Narrating the Ghetto, Narrating Europe: From Berlin, Kreuzberg to the *Banlieues* of Paris

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Abstract
This paper argues that questions of integration and containment were crucial to define the (West) German and European ghetto at two historical moments: The early 1970s, when the West German state implemented new policies to stop the 'guest-worker' programs of the 1950s and 1960s, and the year 2005, when German media reacted in a panic to the riots in the Paris *banlieues*. An intersectional analysis of media discourses of the ghetto explores the continuities and shifts, as well as the contradictions in these narratives of exclusion. In the twenty-first century the contested discussions about ghettos as racialised and sexualised spaces are an important part of a new formation of European narratives. Counter-narratives reveal the many ghettos of Europe and challenge notions of integration and containment.

Introduction

This article theorizes contradictory constructions of Europe by comparing different narratives of the ghetto. The comparison focuses on media discourses about the ghettoisation of the European metropolis and analyses the tension between discourses of integration and containment at two historical moments: The mid-1970s, when laws were passed to restrict work-migration to West Germany and the year 2005/2006, when the effects of European Immigration policies were discussed again in the aftermath of riots in the Paris *banlieues*. In the 1970s, media framed the threat of 'emerging ghettos' in a national context, described the ghetto-inhabitants as male workers from rural areas of southern Europe that brought their extended families and 'flooded' West German cities, and compared this threat of ghettoisation in neighbourhoods like Kreuzberg to the US, i.e., Harlem. In the twenty-first century German mainstream media looked at the outskirts of the European metropolis as the space of ghettoisation and connected the ghetto to discussions about immigration and freedom of movement in a European context. Explicit references to religion, age, violence, and gender further intensified the discussions. In both time periods, the implications are two-fold: On the one hand,

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the movement of people needs to be managed and policed, 'floods' need to be contained by laws; on the other hand, it is precisely this containment that prevents the desired 'integration'[1] and is the root of lawlessness, violence, and social decay. Based on a comparison between different media constructions of the ghetto, this paper offers a way to theorize Europe as composed of multiple, contradictory ghetto-spaces. This article does not attempt to define Europe, but to challenge concepts of Europe by tracing the emergence of the 'European Ghetto.'

Narrating a Changing Europe: 'Ghettos Emerge'

Political geographers have extensively theorized the changing politics of space. The political geographer Henri Lefebvre suggested that a critical analysis of the politics of space helps us to uncover the 'contradictions […] and also the dangers and threats contained in the present situation' (1976, 37). Historicizing such an analysis of the politics of space further uncovers the continuities, shifts, and contradictions in the productions of new systems of representations that contain new threats. Caren Kaplan summarizes the arguments of David Harvey, a geographer of globalisation, who 'argues that the latest round of time-space compression began in the early '70s in response to fiscal crises' (1996, 147). Both Harvey and Edward Soja, another important theorist of the geographies of globalisation, 'mark the 1950s and the 1970s as major points of crisis in social, economic, and political practices that generate transitions in industrialization, the circulation of money, information, and goods, and the production of systems of meanings and representation' (Kaplan 1996, 151).[2] Transnational Feminists and Feminist geographers, like J.K.Gibson-Graham and Doreen Massey have pointed out, however, that this perspective is marked by the absence of a discussion of gender and power relations. To emphasize the overlaps on the politics of exclusions and trace the changing systems of representation from the 1970s to the twenty-first century, this article focuses on the intersectionality of constructions of race, gender, sexuality, age, and religion. By comparing two moments in time and by contrasting a selection of discursive constructions with counter-narratives, the analysis exposes the contradictory effects of a politics of integration on the one hand and a discourse of containment on the other hand.

The analysis of the 1970s uses the most popular West German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* as its main source of data. This discussions in *Der Spiegel*, a centre-left magazine that was founded post WWII to give occupied West Germany a democratic venue to discuss political and cultural issues, exemplifies some of the central tropes of the mainstream discourse. *Der Spiegel* saw parts of West German cities, i.e., Berlin, Kreuzberg, in danger of becoming Harlem. A comparison between the discussions in *Der Spiegel* and Feminist media discourses of the late 1970s shows, however, that the association with US-cities conjured two different

nightmares. Feminist press evoked a nightmare of the Americanized, patriarchal, and violent city that is no longer safe for women and children; *Der Spiegel* focused on racialised fears that such a comparison to the US triggered. The gendered and racialised tropes of these two separate discourses intersect thirty years later in German media reports that react to the riots in the Paris *banlieues* in the fall of 2005. In 2005, the US city as a site of comparison has lost its function and the ghetto comes to signify the space of exception within Europe. As one the most dramatic moments of recent European history, the riots in the *banlieues* highlight the effects of the changing politics of space in post Cold War Europe. The discussions of the political dangers inherent of such media reports will be followed by an exploration of counter-discourses that challenge such racialised imaginations of Europe.

Europe and the Ghetto: Shifting Internal and External Borders

This article traces the parallel evolution and intersection of two concepts: Europe and the ghetto. Scholars, journalists and essayists have theorized the external borders of Europe and showed how the discussions about border-security are racialised and gendered processes in the tradition of imperialist and colonialist histories (Lutz 1997; Steyerl and Rodiriguez 2003). After the end of the Cold War, philosopher and cultural theorist Slavoj Zizek sees a new wall developing to secure the (southern and eastern) borders of Europe:

> A couple of years ago, an ominous decision of the European Union passed almost unnoticed: the plan to establish an all-European police force to secure the isolation of the Union territory and thus to prevent the influx of immigrants. THIS is the truth of globalization: the construction of NEW walls safeguarding the prosperous Europe from the immigrant flood. (Zizek 1997/2005, n/p, emphasis original)

While the 'Fortress Europe' is a concept that theorists from the left employed to criticize attempts to secure the mostly southern and eastern borders of Europe, a focus on the ghetto-discourses allows one to expose the construction of inner-European fortresses. In the borderlands on the periphery of the 'metropolitan heartland' of Europe[3] external sites of comparison and contrast are duplicated by the creation of internal borderlands. The making of Europe is both a continuing process and 'a product of the nineteenth and twentieth century mostly constructed by the European Enlightenment, its racial theories and colonialism' (Arndt 2005, 24). The focus on the ghetto as a central component of Europe, of 'the metropolitan heartland of the old imperial racial system' (Winant 2001, 13), shows how the creation of Europe is still a deeply racialised process.[4] The analyses of the ghetto-discourses reveal how these new racisms create and recreate certain kinds of ghetto-spaces that duplicate, mimic, and enforce the external borders of

Europe. In his study on transnational citizenship, *We, the People of Europe*, Etienne Balibar uses the intentionally provocative concept of 'European apartheid […] to signal the critical nature of the contradiction between the opposite movements of inclusion and exclusion, reduplication of external borders in the form of 'internal borders,' stigmatization and repression of populations whose presence within European societies is nonetheless increasingly massive and legitimate' (2004, x). The demand for integration exemplifies the tension between inclusion and exclusion; the discussions over the containment of certain groups of people stigmatize and repress certain European populations. These mechanisms show that 'in order to apply a norm it is ultimately necessary to suspend its application, to produce an exception' (Agamben 2005, 40). Exclusive forms of cultural identification did not dissolve under transnational challenges in the twenty-first century; a defensive and ambivalent, but therefore not less powerful and potentially violent attempt to produce the norm emerged.

The history of the term 'ghetto' itself reflects such complicated negotiations. The origin of the word is unclear; it might originate in the Hebrew 'ghet,' which means reclusion. The earliest documented usage of 'ghetto' is in connection with the Jewish quarters of 16th century Venice. The *Oxford English Dictionary* traces the origins of the term to the year 1611 in Italy and defines it as 'a quarter in a city, chiefly in Italy, to which Jews were restricted.' As a minority, Jews had chosen to live in certain areas, but starting in the eleventh century Christian laws forcefully restricted Jews to certain living quarters (*Meyers Enzyklopädisches Lexikon* 1974). One of the most common German usages remains in connection with the forced ghettoisation of European Jews during the Nazi regime. The emphasis here is on 'forced' and 'restricted.' While the term clearly contains this association, in the media reports of interest for this inquiry show how the term changed its meaning. The term 'ghetto' (in the 1970s sometimes spelled 'Getto' in German) is often used interchangeably with 'slum.' The German *Duden Fremdwörterbuch* defines 'slums' as 'poverty ridden neighbourhoods in large cities,' whereas a 'ghetto' is defined as 'area of the city in which a racial or religious minority is forced to live.' The historical reference to the restrictions on where people were allowed to live is papered over in the 1970s, when German media seem to imply that this is an American term, most familiar from the popular, sentimental, and romanticising Elvis Presley song 'In the Ghetto' from 1969.[5] In response to the riots in the Paris suburbs in the fall of 2005, any reference to the historical fact of the Jewish Ghettos is completely ignored. In its second, figurative use, the 'ghetto' is defined to refer to 'a quarter in a city, esp. a thickly populated slum area, inhabited by a minority group or groups, usually as a result of economic or social pressures; an area, etc., occupied by an isolated group; isolated or segregated group, community, or area' (*Oxford English Dictionary*). As Jewish histories and the histories of social movements of the twentieth century have shown, the ghetto is also a space of resistance to political oppression, social equality, and racism. In the context of this

interdisciplinary inquiry, which traces the discursive constructions of racialised space in Europe, the historical evolution and the political implications of the term are of central importance. The 'ghetto' itself travels: From Europe, to the US and back. During this journey, it does not lose two of its central tropes: The ghetto as a space of failed integration and the ghetto as a space that confines certain groups of people. Over the course of the twentieth century the reasons for these perceived failures and restrictions shifted and the alleged actors of these processes were recast.

'But the First Harlem-Symptoms Can Already Be Seen': Integrations and Restrictions in the 1970s

In the 1970s the different nightmares of the West German city as a ghetto-space present a contradictory picture. The common trope in discussions of the 'crisis of the cities,' and the 'emergence of ghettos' in the 1970s, however, was the comparison to the US city within a Cold War framework. In the 1970s, the gendered and racialised nightmares of ghettos and crime-ridden streets had not yet merged, but they co-existed and re-enforced each other. While the references to the nightmarish US-style ghetto were clearly understood by the West German reader of the time, race and racism – and histories of anti-racist struggles – were not thematised explicitly; in the discussions of the crisis of the cities the mainstream and feminist media analysed here did not mention the civil rights movement directly, nor did they make any connections to the violent reactions of US police forces to these movements in the 1970s. The US-style ghetto appeared as the marked space, the ultimate nightmare, a dangerous space, which 'we' cannot or should not enter, in which 'we' are not safe, and a space where 'integration' has clearly failed. This imagined ghetto appeared stripped of its historical and political dimensions and became the space for a projection for what West German cities were in danger of becoming.

A few examples from *Der Spiegel* illustrate the racist implications of this discourse. In 1973 *Der Spiegel* reported that the minister for labour, Walter Arendt, wanted to control the 'flood of guest-workers' (13/1973, 60). But, as the article pointed out, politicians in Bonn were still without a plan as to how they 'can help the reserve army of guest-workers out of their ghettos' (Ibid, 62). Later that year, *Der Spiegel* made an explicit connection between 'foreigners,' the German *Ausländer or Fremde*, and the deteriorating cityscape. The article 'Ghettos in Germany: One Million Turks' (*Der Spiegel*, 31/1973) – introduced with the alarmist slogan: 'The Turks are coming – save yourself, if you can' (Ibid, 24) – warned of the growing 'Turkish Ghettos' and talked about an 'invasion' and a 'crisis' that was verging on becoming unmanageable. *Der Spiegel*, raised an alarm about 'emerging ghettos' in German cities:

> The flood of people from the Bosporus is fuelling the growing crisis of foreigners crowding the urban centres. Cities like Berlin, Munich, or Frankfurt can hardly cope with this invasion: ghettos emerge, and sociologists predict a rise in crime and the rate of social decay similar to that of Harlem. (31/1973, 24)

After describing the 'foreign smells,' the 'foreign sounds,' and the 'foreign people' that 'flood' the streets of Kreuzberg, a district of West Berlin with a high percentage of immigrant populations, the article concentrated on the growing number of illegal immigrants, and raised the issues of hygiene, poverty, crime rates, and 'foreignness.' The first 'Harlem symptoms' could already be detected:

> The talk about the 'Turkish Ghetto' became part of the language of local politicians and social workers … Meaning: A city for the periphery of society, doomed to apathy and disease because of racial struggles, crime, and decaying houses, in this country this is still no more than a nightmare. But the first Harlem Symptoms can already be detected. (Ibid, 26)

Der Spiegel repeatedly compared the situation in Kreuzberg to Harlem without exploring the historical and political dimensions of this comparison; neither the history of slavery in the US, nor the ghetto as a site of resistance and anti-racist struggle are mentioned here. The fact that the 'Turkish Ghetto' was described as an urban space crowded by ex-farmers who became factory workers also stood in stark contrast to the urban cultures of US-ghettos that the media used as a point of comparison. The alarmist tone is furthered by the fear that 'almost all of them (referring to Turks) stay in the country and they reproduce diligently' (Ibid., 24). By the end of 1973, according to *Der Spiegel*, day-care centres in Kreuzberg had to take care of more 'foreign' than German babies (*Der Spiegel* 45/1974, 66). The discussion quickly shifted from the numbers of people coming to work in Germany to the fact that 'a Turk does not stay alone for long' (*Der Spiegel* 31/1973, 26). These 'characteristics of Turks' – that they reproduce and tend to bring large families from rural areas into small German apartments – are used to describe a new under-class and the threat of ghettoisation: 'That is part of the cycle of ghetto growth, the unrestricted entrance of 'foreigners' that drives the *Einheimischen* [which translates roughly into 'natives'] out of their traditional living quarters' (*Der Spiegel* 45/1974, 66). According to the 'law of the ghetto,' 'the economically stronger leave first' (*Der Spiegel* 31/1973, 28) only making more room for the 'weaker' to enter:

> Whole village communities from Anatolia are now living in rear courtyard apartments, without any German neighbours … The concentration of foreigners spoils for the *Einheimischen* their traditional living quarters, but the fact that they are moving away once again makes room for new foreigners. (*Der Spiegel* 45/1974, 66)

Der Spiegel further connected 'emerging ghettos' to working conditions and a particular kind of family structure; the underclass worker and his large patriarchal family was the prototypical ghetto-inhabitant of the 1970s (37/1973, 19-28). When Turkish workers went on strike in 1973, their actions were described as violent, uncivilized, and battering.[6] Turkish workers were not constructed as part of the German working class; when it came to solidarity among workers, they represented a sub-proletariat, a different social class. This missing solidarity between German and Turkish workers was linked to the 'ghetto-mentality' of the Turks that 'contains the threat of repetition' (*Der Spiegel*, 37/1973, 29). The image of the immigrant worker as participating in 'wild strikes' with a 'ghetto-mentality' was gendered. An article entitled 'People, get out' in *Der Spiegel* from 1980 lists the side effects of immigration by referring to the worker as exclusively male:

> The misery of the ghettos, the schools with a majority of foreign children, [...] the Turkish clubs and the Yugoslav bars, the state money that goes to their large families, the hard-working and charming southern neighbours who are liked by the boss during the day and by women in the evening. (38/1980, 20)

While the article tries to point to the stereotypes prevalent among Germans, it in turn stereotypes 'foreigners' using gendered as well as ethnic clichés. It depicts the 'foreign male' as industrious, friendly, southern, and Macho; he has a wife and a large family at home, but frequents exclusive bars and clubs and picks up German women. This reproduces the paradox of racism, 'a paradox that consists of the ambivalent concurrence of appropriation and rejection and their ever-changing combinations' (Nghi 2003, 83). On the one hand, the (male) 'foreigners' are integrated, meaning that they benefit from the social services and enjoy the company of white German women; on the other hand they separate in bars and settle in specific neighbourhoods, which prevents their 'integration'.

This gendered and sexualised construction of the 'foreigner' overlaps with alarmist reports in feminist media about the crisis of the West German city. While *Der Spiegel* conjured up the US as a reference point to racialise the threat of the 'emerging ghetto,' feminist vision of the 'crisis of the city' read the Americanized urban environment as infused with sexist violence and dangerous for women and children. In the second issue of the feminist magazine *EMMA* in March 1977, the article 'Male Cities' using the example of Frankfurt am Main feared 'a ghost city with slums close by, like in America' (Dierichs 1977, 46). Since men planned the cities, cities were in danger of turning into slums similar to urban sprawl and wastelands in the US If female interests had been reflected in city planning, this dangerous cityscape could have been avoided, according to the *EMMA* author. Gisela Medzeg in *Frauenjahrbuch*, a yearly publication by West German Feminists in

the late 1970s and 1980s, published an article entitled 'Men Make Plans, Men Build: Are Only Men Living in Our Cities?' She simply stated that city planning was done by men and for men (1977, 94) and that the concerns of women, for example, playgrounds for their kids, were not taken into account. Revival of the inner cities was done on the premise of consumption and accessibility by car. But, as Medzeg stated, women had different worries: 'Women cannot let their children play in the streets any more and the yard is so dangerous that children cannot remain unattended' (Ibid, 96). Medzeg further pointed to the danger of sexual assault in the newly constructed shopping malls that turned dark and lonely after sunset (Ibid, 96). The threat in Medzeg's text remained elusive; it was clear, however, that it was male, that it could lurk in every corner and behind any wall, and that it infused the public urban space. Women were cast as the colonized in the city (Lennox 1995, 484) and patriarchy and capitalism created city-spaces in which women are not safe. Feminist papers in the 1970s did not connect the crisis of the city directly to the increasing presence of 'foreigners;' the inner city here is painted as a violent, patriarchal, and empty urban space.

The discussions of the increasing Americanization of the West German cities, which led to such contradictory visions of the empty, patriarchal, and dangerous ghost town and the crowded, dirty, non-white, and dangerous 'Turkish ghetto,' historically coincide with a debate over the economic advantages and disadvantages of 'guest-workers' (Herbert 1986, 217). The West German government implemented laws to end the recruitment of 'foreign' workers in 1973 to stop the 'guest-worker' programs that were launched in the 1950s and 1960s when the post-war economic boom had demanded cheap labour. As part of global economic and socio-political transitions 'the 1970s mark a significant shift, reconstruction and economic boom were over, and restrictive measures on labour migration were enacted everywhere' (Winant 2001, 253). Measures that would restrict the percentages of 'foreigners' in certain areas were discussed (*Der Spiegel* 45/1974, 65). The way to keep 'foreigners' who were already in West Germany from living in 'ghettos' was to 'try to solve social problems spatially,' (Ibid, 66; also compare *Der Spiegel* 3/1975, 26) and to restrict the freedom of movement for 'foreigners.' The fear of ghettoisation in the 1970s turns the concept of the ghetto as 'forced confinement' on its head: The threat of 'emerging ghettos' fostered a discussion about 'quotas' (Çaglar 2001, 206) that would prevent certain groups of people from 'crowding' certain neighbourhoods. This strategy was supposed to put a stop to the emergence of internal borders and foster *integration* by implementing laws that deprive the people who are supposed to *integrate* from certain constitutional rights. Further, the voices of people living or desiring to live in certain neighbourhoods, i.e., the voices of the people who are supposed to be *integrated*, are all but absent in these reports. The agency of the migrant or the ghetto inhabitant is rarely part of the discourse (Çaglar 2001; Weber 2004, 53). Under the guise of *integration*, political rights – like the right to decide where to live

and move across the city – are called into question for certain people (*Kanak TV*, 'Das Märchen von der Integration'). The debates about 'integrating' the foreigners that are already in West Germany, but containing the threat of illegal immigrants that 'flood' European cities and make them dangerous characterize the ghetto-discourses of the 1970s. It is precisely this tension between *integration* and containment, however, that can be traced to the policy discussions in the 1990s, when the European landscape undergoes a significant reorganization; as an effect of this reorganization, the feminist nightmare of sexual violence is further connected to the vision of the brutal, non-white, rioting, and male ghetto youth in the twenty-first century.

Reshaping the Political Landscapes: The 1990s in Central Europe

The German politician Otto Schilly told the Bundestag in 1999 'that if foreigners living in Germany were not given the rights of other Germans, the result will be a progressive alienation of the immigrants, […] immigrants will live increasingly in ghettos' (Nathans 2004, 254). The significant changes in immigration and naturalization laws that were implemented in the 1990s as a consequence of the re-formation of Europe after the end of the Cold War were intended to shape this process (Nathans 2004, 238; Mennel 2002; Caglar 2001). Sociologist Howard Winant summarizes the development of migration politics in Europe from the 1970s to 2000:

> Over the 1980s and 1990s, as movement toward the unification of Europe gathered steam, a regime of exclusion largely removed the early post-war welcome mat. Yet, barring the door was an illusion then: the pluralization of Western Europe had become a fact on the ground. (2001, 253)

Further, the reforms of the German citizenship laws adopted in the 1990s due to pressures to streamline immigration laws in Europe made it easier for 'foreigners' (legally considered 'aliens') living in Germany to become citizens. Simultaneously, 'the government expanded powers to exclude newly arriving immigrants' (Nathans 2004, 251). These measures to integrate and exclude mirror the policy changes and discussions in the mid-1970s; under the changed political situation, however, these policy changes led to different effects. Waves of racist violence in Germany, increasing fear of unemployment and economic decline, and the growing presence of non-white and non-Christian people in Europe once again change the narratives of the ghetto. Sociologist and anthropologist Ayse Çaglar has discussed the 1990s as a crucial time for a shifting understanding of the 'ghetto metaphor' and shown how the fear of ghettos 'simplifies the complexities of immigrants' presence in the society in a particular way' (2001, 602). Focusing on ghetto-films of the late 1990s, German studies scholars have pointed to the cultural politics of the deconstruction and appropriation of the ghetto-discourse by Turkish-German filmmakers (Mennel

2002). As Leslie Adelson shows, Turkish-German literature of the 1990s also engages with, deconstructs, and criticizes these discourses on various levels (Adelson 2005). Considering these sites of critical engagement and contestation, it is striking to see how the conceived threat of ghettoisation in the 1970s resurfaced not only in the 1990s, when central Europe underwent significant geo-political changes, but also in 2005. In the discussions in 2005, media revisit the questions of integration and containment to define the Europe of the twenty-first century. In these discussions, the effects of the changes of the 1990s become evident; the US has lost its central position and the narratives of the ghetto had become an inner-European site of comparison, contrast, and tension. In the twenty-first century, the paradox of racism took a specifically European turn.

'Disneyland near Paris Even Offers Prayer Rooms for French Muslims:' New European Racisms, 2005

The different character of these ghetto-narratives surfaced in the aftermath of the riots in the *banlieues* of Paris in the fall of 2005. The Paris *banlieue* has become the spaces to represent this horror-vision of the violent, sexist, and non-white ghetto. Even though the riots in the European cities in the twenty-first century certainly could be related to racial riots in US, the US as a nightmare-scenario of what might await Europe in the future was no longer the main focus of media discussions. After the devastating effects of hurricane Katrina were published in the media, the images of poverty and the horrendous conditions in the ghettos of the US-South had become a point of contrast (Zizek 2005). In spite of the fact that just a few months later the riots in Paris showed that poverty and despair did exist in Europe, European media argued that the conditions in New Orleans were distinctively American (Pitzke 2005). References to the US are mostly absent from the media responses to the Paris riots in the late fall and winter of 2005/6. Paris, one of the major European cities, which historically stood for central European culture par excellence, had become the locus of the 'emerging ghettos.' While in the 1970s race entered the discourse via the image of Western European cities threatened by a potential Americanisation and spreading 'foreignness,' in 2005 the debate about internal borders and exclusions had become an inner-European exercise of contrasting and comparing: the ghetto had emerged as part of the European cityscape and the European narrative; the reference points are within Europe. In addition to merging the gendered and racialised notions of the 1970s-ghetto nightmares, this new European racism introduces two tropes: the experience of racialisation of the white European as a threat to social order, and the association of poor, non-white, male youth with the notion of 'ghetto-Islam.'

In late fall of 2005, youth burned cars, schools, and shopping centres every night for about two weeks in reaction to a police chase in which two young men of colour were killed. Riots had occurred in these neighbourhoods before, but this

time the violence seemed to spread across France and into other European countries like England and the Netherlands. Responding to the riots, German media immediately started to compare the conditions in France to Germany. The weekly paper *Die Zeit* published an article with the headline 'Get out of the Ghetto':

> Germany does not have French conditions yet. But many migrants stay among themselves. […] And while in the French *banlieues* cars and supermarkets are burning, Germany looks anxiously upon its own problem zones, known as Turkish and Russian Ghettos. Soon here too? (Drieschner and Klingst 2005)

This article defines the ghetto as a stagnant social space that reproduces its own cycle of failing education, unemployment, and poverty, and argues that 'German' intervention is needed to break the cycle. An ominous and unspecific 'we,' an agent that is never named, is supposed to fix the 'problem,' while policy making and active involvement of the inhabitants of the ghetto is not the focus of the discussion.

'We,' however, have become 'foreign' in our own cities: one of the new racist strategies to define the ghetto as a 'foreign' space within the European metropolis is to narrate the white person's experiences of 'foreignness' as he or she enters the ghetto: 'The guys in the hooded sweatshirts closely watch every foreigner that exits the shopping centre and goes to the parking lot' (Müller 2005). A close-up of a young black man's frowning face turned to the reader against the background of a vandalised cityscape that introduces the article in Stern furthers this strategy. Referring to Berlin, the German author and essayist Peter Schneider described the internal borders as 'The New Berlin Wall' in the *New York Times*: 'There is a new wall rising in the city of Berlin. To cross this wall you have to go to the city's central and northern districts – to Kreuzberg, Neukölln, and Wedding – and you will find yourself in a world unknown to the majority of Berliners' (Schneider 2005). Bruno Schrep in *Spiegel Special* repeats this narrative of the German as a 'foreigner' in his or her own city by describing the reaction of a white German man to the multicultural and multicoloured scene he observes on the street in Cologne: 'Irritated, he looks into the colourful masses of people, many women with headscarves, dark haired children, shops with 'foreign' names. 'Sometimes I feel foreign here,' he says' (Schrep 2005, 176). The articles present this experience of racialisation of the white European as a clear sign of a world upside down, as a manifestation of non-European space in the centres of Europe. As opposed to the reports from the 1970s, where such an experience of 'foreignness' in one's own city was relegated to the realm of a nightmare, the articles from the twenty-first century narrate this experience in great detail. A space has emerged where 'we', the 'white Europeans', have become the 'other', where 'we' face obstacles; 'our'

movement is obstructed. Instead of confronting the question of race, however, the media create and narrate this space as the problem zone of Europe, the ghetto.

The ghetto-discourse of the twenty-first century merges the feminist nightmare of the 1970s with an explicitly racialised concept of the ghetto. In 2005, *EMMA* described this 'foreign' street scene in detail, contrasting the 'Turkish' to the gentrified. The *Umlaut* – quite frequently used in German as well of course – comes to signify the 'foreign,' and the fear that the German language will lose its dominant position:

> On Berliner Straße that snakes through Cologne's neighborhood of Mühlheim, one does not shop at H&M, but at 'Karadag Supermarket'. One browses the Internet in the Internetcafé 'Digitürk', and in the 'Pizzeria Xanthi' a man with a Turban is eating Spaghetti. At least half of the 140 doorbell signs of the apartment house number 128 have at least one Ü or Ö in its name. In Mühlheim, it is said, one can live for 30 years without speaking German. Here, where every fifth youth has a migrant background, street gangs with names like Stegerwald-Gang, Keupstraßen-Power or Ghetto Türken fought on the streets a few months ago. At times, shots could be heard. (Louis 2006, 22)

EMMA connects the experience of whiteness as 'foreignness' to the violence of the 'other.' The 'colourful' street with the youth 'gangs' is the 'ghetto' of the new racism, where, similar to the 1970s, media sense the potential for social unrest (Müller 2005) or even 'revolution.' Rüdiger Falksohn in *Der Spiegel* briefly refers to the history of violent street gangs by pointing out that they originally formed to protect residents against racist attacks. But he asserts that now they have turned into 'crime syndicates' (Falksohn, *Der Spiegel*, 45/2005). Once again, media cite a 'law of the ghetto' (Löchel 2003) and refer to the strict 'codes of the ghetto' (Ibid). This code is patriarchal, violent, and criminal. While the articles mention that poverty plays a role in this process of ghettoisation, an explicit discussion of class is missing.

Another aspect that receives far less attention in 1970s media reports is the role religion plays in the emergence of the ghetto. The comparison to ghettos in the US and the specific legal and social situation of the 'guest-worker' in West Germany in the 1970s directed the reader's attention to issues of social codes and labour conditions. In 2005, however, the media portray the inhabitants of the ghetto as mostly Muslims, 'young sons of immigrants,' who do not have any chance to obtain education or work. After September 11, the US has become the watchdog anxiously policing the developments of Muslim cultures in Europe:

> Some Americans are calling this new Europe 'Eurabia,' a reference to the growing influence of Islam and Arabic culture in Old Europe, despite its

> political and cultural roots in Christianity. Indeed, […] Disneyland near Paris even offers prayer rooms for French Muslims. In Britain, immigrants from former colonies have mostly slipped into the poverty of ghettos. (Falksohn, *Der Spiegel*, 45/2005)

Writing about the sons of the 1970s immigrants, the media refrain from emphasising different customs or the rural background of some of the immigrants. These young people are born in Europe, of course. The population of the ghetto seems mysteriously transformed: large rural families, farmers from Anatolia with their many children and their 'foreign' bathroom customs have morphed into urban, male, Muslim, gang-members. Connected to their Muslim background, most emphasis is put on violence, 'burning cars, suburb-violence and vandalism' (Ibid). This violence is clearly gendered, 'every tenth Turkish Youth – meaning male youth – is a repeat offender, someone who has committed more than five acts of violent crime' (Louis 2006, 22). As Louis continues:

> Heroes. Hard men. Violence that is considered masculine [...]. Those who batter and burn cars and schools in neighbourhoods like Mühlheim, Kreuzberg, or Clichy-sous-Bois are all men. 'Men who are socialized in a Macho-culture in which violence is legitimate.' (Ibid)

US historian Mark LeVine suggests an analytical distinction that is supposed to prevent a conflation of this kind of violence with Islam. The violence in the *banlieues* and other outskirts of European cities, he argues, reflects the emergence of two kinds of Islam, a 'Euro-Islam' that is well-integrated into a globalised European Union, and a 'ghetto-Islam' that turns […] instead to a closed and increasingly violent form of identity to resist a system that excludes, or at best, exploits, the majority of them' (LeVine 2005). For him, this is 'the struggle facing more than one billion Muslims in the age of globalization' (Ibid). Schneider suggests a similar creation of a 'Euro-Islam' that is non-threatening and somehow 'western,' as opposed to the 'ghetto-Islam.' His version of the 'ghetto-Islam' in opposition to 'Europe,' however, lacks any socio-political qualifications. 'Western Enlightenment' will be the teacher:

> Unless this issue is solved, with a corresponding reform of Islam as practiced in the West, there will never be a successful acculturation. Islam needs something like the Enlightenment; and only by sticking hard to their own Enlightenment, with its separation of religion and state, can the Western democracies persuade their Muslim residents that human rights are universally valid. (Schneider 2005)

In the context of this article the discussions about Euro-Islam and the imperialist assumption that modernity is a Western invention will not be discussed in detail. The importance of these quotes lies in the explicit binary created between the

'ghetto' and Western, enlightened democracy and between 'patriarchy,' Islam, and European values. These binaries ignore the histories of colonialism, imperialism, and racism that shaped Europe. Consider author and essayist Necla Kelek:

> And Europe is a community that grew together due to the experiences of war and crisis, enlightenment and rationality, freedom and emancipation movements. This has nothing in common with an Islamic world view, which, over the course of centuries, was preserved and passed on from generation to generation, as Dan Diner describes it. In their fundamental principles they are incompatible. (2006, n/p)

The ghetto is constructed as a patriarchal, violent, and non-European space in the centre of Europe, but this space has clear borders and a different set of laws and codes, a space that is 'a problem' that 'we' need to deal with. Kelek ignores the fact that this kind of 'Islam,' which developed among youth in suburban Paris, certainly has to be considered a specifically European form of Islam. Historically Europe has defined itself by producing the incompatible space, its ghettos, enclaves within or spaces outside of the borders of Europe. In respect to the agency of the immigrant, however, Kelek generates a counter-discourse: She does not repeat the politics of objectification and victimization; to the contrary, she turns 'integration' into an active pursuit by immigrant populations to get out of the ghetto. At the same time Kelek's line of argument corresponds with the dominant media strategy that consistently turns the racial into the cultural (Wollrad 2005, 133; Weber 2005).

Most German media reports carefully avoid the 'the 'R' word' (Winant 2001, 140 and 251) and frame the debates as concerning nationality, ethnicity, and culture. An article in *Der Spiegel* from 2005 explained that in France today 'social divisions […] run along ethnic and religious lines, and they also signify deep cultural rifts' (Falksohn 2005; compare Schneider 2005). Falksohn (*Der Spiegel*, 45/2005) was quick to point out that 'of course, part of the problem lies in the sheer number of immigrants – and the fact that they tend to all live in the same place'. This is also said to be true for other European cities such as Birmingham and Amsterdam. This discourse clearly presents another example of the paradox of racism in its new form, which 'presents itself as both conservative and democratic, articulating popular fears – which have been cultivated for centuries – in an organized and intelligible way in respect to national culture (French, English, Dutch, etc.) as well as linking these fears with supposed Western values' (Winant 2001, 282; compare Zizek 2005). This new racism constructs 'notions of the nation (that) include diversity, but are nevertheless exclusive of certain (differing) groups of so-called foreigners' (Räthzel 1995, 184). New Diasporas, work migration, and post-September 11 fears strengthened this resurgence of Europe as white and Christian once again (Arndt 2005, 25). Media argue that both the 'hardnosed approach' and

the 'French route of soft integration' (Falksohn, *Der Spiegel*, 45/2005) have failed. The emergence of ghetto-space within Europe serves as proof of this failure.

Ghetto-discourses in 2005/6 function as a way to construct one Europe by trying to contain what is 'other', what does not belong, what is not European in a ghetto. These discourses conceptualize the ghetto as an island in a permanent state of emergence or emergency. These danger-zones foster the idea that space can, or should be, policed; i.e., movement should be restricted and organized – for certain people. This space of exception serves as a way to define 'law's threshold' (Agamben 2005, 4). This mirrors the imperialist logic of colonialism, where different laws and spatial restrictions applied to different people.[7] In the twenty-first century, the narratives of Europe that use the ghetto as its internal borderland duplicate and mimic the logic of colonialism. The ghetto-space is created as the locus of a restricted existence of 'state,' (Eberlein 2006) of '*being-outside, and yet belonging*' (Agamben 2005, 35). Further, patriarchy is racialised, and has become a characteristic of the ghetto. The attempts to ghettoise what is not supposed to be European reveal a series of paradoxical structures that are crucial for the emergence of new racisms: Europe is defined via the space that should not exist, the space of failed 'integration' and the 'other' space where rights and freedoms need to be restricted.

The Paradox Re-Narrated: Which Ghetto?

The European ghetto is both feared and needed; it shows both the importance and the impossibility of 'integration;' it is the location of the threat to Europe and the space where the 'other' needs to be restricted and violence needs to be contained. Counter-discourses expose and challenge the assumptions and contradictions that underlie these defensive and exclusive narratives of Europe. This conclusion summarizes two attempts to create 'counter topographies that link different places analytically' (Katz 2001, 1230) by highlighting the contradictions in the discourses on 'integration' and containment.[8] By deconstructing the myth of 'white Europe' and pointing to the complex and violent histories of immigration, these narratives challenge the very foundation of the European racisms described above.

The short documentary film 'White Ghetto,' which was produced by *Kanak TV*, the TV-team of the anti-racist activist group *Kanak Attak*, exposed a different kind of ghetto-space by interviewing people in a predominantly white neighbourhood of Cologne. A team with cameras and microphones confronted people on the street with a set of interview questions to point out the desperate, racist attempts to ignore the reality of multiple and contradictory narratives of the European cityscape. The team asks a police officer how the police and the inhabitants managed to keep their neighbourhood 'foreigner free' and he begins his answer by

saying, 'in a positive sense, life is very organized here.' Then they ask if the Germans seal themselves off and if they are living in a 'white ghetto.' An interviewee gives a definition of the 'ghetto' as meaning to be locked in, to be among themselves and asserts that the concept of a white ghetto is simply 'nonsense.' The fact that this neighbourhood is almost exclusively white prompts the question of integration: 'What would you suggest so that the Germans will integrate better into society?' A woman responds confused, stating, 'one moment, please, the Germans? I think we are well integrated.' A young woman responds, 'I think I am well integrated, but ask a different age group and less educated people.' The woman appears to have understood what the interviewers are looking for. In her suggestion, however, she repeats another component of Apartheid and exclusion: By suggesting that only less educated and older people are racist, she follows a related set of dominant assumptions: That through education one can rid oneself of racism and that only the lower social classes reproduce the paradox of racism. The second half of the 8-minute film asks about a familiar strategy that might help with 'integration': to swap some 'Bio-Germans,' as they term them, with 'other Germans' in other neighbourhoods of Cologne with a higher percentage of immigrants or non-bio-Germans. Aside from the funny, yet disturbing, reactions to the term Bio-German, most people interviewed follow the logic or the 'law of the ghetto,' arguing that they like it where they are, that they made a conscious effort to live in this exact neighbourhood and even that there simply are too many 'foreigners' in other parts of Cologne. In response to one interviewee who says that she would not give up her space here, the interviewer says 'But then it will never happen that immigrants will be able to live here!' To conclude, the team states that this part of Cologne poses a social problem. The neighbourhood should be considered a problem-district, where the Germans ghettoise themselves in what could be called a 'White Ghetto.' *Kanak TV* shows that Europe does contain multiple narratives of inclusions and exclusions, borderlands and ghettos.

In her 1998 film *The Empty Centre* Hito Steyerl offers another way to deconstruct this kind of coherency in spatio-political narratives. Her film creates a Foucauldian archaeology of German space that shows the ever-changing paradox of 'integration' and exclusion. The restriction of movement and the construction of borders becomes the topic of this film about the literally empty centre of Berlin after the fall of the wall in 1989. The film further shows how capitalism and race are key operators in this process. Spaces turn into ghettos for different people at different points in time. But the questions of access to space, of safe-space, and the policing of space arise in many different forms. The film traces the life of Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. As Mendelssohn attempted to enter Berlin, he had trouble finding a gate where he would be allowed to pass through the old customs wall (*Zollmauer*). Finally, in 1743, he was let though at the Rosenthal gate. Documents read: 'Today six oxen, seven pigs, and a Jew passed the

gate.' As a 'foreigner,' he had to petition to be allowed to stay in Berlin and be granted the same rights as the other inhabitants of the city. After his grandson, the composer Felix Mendelssohn, got insulted in Anti-Semitic riots, the Mendelssohns decided to get baptised. That did not help their 'integration;' Felix Mendelssohn was still labelled a 'foreigner' and 'decidedly un-German.' While the story is told the film plays music by Felix Mendelssohn and offers a pictorial history of the space where the *Palais* Mendelssohn once stood. In the 1990s, the same spot was occupied by a souvenir stand run by a Jamaican woman who sold old East German paraphernalia. We see a demonstration against the mandatory visa for children of non-German citizens who live in Germany passing this spot. The narrator further points out that the German Reichstag was built close to the area of the *Palais* Mendelssohn. In connection to the Reichstag the film addresses the aforementioned question of 'illegal guest-workers' and the 'reserve army' at various points in history. The (re)construction projects at the Reichstag and the Brandenburg gate were mainly possible due to 'illegal' workers who lived in containers behind fences while they worked in the centre of the former and present capital of Germany. Large groups of demonstrating, unionized construction workers tore down the fences to storm the fenced-in construction site and the container homes of the temporary workers, a space resembling a ghetto in a traditional sense of the word, and beat up the 'cheap foreign labourers' that undermined their own job-security. Throughout the film, a student of Asian descent describes his experiences after the fall of the wall when he was attacked and beaten by German neo-Nazis. Certain parts of Berlin in the 1990s, he contends, are not safe for non-white people. While following shifting walls and borders, spaces of exclusion and 'integration,' the film still ends on a positive note. It quotes the late Siegfried Kracauer: 'There are always holes in the walls through which we can escape and through which the unlikely can enter.'

Challenging Europe[9]

The comparison between the discourses of the 1970s and the twenty-first century shows how the meaning of the concepts of 'integration' and containment that characterize discourses of the ghetto since the 1970s change over time. Certain discursive tropes, however, overlap: the ghetto as a site of emergency and exception relies of gendered and racialised forms of exclusion. By focussing on these two moments this analysis shows how the idea of Europe enters and changes the narrative of the ghetto. In the 1970s, racialised and gendered nightmares co-exited and overlapped. By linking these two nightmares analytically, their central tropes can be traced to the narratives of the European ghetto in the twenty-first century, where gender and race intersect with concepts of religion, sexuality, and age. The internal borderlands of Europe are defined by a construction of a particular kind of violent, non-white, masculinity. 'Ghetto-Islam' comes to mark

the 'other,' the non-integrated, and the non-European space. Europe asserts itself by defining and defending its 'White Ghettos,' by policing its borders, and by creating a particular zone for the 'other,' a ghetto where patriarchy, violence, social injustice, racism, and other forms of exclusion are supposed to be contained and upheld as a permanent site of contrast and emergency. As the two examples of counter-discourses show, however, the constructions of such ghettos are central to a set of questions that challenge Europe in the twenty-first century: How did Europe 'become white'? What does a post-Eurocentric Europe look like? Counter-knowledges show not only how these narratives operated historically and what kinds of effects they produce today but they also suggest ways to transgress these borders, to expose the gaps and traps, and transform the narratives of the ghetto and the narratives of Europe.

Notes

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[1] For an investigation of contradictory narratives of integration and for a detailed literature review see Weber 2006, 67-68.

[2] See, for example, Edward Soja (1989, 108-112).

[3] For a vivid description of such an imagination of the periphery see Stephen Barber (1995, 27).

[4] Despite the common assumption, Eske Wollrad also shows that the term 'race,' German 'Rasse,' remained part of the public discourse in Germany after 1945 (Wollrad 2005, 16-18).

[5] For a taste of the lyrics: In the ghetto/ People, don't you understand/ The child needs a helping hand/ Or hell grow to be an angry young man some day/ Take a look at you and me,/ Are we too blind to see,/ Do we simply turn our head.

[6] *Der Spiegel* describes Baha Targyn as the 'Rädelsführer,' the speaker of the Turkish strikers (38/1973, 19). The fear of Turkish workers going wild is further connected to memories of 1968 and the student protests, where, according to *Der Spiegel*, Anarchists (*Choaten*) caused violent outbursts (38/1973, 21).

[7] The colonies of the nineteenth century were a manifestation of such an exceptional nation-space, as *Kanak TV* show in their film *Recolonize Cologne* (2005).

[8] Other examples are organizations like *Kein Mensch ist Illegal*, *Sans Papiers* (Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2004) or the *Precarias a la Deriva* (2004). The 'ghetto' as a space for identification and resistance is frequently implied in European Rap and Hip-Hop cultures. For a detailed analysis see Ayhan Kaya (2002). Levent Soysal discusses the 'ghetto narrative in action' (2004, 72) as it functions in Hip-Hop and Rap cultures in Kreuzberg.

[9] Thanks to the Black European Studies Project (BEST) at the University of Mainz and their 2006 conference on 'Black European Studies in Transnational Perspective.'

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