this information here because it suggests two things: one, that Kelek is not the “inventor” of *kaza*; she has merely picked up a linguistic device currently in use and infused it with a particular trope that corresponds to the “parallel society” metaphor: *kaza* as separate, dangerous, and isolated district. The spatial conception of *kaza* (a particular district of Berlin) inherent in the formulation Çağlar cites here may be compatible with the idea of a parallel society, however there are also German language designations which also emphasize this way of dividing up Berlin into separate parts. It is common for addresses, for instance, to be labeled “Berlin-Charlottenburg”, “Berlin-Kreuzberg,” or “Berlin-Neukölln” which is not much different from the Turkish formulation (Berlin’in Kreuzberg kazası) Çağlar cites here. The fact that this term only applies to Kreuzberg, however, is noteworthy, although other than signifying difference or emphasis, I am not sure what conclusions can be drawn from this singularity.

describe a space that can include the two kinds of refusals described above: it contains both those unable *and* unwilling to bind to majority culture.

It is the appropriation of a mainstream German metaphor as a Turkish phenomenon that provides the basis for considering Kelek's text as an example of "autoethnography." Autoethnography is a framework first proposed by Mary Louise Pratt in her book *Imperial Eyes*. As Pratt defines it, autoethnography refers to "instances in which colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that *engage with* the colonizer's own terms . . . [which] involves partial collaboration with and appropriation of the idioms of the conqueror" (7). The appropriation of *Parallelgesellschaft* in the form of "kaza" fits with the model of collusion through idiomatic representation Pratt sketches out in her definition of the genre. The difficulty of applying this definition outside of its original colonial context is that the triangular hierarchical structure (colonized subject – autoethnographer – conqueror) requires different roles. Instead of colonized subjects or conquerors, we have a standoff between Muslim immigrant populations and the German majority. In between the two groups stands the autoethnographer, who comes from a position of lesser power as a member of a minority group, but who shares – through education and multiple linguistic competencies – access to and investment in majority culture. More specifically, the autoethnographer uses the power of education to craft representations of the minority which "engage with the [majority's] own terms."

Portraying Kelek as an “autoethnographer” also allows us to characterize her literary work more fully: rather than simply crafting a narrative of a self, Kelek is working to craft a representation of a group using ethnographic methods, such as interviews and participant observation, coming to conclusions that support dominant power. But Kelek is not simply invested in portraying a group as they are: her historicized interpretations of religious identity, in conjunction with her description of immigrants who become more religious *after* taking up residency in Europe, are ways to represent not only how a group *is*, but also how they *were* and how Kelek wants them to *be*. Indeed, Kelek’s initial framing of her motivations for writing *Die fremde Braut* are clearly laid out in the first chapter of the book. Kelek describes her frustrations in a section called “Wir, Ihr und Ich” (We, you all and I). According to Kelek, cultural relativism is the culprit that allows groups to be “different,” which allows the state also to treat these groups “differently”:

Die türkisch-islamische Gemeinde schweigt betreten, redet von kulturellen Traditionen, versteckt die Frauen unter Kopftüchern und grenzt sich von der deutschen Gesellschaft ab – auch wenn sie mit aller Kraft danach strebt, dass die Türkei in die Europäische Union aufgenommen wird. Dabei beruft sie sich auf die Glaubensfreiheit und findet dafür Verständnis bei den liberalen Deutschen, die im Zweifelsfalle eher bereit sind, ihre Verfassung zu ignorieren, als sich Ausländerfeindlichkeit vorwerfen zu lassen. Ich möchte, dass dieser Zustand beendet wird und auch in Deutschland die Menschenrechte ohne Ausnahme gelten. (18)

The Turkish-Islamic community remains silent and is embarrassed, speaks of cultural traditions, hides its women under headscarves and separates itself from German society – at the same time as it strives with full force for Turkey’s acceptance into the European Union. In this they invoke freedom of religion and

find understanding among liberal Germans, who – when in doubt – are more likely to be willing to ignore their constitution than to be reproached with [charges of] xenophobia. I would like this situation to end, and for human rights – also in Germany – to be valid without exception.

This text section illustrates Kelek's deep disappointment in the perceived inability of Turkish and Muslim groups to behave in concordance with her desires, and the German government's unwillingness to wield its power and force all citizens and residents to "be" as they should. In the text section that immediately follows the above excerpt, Kelek repeats the statement "Ich verstehe nicht" (I don't understand) as a frame, lending the passage's tone a feeling of incredulity, as if German citizens were not aware of the sheer awesomeness of their state institutions. Kelek doesn't understand how a social democratic mayor of Hamburg can support the right of schoolteachers to wear headscarves when, she posits, Germany is based on the separation of church and state.²⁰ She doesn't understand how German feminists permit the enslavement of "import brides" inside German borders, which violates the first article of the German Basic Law. She doesn't understand how judges can give mild sentences to Kurds who have murdered other socially rebellious Kurds, as this rejects the second article of the German

²⁰ Whether this claim is true can be contested: although active participation in religious practice amongst Christian Germans is low, the state still maintains two state-sponsored religions: Catholicism and Protestantism. Federal holidays are observed based on this calendar, and the two religious bodies enjoy the support of federal taxes. Muslim institutions do not receive the same level of support.

constitution²¹ (20). The outrage of “how can you *do* this” oozes with subtext that suggests a more fundamental desire for normative control: “How can you *be* like this?”

That Kelek’s argument ultimately desires normative conformativity is evident in this section. Her questions embody an intense degree of aversion that overlaps with the charges of racism and chauvinism indiscriminately leveled at various activists by Bruckner, Rommelspacher, Mönch and Benz. But slapping Kelek’s work with a label does not, for me, answer more pointed questions about the active choices Kelek makes by engaging in this particular political strategy, which condemns immigrant groups for binding through a religious practice that permits human rights violations, and condemns the German State for overlooking these violations in the name of cultural

²¹ The first two articles of the German Basic Law read as follows: “Artikel 1: (1) Die Würde des Menschen ist unantastbar. Sie zu achten und zu schützen ist Verpflichtung aller staatlichen Gewalt.(2) Das Deutsche Volk bekennt sich darum zu unverletzlichen und unveräußerlichen Menschenrechten als Grundlage jeder menschlichen Gemeinschaft, des Friedens und der Gerechtigkeit in der Welt. (3) Die nachfolgenden Grundrechte binden Gesetzgebung, vollziehende Gewalt und Rechtsprechung als unmittelbar geltendes Recht. Artikel 2: (1) Jeder hat das Recht auf die freie Entfaltung seiner Persönlichkeit, soweit er nicht die Rechte anderer verletzt und nicht gegen die verfassungsmäßige Ordnung oder das Sittengesetz verstößt. (2) Jeder hat das Recht auf Leben und körperliche Unversehrtheit. Die Freiheit der Person ist unverletzlich. In diese Rechte darf nur auf Grund eines Gesetzes eingegriffen werden . (Deutscher Bundestag) (Article 1: (1) Human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority. (2) The German people therefore acknowledge inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every community, of peace and of justice in the world. (3) The following basic rights shall bind the legislature, the executive and the judiciary as directly applicable law. Article 2: (1) Every person shall have the right to free development of his personality insofar as he does not violate the rights of others or offend against the constitutional order or the moral law. (2) Every person shall have the right to life and physical integrity. Freedom of the person shall be inviolable. These rights may be interfered with only pursuant to a law; Translation by Thomuschat).

relativism. “Internal racism” is a far too simplistic label to explain Kelek’s consciously chosen political strategy.²²

If identity-based movements arise from both the recognition of exclusion from democracy and of the inherent paradox of democratic rule excluding certain bodies from participation, what can we make of an identity politics that rejects the right of a group to “bind” as it sees fit and/or strips an entire group of their capacity for democratic participation? The latter is what Kelek performs in these sections: she not only posits a spatial separation between Turkish and German communities, but portrays Shaziye – and other inhabitants of the city that has been “conquered” by the Turks – as both uninterested and incapable of participating in German civic life. Kelek even phrases this question in almost exactly the same terms late in her book: “Ist eine Kultur demokratiefähig, die dem Einzelnen das Recht auf Selbstbestimmung verweigert; ist eine Kultur gesellschaftsfähig, die die Gesetze dieses Landes ignoriert?” (Is a culture that refuses the individual a right to self-determination capable of democracy; is a culture that ignores the laws of this country socially acceptable? 223). Second, once a group has been stripped of its capacity for democratic action, what strategies emerge for state-citizen interaction?

²² That this is a strategy, and not simply reactionary rhetoric, becomes clearer after reading Kelek’s books, opinion pieces and interviews. Her rhetoric is seamlessly consistent; her insistence on human rights and gender parity surface everywhere – and without compromise. The differences between her dissertation and her work for a general audience prove that Kelek is well-versed in other strategies of argumentation, and that she has explicitly chosen this technique as a strategy.

Kelek's suggestions appear in the final two chapters of her book, and are both highly legalistic and driven by assertions of secular values, much like the polemic arguments of 2007 and 2010. Kelek's book focuses on the problems of forced and arranged marriages, where men living or raised in Germany "import" and prefer wives from (rural) Turkey to German or Turkish-German partners. Thus, her first suggestion is to restrict immigration (and the flow of Turkish women) to Germany (225-26). Those who do immigrate must be judged by their ability to live in a democracy: "eine Grundbedingung der Lebensfähigkeit unserer Demokratie ist die Freiheit und der Schutz des Einzelnen. Das kann nicht zur Disposition gestellt werden" (a fundamental requirement of the viability of our democracy is freedom and the protection of the individual. That cannot be put up for discussion, 226). Kelek then suggests changes in policy to test this capacity for democracy: the age of consent for marriages where one partner immigrates should be raised, as young people older than twenty-four are better prepared to contest patriarchal structures and more likely to have employment opportunities (226). Attempts to force marriage should be punishable by law (226-27). Kelek also suggests that couples who wish to marry provide proof of having their own home (231); that the state strengthen its protections against marriages within the extended family (231); that polygamy be handled the same way for Germans and

Muslims (232); and that immigrants provide proof of knowledge of German language and culture when they arrive (233).²³

These requirements, when compared to the entrance requirements of the United States, seem theoretically acceptable. In the German context, however, these regulations can be applied to Muslim populations in a way that produces racial profiling. The attitude tests proposed in 2006 for Muslim residents wishing to naturalize do just that. The Baden-Württemberg test, for which Kelek was a consultant, includes prods for opinion (Was halten Sie von folgenden Aussage? "Demokratie ist die schlechteste Regierungsform, die wir haben, aber die beste [sic], die es gibt"; What do you think of the following statement? "Democracy is the worst form of government we have, but it is the best [form] there is") as well as leading questions with clearly intended "right" and "wrong" answers (Wie stehen Sie zu der Aussage, dass die Frau ihrem Ehemann gehorchen soll, und dass dieser sie schlagen darf, wenn sie ihm nicht gehorsam ist?; What do you think about the statement that wives should obey their husbands, and that he can hit her if she doesn't obey him?) False answers can lead to the loss of citizenship even years after it has been awarded ("Die Gesinnungsprüfung").

Rather than evaluate merely the ethics of her political suggestions, what seems more telling is to compare this discussion of proposed changes in state and federal

²³ Several of these suggestions have since been adopted by the German government, including minimal language competency. See "Ehegattennachzug."

policy with her portrayal of Muslims in Germany that immediately follows her call to action. In this section, entitled “Wer die Mutter zum Weinen bringt, wird ertrinken,” (Whoever makes their mother cry will drown), Kelek sets up a dichotomy between German and Muslim values. Distinguishing between individualistic German society and collectivist Muslim societies (234), Kelek argues that Muslim values are fundamentally at odds with those of German society: “diese [muslimischen] Werte haben mit den Werten und Normen der deutschen Mehrheitsgesellschaft nicht viel gemein” (these [Muslim] values have little in common with the values and norms of the German majority, 235). Kelek even proposes that “Das Recht auf persönliche Entscheidung ist Muslimen deshalb nur in engen Grenzen gegeben” (The right to individual decision is only provided to Muslims within strict limits, 234). And, according to Kelek, all Turks are Muslims. She cites from her dissertation research, which focused on Turkish-Muslim adolescents in Hamburg. Of the adolescents she interviewed, “Alle [...] bezeichneten sich als religiös und als Muslime. Die Selbstzuordnung zum Islam ist selbstverständlicher Teil ihrer türkischen Identität – und die türkische Identität ist muslimische Identität. Es gibt keinen Unterschied dazwischen” (All described themselves as religious and as Muslims. The self-identification with Islam is taken for granted as part of their Turkish identity – and Turkish identity is Muslim identity. There is no difference between them, 236). Once again, Kelek reduces and strips her subjects of identities capable of democratic participation. All Turks are Muslims; Islam is

incompatible with German values; and the ability to act as an individual – an essential component of Kelek’s democracy – is circumscribed by strict boundaries, preventing effective participation.

Kelek ends her book with a short section called “Bittere Wahrheiten oder Woran die Integration scheitert” (Bitter truths or where integration fails, 259). After having previously described Christian guilt as a main component of German identity, Kelek traces the failure of integration to Germany’s inability to engage an active and coherent *Integrationspolitik*, and to the Turkish community’s reversion to Islam and apathetic attitude toward integration (260): “Sie [die Türken] geben den Deutschen die Schuld, sie nicht integriert zu haben, und die Deutschen reagieren darauf mit dem, was inzwischen zu einem festen Bestandteil ihrer Identität geworden zu sein scheint: mit Schuldbewusstsein” (They [the Turks] blame the Germans for not integrating them, and the Germans react to that with what in the meantime seems to have become a constitutive part of their identity: a guilty conscience, 260). In this description, neither Turkish, Muslim nor German communities have sufficiently defended the German constitution. What Kelek is proposing, in contrast to the polemics above that attempt to bind her to a longer intellectual history as an “Enlightenment fundamentalist,” is that mainstream German society, which includes integrated minority groups, develop a renewed vision for “German” values around which the majority can bind. “Hassprediger,” although a term that thoroughly exaggerates and negatively judges

Kelek's politics, hints at the underlying strategy of Kelek's political engagement: agitation in order to compel us to bind under the sign of shared values.

Kelek indicates that she has seen this kind of reeducation work before. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Kelek was sent to the new states to teach administrators from the former East German secret police (Ministerium für Staatssicherheit) about "democracy," specifically about constitutional law (266). Hiring Kelek was a last-ditch effort after the group had chased off multiple other instructors. Kelek enters the room to thirty-five students who have their backs to her, and she lectures for three hours until eliciting a reaction from her students (266):

Ich war gerade dabei, die Elemente einer Staatsverfassung, von der Staatsgrenze über die Staatsgewalt, zusammenzufassen, wobei ich den versammelten Rücken des ehemaligen DDR-Staatsvolkes die Frage stellte: 'Und wer ist denn nun das Volk?', und dabei ein großes Fragezeichen hinter das Wort 'Volk' malte. Nach und nach drehten sich alle Teilnehmer um, und als der Erste zu lachen begann, war das sehr befreiend.

I was just summarizing the elements of a state constitution, from state borders to state government, when I asked the assembled backs of the former GDR-people the question: "And who are the people?, and just then drew a big question mark behind the word "Volk". One by one all the participants turned around, and as the first one began to laugh, it was very liberating. (266-67)

Kelek's tactic in this short anecdote is to barrage her reluctant students with a steady stream of information; it is a display of verbal force that eventually breaks down her students' resistance. The concept that grabs her students' attention is *Volk*. Shared values equal a shared collective identity; strong belief in the institutions of the German state (democracy, the constitution) can bind a wide variety of groups, from former East

German communists to integrated, secular Turks and Muslims. Earlier, I described the polemic debates of 2007 and 2010 as a way for polemicists writing about Islam in Europe to bind across groups by offering values in the place of political strategy. What Kelek does here is offer values *as* a political strategy: being part of the German *Volk* is justification for any number of tactics, even tactics that appear counter-intuitive to democracy (such as legislating knowledge of German culture and attitudes toward democratic participation). Furthermore, ending with a story about reunification reveals the nationalist agenda of Kelek's project itself, and the role of Germanness within it.

Political organizing under the banner of "Das Volk" was the main slogan of East German protestors, who chanted "Wir sind das Volk" as they walked through the streets. What is less obvious is that immigrant activists in the early 90s also organized under the slogan "Wir sind *auch* das Volk" (Motte). Even though Kelek's Germanness is bestowed by her values and citizenship, and effectively decoupled from ethnic essentialism, Kelek still subscribes to the once xenophobic parole of far-right protestors: "Germany for the Germans."

3.4 Conclusion

The above analysis provides, from case studies of texts published in 2005, 2007 and 2010, a basic outline of common rhetorical strategies invoked in writing about Islam in Europe. Certain techniques emerge with frequency, including claims to identity-based knowledge, comparison to historical atrocity, reliance on reductive logic, and the

metonymic use of Muslim women to show the oppressiveness of Islam. The primacy of identity-based claims to knowledge allows us to characterize this rhetoric as a form of identity politics, which bases its understanding of “identity” primarily on shared values that permit large groups of actors to bind across other differences. Necla Kelek’s first book, *Die fremde Braut*, is an extensive case study of this style of politicized identity.

Just as Cornel West points out the positive and negative valences that “bound” identities can take, what is important to consider after this kind of analysis are the aftershocks of certain kinds of value-based binding. Calls to unify around national identity often mobilize nationalistic groups previously tied exclusively to white supremacy and provide them with new socially conservative constituents (the German political party *Bürgerbewegung – ProKöln* [Citizens’ Movement Pro-Cologne] or the *Schweizerische Volkspartei* [Swiss People’s Party] are two examples). In the ensuing political debates, the prominence of human rights debates (which Kelek cites as her motivating factor) often lacks substance, and the debate reverts to blatant racism and xenophobia.

But the impulse to bind is a strong one. Might there be a way to imagine a German politics of identity that does not require recourse to anti-Muslim racism? In the language of Wendy Brown, might there be a particularly German way of promoting collective self-legislation with a version of the question that asks “What do I want for us?”

4. *Problemkiez, Brennpunktviertel* or the Bronx of Berlin?

In May of 2010 the Berlin hip-hop/reggae group *Culcha Candela* released their single “Somma im Kiez.” The song, which spent fourteen weeks at number twenty-two on Germany’s Top 100 Charts, starts off with a light reggae skank that modulates into a schmaltzy pop refrain (“Culcha Candela”). The song is a romanticized description of a Berlin *Kiez* or neighborhood in summer. Although the narrator feels himself to be the “King of the World,” the environment around him is dirty because the city trash men have been granted a day off due to the heat. His “guys” pick up their long-term unemployment checks wearing Bermuda shorts and flip-flops, and the park to which the residents swarm is filled with “cigarette butts” and “stinking plastic bags.” The underprivileged environment around the narrator, however, is no match for the nice weather. The appearance of summer is a kind of balm that promotes sociability and a good mood irrespective of the material conditions surrounding them:

Endlich Somma in meinem Kiez
Alle ham' sich auf einmal lieb
Lass uns um die Häuser zieh'n
denn es ist Somma in meinem Kiez
Somma in mei'm Kiez. (*Culcha Candela*)

Finally summer in my neighborhood
Everyone suddenly likes everyone else
Let's walk around the block
Because it's summer in my 'hood,
Summer in my 'hood.

Kiez is a colloquial regionalism for neighborhood used primarily in Berlin (and often in northern Germany). The *Wahrig Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* gives two definitions for *Kiez*: first, as a word for district, or part of a city; second, as a city district in which prostitution is prominent (“*Kiez*”). This second definition most likely stems from the use of *Kiez* to describe Hamburg’s *Reeperbahn* (red-light district). The linguistic origins of the word stem from Slavic roots. Christopher Gutknecht, for instance, traces the origins of the word to the name of Slavic settlements on the outskirts of cities east of the Elbe whose residents performed low-level services, often as fishermen (152). Both the *Wahrig* definition and Gutknecht’s origin-story characterize *Kiez* as a place both economically underprivileged as well as socially separate. In contemporary usage in Berlin, the negative connotations of the word’s origins are less prominent. A travel guide commonly available in local bookstores, for instance, details walking tours through Berlin and is entitled *Berlin, Kiez für Kiez: Spaziergänge durch die ganze Hauptstadt* (Berlin, *Kiez to Kiez: Walks through the Entire Capital*, Scheddel). Gutknecht confirms: “Heute dient *Kiez* nicht nur als regionale Bezeichnung für arme Stadtviertel” (Today *Kiez* is not only used as a regional term for poor areas of the city, 152). The word is currently used to describe any district of Berlin, irrespective of wealth and/or the social class of its inhabitants.

Because the German language is built around compound words, *Kiez* is easily and commonly joined with other words and colloquial expressions that often imply local

color: *Szenenkiez*, for instance, describes an “in” neighborhood with nightlife; the *Kiezkneipe* is a local pub; *Kiezfest* is a neighborhood street festival or fair. *Kiezdenken*, literally “neighborhood thinking,” can even be used as a reproach – *Kiezdenken* describes a kind of provincialism exhibited when Berlin residents get all their needs met within their *Kiez* and refuse to take advantage of the multiple options offered by the city. In these examples, the use of *Kiez* signifies a simultaneously abstract and specific formulation of place. Each *Kiez* has its own feel – the social diversity, low rents and alternative art scene associated with Neukölln are quite different from the eerily quiet, suburban *Plattenbau* (Soviet-style) highrises of Marzahn; the wealth of Charlottenburg and the fancy stores along the Kurfürstendamm boulevard are miles away (figuratively and literally) from the small town, one street layout of Buch at the northeastern outskirts of the city. While *Kiez* can generically describe every neighborhood or district, the slightest modifier alerts us to the specificities of place. Culcha Candela, for instance, modifies *Kiez* with a simple possessive: “in meinem Kiez” (in my *Kiez*). It is the descriptions which follow that modification which then alert us to the details of what that “my” specifies: the smells, where and how people spend their time, and the institutional structures that are referenced (garbage men and *Hartz IV*). Just as other descriptors can be joined with *Kiez* to further specify the kind of place it is, one can also reinfuse *Kiez* with the connotations of poverty, social exclusion and/or criminality with a single word: the *Problemkiez*.

Berlin-Neukölln may be contemporary Germany's *Problemkiez* par excellence. There is no lack of books and newspaper articles reporting high rates of youth criminality, unemployment, large concentrations of immigrant populations, social isolation from the mainstream and religious or cultural extremism.¹ One of the most sensational stories of the past ten years took place in 2006, when teachers from the Rütli School circulated a damning public letter pleading for intervention into an educational environment which seemed to have descended into chaos. Their portrayal of a school in which the buildings were relentlessly vandalized, teachers feared for their safety and students graduated without hope for the future sparked a media firestorm which quickly degenerated into what former headmaster Brigitte Pick called a state of “media terror” (Plarre). The Rütli School affair, which I will examine more closely later in this chapter, served partly to spearhead reforms at the school and may or may not have influenced the changes to the traditional tripartite school system phased in during the 2010-2011 school year. It also brought national attention to the district and succeeded in making Neukölln a symbolic imaginary for almost all of Germany's social problems.²

¹ Books about the district include the grotesque satire by Uli Hannemann, *Neulich in Neukölln: Notizen von der Talsohle des Lebens*; from the late juvenile judge Kirsten Heisig, who committed suicide after a long but hidden battle with depression in 2010, *Das Ende der Geduld: Konsequenz gegen jugendliche Gewalttäter*; the breakdancing documentary *Neukölln Unlimited*, about three Lebanese-German brothers trying to start dance careers; Murat Topal's *Neukölln: Endlich die Wahrheit*; and Ursula Rogg's description of teaching at Gymnasium in Neukölln entitled: *Nord Neukölln: Frontbericht aus dem Klassenzimmer*. Some of the most successful books about the district are Güner Balci's companion books *Arabboy: Eine Jugend in Deutschland* oder *Das kurze Leben des Rashid A* and *Arab Queen oder Der Geschmack der Freiheit*.

² One of the more impressive uses of Neukölln as a symbolic imaginary can be seen, for example, in an article from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (published in Munich) entitled “Thilo Sarrazin in den Schluchten von

Problemkiez is not the only word used to describe districts like Neukölln. Other terms like *Brennpunktviertel*, or the oddly poetic *der Bronx von Berlin* are different ways of describing the district, especially the densely populated northern tip between the Hermannplatz and Hermannstraße subway stations.³ The *Quartiersmanagement* program describes the *Flughafenkiez* (the area between Hermannplatz and the grounds of the Kindl Brewery, slightly east of the old Tempelhof airport) in the bland terms of the federal development program Social City (*Soziale Stadt*):

Das überwiegend von Jüngeren bewohnte Viertel – 51% der Bewohner sind zwischen 18 und 45 Jahre alt – wirkt vor allem im Bereich der Karl-Marx-Straße international, belebt und urban. Andererseits meiden gut situierte Mittelstandsfamilien das Viertel in dem hohe Arbeitslosigkeit, Armut und Perspektivlosigkeit herrschen. Um den Stadtteil um die Flughafenstraße zu stabilisieren und aufzuwerten, wurde er 2005 zum Quartiersmanagementgebiet, das heißt zu einem Gebiet mit erhöhtem Entwicklungsbedarf erklärt. (Buchholz)

The quarter which is primarily inhabited by younger people – 51% of the inhabitants are between 18 and 45 years old – comes across (especially in the area

Neukölln" (Thilo Sarrazin in the Depths of Neukölln), which has virtually nothing to do with the actual district. The article is rather a documentation of a racist conversation between Sarrazin and renowned economist Thomas Straubhaar and quotes one mention by Sarrazin of Arab immigrants lost in the depths of the Neuköllner city administration. To further support the idea of Neukölln as a signifier rather than a place, see the version of this article on the newspaper's website, which includes a picture of Muslim men praying inside a mosque in a completely different district: neighboring Berlin-Kreuzberg. Thilo Sarrazin is never "placed" in the actual physical district of Neukölln in this article. See Pfauth. See White and Ewing for work on imaginaries.

³The southern part of the district, including the towns of Britz, Buckow and Rudow, are less densely populated, have lower percentages of immigrant populations, and include some extremely wealthy landowners which relativize the statistics about the district as a whole. See Pick. This was also mentioned by Dorothea Kolland in our personal interview. Kolland states: "Außerhalb des S-Bahnringes, Bukow und Rudow gehören zum oberen Viertel des Berliner Sozialatlases, also sehr wohlhabend" (Outside of the elevated train ring, Bukow and Rudow [two other districts of Neukölln –jsc] belong to the upper quarter of the Berlin social atlas, i.e. [they are] very wealthy; Faroqhi/Kolland, "Personal Interview").

of the Karl-Marx-Street) as international, lively, and urban. On the other hand, well-situated middle-class families avoid the quarter in which high unemployment, poverty and hopelessness [lit. lack of prospects] reign. In order to stabilize and raise the value of the neighborhood around the Flughafenstraße, it was turned into a Quarter Management area in 2005, i.e. it was declared *to be an area with an increased need of development* (italics mine).⁴

Projekt Heroes, the organization I will document in Chapter Four, was also founded in the adjacent *Rollbergviertel*, with support from that district's QM. Finally, Neukölln is also often described with the word *Parallelgesellschaft*, or parallel society (occasionally *Parallelwelten*/"parallel universe").⁵ These terms supposedly describe *Kieze* like North-Neukölln, which have large, often predominantly Muslim, immigrant populations.⁶ The Turkish and Arab communities most frequently targeted by these terms are relentlessly racialized in "parallel societies," which are characterized as

⁴ *Die Zeit* published a lengthy article about the future of the QM program nationwide given the cuts made to the program in 2010 by the CSU/CDU/FDP coalition; the subtitle for the article makes the contradiction between public rhetoric about integration and the actual willingness of the government to invest in its immigrant populations clear. See Lißmann.

⁵ The connotations of *Parallelwelten* are slightly different from those of *Parallelgesellschaft*. *Parallelwelten* is primarily used in science fiction, where parallel universes and wormholes present a vivid thought experiment about the individual nature of human experience and the cause-and-effect nature of interaction. Of course, the connotations of "parallel universe" applied to minority populations can be even more damaging than "parallel societies," as those talked about are associated with aliens or mere reflections of their "real world" counterparts. Discovering the origins of the discourse of "parallel societies" is not the task of my chapter here, however, the term has been traced by others back to Wilhelm Heitmeyer, sociologist at the University of Bielefeld Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence/Management. See Ewing, Gessler, Heitmeyer and Bukow, et. al.

⁶ A special issue of *Der Spiegel* from 2008 includes an article by Norbert F. Pötzl called "Schatten über Almanyia" (Shadows over Almanyia) about a neighborhood west of the Flughafenkiez (Sonnenallee/Hermannplatz) where he states: "Hier ist sie hautnah zu erleben, die vielbeschworene und oft geleugnete Parallelgesellschaft" (Here you can experience it up close, the parallel society which is often sworn [to exist] as often as it is denied [to exist]). Although Pötzl quotes scholar Klaus Bade, who calls this term part of a semantics of panic, it doesn't stop Pötzl from writing that residents refer to the Sonnenallee as "the Gaza strip." The English-language title for this article on the Spiegel Online website is "Life in a Parallel Society." See Pötzl.

religiously fundamentalist and isolated migrant communities hostile to the purported “European” values of democracy and secularity. In this discourse, these traditional “values” and the attendant linguistic, social and religious isolation pose difficulties for the political, economic and social health of the city or the nation.

Wolf-Dietrich Bukow, Claudia Nikodem, Erika Schulz and Erol Yildiz have persuasively argued in their edited volume *Was heißt hier Parallelgesellschaft?: Zum Umgang mit Differenzen* (What Do You Mean, Parallel Society?: Engaging with Difference) that the trope of defensive isolation and parallel location which inflects the term “parallel society” is neither plausible nor possible given the realities of urban life in a globalized metropolis. Citing the work of Martin Albrow, they state:

Der Begriff [Parallelgesellschaft] impliziert die Existenz institutionell geschlossener und wohl abgegrenzter, nebeneinander existierender Gesellschaften. Und diese Vorstellung passt nicht zu den heute üblichen Formen von urbanen Zusammenlebens, ebenso wenig zu der zunehmenden, unterdessen schon beträchtlichen Mobilität, zu den immer umfassender vernetzten Infrastruktur-, Wirtschafts-, Bildungs-, Verwaltungs- und Kommunikationssystemen zu einer längst globalisierten Kultur und Ökonomie. (13-14)

The term [parallel society] implies the existence of institutionally closed and well marked-off societies that exist alongside each other. And this association does not fit with forms of urban coexistence common today, much less to the increasing and already sizeable mobility or networked systems of infrastructure, the economy, education, administration and communication in a culture and economy long since globalized.

Bukow, et. al characterize the pervasiveness of the parallel metaphor as the product of two historical conditions. They state that because of the broad recruitment of

immigrants from all over the world, it took longer in Germany for immigrants with similar backgrounds to be publically recognized as a group. When looking at the specific case of Neukölln, this could be traced to the *Zuzugssperre* (Immigrant Residency Ban) of 1975 which prohibited certain immigrants from settling in the districts of Mitte, Wedding and Kreuzberg (Gößwald 16; "Türken in Berlin" 39). Neukölln's proximity to the neighboring *Kiez* of Kreuzberg, sometimes described as *küçük İstanbul* or "Little Istanbul," offered the possibility of forming what Bukow, et. al describe as "ethnic colonies." Ethnic colonies are the necessary (and temporary!) settling of new immigrants in one neighborhood as a way to make use of supports: a language community, family members, and trusted friends or acquaintances.⁷ The second way that the alarmist discourse of parallel societies took root can be found in a renewal of nationalist thought (*nationalstaatlichen Denkens*), which these authors posit was only possible in Germany after reunification in the 1990s (Bukow 13).

When what was previously part of the transitional biopolitics of migration (i.e. immigrant neighborhoods and their attendant support and community life which *allowed* immigrants to later move up social ladders) became aggravating to a nation-state trying to revitalize the European tradition of national homogeneity, then conditions became ripe for discourses that vilify the "ethnic colony" (13). As these authors declare:

⁷ Schmid's study, *Integration als Ideal – Assimilation als Realität*, cites the 2001 study by Sauer and Goldberg which found that only 20% of Turkish-Germans live in "ethnisch geprägten Wohnumgebungen" (ethnic neighborhoods (lit. ethnically shaped living environments, 60). This suggests that the pervasiveness of the parallel metaphor has little basis in statistic evidence.

“In diesem Fall geht es nicht mehr um ‘ethnische Kolonien’ sondern um die Segregation von Ausländerinnen und Ausländern, also um Paralellgesellschaften, letztlich um Brückenköpfe des Fremden im eigenen Land“ (In this case it’s no longer about ‘ethnic colonies’ but rather about the segregation of foreigners, i.e. parallel societies or ultimately about bridgeheads of the foreign in [one’s] own country, 13).

The discourse of insularity implicit in a “parallel” metaphor which accompanies political attempts to thwart defacto segregation would not be possible without the pervasiveness of the integration metaphor. Integration is, hands down, *the* dominant linguistic metaphor for the process of immigration to Germany. It hints strongly at assimilative behavior that grants one access to the mainstream, and has been rejected as an offensive operative term by many, who argue that democratization and participation are the desired goals for immigrants.⁸ In contrast to integration, these two terms (democracy and participation) are not linked to an idea of compulsory assimilation and loss of culture and/or identity. They are also terms which apply to the entire populace.

⁸ Philippa Ebéné, the business director of the *Werkstatt der Kulturen* in Berlin described integration in these terms during an interview about the *Playing-in-the Dark* series of discussions about racism:

PE: Also, bei dem Begriff “Integration“ geht bei uns allen der Rollladen ‘runter. (Well, with the term “integration,” all of us shut down and stop listening.)

JSC: Okay.

PE: Es geht vor allem um Demokratisierung. Es geht um Partizipation. Also ich weiß nicht, wer wie wo hinein integriert werden sollte. Was ist das Merkmal für Integration? Das sind ja so ganz merkwürdige schwammige Begriffe. (Above all else, it’s about democratization. It’s about participation. I mean, I don’t know who should be integrated into what and how. What is the distinguishing feature of integration? These are such strange, porous terms.) (Ebéné).

Integration, in contrast, is often directed only at immigrants and further alienates members of those groups from participating in civic life.

The *Integrationskonzept* of the Berlin Senate from 2007, for instance, includes sections about participation through business as well as in civil society; the key term “integration,” however, leads almost every single section heading of the policy document (“Integration durch Bildung,” “Integration durch Partizipation und Stärkung der Zivilgesellschaft,” “Integration durch Teilnahme am Erweberbsleben”; Integration through Education, Integration through Participation and Strengthening of Civil Society, Integration through Participation in Business Life, etc.; see Berlin). The separateness of the *Problemkiez* and the absorption and exclusion offered by the integration metaphor are intimately linked and structure basic modes of argumentation about immigration policy.

Postcolonial theorist Kien Nghi Ha has problematized the notion of “integration” by showing its theoretical relatedness to colonial practices designed to infantilize and assimilate ethnic others seen as culturally backward (“kulturell rückständig”) and threatening (“bedrohlich”) (123). In Nghi Ha’s essay “Deutsche Integrationspolitik als koloniale Praxis,” the most useful concordance between the work of Bukow, et. al and Nghi Ha’s work can be found in the stigmatizing effects of both “integration” and “parallel societies.” I would group terms like *Problemkiez*, *Brennpunktviertel* or *ghetto* along with “parallel society.” These labels have material effects on the lives of those marked as different. After describing the subjective experience of the national education

system as an instrument of social exclusion and forced socialization, Nghi Ha remarks in a footnote that

Der letzte Armutsbericht konstatiert eine zunehmende soziale Ausschließung: 'Insgesamt ist in Deutschland das Armutsrisiko von Personen mit Migrationshintergrund zwischen 1998 und 2003 from 19.6% auf 24% gestiegen, es liegt damit weiterhin deutlich über der Armutsrisikoquote der Gesamtbevölkerung.

The most recent poverty confirms increasing social exclusion: on the whole the risk of poverty amongst people with a migration background between 1998 and 2003 rose from 19.6% to 24%, and thus clearly lies above the proportion of those at risk of poverty within the entire population (113)

Bukow, et. al point to similar conclusions: immigrants only stay in so-called "ethnic colonies" when their mobility is restricted:

Neben Wirtschaftskrisen, die Mobilität verhindern, gibt es in vielen Ländern einen weiteren Grund dafür, dass die Einwander(innen) langfristig in solchen Quartieren verbleiben: strukturelle Bedingungen, die Mobilität beschränken, genauer, Aufstiegsbarrieren errichten und Migration kanalisieren. [...] Auf diese Weise entsteht ein 'ethnisches Proletariat', das in prekären Stadtquartieren verbleiben muss und damit langfristig marginalisiert wird. [...] Es findet sich in Europa wieder, wo man den Zuwander(innen) den Weg in die Gesellschaft über politische, ökonomische oder rassistische Barrieren versperrt. (12)

Alongside economic crises, which inhibit mobility, in many countries there are further reasons as to why immigrants stay in such neighborhoods long-term: [there are] terms and conditions that restrict mobility, more precisely, [terms and conditions] which construct barriers to upward mobility and which channel migration. [...] In this way an 'ethnic proletariat' develops which has to remain in precarious neighborhoods and thus is marginalized over the long-term. [...] This happens time and again in Europe where political, economic or racist barriers obstruct migrants' path into society.

What these two articles are pointing at is an understanding of the integration and parallel society metaphors as tropes that do not accurately reflect the shape and tenor of

immigrant experience and desire, but rather reflect both the exclusionary mechanisms and attitudes toward immigrants held by those in power. The separateness inherent in the parallel metaphor is a way of limiting the boundaries of and movement through space. Lack of access and lack of desire for access to the mainstream implies a prohibition on movement. Permitting movement would shatter the boundaries of this metaphor in that it would hamper the metaphor's (as a sign or linguistic "thing") ability to obscure, pointing out the forms, functions and structures of a discourse of national belonging that prevents those "parallel" to the mainstream from ever crossing "the line." Invoking this metaphor is thus an *act* of exclusion, not a description of those addressed through its invocation. The call to integrate reflects directly how *difficult* it can be to find access to German civic and social life. The term "parallel society" points to the precise structural and material inequities that *keep* immigrants separate rather than allowing them access to mobility that would help them move up social and economic ladders.

This chapter will explore how the dominance of the integration and parallel society metaphors influence cultural production. My objects are three cultural products about the neighborhood which respond to integrationist discourse, including the terms "parallel society" and "ghetto." These artists and writers use their narratives to reframe, reposition and revise the terms used to talk about the neighborhood, and in so doing, fashion their own places. All position themselves against the idea that "immigrant" spaces are willfully and defensively separate.

First, in an analysis of Brigitte Pick's book-length account about the Rutli School affair of 2006, I will examine the discourse of Neukölln as a structurally disadvantaged part of Berlin. The production of social chaos that works not only to characterize Neukölln as a place beyond the law, but which also incessantly racializes the predominantly Muslim minority groups to which the most media attention is paid, creates what geographer Ulrich Best has called a "ghetto-discourse" about Neukölln (Best). As a counter-response to the negative discourses about Neukölln, I will also examine a history comic book about the district by Anna Faroqhi, which was published by the *Kulturamt Neukölln* (Cultural Bureau of Neukölln) in honor of the 650th anniversary of the city. *Weltreiche erblihten und fielen* (Empires Rose and Fell) is a partly autobiographical comic which weaves together the life of a Neuköllner family with 650 years of local and national history. The structure of this comic book is an attempt to fulfill the mission statement of the *Kulturamt*, which is to bring cultural production and history of the district to an incredibly diverse constituency with widely varying levels of education, income and interest in the arts ("Kulturarbeit," kultur-neukoelln.de). At the end this chapter, I will take up a performance art video by Kanak Attak entitled "Weißes Ghetto" (White Ghetto), which challenges the discourse of insularity characteristic of the Problemkiez by filming interviews with white residents of a Cologne neighborhood. The discourse of the *Problemkiez* functions similarly and in concert with the discourses of "parallel societies" and "ghettos" featured in the Kanak Attak video. It describe places

with high concentrations of “minority” residents (here, older ethnic Germans) as willfully separate, defensive, dangerous and/or isolated and has similar ramifications for integration politics. One of the most obvious ramifications of this discourse is the racialization of certain social groups, which often translates into policies that push for or reward assimilation to mainstream norms.

The spaces and places the metaphor of a parallel society attempts to include, whether the *Hauptschule*, the Neukölln neighborhood, or the inversion of the white ghetto, are within rather than outside of Germany. Each of the cultural works explored in this chapter uses different methods to bind this place to the social space of the nation. Pick, with a faint Marxist ideology, points out the structural inequalities of the *Hauptschulform* which would eventually lead to its obsolescence. Faroqhi, uses of a new medium, the comic book, to develop a new aesthetic form for the historical and material trajectories of the place of Neukölln. Finally, the Kanak Attak video, through the capturing of white gesture, shows the function of this metaphor on a national scale.

4.1 The Rütli School Affair

The characterization of Neukölln in newspaper reports relies on several repeated tropes to construct a place of social chaos. Youth criminality; “clans” of immigrants from the Middle East who settle family affairs in mafia fashion; failing schools and high rates of unemployment are discursive constants in the production of place.¹ With the exception of articles about gentrification or the so-called “Rucksack Projekte” (Backpack Projects) like the *Stadtteilmütter* (Neighborhood Mothers), press attention is frequently negative.² From crime reports describing robberies at ATMs, shootings at small local casinos and reports about alarming new social statistics (for instance, that the percentage of third-graders who can't swim is rising in districts with a higher immigrant ratio), Neukölln's problematic conditions are repeatedly reproduced. Perhaps the most spectacular media event in Neukölln took place in 2006, when teachers from the Rütli School circulated an incendiary letter (*Brandbrief*) bemoaning the teaching conditions within the school. The

¹ See Kalwa, Gehrke, Grassmann, Mirazie, and ssch.

² The *Stadtteilmütter* program employs unemployed women who have immigrated to Germany as social workers who conduct visits with new immigrant mothers about topics such as the German school system, nutrition, registering for German language classes, and child and health care. The mothers are trained for a period of about six months and receive 10 Euros per family visit. They wear trademark red scarves so that they can be recognized. Another event often covered positively in the media is naturalization ceremonies, what the city mayor describes as “making Neuköllner” (see “Berliner Einbürgerungsfeier endet im Debakel”). The coverage about this naturalization ceremony makes fun of the new citizens, including footage of a black man singing the national anthem loudly, off-key and without proper pronunciation. The next interview is with a young woman speaking fluent German, who says she would have rather sung her “own” national anthem at her German naturalization ceremony. This woman says that citizenship is just a piece of paper, and that she is not German. This kind of coverage, which highlights bizarre argumentation or makes fun of new immigrants is a way to create a strong undercurrent of othering even when reporting an event that could be spun positively. See “Start der Ausbildung neuer Stadtteilmütter” and “Berliner Einbürgerungsfeier endet im Debakel.”

letter portrayed an educational environment so out of control that teachers needed constant cell phone access in order to call for help (Eggebrecht, Pick 123-6). The last straw of the events at the Rütli School seems to be that in 2005, not one of the sixty students who graduated from the tenth grade was able to secure an apprenticeship (Pick 180). Apprenticeships are the equivalent of job training for vocational students in Germany, and without an *Ausbildungsplatz* (training spot), entering the job market is very difficult if not impossible. Vocational training is highly prized since *Handwerker* (artisans/craftspersons/skilled workers) have traditionally held high social status. This is slowly changing as university degrees begin to be seen as essential for employment.

In 2006, the Rütli School was what was known as a *Hauptschule*, or a vocational school, into which students were tracked after the sixth grade (other German states sometimes track as early as the fourth grade). The German school system at that time provided for three different tracking options: *Hauptschule*, or vocational school that ends after the tenth grade; *Realschule*, or intermediate school, which also ends after the tenth grade; or *Gymnasium*, a college preparatory school traditionally ending with the Abitur diploma after the thirteenth grade and leading to university studies (*Gymnasium* now ends after the twelfth grade). There are also the *Gesamtschulen*, literally “whole schools,” which resemble American high schools and house all students together while tracking certain classes. According to Brigitte Pick, former headmaster of the Rütli School, the *Hauptschule*, which translates literally into “Main School,” was so named because

approximately 40% of all school pupils in the 1960s and 1970s were tracked into this vocational school. This statistic points to the value attributed to vocational schooling mentioned above. According to Pick, this proportion sunk to 10% of all pupils in the 21st century (177).

The tripartite school system that sorts out children early in life has long been a topic of debate.³ Furthermore, beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, school systems in Berlin were reformed to be made up of only two types of schools: the *Integrierte Sekundarschule* (integrated secondary school, which combines students previously tracked into *Haupt-* or *Realschulen*) and *Gymnasium* ("Schulstrukturreform"). Many schools were also reformed at this time to become full-day schools, rather than ending in the early afternoon before lunch. The dissolution of the *Hauptschulform* is described on the official website of the city of Berlin as a result of the sinking reputation of this kind of vocational schooling:

Das bisherige vielgliedrige Schulsystem in der Sekundarstufe I, also in den Klassen 7 bis 10, ist keine gute Voraussetzung für die angestrebten Verbesserungen der Qualität der Berliner Schule. Ein großes Problem ist die sinkende Akzeptanz der Hauptschule. Weniger als 7 Prozent der Sechstklässler (1724 von über 27 000) wurden an dieser Schulart angemeldet. Die Eltern vieler Schüler mit Hauptschulempfehlung wählten lieber Gesamtschulen oder Realschulen. Trotz hohen Engagements der Lehrkräfte ist in den Hauptschulen oft ein schwieriges Lern- und Entwicklungsmilieu entstanden, in dem viele Kinder und Jugendliche ihre Potenziale nicht ausreichend entfalten können. ("Schulstrukturreform")

³ See Ertl for an analysis of the failure of Germany to develop a comprehensive school (*Gesamtschule*) over a longer period of time.

The current multi-part school system for the secondary level I, i.e. grades 7 through 10, is not a good foundation for the attempted improvements of the quality of the Berlin school [system]. A large problem is the sinking acceptance of the *Hauptschule*. Less than 7% of the 6th graders (1724 of more than 27,000) were registered at this kind of school. The parents of many students with a recommendation for the *Hauptschule* chose instead combined schools (*Gesamtschulen*) or *Realschulen*. Despite the high engagement of the faculty, a difficult environment for learning and development arose in which many children and adolescents were not able to sufficiently develop their potential.

The “difficult environment for learning and development” characteristic of the *Hauptschule* was expressed nowhere so clearly as in the infamous letter from the Rütli school faculty.⁴

The infamous letter, dated February 28th, 2006, is addressed to Frau Fischer, the Senator for Education in Berlin, in response to her visit to the school on February 21, 2006 (Eggebrecht). The letter includes a long distribution list which includes practically every prominent person responsible for the various institutional and administrative tasks correlated with secondary schools: the delegate (*Referent*) for *Hauptschulen*, the delegate for cases of violence, the mayor of the district, the leader of the district advisory council, the school psychologist, leader of the youth welfare service, the advisor to the teachers, all parties in the *Berliner Volksversammlung* (City Council), the Quarter

4 The website of the *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung* (Federal Center for Political Education) includes a link to the original document and a shortened text version as part of a teaching project called “Image Hauptschule,” with the hope that “Schülerinnen und Schüler der Hauptschule setzen sich mit der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung ihrer Schulform auseinander und entwickeln eigene Gestaltungsmöglichkeiten des Schullebens” (students of the Hauptschule engage with the public perception of their form of schooling and develop their own ideals for shaping the possibilities of school life). See “Didaktische Konzeption.”

Management Bureau for the Reuterplatz neighborhood, the Berlin State Senate, and the Commissioner for Migration. The intent to circulate this letter as broadly as possible is clear.

The most problematic feature of the Rütli letter is the blatant racialization of the student body with which the letter begins:

Sehr geehrte Frau Fischer,

die Fülle der zu besprechenden Einzelfälle ließ bei Ihrem Besuch am 24.2.06 keine Zeit über die Gesamtsituation in unserer Schule zu sprechen. Wie in der Schulleitersitzung am 21.2.06 geschildert, hat sich die Zusammensetzung unserer Schülerschaft in den letzten Jahren dahingehend verändert, dass der Anteil der Schüler/innen mit arabischem Migrationshintergrund inzwischen am höchsten ist. Er beträgt zurzeit 34,9%, gefolgt von 26,1% mit türkischem Migrationshintergrund. Der Gesamtanteil der Jugendlichen n.d.H. [nicht deutscher Herkunft] beträgt 83,2%. Die Statistik zeigt, dass an unserer Schule der Anteil der Schüler/innen mit arabischem Migrationshintergrund in den letzten Jahren kontinuierlich gestiegen ist:

10. Klassen = 15 9. Klassen = 21 8. Klassen = 22 7. Klassen = 25 (= 44%)

In unserer Schule gibt es keine/n Mitarbeiter/in aus anderen Kulturkreisen.
(Eggebrecht)

Dear Frau Fischer

the large number of individual cases to be discussed during your visit on February 24, 2006 left us with no time to discuss the overall situation in our school. As was described at the school director meeting on February 21, 2006, the demographics of our school body has changed such that over the last few years the proportion of students with an Arabic background has become the largest group. Currently this group comprises 34.9% of the student body, followed by 26.1% with a Turkish background. The total proportion of youth of non-German origins comprises 83.2%. The statistics show that the proportion of students with an Arabic background has consistently risen:

10th grades = 15 9th grades = 21 8th grades = 22 7th grades = 25 (=44%)

In our school there are no colleagues from other cultures.

The accounts of violence that follow are set up to implicate ethnic and cultural background (Arab or Turkish) as the source of violent behavior, disorder and chaos. The predominant placement of this information at the top of the letter, and the way in which other kinds of difference (class, personal circumstances) are ignored or coded in less prominent ways serves to single out Arab students as intensively violent, chaotic, disruptive and unreachable.

As the letter continues, the tone becomes more measured. The bulk of the letter concerns certain structural changes that the school desires: the discontinuation of the *Hauptschulform*, the need for sustained funding for certain initiatives, the employment of qualified personnel, the need for more teachers, and the need specifically for teachers who desire to teach in such a school (i.e. teachers who are a “good fit”). These kinds of requests are common in the debates about failing schools in industrialized countries which face particular challenges, such as a highly heterogeneous student body and rising levels of unemployment. The media attention, however, focused primarily on the descriptions of violence included in the letter, where the author describes the school’s extremely dangerous and negative social and learning environments, such as classrooms where students throw objects at teachers.

Brigitte Pick was the headmaster of the Rütli School from 1983 to 2005. In 2005, it was suggested she retire for health reasons. During the media frenzy of 2006, she was one of the public voices present in the debates, even though she was no longer employed at the school when the letter was written. She was herself surprised and shocked when the story broke, learning about the publication of the letter in the *Tagespiegel* newspaper by way of a text message from a colleague, also a retired headmaster (Pick 122). In 2007, Pick published a highly autobiographical book about her experiences at the school entitled *Kopfschüsse: Wer PISA nicht versteht, muss mit RÜTLI rechnen* (Shots to the Head: Those Who Don't Understand PISA Will Have to Expect RÜTLI). The book is a mix of anecdotes about former students and school events, leftist pedagogical ideology, commentary on the publication of the letter, and a plea for the abolishment of the selectively tracked school system. The book dives into the ongoing political debates about education in Germany in light of the country's low-rankings on the international PISA study (Programme for International Student Assessment). PISA aims to evaluate the reading, mathematical and scientific literacy of school pupils in multiple countries.

The two main goals of the PISA study are to understand the success of students in learning that which will prepare them for civic and economic participation, as well as the degree to which social disadvantage exists and/or plays a role in schooling:

Im Mittelpunkt steht dabei weniger das Faktenwissen der Jugendlichen, sondern es werden Basiskompetenzen untersucht, die in modernen Staaten für eine

Teilhabe am gesellschaftlichen, wirtschaftlichen und politischen Leben notwendig sind. Es wird gefragt, inwieweit Jugendliche diese Kompetenzen erworben haben und inwieweit soziale Ungleichheiten im Bildungserfolg bestehen.

The focus here is less on the factual knowledge of youth. Rather, basic competencies are tested which are necessary in modern states in order to participate in social, economic and political life. The study tests the degree to which youth have mastered these skills and the degree to which social inequalities exist in educational success. (Stanat)

German school pupils in 2000, for instance, were below the OECD average in all three areas: reading, mathematics and science. Germany surpassed the average in science literacy in 2006, and was ranked 13th amongst all participating countries that year (fifty-seven in total) ("Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2006 – List of Participating Countries/Economies."). The website of the *Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung*, in its summary of the PISA results, describes Germany – with 73 points difference between ethnic German and immigrant German pupils – as "das OECD-Land mit den stärksten migrationsbedingten Unterschieden" (The OECD country with the starkest differences attributed to migration) and states that this discrepancy can be primarily attributed to "soziale Unterschiede und sprachliche Defizite" (social differences and linguistic deficits; "BMBF-Bildung-PISA-2006").

Pick's narrative is remarkable for two reasons. First, the use of the autobiographical genre to provide the audience with a truth-telling narrative from inside a scandal shows that the generic format of autobiography is legible to mass market audiences. Because this scandal had already been predominantly racialized as

“Arab” and “Turkish,” I would argue that this book is a variation on the “Muslim” women’s autobiographies I have analyzed in previous chapters. Pick does not out herself as an immigrant in this book; given the subject matter, I would be surprised if the author of a tell-all autobiography in this context would keep that detail to herself. Second, this book is a political intervention into the portrayal of Neukölln as a parallel society. Pick actively claims place through her revisionist narrative, highlighting the structural inequalities at work within Germany’s tri-partite school system that overwhelmingly disadvantages students of a non-ethnic German background.

“Education,” “language” and “values” form the trifecta of keywords which structure integrationist discourse. These three keywords form the scaffolding for understanding “integration” as a Foucauldian *dispositif*, or apparatus. Education may be the most foundational of the three, in that educational institutions are seen as the space in which the German language is practiced and acquired, as well as spaces capable of transmitting “European” values of individualism, secularism and democratic participation. Education is also, however, a question of access: in order for “integration” to be successful, one must be granted access to schools capable of performing these functions.

Pick’s invocation of the PISA studies in the subtitle of her book marks the starting point for her intervention and highlights how the interplay between education and integration sparked one of the most recent peaks of contemporary integration

debates. The debates about PISA in 2006, combined with the events at the Rütli School spurred the *Bundeskanzleramt* (Office of the Chancellor) to organize the country's first integration summit in 2006 (*Integrationsgipfel*). The federal *Beauftragte für Integration und Migration* (Commissioner for Integration and Migration), Maria Böhmer, even gave a speech to parliament on April 5, 2006, that illustrates clearly how three tropes – violent immigrants, a media discourse about Neukölln as a parallel society, and a professed need for togetherness (here: *Miteinander*; I see this as a variation on the idea of integration) – work in concert to produce the place of Neukölln as defensive, separate, and violent. In her speech “Aus Parallelgesellschaften muss ein Miteinander werden” (Integration Must Arise from Parallel Societies), Böhmer both reproduces the parallel metaphor, but also highlights the structural disadvantages that drive Pick's narrative: “Denn eines haben mir die Schüler der achten Klasse der Rütli-Schule, die ich besucht habe, sehr deutlich gesagt: Wir haben doch keine Chance auf einen Ausbildungsplatz” (Because there's one thing that the eighth grade students at the Rütli school, which I visited, told me very clearly: We really don't have any chance of getting an apprenticeship; Böhmer).

Pick begins her book by tracing her desire to become a teacher from her involvement in the teacher-university student conflicts of 1968. Her teaching philosophy is strongly rooted in the idea that curricula should emphasize practical topics that are relevant for daily life: “Heute wäre Schule möglich, könnte man jugendlichen

Hauptschülern begründen, ihr Lernen liefe wirklich auf Ausbildung und Arbeit hinaus“ (Today the school would be possible if one could justify to the young *Hauptschulern* students that their learning really lead to training and work, 47). Her distaste for the inequalities and structural disadvantages intrinsic to the three-school tracking system is palpable throughout the book and explicitly stated: “Nirgendwo auf der Welt selektiert die Schule so schamlos wie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland” (Nowhere in the world does the school select [its students] as shamelessly as in the Federal Republic of Germany, 11). Pick's introduction to the book is a pedagogical polemic: she criticizes the “Bildungskatastrophe” that followed the publication of Germany's PISA results and the political response to the educational system:

Chancengleichheit wurde mit der Gründung der Gesamtschulen zum Thema. 'Bildungschancen' und 'Begabungsforschung', 'Evaluation' und 'Innovation', 'kompensatorische' und 'emanzipatorische Erziehung' wurden zu diskussionsleitenden Schlagworten. [...] Auf geradezu umwerfende Weise wurde die Erkenntnis umgesetzt, derzufolge die Ganztagschule den Ausweg aus dem Bildungsdesaster bedeutet. Längeres Einsperren als Befriedungs- und Motivationsstrategie – darauf muss man erst mal kommen. (8)

Equal opportunity became a topic with the foundation of the Gesamtschulen (mixed schools). “Chances for education” and “Talent Research,” “Evaluation” and “Innovation,” “compensatory” and “emancipatory” child-raising became key words leading the discussion. [...] In this flippant way the realization was implemented, the consequence of which whole-day school became the way out of the educational disaster. Locking them up for a longer schoolday became the strategy for satisfaction and motivation – it's absurd.

The prison-like characteristics she sees in contemporary schooling stems from institutional structures that have lost their relationship to reality and are blind to their own contradictions:

Kinder werden sortiert: Sie vermögen sozial nicht zu differenzieren, wenn sie Erwartungen haben, sie sind unreif, wenn sie fragen, anstatt zu antworten, man behauptet, sie seien psychisch behindert, wenn sie dem ausgeübten Schulzwang apatisch oder aggressiv begegnen, man sieht sie als Leistungsverweigerer, wenn sie es nicht prickelnd finden, Diktate zu schreiben oder sich per Aufsatz zu besinnen. Schließlich gelangen sie als Benachteiligte in den Genuss besonderer Maßnahmen, die man als Förderung bezeichnet. Wer will schon begreifen, dass die Mittel der Unterdrückung niemals die Mittel der Förderung sein können. (9)

Children are sorted: they are unable to read social cues when they expect something; they are immature when they ask questions instead of answering them; it is said that they are psychologically handicapped when they react to the compulsory schooling apathically or aggressively; they are seen as rejecting success when they don't find it exciting to write dictation or express themselves in essay form. Finally they are classified as underprivileged when they partake of certain policies described as assistance. When will it be understood that the tools of oppression can never be the tools of advancement.

This “master’s house” argument allows Pick to deconstruct the media frenzy later. If the structural inequities and contradictions of the Hauptschulform are invisible to a wider educated public, then the strategies of resistance developed by the students are illegible. Pick makes two lists about the event. One is a list of the factual material included by the teachers in their letter: doors were kicked in; the repeat offender (*Intensivtäter*) became a role model; adults were treated with aggression, lack of respect and ignorance; garbage cans were used as soccer balls; firecrackers were set off; the curriculum was rejected; objects flew at the faculty; and some teachers only went into

certain classrooms with a cell phone (127). The second list shows how each “fact” was transformed into a scandalous headline: “Jugend trainiert für das Ghetto,” “Schule ist für Migranten ein Kulturschock,” “Die Berliner Terrorschule” and “Angst, Gewalt, blanker Hass, hier herrscht Anarchie” (Youth Trains for the Ghetto, School is a Culture Shock for Migrants, The Berlin Terror School; Fear, Violence, Sheer Hate – Here, Anarchy Rules).⁵ Pick explains the degree to which the media attention further exacerbated the situation at school:

Als die Medien die Schule belagern, ironisieren Schüler die Lage: Sie brüllen: “Massaker, Terror, wir gehen jetzt die Lehrer verprügeln.” “Ein Bild und es gibt eins auf die Fresse.” Eine leere Plastikflasche fliegt auf die Journalistenmeute. Ein Junge beschimpft eine Frau auf Arabisch als Hurentochter, die bespuckt den Jungen daraufhin. Die meisten Schüler befinden sich abgeriegelt hinter dem Schulzaun und rufen der Journaille zu: “Ihr seid die Affen, nicht wir.” Es fliegen Steine. Rütli-Schüler berichten, 70 Euro dafür erhalten zu haben. Ein Papierkorb fliegt aus einem Fenster im dritten Stock. Auch dieser Schüler hat Geld dafür erhalten. (129)

As the media camped out in front of the school, the students ironized the situation: they yelled: “Massacres, terror, now we're going to beat up the teachers.” “One picture and we'll attack.” An empty plastic bottle flies into the crown of journalists. A boy calls a woman 'daughter of a whore' in Arabic, in response, she spits on him. Most of the students find themselves lined up behind the protective fence and yell at the yellow press “You are the monkeys, not us.” Stones fly. Rütli students report that they were paid seventy Euros for throwing them. A trashcan flies out of a third-floor window. This student, too, was paid.

The performative reactions of the students suggest that the journalistic spectacle escalated partly because the journalists were unable to “read” the ironic undertones of

⁵ See Maroldt. “Terror-schule” seems to have become a descriptor that “stuck,” and is used in many articles about the school, even after reforms have been long underway. See Manske, Rabenstein and Oberwittler. Oberwittler’s article mentions the frustrations of students in the past year at being called a “terror school.”

the situation. Taking each and every act performed by the students at its most literal, the journalists let the teachers' letter structure their coverage, seeking confirmation of danger and chaos; even provoking it by enticing the students with payment (Pick 129, Lichterbeck). The students of the school and the new school director eventually called a press conference to ask the media to leave them alone (m.k.).

One of the aims of Pick's book is to relativize the scandal by providing situational, personal and historical contexts in which the school's difficulties are shown to result from more complex problems than simply being a school full of "bad kids." While Pick's ability to contextualize the *Brandbrief's* publication in light of her retirement may make her reading of the immediate situation slightly problematic, her attempts to contextualize the longer history and discursive trends surrounding the affair are quite plausible and offer support for the reading of the *Problemkiez* I offer here. Some points of this discourse will also be taken up in Faroqhi's comic book history of the district.⁶

Pick's long employment at the school provides her with a wealth of anecdotes about both problematic and successful students. Some stories even reproduce the basic storylines that serve as fodder for many of Kelek and Ateş' books: forced marriage (in Pick's account, primarily of Roma, not Muslim, adolescents); male violence and cultures of honor (similar to Kelek's *Die verlorenen Söhne*, Pick paints a picture of violent young

⁶ Publications from the *Bezirksamt*, *Kulturamt* and Museum Neukölln provide support for Pick's historical narrative. See Radde and Gößwald.

men who are often misunderstood, but who still strongly desire to be taken seriously); and the abuse of children from all groups. Pick's emphasis on autobiographical anecdotes serves the mission statement of her book, in which she attempts to describe the interplay between personal experience and institutional structures. But more importantly, she writes, the goal of her book is "den Jugendlichen, die in der veröffentlichten Meinung mehr oder weniger pauschal als gewalttätig, bildungsunfähig, aggressiv, fundamentalistisch, chaotisch beschrieben und angesehen werden, ein Gesicht zu geben" (to give a face to the youth who were portrayed and seen in the public opinion more or less reductively as violent, incapable of being educated, aggressive, fundamentalistic and chaotic, 10). If the Rütli School has become a symbolic imaginary for social decline, Pick takes this symbolism one step further in both her title and her first chapter, which ends with the following sentence printed in bold type: "Die Geschichten aus der Rütli-Schule wiederholen sich in den Schulen dieser Republik" (The stories from the Rütli School are repeated in the schools of this republic, 13). If in some sense Pick's anecdotes reproduce the media discourse following the Rütli Affair, her constant insistence on the inadequacy of the school system and not the schoolchildren is nevertheless an attempt to reframe the discourse and reclaim the dignity and complexity of the lives of her students.

Pick also attempts to extend the historical timeline of the Rütli School to its radical history at the beginning of the 20th century. Characterizing the Rütli School as a

place of innovation and reform before the restrictive policies put into place in 1933, Pick creates a revisionist narrative in this last section that distinguishes the inherently democratic possibilities of education from the restrictive blind spots of educational policy. Pick strongly emphasizes the historical background of the Rütli School as an institution as a way to provide both a counternarrative of the school and a pedagogical narrative that takes the students' desires into account. Her research in this last section of the book draws heavily from a project she undertook with her own students in 1984 in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Rütli School.⁷

The Rütli School affair of 2006 is an event that makes visible the many fissures on the surface of integrationist discourse. Pick's book has a similar function: to make individual studies of students visible, to criticize the inegalitarian structure of the tripartite school system, to relativize the history of the school and to call genuine

⁷ The Neukölln public library at the top of the Arcades shopping center still has a copy of the *Festschrift* produced by the students with a sticker on the cover declaring that copies of the text can be purchased for 5 DM at the school office. Bound with heavy duty staples and a cover of orange construction paper reinforced by clear plastic shelving paper, the *Festschrift* documents the history of the school from 1909 to 1984. The first page of the *Festschrift* is a crisp architectural line drawing of the school buildings which also is the basis for Pick's *Kopfschüsse* cover. (The *Festschrift* project was spearheaded by Pick). After the foreword, the book includes the Rütli Oath (*Rütli-Schwur*), a quote from Schiller's play *Wilhelm Tell*. The oath begins with the call to solidarity Pick so openly includes in her own pedagogical ideology against the tripartite school system: "Wir wollen sein ein einzig Volk von Brüdern, / In keiner Not uns trennen und Gefahr" (We want to be a single *Volk* of brothers / let no anguish separate us). The ways in which the *Hauptschulform* performs the act of social division between classes and ethnic background thus contradicts the very first notions of the Rütli Oath. The *Grußwort* from the then-Senator for Schools, Youth and Sports, Dr. Hanna-Renate Laurien, is also ironic in the light of the controversy to come. The *Grußwort* references the history of the Rütli School as a progressive, innovative school in the twenties and thirties. The school was then what was known as a *Lebensgemeinschaftsschule*, a school that offered coeducational classes, no religious instruction (at that time, most schools in Germany were confessional), and a curriculum determined by the abilities of the students to create self-directed projects. See also Radde.

pedagogical reformers to action. Pick also manages to perform contradictory maneuvers simultaneously. By offering us individual stories of youth that are often hopelessly tragic (eighth graders sold into marriage by their families, children punished by being locked into cellars for weeks at a time, or children forced to work from home or cover up their parent's alcoholism), Pick implicates many kinds of social problems which can and do develop and thus partly perpetuates a portrayal of the Neuköllner *Hauptschule* as a place of social decay and isolation. That the location of Neukölln and the structure of the *Hauptschule* as an institution work together to create a particularly crass portrait of decay is commented upon by Pick, however, in that she criticizes the *Hauptschule* and the selection of students for specific tracks early in life as barriers to employment and civic participation.

Contrary to her colleagues, however, she does not attribute this to one immigrant group by ascribing to them essentializing characteristics of violence, ignorance, fundamentalism and chaos. This does not mean that she never essentializes her "characters." One anecdote, entitled "Ölköpfe" (oilheads), the slang description for youth who style their hair with copious amounts of hair product, walks the line between racism, factual reporting and a problematic self-portrayal as one of the few white women who understands these boys and respects them. There are other anecdotes that would have the politically correct tearing out their hair at the way in which Pick's personal practice is pragmatic and street-wise rather than anti-racist or socially just. But

her overarching emphasis on the inequalities inherent in the school system, her refusal to categorize all of her students as violent because of a Turkish or Arab background, and her commitment to sharing stories of students from all backgrounds, including troubled ethnic German students, protects her from succumbing to the blatant racialization present in the first paragraph of the *Brandbrief*.

Finally, Pick reaches into the past in order to present a counter-example of a successful and innovative pedagogy once found in Neukölln. In so doing, Pick offers the possibility of a continuity of place (since a continuity of time and social space are impossible). This continuity of place works to contain time in that this present moment, like others, will also eventually end. The historical narrative offered by Pick becomes a possibility for the life of the school to change once again after this moment has passed.⁸ By the writing of this dissertation in 2012, this difficulty has passed. The Rütli School is now a model integrated secondary school with a waiting list (b.z., kö).

⁸An interesting component of Pick's book is the frustration with the reforms that took place after the spectacle of 2006 which were successful in making the Rütli School, now an integrated secondary school, one of the most highly requested schools with a now limited number of spots for students. Pick critiques the branding initiatives that accompanied the development of the student's own fashion line (called *RütliWear*), and of the initiatives that brought artists and other guests into the school for glitzy short-term projects. She describes a musical project designed by 45 young Americans and students at the Rütli School: "Ein Workshop führte Rütli-Schüler (für jeden mussten 49 Euro abgedrückt werden) mit 45 jungen Amerikanern zwischen 18 und 22 Jahren zu einem Musical zusammen. Die "Young Americans" sollten bei Schülern wohnen. Weil sich nur acht Familien fanden, mussten die Kollegen einspringen – dieses Projekt musste gelingen. [...]" 900 students, parents and journalists attended the performance, which was also reported on in television news, however Pick criticizes the fact that former students of the school were not invited, 25% of the faculty and 10% of the students did not participate. Pick writes sarcastically, imitating the dialect of the neighborhood: "Die *Abwendschau* [Abendschau] und die *Mottenpost* [Morgenpost] berichteten begeistert. Operation gelungen, der Patient denkt positiv" (The "Don't Look News" [pun on the evening news] and the "Moth Post" [pun on Morning Post] report enthusiastically. Operation successful, the patient is optimistic, 135).

4.2 Weltreiche erblühten und fielen

If Pick's narrative attempts to revise an integrationist metaphor that denies the existence of structural inequality and barriers to civic participation, Anna Faroqhi and Dorothea Kolland have created a comic book that reframes what purpose immigration serves. By extending the historical timeline to include 650 years of Neuköllner history, Faroqhi and Kolland move beyond the argumentative constraints of immigration as a problem created by guestworker programs. This longer history also makes the demand to integrate a moot point: this arc of immigration history always includes conflict, but also always bends toward assimilation.

Weltreiche erblühten und fielen (Empires Rose and Fell) is a graphic novel commissioned by the *Kulturamt Neukölln* (Neukölln Cultural Bureau), which Kolland directs. Published in 2010 by Dağyeli Verlag, a local publisher on the Karl-Marx-Straße, this comics history of Neukölln was developed in honor of the 650th anniversary of the district. Kolland described the process as follows during an interview with together with Faroqhi conducted in 2011:

DK: Und das war natürlich der Hintergrund, dass ich den Schwerpunkt für die 650 Jahr Feier einfach anders gesetzt hatte. Dass ich ihn gesetzt hatte als Datum und als Anlass und als Themenschwerpunkt die Geschichte Neuköllns den heutigen Neuköllnern näher zu bringen. Und die heutigen Neuköllner bestehen, insbesondere die Nord-Neuköllner, bestehen mehrheitlich nicht mehr aus Menschen nur deutscher Herkunft. Die sind von ganz vielen Ländern, aber auch aus anderen deutschen Regionen hier nach Neukölln gekommen. Und sind nicht diejenigen, die so bildungsmäßig, also alle 'ne Hochschulniveau hätten oder so, die wissenschaftliche Werke lesen. Und ich fand es wichtig: einmal versuchen Geschichte zu vermitteln – also Wissen über Geschichte zu vermitteln – nicht

einfach über'n Hochglanzding hinzulegen, um Geschichte zu vermitteln, und zum zweiten, einen besonderen Schwerpunkt zu setzen auf die, die heute in Neukölln leben.

And that, of course, was the reason why I simply set the focus for the 650-year celebration differently. I set it as a date and as a justification for and as a thematic focus to bring the history of Neukölln to contemporary Neuköllners. And the majority of contemporary Neuköllners no longer comprises people of only German origins. They have come to Neukölln from many different countries, but also from other German regions. And they are not all at the college level and they don't all read academic books. And I found it important: first to try to really transmit history – i.e. knowledge about history – not just to lay it out in a kind of highly polished thing that teaches history, and second, to set a specific focus on those who live in Neukölln today.

Kollard describes the choice of comics as a format that was designed to make the history of the district accessible to those who currently live in and lay claim to the district: „die, die heute in Neukölln leben.“ Kollard describes this population as mostly those without a German background, but also mentions an internal immigration – of people from other regions within Germany – who are also moving to the district. The commonality across groups, according to Kollard, is found in the lack of higher education – thus the attempt to make this historical narrative accessible to all residents. The traditional practice of publishing a *Festschrift* for the anniversary of the city was discarded in favor of a comic in order to be both innovative and to fulfill the mission of the *Kulturamt* by serving the district's constituents, which include, as she says, “Menschen mit nicht ausreichenden Sprachfähigkeiten des Aufnahmelandes” (people with insufficient linguistic capabilities

in the language of the receiving country, LiMA).⁹ The choice of the form of the comic was influenced strongly by the French and Belgian comic schools, including Marjane Satrapi, as well as through Kolland's encounters with comics in Toronto and her experience of Canada as a diverse and “offenes Land” (open country, LiMA). Her own fond memories of the comics that taught history in the German Democratic Republic were also a point of reference (Faroqhi/Kolland).

Various possibilities for the cooperation were discussed before Anna Faroqhi came on board. Faroqhi, a film-maker who had donated a cartoon (*Zeichenfilm*) to the Museum Neukölln, fit Kolland's necessary qualifications of the politically-engaged artist, storyteller and Neukölln resident. For Kolland, there were also several narrative threads which she wanted to incorporate into the narrative, some of which coincide with the basic characteristics of a *Problemkiez*: for instance, that Neukölln was and is a poor district (LiMA). Kolland cites several historical moments as support for the idea that Neukölln was always economically disadvantaged, including: the ravaging of the village during the Thirty Years War, the occupation by Napoleon, and the time of extreme population growth and lack of infrastructure at the turn of the twentieth-century. According to tables included in the 600th anniversary *Festschrift: Rixdorf-Neukölln: Die geschichtliche Entwicklung eines Berliner Bezirks*, the population increased

⁹The *Festschrift* of 1960 (for the 600th anniversary of the city) is a dry economic and political history of the district from the 14th to the 20th century. See Schultze.

ten-fold over the forty-year timespan between 1871 and 1899. In 1871 the population was 8,147; by 1899 that number was 80,000 (Schultze 160).

The other throughline Kolland hoped to emphasize was the way immigration was an important force in shaping the district: “ohne Zuwanderung,” Kolland declared, “ist Neukölln nicht zu verstehen” (Without immigration Neukölln can't be understood, LiMA). From the Bohemian Protestant refugees of the eighteenth-century to the textile workers with “Manpower und Wissen” (manpower and knowledge) who came in the nineteenth-century, as well as the increased flow of immigrants to Neukölln after 1975 when the districts of Wedding, Mitte and Kreuzberg were closed to new immigrants, changing patterns of immigration have always defined and transformed the district.¹⁰

The primary source material and design for the comic was developed by a team which included an historian, a researcher, a graphic artist, Kolland as editor and Faroqhi as author. The premise of the book lays an autobiographical frame on top of the historical narrative of the past 650 years of *Heimatkunde*. Faroqhi's personal development is driven by her historical research and family life, which anchors her to the place of the *Kiez*. Faroqhi, her husband Haim, and her children Prosper, Emily and Sita are the only constant characters throughout the text, and also serve as foils for the historical action. Faroqhi's family also complicates the stereotypical association of Neukölln with the two largest immigrant communities in the district: those with Arab or Turkish backgrounds.

¹⁰ See Schultze.

Faroqhi describes herself as having “Muslim-Indian forefathers.” She then remarks critically upon her being able to “pass” for white while looking into a mirror which reflects a different version of identity than the one offered by outside appearance:



Figure 1: “I myself have Muslim-Indian forefathers, but you can’t see any of that anymore.” (11)

The power of autobiographical narrative to combine both singularity and representative capacity is reflected most clearly in the cartoon style of her human figures. Scott McCloud, the astute graphic novelist and comics theorist, sees great potential in the reduced, simple facial sketches common to cartoons. Faroqhi’s reflection in the mirror, for example, is nothing but a collection of strategically placed dots and lines: two curves for eyebrows, two dots for eyes, a squiggled nose and another small curve for a mouth. But this simplicity, according to McCloud, both mirrors the general awareness we have of our own features and prompts identification on behalf of the

reader: "Thus, when you look at a photo or realistic drawing of a face – you see it as the face of *another*. But when you enter the world of the *cartoon* – you see yourself" (36). This visual invitation to identification is transformative: "The cartoon is a *vacuum* into which our *identity* and *awareness* are *pulled*...an *empty shell* that we inhabit which *enables* us to travel in *another realm*. We don't just *observe* the cartoon, we *become* it!" (italics in original, 36). The capacity for identification with Faroqhi's comics is different from the identification with the autobiographical texts I analyzed in chapters one and two – although a reader may identify with parts of Ateş' and Kelek's texts, the concrete photographic portrait is both an objectification of the author's image and a distancing measure that prevents the kind of identification offered by Faroqhi's narrative. The photographs on the covers are too specific, too precise for the reader to forget that they are reading someone else's story. Even the historical figures of Faroqhi's cartoon, who anachronistically share space with Faroqhi and her family, are drawn in a similar cartoony style, inviting the reader to identify with characters across time and space.

Faroqhi's husband, Haim, is a first-generation Jewish migrant from Israel, however, his migration history is also multifaceted (11). His family migrated in the 1950s from Morocco to Israel, where they were forced to give up their assets at the Israeli border. He grew up in poverty in Israel, describes the Moroccan-Jewish community as more or less "integrated" into Israeli society, and yet flees to Germany by way of India after serving in the Israeli military and surviving the death of one of his brothers (40).

The various experiences of migration by the two adult members of the family, as well as the ways in which these experiences are passed onto their children (Sita's name, for example, is a reminder of Faroqhi's migration history that threatens to disappear visually, 77) serve as a counter narrative to the idea that guestworkers – primarily Turkish – represent the only experience of migration to the Federal Republic of Germany.

The question of Haim's migration is instigated by his 14-year-old son, Prosper. While playing a car-racing game with his father, Prosper asks why Haim came to Germany (40). Haim's answer is the complex narrative about migration I described earlier. The comic book image which describes Haim's complicated passage through time and place is an excellent example of the interaction in comics between word and picture; of what David Carrier calls "the nature of mental representation" in comics (44). The first page of "Exilanten" is a four-line series of images. The first line consists of the title of the chapter in strong, black letters. The second line is made up of two images – the sight of Prosper and Haim playing computer games from behind – which suggests the continuity from the previous page where Prosper and his friends are playing a similar game drawn from the same perspective: the repeated "reverse shot" angle serves as a version of the cross-fade common in film. The second and third lines of the page suggest a different kind of sequential movement through visual elements use a spatial format to illustrate both time and movement. Throughout the comic, Faroqhi is

consistent in the way in which she chooses to frame her visual elements. Historical factual narrative sticks to the traditional comic strip form of straight bounded lines around each comic panel with the accompanying gutter separating each image from the other. Text in these images is often traditional third-person narrative excerpts, which are also bounded in straight lines and ninety-degree angles. Speech bubbles, which represent the direct speech of the historical figures and the direct speech of her family, are rectangular shapes with curved corners – boundaries which are slightly more relaxed than the severity of the historical narrative's ninety-degree angles. Depictions of her autobiographical family life, i.e. drawings of present-day action, are drawn completely without framing, as we see here in the passage in Figure 2 where Haim and Prosper converse. Dream sequences or imagined historical fantasies are bounded by wavy lines which approximate the film technique of blurred fades into memory sequences and/or fantasy.

In *The Aesthetics of Comics*, Carrier suggests that in order “[t]o understand a picture, we must *move* the depicted scene” (50). One of Carrier's driving questions in his pursuit of understanding how scenes in comics “move” is the question of narrative: how do single images work together to generate narrative continuity? (50). Carrier suggests that our narrative when reading comics is often “jumpy” like “a movie shown with the projector not quite in sync” (51) – but also sees the way of narrating in comics as similar to those found in novels (53).

EXILANTEN



Figure 2: "Exiles." (40)

The moments before and after each picture, which fill – invisibly and silently – the space of the gutter between images are one way in which traditional visual narratives allow us to “move” the scene (53); and Carrier locates the “craft of comics” as “making such transitions happen quickly enough that they do not appear static and boring, but without such large gaps as to make the action seem jumpy” (53). McCloud calls this effect “closure,” as reader involvement is required to complete the movements implied by a sequence of panels.

In this sequence, Faroqhi uses several techniques to provide closure and “move” the narrative. While dialogue – often in the form of questions – help Faroqhi to create plot and exposition, it is often the juxtaposition of two different movements in time – the present and the past – that help us to “move” the scene. In Figure 2, for example, Haim's complex migration to Germany is represented in one frame, bounded and subdivided in wavy lines. The tripartite picture, which moves from left to right through three countries (Germany, India, and Israel) uses stereotypes to make each country instantly recognizable, from sausage and Mercedes-Benz automobiles (“Germany”) and Hindu architecture (“India”) to a person standing in front of a tank (“Israel”). A younger version of Haim, who runs toward Germany as he looks back both on the Israeli tank and lets his automatic rifle fall in front of the temple gives our eye direction, prompting us to read for memory (his gaze is behind him) and chronology (he runs toward

Germany), which are both conveyed in a single spatial format different from the other panels on the page.

Haim's expression, a single line representing a frown, combined with his running, is deathly serious. The three-panel dream sequence, however, is slightly comical, as Haim appears to be running away from a tank and towards an outstretched fork holding a warm (pork) sausage. This back and forth movement is highly effective because of the condensed nature of the word/picture communication. The two-panel dream sequence continues in the first panel of the third line, and roots Haim in his current home, Berlin. In front of a much larger picture of the wrapped *Reichstag*, Haim tells Prosper that he met his mother (his first wife) in Berlin, and comments that Prosper was soon "on the way." The static position of Haim and Prosper's mother in front of the *Reichstag*, once again in a "reverse shot" framing, stops the movement of the dream and roots the characters in their current city. The recourse to place allows Faroqhi to move the scene by jumping from present to past. The multiple frame panel smooths and condenses the "jumpy" quality successfully enough to create an aesthetically pleasing movement from panel to panel, and brings us back to the present conversation between father and son.

When Prosper protests, exclaiming "But you're a Jew! Why did it have to be Germany?", Haim suggests that they take a walk. The explicit movement of Haim and Prosper through the place of their Neukölln neighborhood makes use of a device

commonly used by Faroqhi to make the neighborhood visible while literally making the scene and narrative “move.” The characters, both inhabitants and documenters, wander through Neukölln much like a Baudelairean *voyeur*. Their walks are not only a way of getting the visual narrative to move, they are also a way to make place. Walking through the district introduces both the reader and the characters to the architecture of Neukölln, the memorials of specific historical events placed in space, and the difference “faces” of Neukölln, which are represented by the various *Zuwanderer* (immigrants) who literally wander through the panels.



Figure 3: “Christiana W., born 1963 in Portloko in Sierra Leone. The place was destroyed by rebels who murdered or drove people out. Christiana fled in 1982 from the atrocities of the political conflicts. She had to leave her daughter behind. Not until nine years later, in 1991 as the civil war broke out, was she able to bring the child and her [Christiana’s] four siblings to Berlin. Christiana runs a restaurant on Boddin Street.” (43)

Making place is one way of contesting negative discourses about Neukölln. As

Faroqhi states in the interview conducted together with Kolland, one of her aims while

writing this comic was to value multiple, individual stories deemed unimportant by the broader public:

AF: Für mich war dieser Comic ein Finden von vielen Kleingeschichten, denn genau darum ging es ja, diese Geschichten zu erzählen oder zu finden, von den Menschen, die keine Geschichte hinterlassen. [Es gibt niemanden –af], der die [ihre Geschichten] aufschreibt, weil sie halt ohne Bedeutung sind oder ihre Wertgegenstände nichts wert sind, und dann auf den Müll kommen anstatt ins Museum. [Aus der Arbeit mit dem Comic hat sich ergeben, dass wir (mein Mann Haim Peretz und ich) in die Schulen gehen und die Kinder auffordern, ihre Geschichten selbst im Comic wiederzugeben. Das ist wie Feldforschung –af], die als logische Konsequenz meiner Meinung nach auf [so ein Projekt wie den Comic] folgt. Wir hören unglaubliche Geschichten. Meistens ist es ja so – wir kriegen die Kinder ja nur geknackt, weil wir irgendwann anfangen, individuell zu arbeiten – wir sind die Lehrerin, Haim und ich, drei Menschen – und gehen von Tisch zu Tisch und sagen, "Was? Du hast doch nichts aufgeschrieben? Jetzt erzähl mal, was hast Du zu erzählen?" [...] Ich glaube, es ist wahnsinnig wichtig, das ernst zu nehmen, dieses [...] ganz Kleine, schwer zu Sehende und die Kostbarkeit all dieser vielen Leben und all dieser vielen ungesehenen Leben. Ich weiß nicht gar nicht, wo ich damit hin will, aber im Augenblick ist mein Drang, selber was zu machen, minimiert, weil ich das so unglaublich finde, dieses Große, was da an Geschichten um mich herum ist. (Faroqhi/Kolland)

AF: For me this comic a way to find many little stories, because that's exactly what it was about, to tell or find these stories from people who don't leave a history behind. No one writes their stories because they are without meaning or are worthless, and they turn up in the trash instead of in a museum.[From the work on the comic what arose was that we (my husband Haim Peretz und I) go into schools and ask the students to portray their own stories in comics. It's like fieldwork, -af] which in my opinion is the logical consequence that follows a project like the comic. We hear unbelievable stories. Mostly it's like – we can only reach the children because we start at some point to work individually – we are the teacher, Haim and I, three people – and we go from table to table and say, "What? You haven't written anything yet? Tell me, what do you have to say?" [...] I think it's insanely important to take this seriously, these very small stories that are difficult to see, and the preciousness of all these many lives and all these mostly unseen lives. I don't know where I'm going with this, but right now my drive to do something myself is diminished, because I find it so incredible, this greatness, [the] kinds of stories that are all around me.

For Faroqhi, the notion of a *Problemkiez* or *Parallelgesellschaft* where one narrative – defensive isolation and violent rejection of the majority – repeats itself, imprinting and marking all residents as the same kind of other, does not exist. Rather, a multitude of valuable narrative preciosities (*Kostbarkeiten*) is present, each shaping daily life in this place in their own way. According to Kolland, this allows the comic to be both complex and to provide a narrative continuity to immigrant experience throughout this 650-year historical period:

DK: Und deshalb auch sehr bewusst diese Setzung des Comics, als Versuch in dem Fall hier die Geschichte des Bezirks auch in seiner ganzen Komplexität - und der Comic ist sehr komplex – unsere ganzen Themen, die er anspricht. Hier-also da so eine Brücke zu bauen, damit die Menschen, die hier heute auch arm leben, merken, sie sind hier schon richtig, und sie sind auch gut aufgehoben hier, weil Armut und Not und Migration, das war schon immer ein Thema hier, dieses Bezirks. Und er hat es auch – wenn auch nicht immer wunderbar – aber er hat's auch immer irgendwie angenommen und ist damit umgegangen, sei das jetzt mit den Böhmen, mit den ja, mit den vielen, die dann 1900 nach Berlin strömten, mit den Atheisten, die die Christen angenommen haben, und weiß der Teufel was. Also, das ist – ja – das ist eine wichtige Sache. (Faroqhi/Kolland)

DK: And that's why the use of comics was a conscious choice, as an attempt in this case to tell the story of the district in its entire complexity – and the comic is very complex – all of our themes featured in the comic are complex. To build a bridge here, or rather there, so that the people who live in poverty notice that they are in the right place, and that they are in good hands, because poverty and need and migration, that was always the topic here in this district. And the district also has – even when not especially well – but it always had somehow taken it upon itself and has coped with poverty, whether with the Bohemians, with the – ja, with the many [people] who flowed into Berlin in 1900, with the aetheists accepted by the Christians and the devil knows what else. That – that is a really important thing.



Figure 4: Examples of the stories that surround Faroqhi: on this page you can see three stories of individual residents appearing as subtext or background for the primary action of Anna's children playing. The taxi cab connects with the thick rectangular box in the top right telling the story of Mehmet, whose story is introduced earlier on an earlier panel when Anna and Emily ride past the same taxi on their bikes. The neighbors at the sandbox each have their own stories. Berfin, a forty-two year old woman who sits with Anna on the bench, is watching after Yüksel, the one-year-old who is at the playground with Berfin while his mother was rushed to the hospital due to a miscarriage. (59)

She later articulates a revisionist approach to the district, to see the richness of experience and difference as potential rather than problematic:

DK: [...] wir haben Leute, die nach Neukölln gekommen sind, da waren Nachfolger der Böhmen dabei, war auch einer aus der DDR dabei, aber überwiegend war das die ganze Welt, mit der Überlegung, die Potenziale, die diese Menschen bergen, die aus aller Welt nach Neukölln gekommen sind, diese Potenziale hier fruchtbar – *sichtbar* – zu machen, und fruchtbar zu machen. Ihnen wirklich als Potenzial und nicht als Problem. Die Politik macht das immer als Problem fest. Und als Defizit. (Faroqhi)

DK: And we had people who came to Neukölln who were descendants of the Bohemians there, someone from the GDR too, but mostly it was the entire world, with the thought that these these people who have come to Neukölln from all over the world have potential, to make this potential fruitful – *visible* – here, and to make it fruitful [was our intention]. To [see] them really as potential and not as a problem. Politics always makes it into a problem. And a deficit.

The ability to create meaning by passing through space is also seen in the video *Weißes Ghetto*, which – in concert with Faroqhi's comic book – makes the implications of the practice of making place by revising narratives of the narrative makes the rhetoric of integration more clear.

4.3 “White Ghetto”

The discourse of a parallel society in Germany which describes minority groups as willfully separate from and often antagonistic to the mainstream describes a conflict between two groups simultaneously attempting to make place. The separation between the groups allows multiple kinds of place-making activities to exist, but only side-by-side. The definition of parallel is of two lines which never meet; parallel societies are

thus portrayed as societies forever separated by incommensurable distance.¹¹ This understanding immigration as a process that creates social spaces of exclusion – and even more importantly, the counterpart to this argument, which implies that mainstream German society is an impenetrable space for immigrants, a space which they cannot access and will never be able to shape – is a politicized understanding of location that makes coexistence impossible. Access to space is the prerequisite for place-making; place-making happens by living and moving through space. Using metaphors and words that limit our ability to envision possibilities for access and contact limits our visionary capacity.

The Kanak Attak video *Weißes Ghetto* confronts these contradictions head on. In this video, reporters for “Kanak TV,” occasionally called “Kanakstas” [to be read like “gangstas”], pose standard questions about immigration to white residents of the Cologne neighborhood of Lindenthal: Schotten sich die Deutschen hier ab? Denken Sie, dass das hier ein weißes Ghetto ist? Was würden Sie vorschlagen, damit sich die Deutschen besser in die Kölner Gesellschaft integrieren können? (Are the Germans isolating themselves here? Do you think this is a white ghetto? What would you suggest so that the Germans can integrate themselves better into Cologne society?) The interviewees react with a mix of confusion, indignation, defensiveness and occasionally,

¹¹ For an excellent – and perhaps the only – work on “incommensurable difference” and immigration in Germany, see Chin, *Guestworker*, 141-190.

good humor. Only some notice the inversion of the discourse which takes the majority population as its target. Others hear only the discursive constants that they recognize, and immediately react against the inversion, deflecting the discourse away from themselves and towards immigrants. Often referenced in academic literature as an example of everything from progressive multiculturalism to a way to bring voice to Bhaba's classic subaltern figure of the silent Turkish *Gastarbeiter*, Kanak Attak's video has not yet been explored in detail.¹² What I show in this section is how "Weisses Ghetto" contests the portrayal of mainstream German spaces as "open": the white ghetto is just as ethnically homogenous and insular as the immigrant communities depicted by the trope of a parallel society. *Kanak Attack* thus subverts the trope of a parallel society by rendering it absurd.

Kanak Attack is a performative political organization which produces academic theory, performance art and political interventions, but which steadfastly rejects any and all strategies linked to identity politics. Their 1998 manifesto declares (in German, English, French and Turkish versions):

Kanak Attak ist der selbstgewählte Zusammenschluß verschiedener Leute über die Grenzen zugeschriebener, quasi mit in die Wiege gelegter "Identitäten" hinweg. Kanak Attak fragt nicht nach dem Paß oder nach der Herkunft, sondern wendet sich gegen die Frage nach dem Paß und der Herkunft. Unser kleinster gemeinsamer Nenner besteht darin, die Kanakisierung bestimmter Gruppen von Menschen durch rassistische Zuschreibungen mit allen ihren sozialen, rechtlichen und politischen Folgen anzugreifen. ("Kanak Attak")

¹²See Firat and Stehle.

'Kanak Attak' is a community of different people from diverse backgrounds who share a commitment to eradicate racism from German society. Kanak Attak is not interested in questions about your passport or heritage, in fact it challenges such questions in the first place. Kanak Attak challenges the conservative and liberal orthodoxy that good 'race relations' is [sic] simply a matter of tighter immigration control. Our common position consists of an attack against the 'Kanakisation' of specific groups of people through racist ascriptions which denies [sic] people their social, legal and political rights. Kanak Attak is therefore anti-nationalist, anti-racist and rejects every single form of identity politics, as supported by ethnic absolutist thinking. (Translation by Kanak Attak)

The founding text of German critical whiteness studies, *Mythen, Masken, Subjekte:*

Kritische Weißseinsforschung in Deutschland, was published by Maureen Maisha Eggers,

Grada Kilomba, Peggy Piesche and Susan Arndt in 2005. The foreword to this volume

by Fatima El-Tayeb begins with an analysis of "Weißes Ghetto," marking this video by

Kanak Attak as a performative engagement with German whiteness:

Als im Jahr 2002 Kölner Kanak Attak Aktivisten dem 'Weißen Ghetto' Köln-Lindenthal einen Besuch abstatteten, stießen sie auf wenig Verständnis. Das gleichnamige Kanak TV Video dokumentiert die verwirrten bis aggressiven Reaktionen der 'bio-deutschen' BewohnerInnen, die von den Kanakstas über ihre mangelnde Integration und Selbst-Isolierung befragt wurden. Das Video entlarvt auf simple aber effektive Weise unhinterfragte Machtstrukturen, indem es die Mehrheit, die 'Normalen' zum Objekt des kritisch-ethnologischen Blicks macht. Die ironische Umkehrung des Integrationdiskurses legt den Fokus auf Weißsein als markierter Kategorie und gibt der Minderheit die Repräsentationsmacht, auf einmal ist es die dominante Mehrheit, deren Verhalten kritisch an etablierten Normen gemessen wird. Eine Strategie, an die mehrheitsdeutsche ZuschauerInnen offensichtlich nicht gewöhnt sind und die ablehnende Reaktionen auch bei denjenigen auslöst, die sich als sensibilisiert in Rassismusfragen empfinden: die Benennung 'rassischer' Unterschiede wird als Tabubruch empfunden, als umgekehrter Rassismus oder unangemessene Übernahme eines aggressiven US-amerikanischen Rassendiskurses. Stattdessen erscheint eine so genannte 'Farbenblindheit', ein 'ich sehe keine Unterschiede, für mich sind alle Menschen gleich' als politisch korrekte, kaum anzugreifende anti-

rassistische Haltung. Es ist eben dieser liberale Diskurs, der es verbietet, die Position der dominanten Mehrheit zu relativieren, indem die Parameter ihrer Dominanz benannt werden. Rassismus als kritisiertes Phänomen bleibt so gebunden an und bestimmend für die Existenz von People of Color. (7)

When the Cologne Kanak Attak activists visited the Cologne-Lindenthal white ghetto in 2002, they found little understanding. The Kanak TV video of the same name documents the confused to aggressive reactions of the “bio-German” residents who were questioned by the Kanakstas about their lack of integration and self-isolation. The video reveals in a simple and effective way unquestioned structures of power by turning the majority, the “normal” people, into an object of the critical-ethnographic gaze. The ironic inversion of the discourse of integration lays the focus on whiteness as a marked category and gives the minority the power of representation; suddenly it is the dominant majority whose behavior is measured critically by established norms. This is a strategy which most of the German viewers are apparently not used to. It also elicits defensive reactions from those who think they are sensitized in questions of racism: the naming of “racist” difference is understood as breaking a taboo, as reverse racism, or as an inappropriate assumption of an aggressive US-American discourse of race. Instead of this, a so-called colorblindness appears, a “I see no differences, for me all people are equal” as the politically correct, an anti-racist attitude that is difficult to criticize. It is just this liberal discourse that prohibits relativizing the position of the dominant majority by naming the parameters of their discourse. Racism in this form remains a critical phenomenon bound to and decisive for the lives of people of color.

The first interview questions posed in the “Weißes Ghetto” video have two aims: one, to immediately relativize the position of the dominant majority, als El-Tayib points out; and two, to define the space of the ghetto as one of exclusion. After an “exotic” theme song at the beginning of the video, where drums and other tonal percussion instruments create a hectic beat to footage of German supermarkets and street scenes featuring

whites,¹³ the video begins abruptly with a fade in from the montage with music to a street interview. The Kanak TV interviewer, who is offscreen, asks an older white man how they have managed to keep Lindenthal so free of foreigners. The man, who has since been smiling, pauses, thinks, and makes a face of confusion, distorting his lips and opening his eyes wide. He answers in good humor colloquially: “Schwere Frage, ne?” (Difficult question, huh?) The video then immediately cuts to a Kanaksta posing a follow-up question to a late middle-aged police officer: “Womit hat das was zu tun?” (What are the reasons for this?) The police officer, in the full green and beige uniform of the German police, including the standard white cap bearing a bronzed coat of arms on the front, reacts without understanding the irony of the question and in monotone: “An dem positiven Sinne, dass es hier noch relative ordentlich zugeht, ein gut situierter Schutzbereich ist” (In the positive sense that things here run relatively appropriately, it's a well-situated area of protection). The third question, posed to two middle-aged men and a younger Kanaksta who is seen in the frame, is short and sweet: “Schotten sich die Deutschen hier ab?” (Do the Germans isolate themselves here?) One of the older man replies definitively: “Nein.”

The expository function of these three questions, in rapid succession, mirrors the discourse of parallel societies and ghettos by performing a spatial politics which works

¹³ I have chosen to reproduce the racialized terms of the video itself in this part of my analysis, partly because it then allows me to describe the people featured in the frame as they are portrayed by the video editors without having to revert to assumptions about national origins that mirror discussions about ethnicity in Germany. My two categories here will be “white” and “Kanaksta.”

to define the space of the Lindenthal ghetto as foreigner-free (ausländer-frei), to characterize the space as one of order and disciplinary power (seen in the figure of the policeman and his unironic statements about order), and to provoke the white population by posing an aggressive question to which (I argue) it is expected that those interviewed will react defensively (Schotten sich die Deutschen hier ab?). The abrupt, jumpy and accelerated editing style also alerts us to how this introductory section attempts to define the space, as if the editors had drawn swift, dark lines (represented by the sharp cuts) around a spatial form, delimiting the object of their observation quickly to a certain population: white, primarily male, middle-aged. The swift strokes define the space; "Ausländer-frei" (foreigner-free) characterizes the space as exclusive; the white male subjects to which these questions are posed become representatives of the white majority who are relativized through the recording of their spontaneous reactions.

The next part of the video then allows the Kanakstas the opportunity to subversively participate in making Lindenthal a place, i.e. by taking the liberty to define this neighborhood as a "white ghetto." They pass through the space, and in their interactions with local inhabitants, they participate in making place – here, in creating a "ghetto" by inscribing this marker onto the neighborhood. A different Kanaksta poses the next question, slightly longer, to a white woman passing by:

KANAKSTA: Wie finden Sie es hier im weißen Ghetto? (How do you like it here in the white ghetto?)

WHITE WOMAN: Im was? (In what?)

KANAKSTA: (*Spells out the syllables*). Im wei-ßen Ghet-to. (In the whi-ite ghet-to.)
(*Turns to the camera, spells.*) G-H-E-T-T-O.

WHITE WOMAN: Wie sich das schreibt, weiß ich. (I know how it's spelled.)

The inability of the woman to understand the modifying adjective (*weißes* Ghetto), followed by the insistence of the Kanaksta on “ghetto” instead of “white,” which incites the woman's defensive reaction to being infantilized, is an example of what El-Tayib describes as “dieser liberale Diskurs, der es verbietet, die Position der dominanten Mehrheit zu relativieren, indem die Parameter ihrer Dominanz benannt werden” (this liberal discourse that prohibits relativizing the position of the dominant majority by naming the parameters of their discourse). Ghetto, although rejected by the white woman, is not actually the root of the misunderstanding – rather, the woman does not understand the word “weiß” (white), does not understand herself as the subject being “hailed” in an Althusserian sense. This interaction thus works to resist and create distance between her understanding of her subjectivity as white, and her participation in the counterdiscourse of the Kanak TV project. This defensive reaction marks clearly for us how the Kanakstas have been able to shift – at least momentarily – the balance of power typically associated with rhetoric about integration.

White women are often featured as those subjects most “spooked” and confused by the questions posed by the Kanakstas. One younger white woman laughs throughout her answer, and responds to a similar question that she is integrated, she has even lived in shared housing with “drei Ausländer” (three foreigners) and tells the interviewer that

his question is silly (“ich finde das eine sehr doofe Frage”).¹⁴ One older woman responds to the question with stuttering responses and a long pause during which she looks away from the camera:

KANAKSTA: Was würden Sie vorschlagen, damit die Deutschen sich in die Kölner Gesellschaft besser integrieren können? (What would you suggest so that the Germans can better integrate themselves in to Cologne society?)

OLDER WOMAN: Die-die-wie, mo- mo ment mal, also. Die Deutschen?! (*Pause, looks away from the camera*) Ich denke, wir sind integriert?! (The – the – what, wait a minute, hold on. The Germans?! . . . I think we are integrated?!)

This confusion marks the destabilizing effect of the Kanakstas activism, in that these subjects – with their halting, partly insecure, partly astonished reactions – understand and participate in the Kanakstas’ project. These two women take the question at face value, understanding the ironic inversion. Although they may defend themselves against the accusation that they participate in the exclusionary mechanisms of segregation (the woman who laughs responds to the question by stating that she is well-integrated, and yet calls her roommates [!] “foreigners”), they are affected by the project and show this reaction in their stuttering and giggling, their pauses and glances away from the gaze of the Kanak TV camera.

White men often to respond with definitive answers, or do not notice the inversion of the question at all. Younger men often laugh and agree with the reporter; older men are more defiant. The most brilliant clip in the entire video, I think, is a shot of

¹⁴For another analysis of this scene, see Stehle 62-63.

an older man, moustached, wearing a typically German long cardigan and polo shirt.

The video cuts to the man saying, in thick Kölsch (Cologne dialect):

OLDER MAN: Et liegt an denne, liegt an denne, weil sie sich nicht, inde- (*pause*) anpassen wollen. (It's up to them, up to them, because they don't, inte- (*pause*) they don't assimilate).

KANAKSTA: Wie müssen sie sich denn anpassen? (How do they have to assimilate? [This question appears to have been recorded in editing over the original soundtrack. - jsc])

OLDER MAN: Die deutsche Sprache. (The German language).

KANAKSTA: [unintelligible]

OLDER MAN: Die deutsche Sprache. Es gibt viele, die hier schon vierzig Jahre – wo hier wohnen. (The German language. There are a lot, who – here forty years – live here.)

KANAKSTA: Ja? (Really?)

OLDER MAN: Keine richtiges Deutsch ist das. . . (That's not proper German ...)

With his mumbled responses that are clouded in dialect, this interview gives the impression that *his German* is “not proper” German.

This scene is then followed by a jump cut to a middle-aged man with long white hair holding an agitated diatribe about integration, who tells the interviewer that rather than integrating themselves into society, it is the Germans who build the society. Others are those who must take on the task of integrating themselves (“Die andere haben die Aufgabe, sich in die Gesellschaft zu integrieren”). His treatise consists of fast speech, sermon-like, and is one of the longest in the short film, spanning a full thirty-eight seconds. These two examples, gendered male, present a different defensive reaction to the reporters, one in which a mere consideration of the actual question posed by the Kanakstas is rejected. Rather the question serves as a triggering action which illuminates

the racist reactions of the interviewees and which reflects the broader discourse of *Integrationspolitik*. Taken together, these last four examples show the discourses of integration and ghettoisation (which includes the idea of parallel societies) to be in a moment of absurd rupture: garish laughter, lack of orientation and stupor, unintelligible demands for linguistic assimilation, and an almost religious crusade for the primacy of indigenous German culture point at the underlying motivations for a discourse of integration. Laughter can be read as a symbol of anxiety; confusion and silence as a lack of recognition; use of dialect as linguistic hypocrisy and agitation; and impassioned speech as a fear of the loss of majority power and control.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have looked at three different cultural products – an autobiography, an autobiographical historical comic, and an activist video – which revise, reinterpret and invert the trope of a parallel society and/or the *Problemkiez* commonly invoked alongside the politicized instrumentalization of the integration metaphor. Brigitte Pick's book, *Kopfschüsse*, revealed the structural inequalities of schooling and barriers to employment which the scandal of the Rütli School affair and the concurrent calls to integrate masked. By showing how the tripartite school system before 2011 disproportionately disadvantaged students of color, specifically Arab-German, German Roma and Turkish-German populations, Pick emphasizes how structural and economic inequality – not cultural difference or “race” – creates social problems. Anna Faroqhi and Dorothea

Kolland's historic graphic novel also uses an autobiographical narrative to reframe Neukölln as a district that can only be understood through a longer history of migration to the city, effectively showing both how the many individual stories of immigrants (*Zuwanderer*) create the place of the neighborhood. Rather than marking a specific kind of immigrant (Muslim) as a tyrannical shaper of space, as the notion of a parallel society does, in *Weltreiche erblühten und fielen* it is the constant flow of myriad migration histories that create a richness of experience and narrative framed by the events of German history. Finally, the Kanak Attak video "Weißes Ghetto" shows how an integrationist discourse that portrays immigrants as defensive and willfully separate is rendered absurd as white Germans effectively reproduce the same defensive reaction attributed to immigrants when asked if they feel "integrated" in German society.

These three examples show two things: one, how pervasively the spatial metaphors of integration and parallel societies have shaped the imagined spaces of Neuköllner *Kieze*. The narratives examined in this chapter are responses to arguments frequently repeated in the media and at the federal level of government. They exist to "push back" against these arguments, and would not exist without the presence of these tropes. Secondly, they effectively show how actors passing through and/or inhabiting space effectively lay claim to specific places. Each place – the school, the neighborhood, the ghetto – is shaped and revised as each author engages in a revisionist practice. This "bottom up" response to integration politics shows the disparity between media

discourses, the realities of daily life, and the multiplicity of options available for recasting the place of the neighborhood as created through contact rather than isolation.

5. *Heroes* is Becoming a Movement: Honor, Feminism and Social Work in Berlin

What is honor?

This is the question that starts the *Heroes* workshop conducted in schools and community centers.

“Was ist Ehre? Was bedeutet Ehre für Dich? Eine kleine Definition des Begriffs, einfach. Ehre.” (What is honor? What does honor mean to you? Just a short definition: Honor, Projekt *Heroes*). In the workshops I have seen, this first question is met with silence as the participants try to figure out where this is all headed. At a workshop open to the public in February 2011, two *Heroes* described typical answers to the first question in school workshops:

Hero A: Im normal Fall, es ist dann eigentlich so, dass das Thema nicht so vertieft wird, sondern es ist viel oberflächlicher. Es geht um eine andere Ehre. Weil es geht um dieses ehrenlos, Du Ehrenloser, was zählt dazu, und dann kommen so Sachen, erfahrungsgemäße Dinge, wie z.B. auf der Straße, was sie erlebt haben, dass man Freunde nicht betrügen sollte, dass man keine Schulden haben sollte –

Hero B : “Guck mal, dieser ehrenloser.“ Sie sind halt ein bisschen stumpfer.

Hero A: Ein bisschen stumpfer, ja.

Hero B: Ja, "Guck mal ihn, er ist ein ehrenloser."

Hero A: Ja – es ist einfach ein anderes Niveau, aber im Laufe dieses Themas, schaffen wir es dann irgendwie überzuleiten in das erste Rollenspiel.

(Projekt *Heroes*)

Hero A: Normally what actually happens is that the topic isn't delved into that much, it's more superficial. It's about a different kind of honor. Because it's about this honorless, you dishonorable. . . what contributes to that, and then things pop up, experiential things, like, for instance, on the street, what they've experienced, that you shouldn't cheat your friends, that you shouldn't have debts –

Hero B: “Look at this dishonorable guy. . .” They're just a bit more blunt –

Hero A: A bit more blunt, yeah.

Hero B: Yeah, "look at him, he's dishonorable."

Hero B: Yeah, it's just a different level, but over the course of this conversation we're able to transition into the first role-play (Public Workshop).

The workshop's first role-playing scene is a provocative scenario designed to make this discourse of honor clear for the adolescent students *Heroes* hopes to reach. This role-play has four roles: father, son/brother, brother's friend, sister. It runs four to five minutes, and I have seen it reproduced consistently in multiple contexts: workshops, public workshops, *Heroes* retreats, the 2011 *Annerkennungsfeier* (recognition ceremony), as well as in television broadcasts (Horn). The scene runs something like this: the son/brother sits at home and plays video games. It is "late." The father enters the room and wants to know where his daughter is. The son doesn't know. The father is aggressive, demands that his son go out and find his sister and bring her home. The son leaves reluctantly, and calls up his friend for help.

When the brother meets his friend, the friend knows exactly where his sister is. She's hanging out at the mall/went to the movies/is standing on the street with a group of "questionable" friends; she may be provocatively dressed in a miniskirt. The friend is adamant: the sister must be removed from the environment and brought home. The brother goes up to talk to his sister reluctantly; she doesn't want to leave. The friend puts pressure on the brother to act more aggressively. The sister resists. The friend asks if this brother has any honor. The scene ends with the brother slapping his sister's face and taking her home with force.

There is much to work with in this first role-playing scene. In a workshop, the Heroes and their group leaders examine each role with the participants: is the friend a good friend? Does the son/brother *want* to control the whereabouts of his sister? How is he pressured, first by the father and then by his friend? What kinds of social controls are being perpetuated by a collective (represented by the father and the brother) in this scene? What role would you like to play? What would you do differently?

This role-playing scene was developed together with the first group of Heroes in 2008, and will continue to be used in workshops even after other scenes in the workshop were revised in the fall of 2011. The introductory rhetorical questions the Heroes pose to participants after watching this first scene offer a compact introduction to the topic that shapes the *Projekt Heroes* mission: community engagement “Gegen Unterdrückung im Namen der Ehre” (Against Oppression in the Name of Honor). The students first define honor, then witness a scene in which a discourse of honor oppresses both son and daughter. This honor paradigm is collective in nature; it illustrates a kind of social control; finally, it can create situations in which conflicts escalate to violent conflicts. When the workshop participants get to reenact the scene according to their vision, they participate in revising and reshaping the paradigm of honor they just reconstructed. By taking on various roles in the scene, the workshop participants define what honor means to them.

5.1 Men, Honor and Social Work

Projekt Heroes, which I will often refer to in this chapter as just *Heroes*, was founded in Berlin in 2007. *Heroes* is a preventative social work project modeled after a Swedish organization called *Sharaf Heroes (Sharaf Hjältar)*, which is no longer active (Tasnim).¹

The full, formal name of the Berlin organization reads: "HEROES – Gegen

Unterdrückung im Namen der Ehre: Ein Gleichstellungsprojekt von Strohalm e.V"

(HEROES – Against Oppression in the Name of Honor: An Equality Project from the

Nonprofit *Strohalm*.)² This project, which I tend to describe as a masculinities project,

works with young men from "cultures of honor" (*Ehrenkulturen*) to prepare them with

the tools and knowledge necessary for taking a stand against entrenched power

structures that demand from them what could be described as a patriarchal response:

physical strength, stoicism, guardianship of female family members, as well as – when

¹ This Swedish blog entry criticizes *Sharaf Hjältaras* perpetuating a violent Muslim masculinity, while at the same time she feels that the program is necessary and "wants" to support it. The author writes: "The importance of efforts like these can't be under-estimated. Honour killing, and the twisted reasoning behind it, needs to be completely eradicated, and for this to happen, the causes of the crime need to be actually dealt with, and the main cause, one which is prevalent in quite a few cultures, is the equation of women with property, the perverted idea that girls 'belong' to the family and have no say in who they marry or when they marry or even if they want to marry at all. The only way this idea can be changed is with education. This is why I think the Sharaf program is a brilliant idea and wholeheartedly support it. But its also why the umbrella programme Elektra dissappoints me. For all the faux-arabesque logo and designs – or perhaps because of them – their explanations of the issues lurch from naive to simplistic. It doesn't help that they are also sickeningly self-congratulatory. This is perhaps best illustrated in their frequent and interchangeable use of "patriachal culture" and "immigrant culture" as though patriarchy was a foreign concept, entirely unheard of in Sweden before the hordes of *svartskalles* invaded" (*Svartskalles* is apparently a derogatory term for minorities, lit. "black skull"). See Tasnim.

² *Strohalm e.V.* is the nonprofit organization that "carries" the Heroes Project; it organizes prevention efforts against the sexual abuse of children and thus includes *Heroes* under its umbrella. Both *Strohalm* and *Heroes* were founded by Dagmar Riedel-Breidenstein, a social worker from Berlin.

adults – becoming the family provider and supporting collective forms of social organization. This description of honor-based culture is predicated on an unequal power dynamic which elevates the status of men and requires a subservient role from women. The term “culture of honor” thus includes many stereotypical characteristics of a classically patriarchal society: men who are in control of and responsible for the social standing of their wives, sisters and daughters; traditional gender roles that allow men access to public life while women are in charge of the domestic sphere; strongly conservative beliefs that reinforce these traditional divisions of power and labor; and finally, the recourse to violence as a way of righting wrongs and of elevating the “strong” within a social hierarchy. These are all characteristics of male-dominated society that have been documented extensively in feminist literature.

Projekt Heroes is very conscious of the ways in which “honor” is often misassociated with the label “Muslim.”³ They do not call themselves a project for

³ The literature about honor and feminism is vast. See Abbas, Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments*; Ennaji/Sadiqi, Ghanim, Hasso, “Empowering Governmentalities”; Harmes, Hossain/Welchman, and Jasam, for example. Abu-Lughod’s work on freedom, autonomy and honour in Bedouin society is a nuanced case study of one particular community and their inflection and shaping of honor. Abu-Lughod describes honor as providing both the structure and justification for hierarchy, but places these codes within her broader study and analysis of Bedouin society. Ennaji/Sadiqi and Hossain/Welch have both published edited volumes about honor, gender and violence in the Middle East which resist the stereotypical association of “honor” as a “Muslim” problem. Kandiyoti’s article “Bargaining with Patriarchy” has been particularly influential in many of these discussions, in which she explores how “patriarchal bargains” factor into hierarchical patriarchal relationships and institutions, as well the implications of these bargains for women’s consciousness and struggles. See Kandiyoti. Ghanim’s work is striking in its insistence that Middle Eastern societies are pervaded with social and structural violence, even calling this violence an “instinct woven into domestic relations” (xii). Consequently, this work lacks sufficient critical attention to the effects of war on violence in Iraqi culture. Although Ennaji and Sadiqi see the Middle East and North Africa as a “hotbed of violence,” their collection pays sufficient attention to the consequences of war and state-sponsored violence

Muslims, and do not see the problematic of honor as a “Muslim” problem, per se. When I asked, for instance, in December 2011 if Polish or Russian immigrant youth would be welcome at *Heroes*, Yilmaz Atmaca and Eldem Turan (both group leaders) and Mecbure Oba (the project manager at that time) all agreed that other cultural groups would be welcome at *Projekt Heroes*, although Atmaca noted that there hadn’t yet been demand from other groups. The one stipulation for youth is that they be immigrant youth. The current youth include a broad spectrum of Turkish-, Kurdish-, Zaza-, Arab- and Albanian-German youth with a variety of religious affiliations. While *Heroes* resists the categorization of “Muslim,” their mission statement still associates an immigrant background with the problematic of “honor” and honor-based oppression. Given that “Muslims” are the largest religious minority in Germany, and the fact that this minority is largely associated with immigrants from Turkey and the Middle East, this label (“Muslim”) is always close at hand – despite *Heroes* attempts to resist it. Newspaper articles and television broadcasts about *Heroes* frequently declare it to be a “Muslim”

on daily life, emphasizing a link between militarism and patriarchal oppression (2, 27-138, 231-246). Of particular interest to human rights organizations like Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International is the case of Pakistan. See Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. The language of Amnesty International’s pamphlet about honor killings in Pakistan is particularly inflammatory. They write: “The lives of millions of women in Pakistan are circumscribed by traditions which enforce extreme seclusion and submission to men. Male relatives virtually own them and punish contraventions of their proprietary control” (n.p.). This language victimizes women in Pakistan with its paternalistic tone, which is strategic in that it intends to attract attention to the problematic.

project, and describe *Heroes* as “sending well-integrated Muslims into schools”(Friedrich).⁴

As a label in a German context, “Muslim” is imprecise. “Muslim” in German statistical data describes immigrants from countries where the predominant religion is Islam, but which may or may not accurately describe the religious affiliations of individuals (Kurdish Yezidi coming from Turkey, for instance, would not only be classified as “Muslim” but also as “Turkish” in official data). In common usage, Muslim is often code for a Turkish or Arab ethnic background, regardless of an individual's identification with Islam (Mühe 22-24). It can be invoked as an essentialist label, as a misnomer, as an empty signifier. This slippage can do violence to those read as “Muslim,” carrying with it connotations of terrorism and fundamentalism or the simple fact of misnaming those who are not Muslim but are frequently interpolated as such. On the other hand, this slippage – in concert with attention paid to how this term circulates and transforms space – can be used as a way to chart how identities, tropes and social practices flow. I thus propose that this case study about *Projekt Heroes* be read as an example of what Lila Abu-Lughod calls “the active social life of Muslim women’s rights” (“Active Social Life” 1-3). “Muslim” here is useful precisely because of the tension between *Projekt Heroes* (which does not call itself a Muslim project) and the newspapers and television broadcasts which insist that it is. Within this interstitial

⁴ See Hamann, Horn, Friedrich and Scheub for similar media coverage of the project.

space, *Projekt Heroes* becomes an example of how organizing around “Muslim” women’s rights has its own transnational flow, an “active social life” of its own. In this case study, what I am interested in is the transnational movement of feminist rights-based initiatives into social projects and the cultural products that emerge. Although this case study is German, both the cultural products as well as the movement of organizing have implications for transeuropean discussions about the rights of women and immigrant incorporation.

While members of the *Heroes* staff will readily acknowledge that cultures fitting their definition for “cultures of honor” exist in many societies, they focus on reaching young men whose ancestors' have immigrated to Germany. Most of their youth come from regions which are also sources of substantial immigrant traffic to Germany: Turkey, the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia. The approach of *Projekt Heroes* is preventative. They do not work with criminal or violent youth. Their peer education model requires working with young men of a certain educational background who have the necessary skills for leading the workshops and performing the logical kind of argumentation that can deconstruct a discourse of honor. As Jenny Breidenstein, project manager for *Heroes*, writes in the project description posted on the *Heroes* website, *Heroes* attempts to work with young men who are neither violent nor pulling focus to themselves:

Während Jungenarbeit häufig erst einsetzt, wenn die Jungen auffällig oder gar gewalttätig geworden sind, arbeitet HEROES® mit jungen Männern aus

Ehrenkulturen, die sich engagieren wollen für ein gleichberechtigtes Zusammenleben von Männern und Frauen jeglicher Kultur. Sie übernehmen Verantwortung für sich und ihre "Brüder." (Breidenstein "Heroes")

While social work with boys [lit. boys' work] often first steps in when boys have come to the attention of [authorities] or have even become violent, HEROES works with young men from cultures of honor who want promote the equitable coexistence [lit. having equal rights living together] of men and women of any culture. They take responsibility for themselves and their "brothers."

Over a 9-12 month training period, the group leaders and young men work to create a protected space in which to discuss feelings, uncertainties, and new forms of argumentation and acquire knowledge about "tabu Themen" (taboo topics). They have the chance to test out behavior through role-playing; to hear presentations by invited guest speakers; and finally, learn how to develop their own styles of argumentation through both logical and critical thinking. After this training period, the young men are recognized for their engagement by a prominent celebrity (in the past, these celebrities have included Maria Böhmer, *Beauftragter der Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration*; Georg Friedrich Prinz von Preußen, and in 2011, the Green Party politician Cem Özdemir) in a public ceremony called the *Anerkennungsfeier*. Upon successful completion of the program, the young men also receive a gift of 300 Euros.

After this ceremony, the Heroes are ready to lead workshops for boys and girls in schools and youth centers, during which the Heroes lead role plays and discussions about honor, gender, gender roles, sexuality, cultural expectations and family dynamics. Heroes receive fifty Euros for each workshop that they lead in schools and youth

centers. They are always accompanied by at least one group leader who can jump in at particularly difficult moments. *Projekt Heroes* functions on several levels: one, as a counter-response to media discourses about immigrant masculinity, which associates men – especially “Muslim” men – with criminality, menace and violence; two, as an outreach program for minority youth which both confronts these associations as well as purports to offer an alternative; and three, as an empowerment project designed to strengthen the knowledge bases of young men and provide them with a platform in which they are not only recognized by society for their efforts but are also able to act as *Multiplikatoren* in their communities. The project’s subtitle also positions Heroes within a broader discourse of equal rights.

In thinking about *Projekt Heroes* as an example of the “active social life” of Muslim women’s rights, I think it’s important to point out that this project does not have to directly serve women in order to represent, on a much larger scale, how “Muslim women’s rights” moves into many different kinds of spaces, justifying a variety of projects and making a variety of projects possible. In fact, the absence of a strong outreach program for women illustrates even more clearly how this idea circulates separate from direct interventions with women. *Projekt Heroes* is a masculinities project that justifies its existence and end goals in the language of women’s rights.

Social work researcher Albert Scherr describes in his article “Männer als Adressatengruppe und Berufstätige in der Sozialen Arbeit” (Men as Clients and

Practitioners of Social Work) how masculinities projects such as *Projekt Heroes* are part of a larger trend in re-framing social work with men. Not only are portrayals of men as “Gewinner und Privilegierten” (winners and the privileged) questionable in light of statistics that show men to be charged more often with criminal acts and to have higher rates of suicide than women, but Scherr also points out that German debates about education and youth work target men differently: “Nicht mehr ‘katholische Arbeitermädchen vom Land,’ sondern männliche Jugendliche, insbesondere solche aus sogenannten bildungsfernen Milieus und mit Migrationshintergrund treten hier als Problemgruppe in den Blick” (No longer just ‘Catholic working girls from the country,’ but masculine adolescents, especially those from so-called educationally deprived *milieus* come into view as the problem group, 559). Scherr also points out the need for social work projects to address not just men, but masculinity:

Betrachtet man Jungen/Männer also zunächst als Profiteuren und Privilegierte innerhalb einer patriarchalisch geprägten Gesellschaft und Kultur, dann sind sie für die soziale Arbeit als organisierte Hilfe im Sozialstaat nicht als Männer von Bedeutung, sondern nur dann wenn sie einer anderen Adressatengruppe Sozialer Arbeit zugerechnet werden, also etwa als männliche Obdachlose, männliche Alkoholabhängige, männliche Gefängnisinsassen, männliche Arbeitslose usw. Dabei wird Männlichkeit bis heute kaum als eine eigenständige Ursache jeweiliger Probleme in den Blick genommen. (564)

If you view boys/men first and foremost as those who profit from and are privileged within a patriarchal society and culture, then to understand social work a form of organized assistance within a social-welfare state they are not important as men but rather only as part of another kind of social work clientele, i.e. as men who are homeless, men who are dependent on alcohol, men who are incarcerated, men who are unemployed, etc. And yet masculinity today is rarely visible as the cause of various problems.

Whether or not Heroes is a masculinities project has been a subject of debate, especially in my conversations with Mecbure Oba, the current project manager. According to Oba, Heroes is primarily an equal rights project.

MO: Integration passt auch in so fern, wo wir sagen, wir sind nicht in erster Linie Integrationsprojekt ne, also in erster Linie sind wir ein Gleichbreitungsprojekt, aber - wir tragen auch etwas zur Integration bei, insofern, dass wir möchten, dass alle Menschen in Deutschland miteinander kommunizieren und in Dialog treten, egal welcher Herkunft und welchen, welchen Geschlechts. [...]. Also, die Jungen z.B. machen Erfahrungen von Diskriminierung und Ausgrenzung, von Ungleichbehandlung, und das motiviert sie ja auch sich zu engagieren, in diesem Projekt, weil sie nicht nur etwas für Frauen und unterdrückte Mädchen tun möchten, sondern weil auch ihnen das Image der Migranten in Deutschland stört. Also, Bilder von gewalttätigen Migranten, z.B., und sie möchten natürlich nicht rassistisch behandelt werden. Also, diese Diskriminierung, dagegen machen wir auch was. Und Integration bedeutet auf jeden Fall eben auch Abbau von Rassismus. Also, dass wir uns alle anerkennen als gleichwertige Subjekte. So.

MO:... Integration fits to the degree that we say we're not primarily an integration project, primarily we're an equal rights project, but – we contribute to integration [...] in that we want all people in Germany to communicate with one another and to enter into dialogue irrespective of their origins and their gender. [...] The boys experience discrimination and exclusion, unequal treatment, and that motivates them to get involved in this project, because they don't just want to do something for women and oppressed girls, but because the image – in Germany – of migrants bothers them. Such as images of violent male migrants, for example – and of course they don't want to be discriminated against racially. So we try to do something against this discrimination. And integration definitely means the deconstruction of racism. So that we all recognize each other as subjects of equal value. (Oba)

The image of “violent male migrants,” which pervades journalistic treatments of honor killings and immigrant masculinity – about which geographer Patricia Ehrkamp has written astutely – is referenced here: “the image – in Germany – of migrants bothers

them.” This widely circulating image and the concurrent racism is the draw that seems to get boys interested in working with *Projekt Heroes*, at least according to Oba. The practice of “doing something for women and oppressed girls” is almost a side-effect of taking part in the *Heroes* trainings. Once they find themselves engaged, they end up “doing something for women.” Perhaps most interesting is Oba’s redefinition of the word integration “from below” – in her formulation, race and racism are constructs to be overcome so that the inherent equality of subjects can be both valued and recognized. The redefinition of integration as an anti-racist framework is a generous redefinition of “integration,” which is a metaphor that carries racist ideology with it, – especially when used to talk about Muslims in Germany.

When discussing a draft of this chapter with the *Heroes* Team on December 12, 2011, Oba thought that “masculinities” was the wrong word to describe their work. Oba’s argument in this context was that “masculinities” was a construct, a construct that the trainings at *Projekt Heroes* leaves open. They do not endorse a specific kind of masculinity for their youth. However, a core component of the work at *Projekt Heroes* is focused on questioning masculinity and offering different role models who perform various expressions of masculinity and femininity. This seems to me to offer a perfect model for a masculinities project, where “masculinity” is the construct that is played with, adapted, manipulated, revised and redesigned – especially within the framework of “cultures of honor” which prescribes a certain set of behaviours that dictate how to be

a man or a woman. I later went back to the text of our individual interview from June 21, 2011 and realized that what was at stake might be a linguistic or cultural misunderstanding of key terms. In Germany, social work projects are often grouped under rubrics like “Mädchenarbeit” (Girls’ Work), “Jungenarbeit” (Boys’ Work), “Männerprojekte” (Men’s Project) and “Frauenprojekte” (Women’s Project). Both gender and lifestage are hinted at in these categories and both Oba and group leader Ahmad Mansour talk about Heroes as “Jungenarbeit” (Boy’s Work). But calling Heroes a “masculinities” project seems to strike Oba as a version of “men’s,” as seen in this interview excerpt:

JSC: [...] [W]as bedeutet das für *Heroes*, ein Männlichkeitsprojekt, auch ein feministisches Projekt zu sein?

MO: Ähm. Ein Männerprojekt. Ja, eigentlich ist *Heroes* ja kein Männerprojekt.

JSC: Okay.

MO: Also, es ist ein Jungenprojekt, wo aber im Team – also, bei den Mitarbeitern, ne? Das ist ja gemischt. Wir sind ja momentan mit Euch Praktikanten, sind wir ja vier Frauen, drei Männer. (Oba)

JSC: What does it mean for *Heroes* to be a masculinities project as well as a feminist project?

MO: Um. A men’s project. Well, *Heroes* isn’t really a men’s project.

JSC: Okay.

MO: It’s a boys’ project, but on the team – so, amongst the staff, you know? There it’s mixed. At the moment, with you interns, we’re four women and three men.

Whereas masculinities makes more sense to me as a label, since this work with boys/young men aims to increase the breadth of masculinities available to the young men, for Oba, “Boy’s Work” or “Men’s Project” seem more readily available as a cultural category. The reason I think “masculinities” is a better fit, and why I will continue to

refer to *Projekt Heroes* as a masculinities project, and not as a boys' project, is twofold. First, the majority of the young men are 18 years old or older. They are no longer "boys," but rather they are young men with increasingly adult responsibilities.⁵ Second, the focus on much of the *Projekt Heroes* work around honor centers on finding an individual definition designed to fit each Hero. In that sense, the emphasis on honor, on self-regulation and on critical thinking and argumentation requires each Hero to adapt what he learns in training to his own life and his own understanding of himself. This focus on self-constructed gendered expression permeates the *Heroes* organizational structure.

When *Heroes*-Berlin began training new staff for the expansion of the project to the city of Duisburg, this focus on having varieties of gender expression amongst the staff was clearly articulated, as can be seen in this fieldwork journal entry:

Dagmar again emphasized these two strands while she talked about the *Eigenschaften* [qualities] that the group leaders should have. It's very yin and yang. Somebody should be creative (Yilmaz Atmaca) and somebody should be theoretical (Ahmad Mansour). Somebody should be masculine, older brother (Yilmaz) and somebody should take on feminine attributes (emotions, Ahmad). The [male – jsc] feminine role Dagmar described as the mother role; but the masculine role should be a brother role rather than a *strenge Vater* [a strict father]. The female group leader should NOT be a mother role. (Fieldwork notes from 10 Mar. 2011)

The project handbook also has explicitly formulated this non-traditional distribution of roles in its job descriptions:

⁵ "Jungs," a shortened, casual form of "Jungen" (boys) can sometimes be translated as "guys." This is difficult to tease out in the context of *Projekt Heroes*, since when staff talk about the boys, they often do so in ways that are both casual but that invoke the power differential between the staff and the "boys."

Neben der sehr emotionalen und zugewandten Arbeit der (überwiegend) männlichen Gruppenleiter gibt es im Projekt die Leitungsebene, die mit einer (oder zwei) Frauen besetzt ist. Diese Konstellation stellt eine Alternative zur traditionellen Rollenverteilung – nicht nur – in Ehrenkulturen dar. Die Projektleiterin ist ein Frau mit oder ohne Migrationshintergrund. Sie soll eine feministische Haltung haben und über gender- und interkulturelle Kompetenz verfügen. Zudem ist eine gute Kommunikationsfähigkeit wichtig und Erfahrungen in der Jugend- und/ oder Projektarbeit sind von Vorteil. (Briedenstein, *Heroes-Handbuch* 5-6)

Along with the very emotional and attentive work of the (mostly) male group leaders, there is a management level within the project that is occupied by one (or two) women. This constellation offers an alternative to the traditional distribution of roles, and not only in honor cultures. The project leader is a woman with or without a migration background. She should have a feminist approach and have gender awareness and intercultural skills at her command. Additionally, a strong ability to communicate is important and experience in youth or project work is advantageous.

The end goal of the *Heroes* work is nothing less than to start a social movement of young men who engage in struggles for gender parity. At the heart of this movement is both a revised notion of masculinity and a new kind of honor that has been actively and individually shaped by each youth. The training handbook ends with this spirit in mind:

Die ehrgeizige Hoffnung des Projekts:

“Unsere Aufgabe in diesem Projekt ist eigentlich eine Gesellschaft aufbauen, Menschen zusammen bringen, die so denken und bereit sind diese Denkweise auch an andere zu vermitteln. Nicht nur in Neukölln, sondern deutschlandweit. Und nicht nur Türken und Araber, sondern alle die daran glauben und alle die was in dieser Gesellschaft ändern wollen. Frauen sollen gleichgestellt werden, das hat keine religiöse oder traditionelle oder kulturelle Unterschied, sondern Frauen und Männer sollen gleich gestellt werden. Und wer mitmacht, sollte mitmachen. Ich glaube wenn wir diese Bewegung irgendwie schaffen, dass es nicht nur HeRoes in Neukölln ist, sondern unglaublich viele HeRoes auch in anderen Städten, dann haben wir unser Ziel erreicht.” (Gruppenleiter)

Es liegt in Ihren Händen! (Briedenstein, *Heroes-Handbuch* 63)

The ambitious hopes for the project:

“Our task in this project is actually to build up a society and bring people together who think the same way and are also able to transmit this way of thinking to others. Not just in Neukölln, but also across Germany. And not just Turks and Arabs, but all who believe in and all who want to change something about this society. Women should be equal, there is no religious, traditional or cultural difference there, but rather men and women should be positioned equally. And whoever wants to participate should participate. I think that if we are able to create this movement somehow, so that Heroes isn’t just in Neukölln, but rather that there are tons of Heroes even in other cities, then we will have reached our goal.” (Group Leader)

It lies in your hands!

Projekt Heroes thus envisions a very active social life for itself, across Germany and amongst multiple groups.

5.2 Social Work as an Arena of Cultural Production

Projekt Heroes came to my attention initially through a newspaper article in 2008 or 2009.

During my year of fieldwork at the organization, however, I noticed that this project was more than just an applied counterpart to a wider discursive field concerned with integration politics. The conflicts, conversations, activities and mission of *Projekt Heroes* were functioning as a reflection of society on a small scale. Questions of identity, forms of identity politics, concerns with space and place, and an overarching focus on gender and equal rights are keywords in contemporary debates about the integration of immigrants. These keywords also constitute a good deal of the discussions, arguments and conversations that are part and parcel of *Projekt Heroes’* daily operations. How does identity shape a person? How can identity be an impetus for group formation? What are

the consequences of organizing around identity? What kinds of spaces do we want to create or participate in? What are the specificities of place which are purported to affect groups “negatively” (producing “anti-democratic” and/or “fundamentalist” citizens and residents)? Finally, what kinds of feminist goals and practices currently agitate under the banner of equal rights in the pursuit of gender parity?

As a field, social work has long been a site where practice and theory meet, as new projects are developed to serve emerging populations and deal with new trends. Social work, public health, education and law enforcement are the four institutional pillars of applied practice in any society. Each area provides a valuable focus point for showing how populations shift and adapt in response to a variety of forces. Public health practitioners apply new research from the natural sciences, education applies the results of psychological research to the classroom, and law enforcement bases its practices on cultural logic and legal philosophy. Social work in the sense of what Germans call “social pedagogy” (*Sozialpädagogik*) applies the theoretical work of the humanities (i.e. abstract ideas about the human condition) to the populations they serve. Seen in this way, social work is one logical place among many for interpretive research to focus after the “ethnographic turn.”⁶ In this chapter, I will focus on the most prominent threads of the work that *Projekt Heroes* does and discuss the ways in which

⁶ See “Histories of the Ethnographic Turn” and Culyba, et. al.

this work reflects contemporary narratives of rights and honor, identity, feminist practice, and the creation of protected spaces for critical thought.

Projekt Heroes also sometimes describes itself as a feminist project, with the aim of helping both men and women through its primary focus on young men. What it means to identify as a feminist and what it means to engage in active feminist practice is a constant point of negotiation amongst the staff. Gender is always in the forefront of the work, with a strong focus by some staff on not reproducing gender roles and always questioning those forms of behavior which collude with common gender scripts or are blatantly sexist. The balance between protecting equal rights and gender parity in the context of cultural difference and multiculturalist strategies of population management is a long-running debate not only in Germany, but within human rights discourse as well. The tension between group and individual rights, between the individual and the collective, is a constitutive component of both a discourse of honor and human rights discourse. *Projekt Heroes* examines this tension both in the role play described at the beginning of this chapter as well as in their training sessions with the young men, where each Hero is nudged to develop his own individual definition of honor.

Both the physical location of the *Heroes* offices in Neukölln as well as the training activities and discussion groups for the boys have an explicit focus on space and place. Neukölln was initially read as a place offering demographic access the desired target groups of young men as well as a place which seemed to “need” the creation of a

specific space for “at-risk” youth.⁷ The training sessions with the boys are explicitly designed as a protected space in which they can act and react without judgment. By examining these different components of the *Heroes* work, I hope to show how contemporary tensions about integration and immigration are confirmed, adapted, resisted and/or reproduced as they are applied in social work.

5.3 Honor and Feminist Practice

“What is honor?”

The task of definition is a frequent component of *Projekt Heroes* workshops. Honor, after all, is a word that exists in most languages: which cultural processes are marked as “honorable,” however, vary greatly. One thing I’ve seen happen in *Heroes* workshops is for quite a bit of time to be spent determining the cultural framework guiding their work. What kind of honor are we talking about here? Do you mean *nâmus*, *şeref* or *sharaf*? Are you talking about *Ehre*? It’s an honor to be here, someone might interject, don’t people say that, even in Germany? What about the differences between Arabic, Turkish and Persian ideas of honor? The Iranians have *nâmus*. The Turks are different, they distinguish between honor tied to sexuality and shame (*nâmus*) and honor like the German *Ehre* (*sharaf*). But the Arabs only have one word – *sharaf*, which stands for all kinds of honor, but mostly *nâmus*. How can you tell them apart? Does it even matter? A workshop participant, frustrated or trying to appear enlightened, might just

⁷ See Chapter 4.

suggest, Why don't we just get rid of the whole idea? When do I, he or she may say, ever go around talking about honor?

Projekt Heroes has a difficult task. They both resist the demands of a culture of honor (i.e. honor based on gender disparity, shame and the control of sexuality), but want to be sure that the adolescents know what kind of honor they reject. So the Heroes fill the space with definitions, filling the space of discussion to excess with contradictions and competing examples of honor, eventually reproducing the discourse of honor so that they can revise it together, as a group.

What they often arrive at is something like a conclusion, or a preliminary redefinition of honor as an individual construct rather than a collective one. Honor, they might say, is something you define for yourself. Each one of us is responsible for their actions. Our actions create honor for ourselves as individuals and no one – not even my family – is responsible for the honor of the community. There is a collective definition of honor where my deeds can bring shame upon others. But there is also an individual sense of honor, where my mistakes only affect myself.

The extensive time spent in workshops on reproducing the discourse of family honor that appears so often in the media is confusing. After observing a particularly difficult workshop for adults (the first of its kind, most are for adolescents), I offered to write the *Projekt Heroes* team a description of what I observed, so that they could have an outsider's observations and see whether or not they found anything useful. It was this

emphasis on reproducing this construct of honor that baffled me the most, as can be seen in my report for the staff:

Wenn es um Ehre geht, würde ich sagen – ohne das soziale Wissen und Erfahrung, dass ihr habt – wie könnt ihr über Ehre reden, ohne genau die Strukturen eines Ehrendiskurses wiederherstellen zu müssen? [...] Ich beobachtete das weniger in den Szenen als in den – wir nennen es “Teacher Talk” – was als Einleitung diente, oder Erklärungen, die der Gruppe gegeben wurde über Ehre: so “Hier ist Ehre. Das ist, was ich meine. Wir [in dem Kulturkreis] machen das und das und wir machen es nicht so und machen das nicht und nicht so.” Darin besteht für mich die Gefahr, dass man die Muster reproduzieren muss, um sie zu dekonstruieren. Und wenn wir es für unsere eigenen Zwecken reproduzieren, dann können wir nicht wissen, was die Mitglieder der Gruppe selbst meinen, wenn sie über Ehre sprechen. Dann könnte man auch nicht herausfinden, was genau diese Leute motiviert, so zu handeln. Ich finde das “Was ist Ehre” Powerpoint geht manchmal für mich in dieser Richtung. (Fieldwork notes/Protokoll, 21 June 2011)

When it’s about honor, I would say – without the social knowledge and experience that you have – how can you talk about honor without having to reproduce precisely the structures of a discourse of honor? [...] I observe this less in the scenes than in the – we call it “teacher talk” – what serves as an introduction, or explanations that the group is given about honor: along the lines of “Here is honor. This is what I mean. We [in our culture] do this and this and we don’t do it this way and not like this.” In this I see the danger that one has to reproduce the pattern in order to deconstruct it. And if we reproduce it for our own purposes, then we can’t know what the members of the group believe when they’re talking about honor. Then we can’t figure out what motivates these people to act in this way. I find the “What is Honor” PowerPoint heads for me in this direction sometimes.

At the same time, I remember this workshop was a space in which the worst journalistic prejudices about immigrants would be confirmed.

Dazu muss man auch sagen, man merkte von der unterschwelligem Spannung, die im Raum herrschte sowohl als auch von dem, was gesagt wurde, dass sie dieses Ehrenbild doch teilen. Es gab vieles, das in diesem Raum gesagt wurde, was Frauen- oder “Deutschen-” feindlichkeit diente; was als traditionelles

Denken bezeichnet wurde (z.B. Unser Neffe, der Libanese, hat eine Chinesin geheiratet; wir wollten das nicht, der Junge war besonders und hatte eine arabische Frau verdient!)

Additionally I have to say that one noticed from the subliminal tension that permeated the room as well as from that which was said that they do share this image of honor. There was a lot that was said in that room that functioned as animosity towards women or “Germans”; things that could be described as traditional thought (i.e. our nephew, who is Lebanese, married a Chinese woman; we didn’t want that, the boy was special and deserved an Arab woman!) (Fieldwork notes/Protokoll, 21 June 2011)

In the team meeting that followed this report, it was on the agenda that we talk about these questions – feedback from Oba and Atmaca by email showed me that the kind of feminist criticism I describe here, which appears in other critical research about the effectiveness of women’s organizations, was on the staff’s radar.⁸ Over the course of our weekly six-hour team meeting, however, we repeatedly ran out of both time and energy to thematize this report. As the months passed, this report faded into oblivion, just as other goals were pushed to the back burner due to staff constraints and more pressing demands. Over the course of my time at *Projekt Heroes*, I began to understand theoretical clarity within social work as a luxury. Like the paragraph from Carten Otto’s handbook cited above, financial sustainability, day-to-day operations, overworked staff and bureaucratic restrictions all take precedence over theoretical work.

Projekt Heroes was even quite well-prepared in this regard, as the World Childhood Foundation had financed a three-month period when the project was

⁸ See Hasso.

founded. During this period, the staff was paid to develop mission statements, organizing principles and educate themselves through reading and discussion as to the purpose and structure of their work. This was not a luxury afforded to some of the other projects in different cities which were training to become *Heroes* franchises, often within extant programming as part of larger youth centers. The task of defining honor is a remnant of those early discussions at *Heroes*-Berlin, part of an ongoing task of defining their terms and their mission. "What is honor?" The question resurfaces at almost every turn, evading definition and pointing to a theoretical project that is still in progress.

"What is honor?" Every February, a memorial vigil is organized in Berlin-Tempelhof at the bus stop where Hatun Sürücü was murdered by her younger brother in 2005. In the past, this memorial has been organized by the *Lesben und Schwulen Verband Deutschlands* (Gay and Lesbian Alliance of Germany) and *Terres des Femmes*. A large stone with a square bronze plaque is dedicated to Sürücü, which unobtrusively marks the spot of her death. In February 2011, the Green and Left parties left large wreaths on the stone, and three people gave short speeches in a small ceremony: the mayor of Tempelhof-Schöneberg, an organizer from *Terre des Femmes*, and a member of the *Türkischer Bund Berlin-Brandenburg*. Staff from social work groups like *Papatya*, *Projekt Heroes*, and the *LSVD* arrived to listen, pay their respects and whisper critiques of the mayor's speech. "Din, din, din und nicht Gewalt!" I hear two women comment in a mix of Turkish and

German afterward (“Religion, religion, religion and not violence!” Fieldwork notes, 7 February 2011). Two small girls placed single roses on the stone after the speeches. Unable to resist the symbolism, television cameras rolled as the operators moved towards the girls. Flash bulbs from newspaper reporters interrupted the flow of what was otherwise a quiet, cold February afternoon in front of a large apartment complex near an industrial park.

I did not want to write about Sürücü in this chapter. Sürücü's name has been instrumentalized by various political initiatives, especially those who actively pit “Germans” against “Muslims” and who stoke intergroup animosity with arguments about competing values and the need for a German *Leitkultur* (leading culture). Sürücü's case has become Germany's most famous and spectacular honor killing. Her murder trial was a sensational media event, as was the public custody battle over her young son, but Sürücü's murder first started to serve a highly symbolic function due to highly publicized comments made by students at the Thomas-Morus-Oberschule in Neukölln. These comments were publicized after the school's principal Volker Steffens sent an open letter to the school's staff, students and parents, which was then picked up by the media. According to a report in the *Berliner Zeitung*, three Neuköllner students defended the legitimacy of the murder because Sürücü had “lived like a German”(Deckwerth). In describing a memorial vigil held in 2005, journalists describe what happened in the classroom:

Schüler einer achten Klasse haben ein Plakat gemalt und unter die Laterne gelegt. Darauf steht: "Es tut uns leid, dass einige Schüler so einen Mist erzählen. Wir haben Mitleid." Sie kommen aus der Neuköllner Thomas-Morus-Oberschule – jener Schule, die in die Schlagzeilen geriet, weil drei Klassenkameraden, ein Araber, ein Pole und ein Deutscher, den Mord an Hatin Sürücü gutgeheißen haben. Die drei Schüler hatten bei einer Diskussion gesagt, dass Hatin Sürücü an ihrem Schicksal selbst schuld sei, weil sie sich wie eine Deutsche benommen habe.⁹ (Deckwerth)

Pupils in an eighth-grade classroom made a sign and laid it under the streetlight. On it stood the following: "We're sorry that some students say that crap. Our sympathies." They were from the Thomas-Morus Upper School in Neukölln – the school that made headlines because three classmates, an Arab, a Pole and a German, had declared Hatin [sic] Sürücü's murder to be a good thing. The three pupils said during a discussion that Hatin [sic] Sürücü was responsible for her own fate because she had behaved like a German.

I am frustrated that I can find no other way as of yet to introduce a media discourse of honor invoked in discussions of women's rights without writing Sürücü's name.

Perhaps this feeling is somewhat misplaced. It means that I have made the mistake of melding this invocation of her name with the subjectivities names are supposed to represent; I have been tricked into the power of language, which understands well just how much I desire to find subjectivity and identity behind a name; how much I desire to be hailed by my own name and to call others by their names – especially those they have

⁹ What is interesting is how the national identities of these boys keep changing: in this Berliner Zeitung article, the boy's identities are multiple; in a Spiegel Online article 6 months later, these boys identities have all become "Turkish": "Kurz darauf fand der "Ehrenmord" Beifall an der Thomas-Morus-Hauptschule, die in der Nähe des Tatorts in Neukölln liegt, einem Stadtteil mit einem hohen Anteil an Türken. Drei türkischstämmige Schüler hießen den Mord im Unterricht gut: "Sie hat ja wie eine Deutsche gelebt", erklärte einer von ihnen" (Shortly thereafter the "honor killing" was applauded at the Thomas-Morus-Hauptschule, which is situated near the scene of the crime in Neukölln, a neighborhood with a high percentage of Turks. Three students of Turkish origin called the murder a good thing during class: 'Sie lived like a German,' explained one of them"; "Bundespräsident").

chosen for themselves. But “Hatun Sürücü” is no longer a name, it is a block of sounds with a metonymic function. As I will show, Sürücü’s case is another example that shows the “active social life of Muslim women’s rights.” Like “Muslim,” her name is an empty signifier, overloaded with so many meanings that it now means nothing. Newspaper coverage often paints her as a victim of the “clash of civilizations” or a casualty of traditional culture carried into postmodernity. Sometimes she is painted as a feminist hero for daring to divorce her husband and raise her child as a single parent; for choosing to live an obvious and self-determined sexuality; for removing her headscarf. Other organizations, like the *LSVD*, which organized the first vigil after her death and invited Seyran Ateş as a guest speaker, see in Sürücü a problem they recognize: hate crimes motivated by social restrictions on free sexual expression. Finally, there are the infamous schoolchildren, treated as mouthpieces for their communities and as the *Akteuere* (agents) of the future, who repeat what they have heard said: she got what she deserved; she earned it; she behaved like a German. She was not one of us. She had no honor.

“What is honor?” This question echoes the *Heroes* mission; it is no wonder that this question is posed at the start of so many of their events. Honor is the foundation for their work. It is both the social phenomenon which makes their work necessary, as well as the object their engagement attempts to deconstruct. Attempting to dismantle the discourse through which one was called into being creates a double-bind for the ways

that *Projekt Heroes* positions itself – not only on a landscape of multiple social projects, but also within the broader integrationist discourses circulating on a national scale. This double-bind is not much different from Wendy Brown's portrayal of the unequal distribution of power which bring identity categories into being and lays the foundations for identity politics. Once produced, these identity categories become “wounded attachments” that cling to the inequities which created them.

In this section, I will show how “honor” is a necessarily fragmented discourse that emerges repeatedly in spaces where cultural difference, national identity and arguments about values and rights all compete for attention and power. Each fragment of the discourse reflects different contours and approaches power differently. When “honor” describes a collective social order that resorts to severe social control and violence, this word haunts the self-understanding of the German nation as a space where individual rights and freedoms take precedence over group rights and collective compulsions to conform are summarily rejected.

These two poles: a discourse of collective “honor” and a discourse of “individuality and freedom” create one binary in current integration debates. Once these two poles are set up, subjects seen vascillate between them – most often the “Muslim” woman, who is the “controlled” object in a discourse of honor and thus a “challenge” to the discourse of individuality – are instrumentalized in public debates about either extreme of this binary. Whether an object to be controlled or rescued, both discourses

use the figure of the “Muslim” woman to stabilize their position: this figure takes on a symbolic role for either side.

The figure of Hatun Sürücü can be seen to fit this binary perfectly. On the one hand, her lifestyle can justify the need for a collective discourse of honor as social control. Sürücü's individuality was seen as a threat to the social order within which her family functioned. On the other hand, her unjust death and the invocation of Sürücü's tragic end in the name of “freedom” is seen to threaten the dignity of human beings supposedly protected by the first article of the German constitution – the foundation on which the entirety of the German nation is seen to rest. Although these two poles represent discursive extremes, they can show us why feminism is so often invoked in these debates, especially to argue against honor and for freedom. Feminism is both a tool that allows individuals the necessary theoretical support to recognize power and to claim individual rights; it can also offer a space for collective action and community in an individualist context. The notion of autonomy that has both driven human rights discourse as well as plagued feminist critiques of it is at stake here. From the murder trial to the LSVD vigil to the Thomas-Morus-Oberschule, we can see how these debates move from the criminal justice system to queer activism to education to the media. A very active social life, indeed.

If we look comparatively at "honor" from two vantage points: one, how *Projekt Heroes* shapes a complex invocation of honor and two, how a media-based discourse

reduces and manipulates the same word, we can begin to see just how fragmentary the notion of "honor" is. By examining each fragment, we may also be able to gain some insight into the strategic functions of honor on a landscape of German power relations. What kind of knowledge does an honor apparatus support, for instance?

There are some points at which the *Heroes* understanding of honor overlaps with the media-based discourse, and these points of concordance will be the most useful for understanding the interplay between the applied practices of a social work organization and its location within a broader discourse which has shaped – whether directly or indirectly – the project's form. The apparatus of honor, encapsulated and signified by the metonym "Hatun Sürücü," thus serves as the justification for a project like *Projekt Heroes* and illustrates how rights discourse has travelled into that space.¹⁰

In direct questions about the emergence of *Projekt Heroes* with Yilmaz Atmaca, a group leader, and Dagmar Riedel-Breidenstein, the co-founder and coordinator, I received two different answers about the relationship between the emergence of *Projekt Heroes* and the broader discursive landscape. Riedel-Breidenstein stuck to a practical story of the project's emergence, saying that *Heroes* did not emerge from highly publicized media events, but rather from the chance meeting of two social workers, one German, one Swedish, at a conference:

¹⁰ *Projekt Heroes*, as I said before, is an offshoot of a Swedish organization that was organized with similar justifications. Just as honor killings needed to become legible as a social problem in Germany, "balcony murders" (honor killings that look like suicidal jumps from an apartment balcony) were the construct that prompted the emergence of *Sharaf Hjältlar*.

JSC: 2005 Neca Kelek kommt auf die Szene, 2006 gibt's Hatun Sürücü und zwei andere Ehrenmorde und dann 2007 kommt *Heroes*. Inwiefern passt die Entwicklung von *Heroes* [...] innerhalb dieser Chronologie?

DRB: Ähm, ja, ich würde sagen fast peinlicherweise ist der Zusammenhang nicht so direkt. War wirklich einfach viel schlichter, diese Geschichte mit dem Strohalm-Fachtag, zu interkultureller Prävention, wo Childhood [World Childhood Foundation, their founder – jsc] wollte, dass wir auch Anna [Rinder-Beckerath, former project leader for *Sharaf Hjältlar*] einladen. Haben wir gemacht. Fand ich einfach irre, was die da erzählt hat, konnte ich gar nicht glauben, dass Jungs sowas machen. Und in der Auswertung hat die- die von Childhood gesagt, also wir würden auch in Berlin so ein Projekt finanzieren, wenn jemand als Träger... Und da hab ich gesagt: Au ja, dat würden wir dann schon gern versuchen, ja. (Riedel-Breidenstein)

JSC: Necla Kelek comes on the scene in 2005, in 2006 there's Hatun Sürücü and two other honor killings, and then in 2007 *Heroes* starts. To what degree does the development of *Heroes* fit in this chronology?

DRB: Um, yeah, I would say, almost with embarrassment, that the relationship isn't that direct. It was actually much simpler, this thing with the Strohhalm conference for intercultural prevention [of sexual abuse], where Childhood wanted us to invite Anna [Rinder von Beckerath, former project leader for *Sharaf Hjältlar*]. We did. I thought it was nuts, what she was saying there, I could not believe that boys would do something like that. And in the appraisal of the project, the woman from Childhood said, you know, we would also finance a project like this in Berlin if someone [would serve] as an umbrella organization... And then I said [flips into Berlin dialect for emphasis]: Oh, yeah, we'd like to try that, yes.

Atmaca, however, ventured that broader social events like Sürücü's murder had been a contributing factor in the founding of *Projekt Heroes*.

YA: Ob *Heroes* jetzt mit Necla Kelek's Büchern oder Veröffentlichungen zu tun hat, glaube ich nicht – aber die Ehrenmorde, die währenddessen oder in derselben Zeit oder davor geschehen, bestimmt, weil das Projekt wurde ja in Schweden gegründet, nachdem sie gesehen haben, dass viele junge Frauen angeblich Selbstmord begehen und irgendwann kam das raus, dass es, äh, so getäuscht wurde. Eigentlich war das Tötung im Namen der Ehre, sozusagen. Äh, und in Berlin, oder in Deutschland, haben wir auch diese – diese Tötungen erlebt... im Namen der Ehre und das ist natürlich die Spitze. Aber auf der Straße,

in den Schulen oder in der Öffentlichkeit, äh, war es ganz klar, dass Frauen, Mädchen unterdrückt werden. Weniger Rechte hatten, sei es in der Familie, sei es in ihrem Community und so weiter. (Atmaca, "Personal Interview")

YA: Whether *Heroes* had anything to do with Necla Kelek's books or publications, [no], I don't think so – but the honor killings that took place while that was happening, at the same time or earlier, of course, because the project was founded in Sweden after they saw that many young women were supposedly committing suicide and at some point it came out that that, that it was being covered up. I was actually murder in the name of honor, so to speak. Um, and in Berlin, or in Germany, we also experienced these murders... in the name of honor, and that's of course the most extreme [lit. peak, top]. But on the street, in schools or in public, um, it was very clear that women and girls were being oppressed. That they had fewer rights, whether it was in the family or in their community and so on.

These two answers function on multiple levels: the factual and the discursive. *Projekt Heroes* would not exist without the networking which took place between Anna Rinder von Beckerath and Dagmar Riedel-Breidenstein. At the same time, I would argue that the *Projekt Heroes* mission statement (*Konzept*) would not be legible to the media and of continued interest to journalists without the support of broader debates in the media which make certain cultural formations like "stigmatized immigrant masculinity" and "honor killings" legible to a wider public.

In professional environments, *Projekt Heroes* uses a PowerPoint presentation to introduce their project to other social workers and possible financial backers. This PowerPoint is also used in various forms for conferences and talks. The title of the PowerPoint is "Ehre: Eine Soziopsychologische Sicht" (Honor: A Socio-Psychological View). The first four or five slides of this PowerPoint define honor in a way that mirrors

the rhetorical questions of the school workshop. Rather than posing the question “What is honor?” to other professionals and financial backers, *Projekt Heroes* describes the training sessions where they asked the first group of boys this question. They then document the group's attempt to define what honor meant and how this affected the way the young men view their interactions with women. After the notion of “honor” is introduced, the next slide is a pixelated image of Sürücü standing in a door or window titled with the famous comment from a schoolchild that shook the nation: “Sie hat sich wie eine Deutsche benommen” (She behaved like a German).

These two points of reference – the documentation of the attempts to define honor and the image of Sürücü (which functions, alongside the quote, as a definition by itself) show two things. First, they show the multiplicity of definitions for the word “honor.” Some of the definitions offered by the boys overlap with a discourse of honor as a discourse of social control; some are tied more strongly to an individualist discourse that links honor to achievement. Second, when we place the order of slides in this PowerPoint alongside the structure of the workshop, these two internal practices show how *Heroes* brings both its youth work and self-presentation into focus. First, they sift through as many definitions of honor as possible, breaking apart the unity of the term as if they were crumbling a loaf of dry bread. Then, in either the first role-playing scene or through the image of Sürücü in the PowerPoint, they make it clear to all participants,

whether schoolchildren or professionals, exactly which discourse of honor makes this work necessary, and which discourse of honor *Projekt Heroes* hope to make obsolete.

The instances of violence in both examples – the aggressive yelling of the father and the brother; the slap of the sister's cheek; the ultimate example of murder – show compactly and precisely how this discourse of honor impinges on individual rights. The push to develop an individual definition of honor performs the task of revising the collective definition of gendered honor that *Projekt Heroes* targets. The similarities between both the start of the workshop as well as the start of the professional PowerPoint represent a consistent and unified framework for the way that *Heroes* presents itself to the outside. The slippage between the target group of young men, the justification for serving these young men as a way to protect and further women's rights, and the invocation of the figure of Hatun Sürücü as proof that there is a discourse of honor which represents a threat, shows the multiple spaces through which the idea of Muslim women's rights travels. In this example, we can see at least three of these spaces: social work with youth, *Heroes'* professional justifications for their existence, and a media scandal that serves as the worst-case scenario. It is also precisely this slippage that shows how an emphasis on honor starts to show signs of strain.

This strain presents a fundamental contradiction of the *Projekt Heroes* work. Honor killings, equal rights for women, and men's involvement in patriarchal structures are all sweeping topics that encompass a broad array of contexts, cultural practices,

socialized constructs and long-standing feminist concerns. To imagine any social work project as contributing in a measurable way to deconstruct even one of these structures is doubtful, especially on a large scale. The scale of social work or social pedagogy is small, especially if the focus of the project is on forming relationships and developing personal growth over time, as the Heroes do in their 9 month training process. In our individual interview, group leader Ahmad Mansour even noted that this has been the direction of the *Projekt Heroes* work over time, from broad concerns about blatant abuses of the term “honor” to a focus on smaller, daily practices:

AM: [Talking about a conversation he had with his girlfriend – jsc]Also natürlich habe ich Fehler gemacht. Natürlich bin [ich] jetzt, wenn ich das gucke, ich habe mich blöd verhalten. Weil ich wollte fahren. Ich wollte nicht, dass sie fährt. Ja? Aber das reflektieren zu können, darüber reden zu können, ist für mich ein Riesenschritt. Weil in diesen Kleinigkeiten, da geht die Emanzipation kaputt und da geht auch die Gleichberechtigung kaputt. Es geht nicht um Ehre, und Sexualität und weiß ich nicht was. Diese, diese Entwicklung, [die ich]damals als ich über, keine Ahnung, Ehre, und über meine Schwester, und ob meine Schwester einen Freund haben kann oder weiß ich nicht, da bin ich nicht da.

JSC: Da bist du nicht da.

AM: Das heißt, diese Ängste, die ich damals gehabt habe-

JSC: Achso.

AM: - kann ich das mir erlauben, werde ich das aushalten, dass meine Tochter oder mein, meine Schwester einen Freund hat, dass sie vielleicht sexualaktiv ist, oder weiß ich nicht. Das ist kein Thema mehr für mich. Also das Thema ist jetzt diese Kleinigkeiten, die für mich eine Riesenrolle spielt. Zum Beispiel Partnersuche, wie man eine Partnerschaft führt, wie man halt die Frauen in der Öffentlichkeit wahrnimmt. [...] Und das ist für mich eine Riesenentwicklung. Und das ist eine persönliche Entwicklung. Und das endet nie. Es geht nicht um *Heroes*, es geht um mein Glück. Oder eigentlich reinzukommen in eine Gesellschaft, und ich rede nicht von der deutschen Gesellschaft, sondern von was ich unter zum Beispiel Partnerschaft verstehe, unter Familie verstehe, unter Gleichberechtigung verstehe, das ist nicht Deutschland. Ich orientiere mich nicht an Deutschland, ich orientiere mich an was ich hier lerne, von Tag zu Tag. Ich

beschäftige mich mit dem Thema. Ich gucke Filme, die mit dem Thema zu tun, ich mache Beobachtungen zum Beispiel in meiner Familie, ich beobachte mich selber in meiner Partnerschaft. Und solche Sachen, das sind die Entwicklungen. (Mansour)

AM: [talking about a conversation he had with his girlfriend – jsc]. So of course I made mistakes. Of course, now, when I look [back] on it, I behaved like an idiot. Because I wanted to drive. I didn't want her to drive. You know? But to be able to reflect on that, to be able to talk about that, is a huge step for me. Because it's in the little things, that's where emancipation breaks down and that's also where equal rights break down. It's not about honor and sexuality and whatever. This, this development, that I made then as I – who knows, about honor, and about my sister, and if my sister could have a boyfriend or I don't know: that's not where I am.

JSC: You're not there.

AM: That means, these fears that I had then –

JSC: Oh.

AM: – can I allow myself to, will I be able to cope with the fact that my daughter or my sister has a boyfriend, that she might be sexually active, or whatever. That's not an issue for me anymore. So the focus now is on these little things that play a huge role for me. For example, looking for a partner, how do you navigate a relationship, how do you perceive women in public. [...] And that is a huge development for me. It's also a personal development. And it never ends. It's not about *Heroes*, it's about my happiness. Or actually about coming into society, and I'm not talking about German society, but rather about what I understand under the rubric of "relationships", under "family," under "equal rights," that's not Germany. I'm not orienting myself with respect to Germany, I'm orienting myself with respect to what I learn here, day by day. I am part of the conversation. I watch films about the topic, I observe myself in my family, I observe myself in my relationship. And those kinds of things, those are the developments.

Mansour himself later notes the discrepancy between the outward presentation of the *Heroes* workshops and his hopes that the project develops with a broader focus in order to reach more youth:

JSC: Und würdest du sagen, dass am Anfang – nur so, dass ich das verstehe – am Anfang als du dann bei *Heroes* angefangen hast, dass dann gingen die Gespräche eher um diese großen Tabuthemen wie Ehre, Sexualität, und jetzt –

AM: Ja, auch mit den Jungs.

JSC: Auch mit den Jungs. Und jetzt ist es irgendwie zu diesen Kleinigkeiten, alltägliche Sachen –

AM: Also das Thema Kleidung, Minirock zum Beispiel, Partnerschaft, das sind Themen, die wir mit der ersten und zweiten Gruppe erst vor ein paar Monaten bearbeitet haben, nicht vorher.

JSC: Aha. Ok.

AM: Also da ging's um Gleichberechtigung, da ging's um Vorurteile, allgemein, da ging's um, ja, was bedeutet eine Frau? Also guck mal, unsere – unser Workshop zum Beispiel, da geht's um diese Thema, es geht nicht um die Kleinigkeiten.

JSC: Aber glaubst du, dass wir dann, wenn wir in der Türkei sind diesen Sommer, dass wir dann das eher bearbeiten, überarbeiten werden, so dass der Workshop dann eher um alltägliche Sachen geht? Also, ist das, was ihr vorhabt?

AM: Also, ich glaube, dass die großen Themen auf jeden Fall da sein [werden], weil die Leute, die wir treffen, treffen werden, in dem Workshop, die haben diese Entwicklung gar nicht gemacht. Ich glaube aber, und das muss dann im Team besprochen werden, dass ein oder zwei alltägliche Themen auf jeden Fall reinkommen sollen, weil da[durch] können wir auch die Deutschen erreichen halt. (Mansour)

JSC: And would you say that at the beginning – just so I can understand – at the beginning when you started at *Heroes*, then the conversations were more likely to be about these big taboo topics like honor, sexuality and now –

AM: Yes, also with the boys.

JSC: Also with the boys. And now it's somehow about these little, everyday things –

AM: So the topics of clothing, miniskirts, for example, relationships; those are topics that we only worked through with the first and second group a couple of months ago, not before.

JSC: Aha. Ok.

AM: And there we were talking about equal rights, there it was about stereotypes, it was about prejudice more generally. There it's about: what does a women stand for? But look – our, our workshop, for example: there it's still about this topic, it's not about the little things.

JSC: Do you think that we'll – when we're in Turkey this summer – that we'll work on that, work through it, so that the workshop is then about everyday things? Is that what you're planning?

AM: I think that the big topics will certainly be there, because the people who we encounter, who we will encounter in a workshop, they haven't gone through this development. I also think, and this has to be discussed in the team, that one or two everyday topics should certainly be incorporated, because that's how we can reach the Germans.

What Mansour mentions here is finding a way to manage serving multiple groups: those who haven't "developed" as he and the Heroes have had time to do; as well as those for whom this discourse of honor may be foreign ("die Deutschen"). Within this narrative of development, he also describes is a refinement of how to combat sexism by moving away from "culture" and towards the specificities of daily practice. This need to serve multiple groups, however, illustrates a tension in the *Projekt Heroes* work between invocations of honor and a desire for gender parity. This tension can be seen not only between the way *Heroes* defines and redefines honor by invoking both the voices of the youth they serve as well as the immediately recognizable image of Sürücü, but also in more subtle moments, one of which took place during media trainings.

As the project begins to expand internationally, *Heroes* is polishing its media image, both by training its staff members in performative and rhetorical techniques as well as developing formal *Projekt Heroes* positions to topical hot-button issues like headscarves and Thilo Sarrazin, which often come up in conversations with journalists. They have recognized that they must position themselves politically in order to be

confident about their mission, for their mission to be clear, and for their organization to be able to participate in shaping those things most important to them.

In June 2011, the staff participated in a full-day workshop with political advisors as well as camera operators and an experienced television journalist. Each staff member was interviewed and taped for approximately ten to fifteen minutes as the moderator asked them stereotypical hot-button questions and invoked all of the signifiers of contemporary media discourse about “Muslim” immigration to Germany: burqas, headscarves, honor killings, Neukölln, Sarrazin, Islam, feminism, and leading questions about their boys and the school workshops they lead. The team then watched themselves on video, and received feedback from the professionals about their performance.

As could be expected, the staff had different levels of camera-readiness: some were more authentic, some more on edge, some more monotone, some more expressive, some more captivating to watch, some more stoic. One of the most interesting moments during this training, however, surfaced when the moderator mentioned honor and made the stereotypical jump directly to honor killings, flattening the complex notion of honor that *Projekt Heroes* tries to develop amongst their boys and in workshops. As the moderator tried to corner the *Projekt Heroes* team, showing them the manipulative power of television journalism as part of their training, the team's resistance to this manipulation could be seen in their facial expressions. Their reaction, however, might

not be immediately legible to those outside of the field: a couple staff members smiled or laughed softly when honor killings were mentioned. These moments of nervous amusement, however, were immediately legible to the other team members. Dagmar Riedel-Breidenstein, the coordinator and founder of *Heroes*, remarked during the talkback that she knew exactly where those smiles or laughter came from – from frustration and a subtle resistance to perpetuating media stereotypes – and also noted that in that moment it was the *worst* reaction the staff could have had (Fieldwork Notes, 1 June 2011).

The affective response to being cornered was a comment on the absurdity of a media discourse that immediately links young immigrant men to violence and fundamentalism that paints "Muslim" immigrants as backward and "medieval," that links honor both to honor killings and to Islam. The smiles and laughter to a serious question were short breaks in the mock interviews; the staff quickly regained their composure. But the break was there, and it was both visible and audible. While the team immediately understood the reaction as frustration with a media discourse that overlooks the details of *Projekt Heroes'* engagement, to the outside, it would seem as if the staff were laughing at its own *raison d'être*, minimizing the gravity of murder and selling their project short. Furthermore, pointed questions about Islam and Muslims, including questions about whether or not women have the right to wear headscarves

and burqas, emphasized a connection *Projekt Heroes* resists: *Heroes* is a project for immigrant youth; it is not a project for “Muslim” youth.

If we return to the moment during media training where staff members briefly lost their composure through the emergence of inappropriate affect, we can see the beginnings of a crack starting to spread through what had previously looked like a monolithic discourse. This crack is created when the television journalist and the *Heroes* meet in a shared space. The journalist throws out a “serious” question; the staff member laughs or smiles. This moment is *not* silent: there are audio and visual cues that point to the fundamental incompatibility between the *Heroes* conception of honor and media discourse. But the moment is subtle, and illegible to those who do not already share a critical investment with terms like “honor,” “rights” and “Muslim.” If anything, this reaction points to the critical stance of individual members of the *Heroes* staff, even if they are not always able to articulate this effectively or with the clarity they might desire. Whereas Riedel-Breidenstein noticed and commented that this reaction threatened to undermine the authority of the *Heroes* staff when it came to the subject of honor crimes, I read this moment as a moment of resistance. It was the clearest expression of frustration with media discourse and an “honor” paradigm I observed during my year of fieldwork at the organization. Without this moment, I might have incorrectly assumed that this resistance did not exist – at least not in a form I could read and understand.

5.4 A Transeuropean Discourse of Honor

The role of the media, which most often relies on Orientalist tropes, is both a blessing and a curse for *Projekt Heroes*. Early experiences with journalists who singled out individuals from the group and who were not always forthcoming about the context of their broadcast resulted in some negative experiences where staff felt their project was misrepresented. Riedel-Breidenstein now requires two pre-meetings from journalists before filming or interviews takes place:

DRB: Es war ja auch was, was wir im Laufe der, der Zeit erst mitgekriegt haben, wie das Interesse der Medien speziell an uns ist, und man kann es vielleicht so zusammenfassen: Am liebsten eben Home-Stories, also hätten sie gerne mit den Jungs ganz intensiv und privat und wir gehen mit euch nach Hause und, wie macht ihr das mit euern Eltern und mit euern Schwestern und in der Schule. Das sind Aspekte, wo uns sehr schnell klar war, dass wir das überhaupt nicht wollten für die Jungs, dass wir sie davor schützen wollten [...].

[E]s gab diese, diese Erfahrung mit RTL, die war so, dass die eigentlich 'nen, wie alle andern auch, angefragt haben, dass sie einen Bericht machen wollen über *Heroes*, das auch gemacht haben. Das war auch ganz gut, aber sie hatten nicht gesagt, dass sie das im Rahmen eines, eines größeren Gesamtberichtes senden wollten, der über Zwangsheirat und Ehrenmord war. [...] Das heißt also, über uns gab's dann sagen wir mal, was Zwölfminütiges, aber im Rahmen einer dreiviertelstündigen Sendung, die also total, brrrom, krachermäßig war, ne? Und als die Guten tauchten dazwischen dann immer an verschiedenen Stellen die *Heroes* auf. Ja. [...]

Und es war dann auch direkt im Anschluss an diese Sendung – es gab auch noch andere auslösende Aspekte, aber es, es war direkt im Anschluss an diese Sendung, dass es hier vor der Tür mit Jugendlichen von gegenüber Ärger gab, die also auf diese Sendung auch anspielten und also da sich rumstritten, aggressiv auf Ahmad [Mansour] und, und einige von den, von den Jungen losgingen und es denen nur sehr mühselig gelungen ist, das da so auf so 'ner Diskussionsebene zu halten. Und in der gleichen Nacht gab's dann eben hier auch 'n Einbruch und alle unsere Computer waren geklaut, so dass wir ehrlich gesagt also da durchaus 'n Zusammenhang irgendwie hergestellt haben, der war zeitlich so eng, dass es also schwer war, es nicht zu tun, ja? (Riedel-Breidenstein)

DRB: It was also something that we only understood over time, what about the media is specifically interested in us, and one can probably summarize it this way: what they'd most like are home stories, so they would like to be tight with the guys and work in private and we're going to go home with you and how do you deal with your parents and your sisters and what's it like at school. Those were aspects where it was clear to us very quickly that we didn't want that at all for the boys, that we wanted to protect them from it [...].

There was this, this experience with RTL that went something like this: they actually, like everyone else, asked to do a report about *Heroes*, and did so. It was also pretty good, but they hadn't said that they wanted to broadcast it as part of a larger report about forced marriage and honor killings. [...] That means, there was, let's say, about a twelve minute thing about us, but with a longer broadcast that was about forty-five minutes and was totally, brrroom, explosive, you know? And now and then, at various moments, the *Heroes* popped up as the good ones. Yeah.

And then, it was directly after this broadcast – there was also another contributing factor, but it was directly after this broadcast, that here in front of our door adolescents from across the street caused trouble, they were responding also to this broadcast and then fought with each other, got aggressive with Ahmad [Mansour] and, and some of them – some of the boys got going and it was only with effort that we kept that at the level of discussion. And that same night there was a break-in here and all of our computers were stolen, such that we, to be honest, somehow saw a connection, it was chronologically so close that it was also hard not to do that, you know?

Riedel-Breidenstein also points to an attentive practice of *Projekt Heroes* attempting to shape their own media image, allowing only those journalists who agree to their demands to film or interview the staff and young men:

DRB: [W]as wir schon länger gemacht haben und was wir dann wirklich sehr systematisch gemacht haben, dass ich mit allen, die, die hier was, äh, berichten wollen, Vorgespräche mache und, äh, ihnen auch sage, was geht, was nicht geht, was durchaus dazu geführt hat, dass etliche dann nicht mehr, also sich dann zurückgezogen haben, ne, also weil sie eben sowas wollten mit Begleitung und so und irgendwelchen Müttern, die dagegen sind und schimpfen und, also, weeß

ick wat allet, ne, also so wie sie sich eben so vorstellen, wie det alles so is' bei Migrantens, ja? (Riedel-Breidenstein)

DRB: What we've done for a longer time and what we have really done very systematically, is that I meet with everyone who wants to report something, I do preliminary interviews and tell them what is okay, what isn't okay, which has led to the fact that many of them no longer – they step back, you know, because they just want to [film] with an escort and so and [find] some mothers who are against it and who complain, and [switches into Berlin dialect for emphasis]: oh, I don't know what it's all about, you know, what they're imagining, how they think things are with migrants, you know?

Seen through a Saidian lens, the fascination with honor killings plays into cliched Orientalist fantasies: savage men, victimized women, blood and violence, rampant sexuality. Through the *Vorgespräche* (preliminary interviews) with journalists, *Projekt Heroes* is able to restrict certain stereotypical perspectives from shaping their public image.

An Orientalist discourse of honor is not particular to a German context – as Edward Said has shown, Orientalist fantasies are common across Europe (he points specifically to French and English examples, and acknowledges the existence of German versions of the same phenomenon). This chapter may perform some of the work Said was not able to complete by incorporating a German case study into a framework Said acknowledged was shaped mostly by English and French colonial history.¹¹ Social work,

¹¹ Suzanne Zantop's work on colonial fantasies in Germany is the most notable contribution to the cases which Said admits he left out of his study. Todd Koontje has examined the German literary canon through a Saidian lens. See Koontje and Zantop. Interestingly enough, Said himself rejected the idea that adding German examples into his study was necessary, saying "Others - like my exclusion of German Orientalism, which no one has given any reason for me to have included - have frankly struck me as superficial or trivial,

especially outreach and shelters for women, is one of the areas that has been shaped strongly by the discussions in Europe about immigration and honor. These organizations also have missions or names that resonate with the autobiographical practice of linking particular problematics to the faces and famous narratives of autobiographical celebrities. Like the visual trope of author's faces being splashed across the paperback covers of Muslim women's autobiography, linking individual identities and experience to political projects, social work organizations that are designed to engage with the problematic of honor often use the first names of victims as the name of their organization. This functions as a variation on the method of linking individual identity to social work practice. For social work organizations, the use of victim's first names not only links individuals to broader narratives of honor and problematic cultural difference, but also serves as a shorthand justification for each project's mission.

Glöm aldrig Pela och Fadime (Never Forget Pela and Fadime), a Swedish organization designed to both guide "victims" to health and safety resources as well as to raise public awareness of honor crimes, for instance, uses the names of two victims to make their work legible ("About Us"). The German non-profit *Hatun und Can e.V.* was

and there seems no point in even responding to them" (90). Zantop, I believe, can be seen as having effectively provided proof that colonial fantasies (and Orientalist fantasies, by extension) were able to circulate in German-speaking countries even without a large German empire. See Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered." See also Chunjie Zhang's dissertation *Views from the Other Side: Colonial Culture and Anti-colonial Sentiment in Germany around 1800* (2010).

named similarly after Sürücü and her surviving son, and was an organization set up to provide direct intervention in the form of cash and furnished apartments to those seeking refuge. This organization was the subject of a sensational scandal in 2010 after Alice Schwarzer pledged half a million Euros in donations, and then became suspicious after requesting the organization's accounting records (dpa/lk, "Vereinsvorsitzender"). This organization's assets are currently frozen while they are under investigation for misuse of funds; the organization's website no longer exists ("Chef"). The suspected fraud perpetrated by the founder of *Hatun und Can e.V.* is a clear example of how a discourse of honor that demonizes men and victimizes women has become so legible to the public that Alice Schwarzer can appear on RTL – a cable television network like TNT in the United States – and be applauded for her efforts to protect Germans from honor-based crimes without having researched her choice of organization. The twenty-five year old women's organization *Papatya*, also a women's crisis center which has long provided services to this population, for instance, was not legible to Schwarzer in the same way as *Hatun und Can e.V.* The political gesture of Alice Schwarzer was thus largely symbolic, and quite distanced from effective intervention on behalf of women.

What I am attempting to do here is to step back from the immediacy of intervention – or even prevention – and call into question the similarities of a transnational discourse of honor, feminism and rights that is moving through and shaping many spaces simultaneously. This transnational movement of discourse

becomes theoretically interesting due to its similarity in multiple places – but it is critical to examine this similarity closely because it may be masking power that actually works against the interests of the populations this discourse purports to serve.¹² Transnational trends are a fact of the post-globalized world, but what benefits do these transnational phenomena offer? How does the transnational flow of funding and particular formulations of social problems affect social work practice?¹³ If what is really at stake in

¹² See Hasso and Lughod, “Active Social Life.” Sineb el-Masrar, author of *Muslim Girls: Wer wir sind, wie wir leben* addressed just this issue during a reading from her book at the Auswärtiges Amt in Berlin January 6, 2011. According to el-Masrar, the discourse of the victimized Muslim woman and the books of authors such as Ateş and Kelek serve to prop up celebrity personalities rather than to actually help those most oppressed. As support for her claim, el-Masrar cited the example of a suicide hotline for women that begins the 01805 area code (like 1-900 in the US, 01805 marks telephone numbers which incur charges). Had the psychotherapist who began this initiative really wanted to help women, el-Masrar said, they wouldn’t have chosen a number that incurs costs and leaves a trace on the telephone used to call for assistance. The “End Your Silence, Not Your Life” campaign is what el-Masrar is probably referencing here, which was an initiative from the Berlin Charité research hospital after a public health study was published in which Turkish-German women were found to have double the suicide rate of their indigenous German peers (see Westhoff). Even more baffling than the fact that this number carries significant costs (14 Euro Cent/minute from landlines; up to 42 Euro Cent/min from a cell phone) is the fact that it is open only Monday-Friday from 9am – 4pm. The BIG hotline for domestic violence is somewhat better organized, has a local number without special costs, and is available from 9am – midnight seven days a week. The website for the BIG hotline notes that domestic violence has only been a punishable offense since 2001. See “BIG Hotline.”

¹³ Saba Mahmood, for instance, has successfully shown how the genre of Muslim women’s autobiography has been mobilized under the banner of women’s rights and feminism to support neo-liberal economic and military interests of France and the United States in the Middle East. By demonizing Islam as a religion that oppresses women, these voices justify military intervention and war – which, in turn, have a contradictory effect, inevitably restricting even further the daily movement of women and girls. Patricia Ehrkamp, a cultural geographer, has shown in her article “Risking Publicity” how publicity about urban immigrant neighborhoods in Germany is a risk for immigrant communities. The media attention is only turned to outside/public spaces, which function as immigrant spaces writ large, masking the power of gender to shape space and obscuring the racializing function of the media. As Ehrkamp asserts: “I propose that young Turkish and Kurdish men enact masculinities in relation to young Turkish women, Turkish and Kurdish political groups, and German residents, which shapes public neighborhood space in ways that can be characterized as masculine and exclusionary. These masculinist public spaces are frequently racialized as ‘Turkish’ by local German residents, politicians, and the media. I argue that these portrayals of ‘Turkish’ space read gendered spatial practices as racial practices. I conclude that it is necessary to carefully unpack the ways that Kurdish and Turkish men’s masculinities are articulated with race, public space, and non-migrants’ masculinities in order to better understand the spatial politics of difference in immigrant-receiving

these discussions is cultural difference, national identity, feminist self-determination and equal rights, does each location require its own politics; its own discourse; its own approach in order to make the contours of the rhetoric “fit” the location? What kinds of effects does the “one size fits all” approach have on imagining the potential for social work?

As noted earlier, the German, the Swedish and the French discourses of honor use the names of victims of honor killings to symbolize both the emerging movement against “false” honor as well as to participate in commemorating their death. The Swedish cases of Pela and Fadime were highly publicized “balcony murders.” A balcony murder takes place when young women are pushed to their death from apartment balconies. These murders look like suicides but are actually honor killings. A short informational booklet developed in Sweden entitled “From Forced Marriages to Balcony Murders: Entering Honor Culture,” which was printed and distributed by ALMAEuropa, outlines honor culture in its introduction:

The most well-known honor killings in Sweden are those of Fadime, Sara and Pela. . . During 2007, four murders/murder attempts on young girls having fallen from balconies were investigated. In all cases the parents were under suspicion, but all investigations were closed because of lack of evidence. . . The balcony

societies.” See Ehrkamp. By pulling back and looking at these two academic examples as well as the break which surfaced during the media training, what may be masked within a media discourse of honor as it pertains to *Heroes* are the stark differences between what *Heroes* actually does and what the media thinks it does.

murders represent a detail in the description of honor culture in Sweden. It is a technique developed to make honor culture function in Western societies, a technique resulting from the struggle between the Swedish legal system and honor culture. As such, the balcony murders give us an insight into honor culture and the way it works, and at the same time, the crimes tell us something about where we stand today. . . The origin on honor culture is not evil, nor is it lack of love for one's children and family members. There are strictly rational reasons for survival that explain why honor culture could have been created and upheld. This book aims to offer information about honor culture and an introduction to the great efforts to promote democracy and human rights that need to be made in order to undermine honor culture. (4-5)

In this context, "honor" is partly a contemporary phenomenon that emerges from cultural conflict between immigrants and the Swedish state; it places the origins of honor culture in a "rational" worldview focused on survival. Within a democratic and rights-based culture, honor-based survival is no longer necessary. Honor culture becomes obsolete and should be "undermined" in order "to promote democracy and human rights." In this context, the ALMAEuropa authors point to murder as a cultural formation and claim the right to demand immigrant groups modify a supposed "cultural" practice. As Frances Hasso, Lila Abu-Lughod and Leti Volpp have persuasively argued, this shaping of murder as a cultural practice demonizes Muslims or cultural others and sets up barriers to members of majority cultures perceiving victims and victim's families as being "like us" (Volpp 91).

The French activist movement *nis poutes, nis soumises*, founded by Fadela Amara, also cites murder as the instigating event for the *nis poutes nis soumises* protest march in 2003. The spectacular murder of Sohane, an 18-year-old girl in the Balzac Quarter of

Vitry-sur-seine, was committed in 2002. Amara later published an autobiographical account of both the march and the movement of the same name. This book was published under a different title in English (“Breaking the Silence: French Women’s Voices from the Ghetto”) but the German translation sticks to the original title (*Weder Huren noch Unterworfenen*). While the American edition emphasizes the French nationality of the march’s participants, this English title became more sensationalist and cumbersome.¹⁴

Amara's book is especially important for this history of *Projekt Heroes*, as it is the suggested reading for all new staff before they enter training, and had a formidable influence on the development of *Heroes*-Berlin as they were developing their mission. Amara's book is also given explicit attention in ALMAEuropa's booklet. What we have here are thus three national contexts – Swedish, German, US-American – in which the same text is circulating and, in the case of Sweden and Germany, affecting both the interpretation of “culture” and the practice of social work.

¹⁴ In terms of the visual shorthand of this genre I discussed earlier, what I find interesting is the comparison between the German and American covers of the book’s translations. While the German translation has a cover image of Amara speaking, as fits the European generic traditions, the American cover has photos of two black women at a *nis putes nis soumises* protest, with signs visibly written in French. While the German translation emphasizes the personality and celebrity of the author, the American version emphasizes the social movement and also transfers the conflict onto racialized others. While race is certainly part of the French march, it was not the only focus of the march. American readers are thus being “primed” to understand this conflict through the lens of race, especially given the (mis)translation of the book’s title as “Breaking the Silence: French Women’s Voices from the Ghetto.” “Ghetto” in the US signals both race (blackness) and socioeconomic and political disenfranchisement. Whether this inflection is absolutely necessary is doubtful.

Just as Amara cites Sohane's death as one of the instigating events for the famous 2003 protest march (15), the *Projekt Heroes* PowerPoint that flashes a picture of Sürücü as the justification for the project itself. In her book, Amara lays out how a discourse of honor provided the catalyst for the now transnational women's rights movement under the same name. The basic themes of Amara's book are the following:

1. Amara insists that the *majority* of those involved reject the patterns of violence around them, however, this majority is a *silent* majority (36, 111);
2. She explores the differences between the activism of underprivileged feminists from the *banlieus* and the mainstream and often more privileged feminists from Paris proper (82-88);¹⁵
3. She insists on the necessity of involving men and boy in these feminist goals, pointing out in numerous passages the ways that boys suffer under the prescribed gender roles currently shaping the space of the *banlieu* (17, 36-37, 65, 74, 79).

¹⁵ This conflict is often described as a conflict of race or class. If I just use the language of class, however, to talk about this dichotomy, it negates the middle class immigrant feminists who became part of the movement; if I only talk about "Muslim" immigrants, it excludes the black and white feminists who became part of the march. Lining up the dichotomy between "underprivileged feminists of color" and "middle-class white feminists" also associates racial backgrounds with specific economic positions, which is also inaccurate. "Western" and "Muslim" feminists also falls short as a dichotomy, as all of these activists find themselves in the West; and furthermore, not all of those marching were Muslim. Thus, I find that location and privilege are probably the most comprehensive descriptors that I can apply here, which sheds light both on the specificities of place as well as the power dynamics within the conflict. Not all "mainstream" feminists in France come from Paris, but the *banlieus* and Paris serve here to demarcate differences in power afforded by situation.

Projekt Heroes engages with all of these themes in their own way. Perhaps the most prominent theme invoked by *Projekt Heroes* is the last in this list – the importance of including men and boys in feminist practice because they are fellow sufferers of gender inequality. The *Heroes* mission statement (*Konzept*) incorporates this argument frequently, especially when justifying directly serving only young men:

Patriarchale Strukturen und Vorstellungen von Ehre, die v.a. durch Erziehung weitergegeben werden, haben in diesem Zusammenhang eine hohe Bedeutung. Sie hindern Jugendliche beiderlei Geschlechts an der freien Entwicklung ihrer Persönlichkeit und schränken die möglichen Lebensentwürfe ein: Mädchen und Frauen werden in schwache Positionen, in die Opferrolle gedrängt (Zwangsheirat, Kontrolle, Unterordnung), aber auch Jungen geraten unter empfindlichen Druck (Durchsetzung der Ehrevorschriften, arrangierte Ehen). (Breidenstein, "Heroes" 1-2)

Patriarchal structures and ideas of honor, which above all else are passed on through child-rearing, are very important in this context. They inhibit adolescents of both genders from freely developing their personality and restrict possible lifestyle choices: girls and women are pushed into weak positions, into the role of the victim (forced marriage, control, subjugation), but boys encounter intense pressure, too (enforcing the dictates of honor, arranged marriages).

Later they write:

Wir sind davon überzeugt, dass eine erfolgreiche Arbeit für die Gleichberechtigung auch die Männer einbeziehen muss. Ohne einen Entwicklungsprozess, der die Männer einschließt und ihnen die Möglichkeit gibt, traditionelle Geschlechterrollen in Frage zu stellen, gibt es keine Chance auf eine nachhaltige gesellschaftliche Veränderung. Das Ziel ist eine Gesellschaft, in der Frauen und Männer gleiche Rechte und gleiche Möglichkeiten haben. Aus dieser Perspektive ist es wichtig, dass unser Team heterogen ist und sich aus Frauen und Männern zusammensetzt und aus verschiedenen ethnischen Gruppen kommt. (3)

We are convinced that successful work towards equality also must include men. Without a developmental process that includes men and gives them the

opportunity to question traditional gender roles, there is no chance for sustainable societal change. The goal is a society in which women and men have the same rights and the same ability to make choices. From this perspective it is important that our team is heterogeneous and consists of men and women as well as members from various ethnic groups.

In short, serving young men is an explicitly feminist practice, allowing the *Heroes* boys and group leaders the chance to question their socialization, and to perform an atypical, non-traditional distribution of labor: the managerial, leadership roles are performed by women; the task of engaging with the boys affectively is performed mostly by men. The heterogeneity of the team – men *and* woman from various ethnic groups – allows multiple identities to circulate and perform labor in a space in which no one can be seen to fill a stereotypical role, not even the female group leader, who performs both the affective group work, but who is also in a position of authority and a professional. These excerpts also portray young men as in need of spaces in which to develop critical thought about their own gendered roles. This is the precondition for “sustainable social change.” Only by questioning their own position will they be able to recognize the “substantial pressure” a culture of honor places upon them. Both Atmaca and Turan (the first female group leader) noted the differences they see between their experiences within this “culture” and the “culture” in which the boys they serve are growing up. They thus point to understandings of culture and identity that is always in flux. Part of this is the result of structural shifts, as Turan remarked in our interview:

ET: Beobachte ich schon, dass die Generation nach mir, auch wenn es jetzt nur fünf, sechs, sieben Jahre entfernt ist von mir, sage ich mal, ähm definitive

weniger zweispältig leben als meine Generation. Also ich glaube, meine Generation ist noch sehr starker verankert in innere Konflikte, sag' ich mal. Identitätskonflikte, als die neuere Generation. Ich glaube, die sind hier einfach besser angekommen, weil sie weiter weg von der Elterngeneration sind, bzw. Deren Eltern vielleicht 'n Stückchen jünger sind und auch angepasster sind, die nicht sehr stark diese Identitätskonflikte haben, die sich besser ausdrücken, sich besser organisiert sind, viel mehr von denen z.B. auf gute Schulen gehen. Viel mehr in meinem Alter, so war es z.B., ich kann nur ein Beispiel geben, auf der Schule, wo ich Abitur angefangen habe, ähm waren wir vielleicht zwei Türkinnen in der ganzen Klasse. Oder höchstens drei später. [...] Und die haben nicht mal alle Abitur gemacht bei uns.

ET: I do notice that the generation after me, even when there are just five, six, seven years difference, so to speak, definitely lives less ambivalently than my generation. I mean, I think my generation is still much more strongly anchored in internal conflicts, let's say: identity conflicts; [more so than] the new generation. I think they've simply "arrived" better, because they are further away from their parents' generation. Their parents are maybe a little bit younger and have also assimilated more, they don't have a strong identity conflict, they express themselves better, are organized better, many more of them, for instance, go to good schools. For people my age, this is how it was – I can only give one example – at the school where I started *Abitur*, there were maybe two Turkish girls in the whole class. Or three at the most a little bit later. And not even all of them completed their *Abitur* with us.

Turan later noted that she also almost abandoned college preparatory education because of the discrimination she faced in school for her accent, and later transferred to a school where there were more students of color.¹⁶ By distinguishing here between two "generations" of immigrants, Turan directly contests the often articulated fear that the second and third generations of immigrants are *less* integrated, noting that even a group only five to seven years younger than she is already exhibit what many would describe

¹⁶ All of the *Projekt Heroes* staff have university degrees in a variety of fields (psychology, sociology, gender studies, business administration and theater pedagogy).

as a positive step-up in society (better education, better language skills, fewer identity conflicts).

Despite Turan's insistence that notions of "culture" are shifting rapidly, the possible critiques of *Projekt Heroes* by feminists would have to include the notion of "culture of honor" as a way to emphasize and essentialize "culture" as the vehicle for behavioral traits. The focus on honor and young men in public spaces could also be described as a way to stigmatize immigrant men as "abject others" (Ewing). That publicity for minorities brings with it the danger of being racialized by majority society, as several journalistic reports about the project that describe Heroes as "Young Muslims" or "Integrated Muslims" do, seems obvious (Ehrkamp). The theoretical difficulty of entrusting the protection of women's rights to men and the reproduction of patriarchy this entails is clear. What do we make of these critiques within the structures, limitations, possibilities and spaces of the applied social work that attempts to engage with these issues?

Evidence that this tension is both apparent to and grappled with by the young men served by *Projekt Heroes* can best be found in their own words. While on a workshop development trip at a youth center on the Turkish Aegean Coast between Bergama und Aliğa, I had the opportunity to interview several Heroes. The *Projekt Heroes* staff was very helpful in making space in their schedule between group activities and meals so that those young men who wanted to be interviewed had time to come

find me. Our interviews were quite short, no more than ten minutes per Hero, but taken as a group they offer some insights as to how the contradictions between theory and practice are both evident to and explored by teenagers (these Heroes were eighteen or nineteen years old at the time of our interviews).

What these interviews suggest is that the *Heroes* youth are well aware of some of the difficulties and contradictions of the *Heroes* work, but see these contradictions and tensions not as barriers to participation, but as questions they hope will be addressed, as possible additions to the *Heroes* work or even as practices that certain strands of theorists may consider problematic but with which they nevertheless identify.

During our conversation, for instance, I asked Hero 1 what the purpose of the *Heroes* work is. He replied “Der Sinn der Sache ist, dass *Heroes* versucht, den unterdrückten Frauen zu helfen, und auch zu zeigen, dass es überhaupt diese Probleme gibt [...] Und vielen ist es auch egal” (The point of it is that *Heroes* tries to help oppressed women, and also to show that these problems even exist at all. [...] And many people don’t care, Hero 1). When I asked him in response why he *does* care, he referenced his own experiences growing up in Berlin-Kreuzberg as proof that “these problems” exist. However vague this notion of working for equal rights is – and some of this vagueness may be age-appropriate – he sees the limits of what *Heroes* can accomplish. When I asked him what he hoped to achieve in the future from participating at *Projekt Heroes*, he admitted “Auf jeden Fall wird’s schwer, mit *Heroes*. Also, man erreicht schon was, aber .

. . eine ganze Menge damit zu erreichen, eine Menge, Masse von Leuten damit zu erreichen wird schon schwer sein [...] man kann ja nicht gleich so von einem Tag zum anderen Menschen überzeugen, so“ (In any case, it’s going to be hard for *Heroes*. Like, you can achieve something, but . . . to achieve a whole lot, to reach a lot, a mass of people will be difficult [...] you can’t just convince people right away, so . . ., Hero 1). Although this critical push is limited, and eventually results in him repeating that the best result of the project would be “equal rights for men and women,” he seems to understand that the cause and effect relationships between oppression and emancipation are not as straightforward as this articulation makes them seem.

My interview with Hero 2 showed a much more skeptical approach to *Projekt Heroes*, especially before he joined the group: “[I]ch war erstmal nicht so beeindruckt, um ehrlich zu sein (*lacht*), hab’ erstmal daran gezweifelt, dass dieses Projekt überhaupt etwas bewirken kann“ (I wasn’t that impressed at first, to be honest (*laughs*), I really doubted that this project could change anything at all, Hero 2). This Hero had participated in various other social projects and had been disappointed by their offerings. When I asked him what was different about *Projekt Heroes*, he said:

H2: Es war einfach, jeder konnte sagen, was er will. Die haben dieses Projekt – erstmal haben wir die Definition von dem Wort zum Beispiel Ehre gesucht, wir haben versucht, das alles überhaupt zu definieren und überhaupt so eine Lösung zu finden [...] Es ging nicht darum einfach wie man, alle jetzt in der Klasse zu überzeugen, sondern es ist dieser Aufklärungsprozess, den wir an arbeiten sozusagen, diese Denkanstöße, was ich sehr interessant fand, und – wir betreiben halt Aufklärungsarbeit, und das hat mir sehr gefallen eigentlich. (Hero 2)

It was just, everyone could say what they wanted to. They have this project – first we looked for the definition of the word honor, for example, we tried to define everything and generally find a solution. [...] It wasn't just about how you convince everybody in the class, but it's this kind of consciousness that we're working on, so to speak, this brainstorming (lit. thought-impulses), which I found very interesting, and – we're just doing consciousness work (lit. enlightenment work), and that actually was something I liked.

Hero 6 echoed this sentiment:

H6: [I]ch hab' vorher bei vielen anderen, äh, Projekten, auch wenn sie nur ganz kurz waren eigentlich, [...] wo es um soziale Themen und so ging. Aber die haben mich nie wirklich angesprochen, weil es war immer sehr strikt und immer sehr, so eintönig [...]. Und was mich bei äh, *Heroes*, ähm, also mein allererster Eindruck war, dass ich einfach alles sagen konnte, was ich wollte, ohne mich jetzt davor zu fürchten, dass ich irgendwie ausgelacht werde, dass die mir sagen, nein, sowas kannst du nicht sagen und so. (Hero 6)

H6: Before I'd [done stuff] with a lot of other projects, even when they were actually short, [...] where it was about social topics and so on. But they never really spoke to me, because it was always really strict and always very, like, monotonous [...]. Und what, uh, what my first impression from *Heroes* was, was that I could just say everything I wanted to, without being scared that I'd be laughed at, that they would tell me, no, you can't say that and so on.

Hero 2 also noted that he enjoyed being surrounded by a group of young men who were all friendly and smart (most have or are finishing their *Abitur*). What both Hero 2 and Hero 6 articulate is the enjoyment of an open-ended intellectual process and social acceptance. Hero 2 adds that he enjoys "Aufklärungsarbeit," which could be translated as "awareness training," or a kind of consciousness-raising work. The desire for power is also not to be underestimated: almost all of the Heroes stated that they like the fact that they will, after training, be able to lead workshops and ask the "kids" questions, to lead workshops that make them think. Like Hero 1, Hero 2 doesn't articulate a

particularly detailed notion of what it means to agitate under the banner of equal rights.

But when I asked him what has changed since her started working with *Projekt Heroes*,

he pointed directly to his own positive development with respect to “girls”:

JSC: Hast du bemerkt, dass etwas in deinem Alltag sich verändert hat, nachdem du bei *Heroes* angefangen hast?

Hero 2: Ja, auf jeden Fall (*lacht*), mein Umgang mit Mädchen ist anders geworden.

JSC: Besser?

Hero 2: Ja, besser geworden auf jeden Fall. Also ich war jetzt nicht grad’ der Netteste, also ich, das Netteste zu Mädchen – hab’ die, wenn ich das so sagen darf, ausgenutzt. (Hero 2)

JSC: Have you noticed anything about your everyday life change after you started at *Heroes*?

H2: Definitely (*laughs*), my interactions with girls have changed.

JSC: Better?

H2: Yeah, it’s gotten better, definitely. So, I wasn’t exactly the nicest – I – wasn’t the nicest to girls – I kinda, if I can say so, used them.

He even advocates for including girls into the *Heroes* mission, one of the critiques that

often surfaces about this “boys” project:

H2: [I]ch würd’ mich freuen, wenn mehr Mädchen, also wenn auch Mädchen sich bei, an *Heroes* beteiligen könnten. Was ich sehr wichtig fänd’, weil auch immer wenn ich mit meinen Freunden über *Heroes* rede, wird das angesprochen, warum Mädchen da jetzt nicht aktiv werden. Sie wollen aktiv werden, sie finden das super, was wir machen, sind auch sehr beeindruckt davon. Und ich hab’ denen auch diese *Heroes*-Anstecker gegeben, und die tragen das auch noch ziemlich stolz, was mich auch verwundert [...] Und denen die Möglichkeit zu bieten, wäre eigentlich auch auf jeden Fall ein, äh, Fortschritt für *Heroes* [...]. (Hero 2)

H2: I’d be happy when more girls, I mean, if girls could participate at *Heroes* too. Which I find to be very important, because whenever I’m talking about *Heroes* with my friends, that’s brought up, why girls can’t be active there now. They want to be active, they think it’s great what we’re doing, they’re also very

impressed with it. And I also gave them these *Heroes* buttons, and they wear them rather proudly, which astounds me. [...] And to offer them the possibility would actually definitely be progress for *Heroes*.

In fact, what surfaced in several conversations with various *Heroes* was a strong awareness of power and solidarity with the young women they know, which was not rooted in their participation with *Projekt Heroes* but strengthened and complemented by it. Hero 3, when I asked him what kinds of discussions he had had with his friends about the oppression of women, described his own experiences of navigating gender difference in school. German middle and primary schools are arranged around “classes.” Rather than having individual schedules, up until the tenth grade school pupils have a mostly uniform schedule with their twenty to thirty peers. This Hero’s class had a strong gender imbalance, where boys outnumbered girls.

H3: Damals war das so, dass es in der Klasse angefangen hat, dass wir viel mehr Jungs waren in der Klasse. [...] Dann war das so, dass die Lehrer gesagt haben, erstmal die Mädchen, als wir in den Bus eingestiegen sind, oder halt in ein Flugzeug, oder auf Klassenfahrten, alles Mögliche, ja erstmal die Mädchen. Auch beim Feueralarm, das war auch eine lustige Geschichte. Und dann sind wir als Gruppe insgesamt, unter anderem auch die Mädchen, haben gesagt, ey, wenn dann alle zusammen, oder gar nicht. [...] Seitdem sind wir auch richtig enge und vertreten unsere Meinung. Ich glaub’ auch, dass die anderen dasselbe sagen würden. Das ist Gleichberechtigung für mich. (Hero 3)

H3: Then it was so that it started with our class, that there were a lot more boys in the class. [...] Then it was like, the teachers would say, first the girls when we got onto the bus, or onto a plane, or on class trips, everything possible, yeah, first the girls. And even during a fire alarm, that was a funny story. And then we got together as a group, including the girls, said, hey, if we go, then everybody at the same time – or not at all. [...] Since then we’ve also been really tight and speak our mind. I think that the others would say the same thing. That’s equal rights to me.

In addition to being able to fashion a definition of equal rights rooted in everyday practices, this Hero credits *Projekt Heroes* with strengthening his ability to speak up for himself, with offering a kind of empowerment:

H3: Also, jeden Montag treffen wir uns und haben immer Diskussionen und so. Und vor *Heroes*, was ich sagen will, konnte ich nie meine Meinung vertreten, auch als wir sozial aktiv waren, war ich immer derjenige [...], der ruhig war und dafür gesorgt hat, dass andere für mich reden. Aber dank *Heroes* kann ich jetzt meine Meinung offen sagen, und ich finde, keiner kann dagegen etwas tun. (Hero 3)

H3: So every Monday we meet and always have, like, discussions. And before *Heroes*, what I want to say, I couldn't ever express my opinion, even when we were socially active, I was always the one [...] who was quiet and who let other people speak for me. But thanks to *Heroes* I can express my opinion openly, and I think, nobody can take that away from me.

Hero 4 even credits the project with helping him both socially and at his place of employment¹⁷:

H4: Auf jeden Fall, was ich bei *Heroes* gelernt habe, ist das Miteinander, also noch soz- ich bin noch sozialer geworden, [...] habe gelernt auch vor- vor Gruppen zu sprechen, also jetzt vor der gesamten Mannschaft zu sprechen, was wiederum auch, sich ausgeschlagen hat, [...] positiv ausgeschlagen hat auf meine Arbeit, dass ich jetzt noch besser mit dem Bürger sprechen kann. (Hero 4)

H4: Definitely, what I've learned from *Heroes* is how to be together, like, I've gotten more social, [...] and I've also learned how to speak in front of groups, and to speak in front of the whole team, which has also turned out to positively affect my work, so that I can talk to the people (lit. citizens) better now.

¹⁷ Employment for those who have completed an *Ausbildung* can start relatively early, even at age sixteen or seventeen. This Hero has a full time job as a civil servant, even though he is still a teenager.

Finally, Hero 5 even articulates the point made by many feminists researching “feminist” or “equal rights” organizations, that these organizations are often limited, unable or unwilling to advocate for women effectively. They may, however, do other things quite well. Hero 5 sees the focus of *Projekt Heroes* not as women’s rights, but as youth work:

JSC: Was glaubst du ist der A und O von der *Heroes*, *Heroes*-Arbeit?

H5: Jugendarbeit. Also – ich würd’ gar nicht wirklich sagen jetzt, *Heroes* ist eine Frauenrechtsorganisation. Es geht einfach darum, die äh, Kids, die einfach nicht so ‘ne Erziehung genossen haben, wo die Frau im Mittelpunkt ist – also, wo die Frau, ähm, auch respektiert wurde, ähm, einfach die aufzuklären sozusagen. So ‘ne bisschen missionarische Arbeit, nicht jetzt auf Religion bezogen, sondern Aufklärungsarbeit. (Hero 5)

JSC: What do you think is the alpha and omega of the *Heroes* work?

H5: Youth work. Like –I wouldn’t really say that *Heroes* is a women’s rights organization. It’s just simply about – it’s for the kids who simply haven’t had this kind of an education where the woman is central – like, where the woman is respected, um, it’s simply to enlighten them. So it’s, like, kind of missionary work, but not with respect to religion, but rather, working to raise consciousness.

From this brief collection of interview excerpts, what becomes clear is the variety of responses and desires that shape each individual Hero’s investment in and identification with the project. We can also see how the outward presentation of the project and the internal benefits of sustained “training” over long periods of time in small groups show how *Projekt Heroes* has two different strands to their work: the external presentation of the project and the internal trainings for the small *Heroes* groups.

5.5 Conclusion

The *Heroes Project* is a social work organization that is actively engaged in the day-to-day work of mentoring youth. The articulated goals of this project are both to take a stand against “cultures of honor” and to reframe the dominant image of immigrant men as a threat or as violent criminals. The outward presentation of the project, seen in the school workshops, most of the media attention, professional PowerPoint presentations for other social workers, and their tagline “against oppression in the name of honor,” rely on extant discursive markers to make the problematic of honor legible. This requires *Projekt Heroes* to construct a clear articulation of the discourse of honor as a form of collective social control that is primarily the concern of immigrant groups, and which also impinges on individual rights, especially the rights of women. We can see some of the difficulties that arise from *Projekt Heroes* positioning itself this way through the ill-fitting reactions of some of the staff during media training, and the tension Dagmar Riedel-Breidenstein describes between *Heroes’* self-image and their portrayal in the press.

In contrast to this legible, but possibly stereotypical, construction of honor that courses through its public self-presentation, *Projekt Heroes* also has internal activities that engage with a much broader spectrum of concerns in its training program for young peer educators. As the interviews with the individual *Heroes* show, sustained engagement over time allows each Hero to learn to think for themselves, to speak up, and to see opportunities for combating sexism as part of an everyday practice. In

interviews with the two Heroes that addressed women's rights directly, an engagement for equal rights was not the project of men, but rather, was the product of a coeducational environment or having close female friends. Finally, Hero 5 even articulated this break, by declaring that *Projekt Heroes* was not a women's rights organization, but rather had youth work as its essential core.

From my year of fieldwork with the organization, I too – like this last Hero – have a sense that the most valuable component of *Heroes* work is its investment in youth rather than the abstract and long-term goal of somehow acquiring rights for women. However, for social work organizations to be successful, they must demonstrate a need, and this need must be legible – to the media, to financial backers, to the youth that seek out opportunities to participate in such a project. However problematic this may be for theoretical feminism, *Projekt Heroes'* notions of “cultures of honor” and “women's rights” has its finger on public debates about gender, equal rights and cultural difference in contemporary Germany, and invoking rights and honor discourses makes the project legible to a wider public. This legibility is what makes more nuanced work with young men over longer periods of time possible and is a bargain I argue that the *Heroes Projekt* both understands and acknowledges making.

It is always easier to criticize than to attempt to understand why people make certain choices. There is a strand of feminist criticism that would choose to paint *Project Heroes* in a negative light because of the tropes that surface in some of their workshop

scenes; because of the assumption that *Heroes* colludes with integrationist discourse, or simply because they do not believe that these kinds of projects serve the interests of the women they instrumentalize. While I understand, theoretically, where these critiques come from and indeed, have raised some of these same questions myself in the reports I wrote for the *Heroes* staff about workshops, I think that *Heroes* deserves a different question. Taking my cue from Hero 5, who declared bluntly that the point of *Heroes* was not to fight for women's rights, I want to ask what mistake is made by describing *Heroes* as a *feminist project for men*.

I know from conversations we had as a team that the *Heroes* staff is invested in the problematic of honor, sees the engagement with honor and cultures of honor as a way to fight oppression, and as a way to be culturally sensitive to difference. For some feminists, this would already be an error, as it would essentialize an understanding of culture that reifies and perpetuates difference where we could choose to see sameness. But I understand, as well, from the workshops I have seen, that "honor" – however problematic – continues to play a role in workshop settings and is also a way to bargain for legibility. What is more interesting to me, especially in the context of the larger discussion I have tried to trace throughout this research between gender, autobiography and national identity, is why *Heroes* feels the need to justify its mission in the context of women's victimization.

From observing the week of events that took place during our training trip to Turkey, I can say that the staff of *Heroes* has earned my full respect in terms of youth work. They are attentive, concerned, engaged and smart about the questions and challenges they pose to their youth, even as the staff themselves are moving through processes of questioning, reevaluating and enlarging their understanding and approach to topical issues. The reactions of the youth are positive, and it is obvious from my short interviews with one group of *Heroes* that this project provides them with multiple opportunities to develop their own talents and desires and to receive affirmation and comfort from male *and* female role models.

In many ways, I think that some of the *Heroes* activities are radically feminist: the job descriptions in the *Heroes* handbook emphasize a committed practice to revising gender and gender roles at work. Dagmar Riedel-Breidenstein, the founder, is the “boss” – something that the *Heroes* often notice in large group activities. The young men watch as the male group leaders both lead youth and have to get permission, so to speak, from a woman in a managerial position. Certain authoritarian notions of masculinity are also targeted: male group leaders, as I noted, should not represent “the strict father.” Instead, they want their male group leaders to offer variations on a performance of masculinity that take on stereotypically female characteristics.

Ahmad Mansour, one of the group leaders, has developed an identity within the organization as the person the *Heroes* confide in about their girlfriends or their

problems at home. These kinds of conversations allow these young men to find emotional support in a male role model – and not necessarily from any of the female staff members in the same way. But both a feminist organizational structure, coupled with the end goal of achieving equal rights, doesn't prevent an emphasis on male authority from subtly influencing parts of the *Heroes* activities.

Part of the *Heroes* training is learning how to talk to the media. When asked mock questions about why they are part of *Heroes*, as I observed during this workshop retreat, *Heroes* would often state: We want to “solve” the problem. We want to fix the problem of men having some rights and women having fewer rights. I bring this up because I think it shows how a powerful male agency and privilege can seep into conversation. Some of this agency is evident in television news reports, where a group of male *Heroes* work through the role-playing scenes themselves, playing both audience and workshop leaders in front of the camera (Horn). This conceit, which serves to protect the workshop spaces from an outside gaze, produces a strange effect where – in media representations – women are subtly invoked as distant beneficiaries of a new articulation of honor, which, once again, comes from men. A real workshop for a mixed-gender classroom would create a different dynamic.

Heroes also attempts to gather feedback from women in other ways. They have female staff members, and Eldem Turan, their female group leader, also runs something called “Girls’ Advisory” (*Mädchenbeirat*) to get input for scene ideas from young women

from “cultures of honor.” But when I watch these kinds of television reports, I get the sense that women can only benefit if men are willing to initiate change. In some senses, this is even articulated on the *Heroes* website, where, under the heading “Project Description,” they describe the Heroes as “having privileges and [being] more likely than their sisters to have the opportunity to change something about this constellation” (Zugleich haben sie Privilegien und eher als ihre Schwestern die Möglichkeit, etwas an der Konstellation zu ändern, Breidenstein “Heroes”). While I am not sure I agree with the idea that these young men have *more* opportunities to change things, I do agree that they must come to terms with a mix of privileges and obstacles that are different from the challenges faced by “their sisters.” From this standpoint, I must ask: why is it not enough for these young men to be provided with a space in which they are allowed to come to terms with and confront their *specific* difficulties, difficulties which may or *may not* be linked to gender parity? Is there a way to pursue the goals of *Projekt Heroes* without recourse to the instrumentalization of women found in the kinds of autobiographical voices I problematized earlier in this research?

When I ask myself this question in this form, I wonder if the reason for this *Umweg* (detour) lies in an acute *absence* of male narratives about discrimination, societal pressure and identity. If this is true, then some of the strength of *Heroes* lies in the individual narratives and the visible embodiment of these young men in public spaces, as leaders of workshops and media darlings. It also would explain an effect of the

proliferation of Muslim *women's* autobiography and the transnational movement and active social life of "Muslim women's rights." These kinds of cultural products about women's suffering or the language of rights come with their own shadowed silences and actively obscure male voices and male feminism. I think the ultimate achievement and potential of *Heroes* lies in figuring out how to create male feminist narratives and support their proliferation in ways that are separate or different from contemporary concerns about "Muslim women's rights."

6. Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have shown how the spatial metaphor of integration shapes cultural production in contemporary Germany. Seyran Ateş' and Necla Kelek's attempts to illuminate what they see as previously hidden or ignored spaces harness their projects to the extent apparatus of disciplinary power or racializing tropes of Muslims that portray this group as menacingly separate. The works of Brigitte Pick, Anna Faroqhi, Dorothea Kolland and Kanak Attak use their narratives to push back against another spatial metaphor (parallel societies), showing a variety of strategies that describe how immigrant spaces are vibrant and shaped through contact rather than shaped by willfully separate defensiveness and isolation. Finally, the case study of *Projekt Heroes*, a social work project for young men in Berlin, shows how discourses of integration, violent masculinity and gender parity are invoked in the applied spaces of social work. In this series of narratives, we can see how "integration" is performed in all of its inflections as part of a broader federal performance of a mythic national German identity where shared values and individual rights take precedence over all other collective identity scripts.

Language plays a large role in shaping these images of the nation. I have tried to highlight some of the specific words which travel through space here. These "words in motion," such as "integration," *kaza*, *Parallelgesellschaft*, *Problemkiez*, "ghetto," *Ehre*, "Muslim," "woman" and "rights" cross borders and transform spaces as they move

(Gluck 3). As Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing explains in her contribution to *Words in Motion:*

Toward a Global Lexicon,

Words in motion surprise us. Their far-flung antics interrupt conventional intellectual history, with its assumption of stable genealogies of thought. They are spread too far for the boundaries of national history; they ricochet too widely to follow strictly colonial geographies. Words in motion urge us to consider multiple linguistic and cultural legacies in dialogue. (40)

Although words can travel widely, as Tsing mentions here, words take on local specificity as part of this dialogue. "Integration," for instance, means something different in a German context, where the word clings to the lips of both elites and citizens, and in the United States, where integration was widely tied to the desegregation efforts following the end of Jim Crow. I have tried to show, by placing these words in context, the multiple local valences of each word. Often, as seen clearly in the Kanak Attak video, this valence is attached to those who utter these words. The vividness of the Kanak Attak video, with its polyphony and linguistic playfulness, shows us that the position of those speaking in space is critical. Its video format also reminds us that all words – whether read, thought or spoken – carry with them a dimension of sound.

Many of the artists, authors and social workers I analyze justify their production of sound as a necessary step towards breaking "the" silence. Ateş and Kelek interpellate themselves as brave activists who dare to talk about taboos. Fadela Amara wants to bring attention to the "silent" majority. The *Heroes* trainings are structured around

learning to talk about “taboo” topics. Faroqhi frames her purpose as someone who collects and listens to other people’s stories, especially those marked as insignificant. Merkel even declares in her Germany speech that the most important part of integration is learning the language; the ability to speak German is the foundation of a successful integration politics and must be demanded from immigrants.

If anything, what differentiates the contemporary debates about integration from their earlier incarnation can be read in terms of pitch: the elite voices weighing in on these issues – from Ateş and Kelek to Angela Merkel, European heads of state and Thilo Sarrazin – are relentlessly shrill; they trumpet their polemics as they break “the” silence; they do not go quietly. Their polemic narratives are loud, and projected by the fervor of publication, as autobiographers produce text after text. Merkel’s proclamation that “multiculturalism has failed” travels across the globe, reifying the German nation as particularly hostile even as other European and Australian heads of state utter the same sentence. Interviews with either the Heroes or Thilo Sarrazin proliferate in radio, print and digital media.

In terms of political participation, finding a voice with which one can approach power and be heard may be the only successful way in which to enter the public sphere. That one has found a voice, however, does not guarantee that one’s voice will be heard. Space shapes sound. The construction of rooms, recording studios, concert halls and government meeting rooms influence how the vibrations of energy are transmitted to

the human ear. Radio reporters even record what they call "room tone" – which the human ear filters out "in real life" as silence – to smooth the violent cuts they make while editing. I propose that we consider the space of the nation our auditorium; that this abstract construct can represent the four walls within which the sounds of these words, this shrillness of debate resonates.

The stairwell to the apartment building I lived in while conducting fieldwork in Berlin was an echo chamber of sound. The single concrete winding staircase up six floors, surrounded by the stereotypical concrete walls of modern apartment buildings, acted as a bright, live concrete tunnel which kept noise alive long after its moment of production. Each and every tenant could be heard walking up and down the stairs. Children, less able to modulate their voices, often played with the echo by talking and singing before exiting the building. Right before New Year's Eve, when Germans typically celebrate by setting off firecrackers, someone threw a firecracker into this stairwell. The incredibly loud and incredibly close "boom" drove me to investigate, as I was convinced that some structural damage must have befallen the building – or someone had just been shot in my stairwell. The only remnant of this capacious sound, however, was a small wrapper on the ground floor.

The current spaces allotted for integration debates at the national level remind me of this staircase. Rather than expanding the space of the nation, these debates and political performances *sound* as if they are all happening on my staircase – voices echo,

bounce, and are made even louder and distorted by the unyielding concrete walls. This constant echo of sound makes it difficult to listen for silence. In this kind of a chamber, contemplating what might be a productive use of silence is nearly impossible.

Within the emphasis and repeated performance of “integration,” for instance, what is rarely spoken is the fear of “disintegration” and national decline that serves as integration’s shadow.¹⁸ This fear is best seen in the backlash against a multicultural, diverse national identity. One of the voices which explicitly (if problematically) gave voice to this fear of disintegration has been Thilo Sarrazin. Sarrazin was, most certainly, not the first voice – right-wing extremists and conservative political parties have been voicing these arguments for decades. Sarrazin, however, was one of the only voices of the political elite that dared be so unabashedly, bluntly racist. As Philippa Ebéné, the director of the Berlin arts center *Werkstatt der Kulturen* remarked in a personal interview in 2011, Sarrazin was the one who made this particular kind of voice suddenly acceptable in public spaces.¹⁹ The *Werkstatt* organized a series of panel discussions after

¹⁸ Tsing and Gluck include in *Words in Motion* a chapter heading and category called “words with shadows.” This description is fitting and useful here.

¹⁹ Geoff Eley’s contribution to *After the Nazi Racial State*, an essay entitled “The Trouble with ‘Race’: Migrancy, Cultural Difference, and the Remaking of Europe,” does an excellent job of mapping how Europeans have been reluctant to engage openly with ideas of “race” and racism, but offers compelling evidence for nascent nationalisms that base a lot of their argumentative practice on ideas of “race.” Eley particularly highlights the ways in which “race” and “Muslim” function in concert: “the febrile and hyper-security-conscious political climate of ‘post-9/11’ has definitely endowed the perceived presence of Islam inside and outside Europe’s borders with an intensely mobilized logic of racialized meaning” (177). See Eley.

the Sarrazin scandal broke. The series, entitled *Playing-in-the-Dark: Die Rassistmus-Falle*, was, according to Ebéné, an attempt to counter these voices:

Also es ging mir eigentlich mehr darum, Menschen die ohnehin ins Haus kommen [...] auch ein anderes Diskursprogramm zu präsentieren. Wohl kann man sagen es war nicht kontrovers genug, weil: es gab keine sarrazinischen Positionen. Nur hatten wir den Eindruck, in den vergangenen Monaten, dass letztendlich all das, [...] so viel Raum genommen hat, dass es so viel mehr Stimmen hatte [...]. Und letzten Endes hat er [Sarrazin] einen Diskurs salonfähig gemacht, und auch eine Rede salonfähig gemacht, die vor zehn Jahren in der Weise sicherlich nicht salonfähig gewesen wäre. Wir wollten einfach nur die Breite der Gegenpositionen demonstrieren. [...] Und dafür muss man auch ein Podium schaffen, das groß genug ist.

For me it was actually more about presenting people who would normally come into the building a different discursive program. Of course, one could say that it wasn't controversial enough because there were no Sarrazinian positions. But we had the impression over the last [few] months that all of that [...] had taken up so much space, that that position had so many more voices [...]. And finally, he [Sarrazin] had made a discourse acceptable in public space, and also speech acceptable in public space, [both] of which surely wouldn't have been acceptable in public spaces ten years ago. We wanted simply to demonstrate the breadth of oppositional positions. [...] And to do that, we had to create a podium that was big enough. (Ebéné)

Creating a podium that is "big enough," i.e. creating enough space, to counter this discursive pressure was achieved by inviting Michel Friedman, a famous and controversial media journalist, as the moderator for the series.

Sarrazin's book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (Germany Does Away with Itself), is a veritable rant against minority populations in Germany, who are portrayed as a threat to the ethnic and financial integrity of the German nation. Sarrazin argues these theses in the manner expected of a federal banker: the very first paragraph of this nearly 500-page

racist polemic invokes the *Wirtschaftswunder* (which, as Sarrazin neatly forgets, was only possible because of *Gastarbeiter*) as the foundation of German national pride. Even four economic crises, global warming, globalization and environmental damage could hinder the Germans *Grundoptimismus* (basic optimism, 7). But, Sarrazin warns us: “Dieser Grundoptimismus und die Jahrzehnte des fast ungetrübten Erfolgs haben aber die Sehschärfe der Deutschen getrübt für die Gefährdungen und Fäulnisprozesse im Inneren der Gesellschaft“ (This basic optimism and the decades of almost unclouded success have clouded the ability of the Germans to see clearly into the dangers and processes of decay within German society, 7).

In the context of this discussion about sound and silence, I think I should mention the epigraph to Sarrazin’s first chapter, which is a poem from Ferdinand Lassalle: “Alle politische Kleingeisterei besteht in dem/Verschweigen und Bemänteln dessen, was ist” (All political narrow-mindedness exists in the/silencing and palliation of that which is, 7). Sarrazin here paints himself as a political figure that has risen above narrow-mindedness to speak “that which is,” to voice the silences of integration politics by showing them to hide the disintegration apparent to him. Given the narrow-mindedness of his polemic, which shows Sarrazin to be at best, patronizing, and at worst, an advocate of *völkischen Ideologie* (ethnic ideology), his choice of epigraph can also be read as an ironic indictment of his misguided notion of “that which is.”

Sarrazin's text succeeded in creating an exponential amount of cultural production through editorials, newspaper coverage, TV talk shows, public forums, "town-hall" style meetings, as well as new publications which refuted claims as well as his politics.²⁰ Other researchers, after Sarrazin had been run through the mill, took up the task of defending his theses and attempting to relativize them.²¹

One of the strong conservative arguments made during this firestorm was that Sarrazin had dared to say what no one else would. His own nationalistic polemic had revealed the surprising continuity of racist thought in Germany since the end of World War II, and his voicing this point of tension – no matter how problematic – was seen by some as a sign of relief. A little less than two years after this book's publication, however, one must pose the question: what was the effect of all this sound? Had Sarrazin done *anything* productive by breaking this "silence"?

Hamed Abdel-Samad, a German-Egyptian political scientist and historian, published an essay one year after the event of Sarrazin in the right-of-center newspaper *Die Welt* entitled "Viel Lärm um nichts" (Much Ado about Nothing). Abdel-Samad remarks in this article that the only thing Sarrazin successfully produced by publishing his book was having generated an awful lot of attention for himself:

Ja, Sarrazin hat eine Debatte entfesselt, doch nicht über das Tabuthema Integration, sondern über das Thema Sarrazin. Und die Emotionen sind nicht

²⁰ See Sezgin.

²¹ See Bellers.

durch Sarrazins unverhältnismäßige Kritik entstanden, sondern durch das subjektive Gefühl vieler Menschen, ständig ungerecht behandelt zu werden. Dieses Gefühl haben merkwürdigerweise beide Hauptkontrahenten in der Islamdebatte. Die "Endlich sagt es mal einer"-Fraktion hält unreflektiert zu ihm und seinen Thesen, die kaum jemand genau wiedergeben kann. Und die "Wir fühlen uns nicht willkommen"-Fraktion wartet sehnsüchtig auf die Botschaften des pensionierten Bankers, um die eigene Dauerempörung auf Temperatur zu halten. Die ständige Inszenierung und künstliche Verlängerung der Sarrazin-Debatte ist ein Beleg dafür, dass wir entweder kein Integrationsproblem haben – oder keine Lösung dafür.

Yes, Sarrazin unleashed a debate, but not about the taboo topic of integration, but rather about the topic of Sarrazin. And the emotions did not arise from Sarrazin's over-the-top critique, but rather from the subjective feeling of many people of constantly being treated unjustly. This feeling, strangely enough, is something both of the main opponents in the Islam debate hold. The "Finally-someone-said-it" faction holds onto, in an unreflective manner, him and his theses, which no one can precisely define. And the "We-don't-feel-welcome" faction waits longingly for the messages of the retired banker in order to keep their own perpetual indignation revved up. The constant performance and artificial prolongation of the Sarrazin debate is proof that we either don't have an integration problem – or that we have no solution for it. (Abdel-Samad).

According to Abdel-Samad's reading of the Sarrazin debate, the only thing successfully vented in the past year of debate was affect – the voices in both camps (those with latent racist sympathies and those who feel unwelcome in Germany) were driven by subjective reactions to injustice. The "constant performance and artificial prolongation of the Sarrazin debate" proves to Abdel-Samad that integration politics is either completely artificial or a problem that must begin to be seen differently in order to arrive at a solution.

Language can offer us a way to "see" differently; language can offer us a way to enter the problematic of envisioning the nation by revising the way in which we talk

about it. Rather than seeing the “silent majority” as a lack of political interest or will, certain types of strategic silences – silence that is chosen rather than imposed – might be a transitional tactic that can open up new spaces. One kind of strategic silence can be seen in the use of politically correct language to censor potentially hurtful language and its violent history.

Nadja Ofuatey-Alazard posited the usefulness of this tactic during the final panel discussion of the *Playing-in-the-Dark* series, entitled: “Das sagt man nicht – diskriminierende Sprache in Politik, Medien & Alltag”: “Ja, gut, diese Worte – Worte haben immer eine Geschichte und transportieren Bilder, transportieren Inhalte, sind von daher wichtig. Müssen wir uns angucken und etliche Worte sollten meines Erachtens aus dem deutschen Vokabular eben verschwinden“ (Yes, okay, these words – words always have a history, and they transport images, transport content, and are thus important. We need to pay attention to them, and quite a few words should, in my view, disappear from German vocabulary, Ofuatey-Alazard). Although Ofuatey-Alazard’s focus, through her examples of the offensive words used to describe certain groups of people, in particular racialized others, is often on ending the cycle of violence and oppression of the colonial relationship, her emphasis that words always have a history *and simultaneously are forms to transmit images* provides an understanding of language as a way to envision. A book release party for *Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht* at the *Werkstatt der Kulturen* in the summer of 2011 saw a different kind of suggestion made in

favor of politically correct language by the Jewish-German writer Esther Dischereit.

Using politically correct language means for Dischereit that "Man kann den öffentlichen Raum nicht so ohne Weiteres sprachlich vollmüllen" (You can't trash the public space just because, Vogel). In this formulation, space can be kept clean, order can be preserved through the use of politically correct language.

Yilmaz Atmaca, a group leader at *Projekt Heroes*, was asked in an individual interview after a particularly difficult workshop what the differences were between early *Heroes* work in 2008 and the activities of the organization in 2011:

YA: Mittlerweile, da ja die Arbeit bisschen routiniert ist, hab' ich das Gefühl, dass ich - das wir manchmal, äh, zu viel sprechen, zu viel, äh..., Moral predigen, sozusagen. [...] Darauf... müssen wir, glaub' ich, achten, dass es nicht dazukommt, dass wir eher – auch wenn wir vieles sagen möchten – unsere Bedürfnisse eher zurückziehen sollen und gucken, wie der Dynamik innerhalb dieser Gruppe ist.

JSC: Sogar wenn vielleicht Deine Perspektive da in der Gruppe nicht in dem Moment vertreten wird,

YA: Sehr richtig.

JSC: – trotzdem zu schweigen.

YA: Sehr richtig.

JSC: Hm-hm.

Y: Oder ganz wenig, ganz kurz andeuten, damit, äh, die Diskussion nicht nur in einer Richtung geht, sondern auch andere Sichtweisen bekommt, aber nicht mit Ach und Krach versuchen, äh, recht zu haben.

YA: These days, since the work has kind of become routine, I have the feeling that I – that we – sometimes, um, talk too much, morally preach too much, so to speak. [...] That's something I think we need to pay attention to, so that we don't get to a point where we tend – even when we want to say a lot – we should tend to hold back this need and look at the dynamic within the group.

JSC: Even if your perspective maybe isn't being represented in the group at that moment –

YA: That's correct.

JSC: – even then to stay silent.

YA: That’s correct.

JSC: Uh-huh.

YA: Or at the very least, to hint at that quickly, so that the discussion doesn’t just go in one direction, but rather allows other points of view to surface, but not to try by the skin of one’s teeth to be right. (Atmaca “Personal Interview”)

According to Atmaca, the feeling that one “preaches” is something that can negatively restrict the variety of opinions that can enter the space of discussion. Atmaca also mentions tone here, cautioning against getting louder through the idiom “Ach und Krach.” Figuratively this idiom means “by the skin of your teeth,” or “by any means.” Literally, however, this is formulated in sound: “sighs” and “noise” could be a possible definition; *Krach* can describe noise, a booming sound or a quarrel. Furthermore, what Atmaca points to here – and what Ofuatey-Alazard and Dischereit also imply – is that limiting sound can actually produce more sound.

Limiting the language we use to talk about national identity may very well provide national identity a way to expand. In an apparent contradiction, permitting that expansion may strengthen the nation – perhaps not in the ways in which the rhetoric of the federal government hopes. But if “integration” is really to be about participation and democraticization, then those talked about must be able to *use* a voice to approach power – and those in power must learn to listen for both voice and silence; for the words and their shadows that currently reverberate in the echo chamber of public debate. Without attempts to create this kind of space, demands to integrate will ring hollow.

Appendix A: Muslim Women's Autobiographies in German

This is by no means an exhaustive list of texts available in German, but it can serve as a reference for future researchers.

- Ackermann, Lea, Mary Kreuzer, and Alicia Allgäuer. *In Freiheit leben, das war lange nur ein Traum: Mutige Frauen erzählen von ihrer Flucht aus Gewalt und moderner Sklaverei*. Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 2010. (Foreword by Seyran Ateş).
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- Akgün, Lale. *Der getürkte Reichstag: Tante Semras Sippe macht Politik*. Frankfurt: Krüger, 2010.
- . *Kebabweihnacht*. Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 2011.
- . *Tante Semra im Leberkäseland: Geschichten aus meiner türkisch-deutschen Familie*. Frankfurt: Fischer, 2011.
- Al-Baz, Rania. *Entstellt: Sie erlebte einen Albtraum – und wurde die mutigste Frau Saudi-Arabiens*. Trans. Christiane Landgrebe. Cologne: Bastei Lübbe, 2011. (Originally published as *Dèfigureè*.)
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- Ayse. *Scheherazades Tochter: Von meinen eigenen Eltern zum Tode verurteilt*. Berlin: Ullstein, 2004.
- Çileli, Serap. *Eure Ehre – unser Leid: Ich kämpfe gegen Zwangsehe und Ehrenmord*. Munich: Blanvalet Verlag, 2010.
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- . *Hinter goldenen Gittern und Hinter dem Schleier der Tränen: Zwei Bestseller in einem Band*. Berlin: Ullstein, 2005.
- el-Masrar, Sineb. *Muslim Girls: Wer wir sind, wie wir leben*. Frankfurt: Eichborn, 2010.
- Gashi, Hanife. *Mein Schmerz trägt deinen Namen: Ein Ehrenmord in Deutschland*. Reinbeck: Rororo, 2005.
- James, Sabatina. *Sterben sollst du für dein Glück: Gefangen zwischen zwei Welten*. Munich: Knauer, 2004.
- Kalemi, Oxana. *Sie haben mich verkauft: Eine wahre Geschichte*. Isabell Lorenz, trans. Cologne: Bastei Lübbe, 2011. (Originally published in English with the title *Mummy, Come Home*.)
- Kalkan, Hülya. *Ich wollte nur frei sein: Meine Flucht vor der Zwangsehe*. Berlin: Ullstein, 2006.
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Biography

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