

TOWARD A RELATIONAL SOCIETY

Thinking Multiculturalism Differently

Sarah Vader

Comparative Women's Studies in Culture and Politics

Supervisor: Dr. Eva Midden

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Foreword

Academic writing is not about finding answers, but rather about showing the complexity of questions and matters.

These words inspired me to do this project; to write a thesis that does not give clear answers and solutions, but that lays bare the complex world we live in. This writing is meant as an inspiration to think *differently*.

During my masters, I came in contact with the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. Although it was and still is a difficult task to comprehend Deleuze's ideas, I have always had the idea that he expresses in words, what I always knew was there, but just did not know how to formulate in any concrete way. I have worked a lot on and with Deleuzian thought in the last year, resulting in this thesis on relationality and difference in itself.

This project could never have been completed without the help of many others. Therefore, I would like to thank everybody who took part in this. My special gratitude goes to Dr. Eva Midden for her support and critical notes toward my writing. Your definitely made me a better author.

Secondly, I want to show my appreciation to the girls from the Teresa von Avila-Haus who shared their stories with me.

Finally, I want to thank Dr. Kathrin Thiele for the inspiration she gave me throughout my master year to think *differently*.

1. Introduction

1.1. Has multiculturalism failed?

In a speech, held at a congress of young Christian democrats in 2010, Angela Merkel stated that multiculturalism in Germany had utterly failed.

"At the start of the 60s we invited the guest-workers to Germany. We kidded ourselves for a while that they would not stay, that one day they'd go home. That isn't what happened. And of course the tendency was to say: let us be multicultural and live next to each other and enjoy being together, [but] this concept has failed, failed utterly." (The Guardian 2010)

A poll held in Germany in 2010 showed that one third of the German population thought that the country was overrun by foreigners and 55% found that Arabs are unpleasant people. (The Guardian 2010) These outcomes do not really point toward a good working multicultural society where people with different cultural backgrounds live peaceful and happily next to each other. Angela Merkel suggests that immigrants need to integrate better. People who come to live in Germany should not only comply to the law, but also learn the language, and as such be able to better merge into German society. (BCC News 2010)

Although I do not want to disagree with Merkel on the necessity of learning the language of a country you live and work in, I do not think that this form of integration is sufficient enough for multiculturalism as a concept to work. In my opinion, the only way for multiculturalism to really achieve peaceful coexistence and equality between different cultural groups, is when the differences between such groups are approached in another manner.

Multiculturalism is based on the idea that distinct cultural groups have different needs and that these needs have to be recognized and accommodated within a nation state. As such, it

entails the idea that there is such a thing as a cultural identity as a basis for group formation. The establishment of a cultural identity involves processes of differentiation from certain people, and affirming a communal identity with others. With regard to the poll held in Germany, for example, German people affirm a communal identity with other Germans, and differentiate themselves from Arabs.

In the process of identity formation, differences and similarities between groups and individuals are marked by boundaries. The boundary maintenance of groups is necessary in order to state who does and who does not belong to a certain group or entity. Belonging to a cultural group is not only based on self identification but also on an ascribed identity by others. (Brah 1993: 13) This belonging is again marked by difference; identification with a certain cultural group implies dis-identification with that which is different from that group. (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, Brah 1993) Europe's so called multicultural societies, for example, are based on the idea of 'distinct' cultural groups that live together within a nation state. The distinction between these different cultures are again based on inclusion and exclusion, 'Us' and 'Them'. (Gupta and Ferguson 1992)

As has become clear, identification processes involve individual and communal identities that are produced and articulated by means of *difference*. Difference, however, can be approached in many different ways. Although identity is often produced in terms of *sameness* as opposed to *difference*, my aim is to move beyond this binary opposition and investigate if (multicultural) societies can be based on an idea of *difference in itself* as presented by Gilles Deleuze in his book *Difference and Repetition* (2004 [1968]) With the use of his theories, I want to create a way of thinking about the world in more relational instead of oppositional terms. I want to pursue a society in which we feel we all belong to each other because we identify on the basis of difference as such.

1.2. Refugee girls in German society

Recently, I have done research among refugee and immigrant girls in Germany on topics such as integration, homemaking processes and identity. These girls came from diverse places all over the world. Many of them had fled to Germany because they had no possibilities to stay in their home country. Most of these girls had come alone, without their parents or other family members. Arriving in Germany, they had to reconsider their identity and cultural values, and create themselves a new home in a country unfamiliar to them. I was very interested in how these girls identified themselves and how they approached cultural values and communities. Almost all of the girls I talked with stated that they do not feel they belong to any culture anymore, they feel lost between worlds. They feel disconnected from the place they fled from, but do not consider themselves as part of German society either. All of them feel in one way or the other 'different'. They no longer belong to any place or culture. When I asked them about their position in German society, all of them had experienced that they were perceived as foreigners, alien, different, and not belonging to German society. (Interviews 2012¹) Hearing the stories of these girls, and how they struggled to find new homes for themselves, inspired me to write this thesis on difference and multiculturalism. First of all, I want to find out why it is so difficult for them to belong to German society, and then have a look at the necessities for them to feel at home in Germany.

1.3. Research Question

Multicultural societies are based on the logic of cultural difference. Marked by boundaries that include and exclude and decide who belongs and who does not belong, cultural groups create their identities through encounters with other cultural communities. (Gupta and Ferguson 1992, Brah 1993) As a result, oppositional thinking in terms of 'Us' and 'Them' is a common feature in

¹ The complete interviews can be found in the annex

contemporary societies. Not only in the Netherlands, where I grew up and studied, but also in Germany, the country where I recently moved to. Through interviews that I conducted among refugee and immigrant girls in Germany, I found out about their identification processes and their feelings of belonging. These girls told me that they feel that they do not belong to any culture or community anymore but rather feel 'different'. Different from Germans, but also different from the culture others might subscribe them to. (Interviews 2012)

The existence of difference is in itself not a problematic given; it is an important factor to take into account when talking about identity and belonging. However, difference tends to be articulated in oppositional terms, leading to processes of inclusion and exclusion. Identity construction is always based on excluding something and establishing a hierarchy between the two poles that are created. (Hall 1996: 5) Within binary oppositions, one term is always dominant and the other subordinate. (Rutherford 1990: 10) Thus by creating a German identity, something outside that identity needs to be created and excluded in order to define what is German. That what is excluded is not only marked by its difference, but is also made subordinate and inferior. Multiculturalism recognizes differences between cultural identity groups, but as such becomes involved in the establishment of binary oppositions between cultures. However, not respecting existing differences between people, i.e. treating everyone on the same basis, is neither a solution to bring equality between different cultural groups since people have distinct needs. As such, a new view on multiculturalism is needed; one in which multiculturalism can be approached differently so as to recognize difference without opposing it to sameness. Therefore, the research question that will guide this thesis will be the following: How can people live together and identify on the basis of (cultural) difference without falling into oppositional terms of sameness and difference? In order to answer this question, I will use the theory that Gilles Deleuze presented in his book *Difference and Repetition* (1994). I will take this theory as a departure point and see what happens if this is used in the analysis of cultural identity and community formation. The outcomes of the interviews will function as an example to show the important role difference plays within multicultural societies. It will visualize how these girls feel *different* with regard to Germans, but also in relation to their 'own' culture. Furthermore, I will use the interviews in order to show how a relational society can create an environment of belonging for these girls.

1.4. Objective

I recently moved to Germany which made me think more conscious about cultural identity construction and the function of community making. I am Dutch, which makes me a ‘foreigner’ in Germany, even if I would identify myself as German, many Germans would never see me as part of ‘their’ community.

Identity construction always involves a Self as opposed to an Other. As Aghil Gupta and James Ferguson argue, the Other does not have to be far away in order to be Other. (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 14) Cultural differences are present within European nation states as well. Within so called multicultural societies, different cultural groups are separated by boundaries that seem to become stronger as time passes by. I would like to picture this different, to have a more relational idea about society; a society were boundaries between cultures are not so visible anymore. As such, equality between people can be achieved, and people can approach each other in an affirmative and relational way.

This thesis will not, however, provide any clear cut answers, nor will it provide a model that can directly be implemented into society. My arguments and ideas are rather a suggestion for a different way of thinking about communities and cultural identity that can help in the creation of a more open and relational society and existence between people. Gilles Deleuze beautifully states that ‘modes of life inspire ways of thinking; modes of thinking create ways of living.’ (Deleuze in Thiele 2008: 161) Every approach to the world is already a composition of the world. (Thiele 2008: 161) Therefore my aim is to inspire people to think differently, to have a different approach to the world and as such create a new composition of the world. Because modes of thinking need to change in order for the world to change. And I want this world to do exactly that: change.

1.5. Approach

An important aspect in my approach to this research is how my position influences my research. Adrienne Rich refers to this as the politics of location. (Rich 1985) Rich argues for the importance

of recognizing the position we are speaking from and taking responsibility for that position. Reflecting on the location someone is speaking from is necessary since the knowledge that is produced from there is influenced by the position someone is taking. (Rich 1985) As such, it is important to recognize the ground I am speaking from. I am a white, Dutch university student. Although I live in Germany as a non-German, I am still part of a European, white community. This gives me a privileged and dominant position in general and especially with regard to multicultural issues; I belong to the unmarked race and the unmarked culture. Discussions on multiculturalism are often lead by the dominant group that talks about and/or speaks in behalf of the marked groups. For me, being a European white woman discussing the situation of migrant and refugee girls, it is easy to fall into that same dynamic as well. As Harding states, conventional research is often conducted by the dominant group. (Harding 1991: 124) In the case of the position of migrant and refugee women in Germany, this entails that scholars and policy makers often talk about these women, but that they themselves are hardly heard in the discussions. Therefore it is important to listen to other voices as well, “otherwise, only the gender, race, sexuality, and class elites who now predominate in institutions of knowledge-seeking will have the chance to decide how to start asking their research questions, and we are entitled to suspicion about the historic location from which those questions will in fact be asked.” (Harding 1991: 124) In that sense, I find it very important to listen to the stories of the girls who belong to the marginal groups. However it is not my aim to ‘give them a voice’. As Gayatri Spivak has argued, the subaltern cannot speak. (Spivak 1987) But I will use the stories of the women I have interviewed in order to create a different view on identity and multiculturalism.

Being a non-German in Germany made it in some cases easier for me to access the conversation with the girls because we had something in common. On the other hand, being a white European University student gives me a lot of privileges in German society that these girls do not have. Regarding my location as a researcher, I can impossibly give an objective account of these girls’ stories. As such, I would say that the narratives presented in this thesis, are not a direct description of the conversations but rather my view and interpretation of the stories they provided me with.

I will start this thesis with a theoretical part on multiculturalism and cultural identity, based on the analysis of sociological, anthropological and cultural studies texts. After discussing the

issues that identity brings with it, I will move toward the theory of difference in itself as presented by Gilles Deleuze in his book *Repetition and Difference* (1994). I use a political theory approach, as presented by Todd May, in the discussion of this book. In the last part of the thesis, I will use the theory of difference in itself in order to engender a different view on multiculturalism and present the possibilities of a relational society. I want to emphasize again that this thesis will not provide an approach on multiculturalism that can be implemented into society directly. This thesis functions to encourage people to think *differently* and as an inspiration to look *differently* at multicultural societies.

1.6. Methodology

During my internship at the Teresa von Avila-Haus, I conducted interviews among the refugee and migrant girls who live there. The stories presented here mainly function as an example to visualize how not only multicultural practices of exclusion leads to feelings of difference, but also how a relational society can create feelings of belonging that have an inclusionary nature. This thesis contain interviews with Chris, Forough and Maryaam to illustrate my argument. The complete interviews can be found in an annex 1.

The interviews themselves consisted of different questions on the topics of belonging, homemaking processes and identity. I used a semi-structural approach and as such, the questions only functioned as a guideline during the interviews. My main purpose however, was to hear the stories the girls had to tell. As such, I did not strictly follow the questions I had prepared, but only used them to structure the conversation I had with the girls.

My position as an interviewer has very much influenced the course and the outcome of the interviews. I was not a passive hearer of the stories they had to tell. I was there, present, asking questions, giving suggestions, talking about my experiences. As such, the interviews that I use here are not their stories, but my analysis of their stories. Furthermore, it is important to take into account that the girls talk from a certain standpoint as well, they are speaking about their personal experiences. Therefore, the interviews cannot be taken as a general statement on the identification processes of young girls in Germany. This does not mean that their experiences are not valuable. As Sandra Harding argues, experiences are very useful in the production of

knowledge. They are a starting point for feminist theory to develop. We can learn more about society in general when we start from marginalized perspectives. (Harding 1991: 119) As such, I used the personal experiences of these girls as a ground for the development of new ideas and theories.

In the first part of this thesis, I will give an overview of the debates on multiculturalism, culture and identity as discussed in anthropological- and cultural studies. I then move on to the theory of difference as presented by Gilles Deleuze, followed by a section of difference and identity. In the last part of the thesis, I want to use the interviews I conducted with the women from the Teresa von Avila-Haus as an example to show how difference theory can be used to further develop multiculturalism.

2. Multiculturalism

2.1. Multicultural Societies

According to the Oxford Dictionary, multiculturalism refers to “a policy or process whereby the distinctive identities of the cultural groups within a society are maintained or supported.”(Oxford Dictionary 2012) Although it can be stated that this is what multiculturalism is about in a nutshell, the term and its function are much more complex than just the maintenance of distinctive identities of cultural groups within a unified society, state or nation. Multiculturalism deals with societies in which different cultural groups hold different identity positions. These groups make political claims and ask for political and social recognition with regard to the position they hold within society.

Kymlicka (1995), in his works on multiculturalism, stresses the importance of treating members of minority groups as equal citizens. To accomplish this equal treatment, mere toleration of difference is not sufficient. Rather, positive group differences need to be accommodated in society by the means of group-differentiated rights. (Kymlicka 1995: 6, 10) In order for minority groups to become equal citizens, they should get different rights to protect

their cultural values. A group-differentiated right can be defined as a right of a minority group (or a member of such a group) to act or not act in a certain way in accordance with their religious obligations and/or cultural commitments. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2012)

Scholars in favor of multicultural politics claim that equality between citizens can only be achieved through treating them differently. They argue that by giving minority groups special rights, equality between these groups and the majority can be accomplished. The different needs of minority groups should be met with group-differentiated rights to give them an equal status. What is considered as important, are policies and institutions that do not eliminate differences, i.e. treating every person in an equal way, but rather recognize differences. The differences we are talking about here are variations in the field of race, ethnicity, cultural heritage and or religion etc. (Modood 2007: 39)

Tariq Modood (2007), in his book on multicultural societies, states that we cannot just speak about difference as something that exists in and on itself. A notion of difference always has to be related to things we have in common. He states, that multiculturalism begins with a concept of negative difference, with the goal to transform this into a positive difference. Achieving this involves the appreciation of groupness and multiplicity and the building of group pride. (Modood 2007: 61) An example of how to transform a negative difference into a positive one is the headscarf. The headscarf is seen as a marker of difference; a negative marker of difference. The headscarf is in western societies often perceived as a symbol for suppression. As I wrote in my bachelor thesis on Muslim women and identity, a group of Muslim women decided to turn this item into something positive, something to be proud of. They did this by arguing that the headscarf was not a symbol of suppression, but was rather as an expression of identity. As such, they turned an item that had a negative connotation in something positive and affirmative. (Vader 2011) For a positive difference to be working, however, integration is necessary; a society in which cultural group identities are recognized and supported in the public space. (Modood 2007: 61)

The recognition of difference plays part both within the minority group itself, and outside the group. Difference is always constituted from the inside and from the outside. Minority groups within a larger society feel different in their language, religion, cultural tradition, customs etc., but are also always perceived as different by the majority of society. Immigrants do not only

distinct themselves but are as well perceived as dissimilar within society. Group differentiation is thus central to its social constitution. (Modood 2007: 40)

Charles Taylor (1994), argues that in order for distinct groups to achieve real equality, difference needs to be taken into account. The two forms of equality that constitute multicultural politics are equal dignity and equal respect. The first one, equal dignity, finds its roots in liberalism and refers to the equal status of all human beings. Taylor argues that this politics of equal dignity falls short because it does not take the importance of recognition into account. He states that in order for an individual to determine who he or she is, that person is dependent on recognition by others. If this recognition by others is denied, the principle of human dignity is in jeopardy and thus demands that this case of inequality is addressed. (Mansvelt Beck 2004: 3) Therefore, the equal dignity of people can only be accomplished when their identity is recognized. Taylor wants to break with the politics of equal dignity and make place for a politics of difference; a politics that recognizes the difference of minority groups. The concept of equality through difference should be applied to groups since an individual cannot gain equal dignity when the minority group he or she is a member of is not recognized. This recognition should then be fuelled by respect. His suggestion for obtaining this is a politics of equal respect fuelled by the presumption of cultural equality. (Mansvelt Beck 2004: 2-3) Equal dignity, thus, is an important factor within multicultural politics since equal respect grows out of the idea of equal dignity; it is only because there is a fundamental equality between human beings that the claim for respect can be formulated. (Modood 2007: 52)

2.2. Multicultural Germany

Germany, like many other European countries, has a long history of immigration. Currently, more than 200 different ethnic groups are living in Germany, coming from all over the globe. As such, it can be stated that Germany is a multiethnic society. Although multiculturalism in Germany was already debated in the 1980's, it took until the year 2002 before the country officially said to be an immigration nation. (Rommelspacher 2002, Smalz-Jacobsen & Hansen 1995: 7) This official statement had as a result, that from that moment on, all people living in Germany

had the official right of cultural expression and the right to be politically represented.

(Rommelspacher 2002: 175) There is a lot of critique on multiculturalism in Germany. One of the issues many scholars address, is that cultures are taken as homogeneous entities. As a result, conflicts between cultures emerge because described and ascribed ethnic group identities are seen as an intrinsic part of culture. As such, multiculturalism is emphasizing cultural categories instead of bringing more integration. (Rommelspacher 2002: 176.; Smalz Jacobsen & Hansen 1995: 8) Difference is in this case regarded as a negative component of multiculturalism instead of a positive variation in cultural convictions.

What has become clear by now, is that multiculturalism involves the integration of the needs of different cultural groups within a society. However, before a mediation between cultural groups can take place, the question needs to be asked what cultural groups actually are. What makes one cultural group different from another? How are cultural groups formed? In order to give insight in these questions, I want to elaborate on the meaning of culture.

3. Culture

3.1. The Meaning of Culture

Before the end of the 19th century, historians and philosophers saw 'culture' as some kind of spirit or idea that provided a basis on which to characterize a society. They perceived the world as divided into different civilizations that all possessed their own distinct cultures. Culture, in this sense, was seen as a coherent unity or pattern presenting religious, philosophical and aesthetic norms and values. It was not until the late 19th century that the actual term 'culture' was introduced and developed within the field of anthropology. Anthropologists used to see culture as static, undifferentiated and as a marker that could be applied to whole societies. (Smelser 1993: 4) This notion of culture is what we nowadays call essentialism, or *culturalism* as Grillo (2003) likes to define it. Culturalism places the human being as a cultural subject that defines a cultural entity. Humans are bearers of a specific culture and play a central role in the definition and

differentiation between cultures. Also, the culture to which one is said or claims to belong defines that person's essence. Cultures, in this sense, determine individual and group identities. (Grillo 2003: 160)

During the course of the 20th century, a lot of critique was delivered on the essentialist take on culture and most contemporary anthropological accounts of culture are in conflict with this view. These anthropologists doubt the unified and coherent nature of culture and question to what degree a societies population shares cultural values. Gupta and Ferguson (1992), for example, are very critical on coherent and stable notions of culture. They argue that the world is often represented as a collection of countries with clear cut boundaries, a fragmented space divided into different societies. Every country embodies its own distinctive culture and society. This results in an unproblematic distinction between our own society and the other society. (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 6)

Stuart Hall, a scholar in cultural studies, also argues against culture as a stable collective, 'a sort of collective one true self'. (Hall 1990: 224) When cultures are taken as collectivities, it seems like our cultural identities reflect historical experiences and shared cultural codes that are always present underneath the shifting and changing history we live in. Our cultural identities turn us into one culture, one people with a stable essence that is always present somewhere underneath the surface and despite visible differences. (Hall 1990: 224)

However, if we look around us, the coherence between nations and cultures are no longer valid in a world that is interconnected through time and space. Gupta and Ferguson give the example of how tourists visit India in order to get an experience of 'Indian Culture'. (Gupta and Ferguson 1992: 6) But what is Indian culture really? And who is Indian? Is there, culturally speaking, even something as an Indian considering the many different cultural and religious groups living in India. The same counts for a country as Germany, were today more than 200 different ethnicities are present. Not only variable ethnicities contest the idea of a unified culture with a national state, also the different values, ideologies and religions that are present among 'German' people challenge the notion that every society has shared cultural values. Thus, instead of assuming the autonomy of a primeval community, we need to examine how cultures have come into existence. Culture and its boundaries, are constantly coming into existence through the encounters with other cultures. They are created on the notion of sameness and belonging *to* one culture, and difference *from* another culture to which one does *not* belong. Cultural identities,

thus, come into existence through a process of differentiation. How these cultural identities are constructed exactly will be discussed in the next paragraph.

3.2. Cultural Identity; Boundaries of Inclusion and Exclusion

Cultural identities do not have an a priori existence and transcend time and place, history and culture. Rather, it represents that what is in flux, that which becomes and is formed out of the interconnected space.

Cultural identity, in this sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past. (Hall 1990: 225)

Identity is thus something that is changeable. Identity transforms because the world, the time and the history identities are placed in change. Since identities are situated in, and dependent on time and space, their content changes according to the historical context they are embedded in; the meaning of identity is contextual. Furthermore, identities are not essential but a position that is taken on, not only by individuals themselves, since identities are also embedded in a social environment which influences the position an individual is placed in. Identity is thus constructed and not situated in 'a transcendental law of origin'. (Hall 1990: 225) As Jonathan Rutherford puts it, "identity marks the conjuncture of our past with the social, cultural and economic relations we

live in. Each individual is the synthesis of the history of existing social relations.” (Rutherford 1990: 19)

If this is indeed the case, if identities are not emerging and developing from some point of fixed origin, how then can we understand their formation? Identities are always constructed in a twofold process. On the one hand people build their identities on commonalities with other people, but simultaneously dis-identify with that which is different and unfamiliar. Identity is thus constructed through recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. (Hall 1996) As such, identities are always positioned in a web of social relations. You can never identify solely on the basis of only yourself. I, for example, cannot identify myself as a European woman, if there was not something like a man and a non-European world. In order to identify myself I thus need social relations where I can identify with, such as other women and Europeans, and which I can identify from, man and non-Europeans. Which of the different aspects of our identity we bring to the fore depends on the position we place ourselves in. My ethnic background comes to the foreground when I am in an environment with distinct ethnicities whereas my sexual preference might be much more apparent when I visit a party in my home country. Jeffrey Weeks (1990) calls this our possible belongings. What is important to note here, is that our different identical axes, such as gender, sexuality, nationality and ethnicity a.o. do not exist separate from each other but that these are entangled and co-construct identity. Identity is placed on the intersection of all these different axes. (Wekker 2001, Crenshaw 1991)

Instead of the essentialist view on identity, the arguments presented above give a discursive approach to the matter. Within this methodology, (cultural) identity is not a given, but a construction. It does not refer to a stable self which is unfolding through history without changing, but rather sees identity as a never ending process. Neither do cultural groups simply exist out of a cluster of individuals that hold the same identity. Identities are never unified, but always fragmented and fractured. (Hall 1996: 3-4)

Globalization reinforces the fragmented nature of our identities. Flows of people move around the globe, crossing national boundaries and settling in new places. Migrants bring with them old cultural values that merge with cultural aspects present at the places they settle. This

engenders new grounds for identification and new cultural dynamics. Globalization challenges fixed notions of cultures, since it results in new cultural forms and practices that take shape in the encounters between people. For example, the immigration of Mexican people in the south of the USA created a new cultural movement called *chicanismo* with an own culture and their own language: *Spanglish*, a mixture of Spanish and English. (Wekker 2007: 74) This exemplifies how cultures are not only fluid and changeable, but are constantly (re)created with regard to social contexts. Identity, in whatever form it emerges, is thus constructed. Constructed with regard to commonality and difference; commonality and recognition on the one hand, automatically assumes difference and non-identification on the other hand. Identity depends on its difference from and negation of some other term. An Other needs to be constructed before the Self can be. I already explained that in this section with the example of man and woman. There is no way I can identify myself as self or a woman if I not first identify some other as man. This Other always needs to be different in order to fulfill the purpose of being Other. Identity is thus always an effect of relations which define through marking differences. (Grossberg 1996: 89)

4. Difference

4.1. Identity and Difference

As has been argued in the sections above, identities are constructed in relation to other identities and cultures. Identity and difference are thus inseparable and co-constructive. For Hegel, the relationship between difference and identity starts with the question of science and determinacy. He states that science, in order to be 'good' science, should start with no presuppositions regarding either its form or its content. His argument is that only thought that is independent of any given determination may be final. (Grier 2007: 17) Thus thought, science, knowledge, none of these are based on already existing presuppositions. This means that there can be no foundational

determinacies of form or content given from the outside. If there is indeed no science present as determinate, than how can determination arise?

According to Hegel, self-determination takes place as a forward moving process whereby what is to be determinate comes to be in and through a mutually constitutive relation to its other. (Grier 2007: 18) There can thus be no thought of content without thinking the opposite; there can be no thought without difference. (Grier 2007: 18) The world comes into existence through oppositions that define each other's existence. In order to determine a content of a concept, it needs to be different from another concept. This then also counts for identities; since there are no predetermined forms of identity possible, identity commences in relation to, and negation of its opposite: the Other. In Hegelian terms, in order for identity to come into existence, it has to emerge from the start together with difference. The two then have to remain involved with one another in the further development of the process. However, even though identity and difference are inextricably involved, they are not undistinguished from each other. They are absolutely distinct, but inseparable and each evaporates in its opposite. (Hegel 1969: 83) In sum: 'To be is to be determinate, and being may come to be fully and finally determinate only insofar as a manifold variety of differentiating relations to others is both realized and brought to thought. Self-sufficiency and autonomy are not attainable in isolation, by excluding or incorporating difference, but rather only by establishing and sustaining it.' (Grier 2007: 19) The process of formation does not start with identity and then moves to difference or the other way around. It rather starts with a 'dynamic oscillation between identifying and differing.' (Hegel 1969: 92) Being only is in terms of its relation to an Other, and this Other only is or comes to be in relation to its Other; being. Thus that what is, is a self differentiating relation to that which is Other. (Grier 2007: 21)

Hegel's explanation on the commence of identity is very helpful to challenge the idea that cultural identities are essentialist and pre-existing. By stating that there is no such thing as a presupposed identity, Hegel's theory indirectly supports an approach on culture as fluid and emerging in relation with other identities. On the other hand, the fact that identities are constructed through and not outside difference, is a rather disturbing recognition since this automatically assumes that it is only through a relation to the Other that identity can be constructed. According to Hegel, every identity, every being can only function because of

exclusion. Something outside being has to be abjected in order for it to even come into existence. (Grier 2007, Hall 1996: 4-5) As a result, there always needs to be an Other that is denounced in order for a Self to be produced.

Psychoanalysis points toward the ambiguous relation between the Self and the Other. According to Sigmund Freud, our definition of Self depends on the way we are formed as subjects. Subjectivity and a sense of Self can only be formed in relation to a significant Other which is different from itself. (Hall 2011: 237-238) Freud thus argues that identities are always constructed in binary oppositions; there is always that Other which is necessary to define the Self. Besides having a significant meaning on the personal level in the constitution of a subject, the Other also has a much broader cultural meaning. In Western culture, the Other creates a cultural meaning of what the West as a (imagined) community is. Fundamental in representations of the Self and the Other, the Occident and the Orient, is that these markers are based on a notion of difference. Not so much the difference between the Self and the Other, but the difference of the Other *from* the Self. In representations of the Other, something is always said not only about the people and the occasion, but also about their difference, their otherness. (Hall 2011: 230) This Self and Other are not only present at the individual level, but also on a group and cultural level, between the West and the Orient, between Muslim's and Christian's, or between Kurds and Turks. The same dynamic is visible within multicultural societies. I even want to argue that multicultural societies are based on structures of commonality and difference.

As is clear by now, cultures are never pre-existing, stable entities. Rather, they are constructed through encounters with other cultures marked by their Otherness. As I have elaborated on above, Hegel, Freud and other scholars involved in philosophy and anthropology, argue that difference is a necessary factor in the construction of identity, be it personal or political. I, however, want to use theories where the function of difference is approached in an alternative way and use these to look at multiculturalism differently.

4.2. The Matter of Difference

Why does difference matter? Why are we always putting our identities, ideas and values in opposition to others?

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, argues that difference matters because it is essential to meaning; without difference, meaning could not exist. (Hall 2011: 243) Herewith, de Saussure argues that meaning is relational. It is the difference between things that give meaning to them; the difference between the Self and the Other is that which signifies and which holds meaning. Although I agree with de Saussure on the relationality of meaning production, the issue with difference is that it leads to binary oppositions. This would suggest that no meaning can be produced outside of oppositions. I think however, that difference can be approached in a more relational way, in the sense that the Self is as much different as the Other. As such, differences between subject positions are addressed in a more relational way instead of an oppositional way. This does not mean that differences do no longer exist, or should not be paid attention to, on the contrary, difference should not be overlooked. People are different from one another and it is important to acknowledge particularities. However, difference should not be placed in opposition to sameness, but should be placed in itself. As a result, people can start relating to each other on the basis of a shared difference. I will explain this idea in more depth in the next section. But first, I want to elaborate on the question why it is so important to transcend binary oppositions.

Binaries always involve power relations, especially in the case of the Self and the Other. As long as identification and representation are based on categories such as Self and Other in a process of sameness and difference, power relations between these two will not be overcome. The otherness of race, sex, class, ethnicity, gender etc. deeply divides our society. It is within the oppositions of white/black, masculine/feminine, hetero/homosexual, Christian/Muslim, West/East etc. where one term is always dominant and the other subordinate. (Rutherford 1993: 10) Identity construction is always based on excluding something and establishing a hierarchy between the two poles created. (Hall 1996: 5) This becomes clear in identity constructions where the Other is not only placed outside the Self (not within), but also reduced to an essentialist difference, to that which is alien and inferior. Binaries, thus, become constitutive difference, in

which the Other is defined by its negativity. The same dynamic is visible within the field of cultural identities. Identity groups are constructed within a play of power and exclusion, and are the result not of a primordial cultural existence, but rather of a process of inclusion and exclusion.

Within multiculturalism, differences are not eliminated but recognized. Although I agree on the necessity of the recognition of difference, a politics of difference can easily lead to preserved oppositions between distinct cultural groups. Modood also recognizes this issue, when he states that the sense of identities that groups have of themselves are not only based on a feeling of difference, but also a form of alienness or inferiority which makes equal citizenship difficult. (Modood 2007: 37) His solution is to transform negative difference into a positive difference through affirmation and that this is the eventual goal of multiculturalism. (Modood 2007: 39) Although this is a good starting point, I doubt if positive affirmation of difference will be enough to attain an equal notion of culture and thus eventually to lead to a well functioning multicultural society. Even if a positive difference is obtained, difference remains a marker between cultural identities. This automatically involves an opposition between recognition and differentiation, between the Self and the Other. As I have already mentioned, the Other -that which is different- is abjected and excluded, and as such will never be able to reach an equal status. When people would identify not by opposing to everything different, but rather identify on shared differences, a more equal relationship between people emerges. Furthermore, when difference in itself is a starting point, the subject is no longer fixed in a place, but constantly moving between positions. As such, the Other can never be fixed in a subjugated position with regard to the dominating Self. In order to get out of a binary opposition between the Self and the Other, difference needs to be approached differently; not in terms of sameness and difference, but in terms of difference in itself. As such, I want to further develop multiculturalism in the direction of relationality instead of differentiation. I want to argue for cultural identities that are based on difference without opposing it to sameness. In order to get there, we need to elaborate on the theory of difference as theorized by Gilles Deleuze.

4.3. Gilles Deleuze; Difference in Itself

Gilles Deleuze was a French philosopher who wrote from the early 1960's until the 1990's on topics such as difference, multiplicity and constructivism. Being a constructivist, he argues for philosophers to be creators, and for readings of philosophy and philosophical encounters to inspire new concepts. For Deleuze, there is no identity, and in repetition, nothing is ever the same. Rather, there is only difference; copies do not resemble but are different, everything is constantly changing, and reality is a becoming, not a being. (Deleuze 1994) With regard to the argument I want to make in this thesis, I am mainly interested in his view on difference.

However, in order to understand a Deleuzian difference, one needs to understand his ideas on philosophy, and his arguments with regard to repetition. In order to understand how repetition is not resemblance, one has to understand time and the ontology of becoming. As such, I will start with explaining what philosophy means for Deleuze, and then discuss the topics of difference, repetition, time and the ontology of becoming.

Philosophy

For Deleuze, the project of philosophy has nothing to do with unraveling the truth or the discovery of principles. Rather, the philosophical project is one of creating, arranging, and rearranging perspectives; it is, as he puts it, the discipline that consists of creating concepts. As such, what Deleuze wants is not to reveal the world *as it is*, but rather to offer new ways of looking at things. (May 2003)

Deleuze states that philosophy is a constructivism and as such works on the creation of concepts. These philosophical concepts are not reflections of a world that transcends them but constituents of a perspective that creates a world. Concepts do not refer to transcendental objects, but to themselves and to other objects that come into existence in the immanent world. A concept has no reference, it is self referential; it posits itself and its object at the same time as it is created. (May 2003: 141-142) Objects are thus not copies of concepts that exist a priori and in a

transcendental world, but come into existence in the immanent world; they are created in the world as we live it.

So why is philosophy important for understanding difference in a Deleuzian sense? The point of a philosophical perspective is not to tell us what the world is like, but to create a perspective through which the world takes on a new significance. (May 2003: 142) When Deleuze is talking about difference, he is engaging in the practice of doing philosophy. He is literally thinking differently about difference, taking the concept to a new level and looking at it in an alternative way. He is creating a concept that will shape a perspective from which to see things differently. (May 2003: 175) Difference thus, should be seen differently from how we know it. With Deleuze, the concept gets an altered meaning, a new significance to work with.

Difference

“Difference is the state in which one can speak of determination as such. The difference ‘between’ two things is only empirical, and the corresponding determinations are only extrinsic. However, instead of something distinguished from something else, imagine something which distinguishes itself– and yet that from which it distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it. [...] We must therefore say that difference is made, or makes itself, as in the expression of ‘making a difference’.” (Deleuze 1994: 36)

What Deleuze is arguing here, is that the difference between two things does not actually exist but is only present in appearance. Difference as a determination as such does not distinguish itself from something else on the basis of sameness and difference, but rather distinguishes itself. What is left is a difference that is not the distinction between two identities (which would subordinate difference to identity) or the negation of one of them (which would think of difference only negatively) but a difference in itself. (May 2003: 21) Deleuze wants to move

beyond the opposition between sameness and difference. In order to achieve this, the object must in no way be identical. Difference must become the element, the ultimate unity and must therefore refer to other differences, which never identify it, but rather differentiate it. Difference, so to speak, differentiates itself. “Every object and everything must see its own identity swallowed up in difference, each being no more than a difference between differences. Difference must be shown differing.” (Deleuze 1994: 68)

I will explain the process of self differentiation in further detail when I discuss repetition and the ontology of becoming. For now, it is important to take difference not as part of the identical, but in itself. Why is it, that Deleuze argues for a difference in itself? When difference is subordinated to identity, it is always marked as negative; it is the non-identical, the lack of identity. Deleuze’s aim is to affirm difference and to turn it into something positive and wants us to “see difference as respectable, reconcilable, or federative differences, not as bloody contradictions”. (Deleuze 1994: 63) I interpret this sentence of him as a call for relationality and reconciliation and to see difference not as a marker of unbridgeable oppositions, but rather as a reconcilable factor. Difference should thus not be denied, but be respected. I should however also be seen as a federative and compatible factor.

Another reason for Deleuze to create a new perspective on difference, is because founding difference on identity leads to an infinite circle since these identities have to find their ground in other identities. (May 2003: 144) This in turn assumes that there is a fixed identity in a transcendental world on which other identities are based. Deleuze, however, states that philosophy should not ground its arguments in a transcendental world, but argues for philosophy to deal with questions in the transcendental world. As such, he believes difference should not be seen as a repetition, but as something in and on itself. As we will see in the next section, there can only be difference in itself, since a model and its copy can never be identical.

Repetition

Deleuze starts his book *Repetition and Difference* with the following sentence: “Repetition and resemblance are different in kind.” (Deleuze 1994: 1) This is not only the core argument in

Deleuze's philosophy on difference, but also the core argument against the existence of the identical.

Repetition has been seen with regard to the production of the identical. To repeat something, is to do the same thing, but in a different moment. However, beings are not repeated identical, but rather as other. "The simulacra exist in and of itself, without grounding in or in reference to a model with simulacra being "those systems in which different relates to different by means of difference itself. What is essential is that we find in these systems no prior identity or internal resemblance". (Deleuze 1994: 299) Each simulacra thus is its own model. A very logical argument, because if everything would be repeated as similar, this would mean for identities to be copies, to constantly be the same. This would again suggest that there must be something like an a priori identity, an ontological being on which identities are based and repeated on; some transcendental identity that is not affected by time and place. Another option for the identical to come into existence is the Hegelian dialectic. But this reduces difference to something negative, to something lacking. Furthermore, it is making identity as the condition for difference to even possibly exist. As such, no difference can possibly exist in itself.

Deleuze, by stating that difference is not resemblance, argues that only when beings are repeated as something other (not similar or identical) that their disparateness is revealed. This makes it impossible to talk about difference without the identical, and the identical cannot exist in repetition.

Time

Repetition can thus not be understood as a repetition of the same, but only as a repetition of that which differs from itself. To support this argument, Deleuze refers to Nietzsche's philosophy of time and becoming. According to Nietzsche, the subject of eternal return is not the same, but the different, not the similar but the dissimilar, not the one, but the many. (Deleuze 1983: 126) Everything that exists as the same, as a unity, will not return. Only that which differs from itself inhabits repetition and can thus return. (Deleuze 1983: 76) Let me try to explain this in more detail. In the prior section, I have argued that repetition is never producing copies, but is rather

producing difference, a difference in itself. Time is not a static thing but rather moves, just as repetition is a movement. Movement can only bring forth differences and not identities. Difference is thus a movement of differentiation. The content of time, since it cannot come in terms of identity and sameness, must be difference in itself. Identities and sameness do not exist in the pure duration of time. If the content of the past were to consist in certain identities, than their nature as identities would have to be modeled on some original form from which they would draw their character as identities. These original forms would themselves not be in time, since the contents in time would be copies of them. These would in turn again refer to a transcendental world. But there is no being that can serve as a stable model, there is only the unfolding of difference in time.

Ontology of Becoming

The term ontology captures several meanings in philosophy. In the analytic tradition, it means “the study of what there is,” either in general or in some specific area. It deals with questions of being. (May 2003: 13) Deleuze, however, does not believe in a being, but argues for being as the affirmation of becoming.

“There is no being beyond becoming, nothing beyond multiplicity; neither multiplicity nor becoming are appearances or illusions. But neither are there multiple or eternal realities which would be, in turn, like essences beyond appearance. Multiplicity is the inseparable manifestation, essential transformation and constant symptom of unity. Multiplicity is the affirmation of unity; becoming is the affirmation of being.” (Deleuze 1983: 23-24)

What Gilles Deleuze is arguing here is that there is no being beyond becoming. Becoming is the final reality, but not a transcendental reality since there are no realities beyond appearance. (May

2003: 143) Deleuze first of all states that there is no essential being beyond becoming. Rather, becoming, that is the constant moving of the subject, is the final reality of being. This then again can be explained as the immanence of the becoming; there is no reality beyond appearance since there is not transcendental world on which our appearances are build on. Thus 'I' am not 'me' but am constantly becoming someone or something different. Furthermore, me as a becoming subject is the final reality since I am not based on anything outside of what I am constantly becoming. Herewith, Deleuze rejects stable unities.

When becoming is the being of being, a being is an instable state rather than a fixed one. This leaves us with a subject that never is, but a subject that is always in the process of becoming. (Grosz 2005: 178)

A line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it, on the contrary, it passes *between* points, it comes up through the middle, it runs perpendicular to the points first perceived, transversally to the localizable relation to distant or contiguous points. A point is always a point of origin. But a line of becoming has neither beginning nor end, departure not arrival, origin nor destination [...] A becoming is neither one, nor two, nor the relation of the two; it is the in-between [...]. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 293)

If, as Deleuze suggests in the quote above, becoming has no origin, then how can we move from being toward becoming? According to Deleuze, we can be thrown into a becoming by the smallest detail that carries us off from the majority. With the majority, he means the normative standard that dominates and produces stable identities. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 292) This might suggest that we are all stable beings until something makes us a becoming. I, however, interpret this more in the sense that anything and everything constantly shapes our becoming; constantly moves us away from the majority into a becoming. Everyone and everything can become. The only prescript for becoming, is becoming-minor. Minority here refers to a fluid movement that subverts dominant identities. The majority, on the contrary, is the normative standard that

dominates. In order to subvert the dominant stable identities, it is necessary to become minor. What becomings do, is that they undermine the fixed terms given to us by the majority. (May 2003: 149-150)

Since becoming is the unfolding of difference in time, there is no sameness between becomings. (May 2003: 150) Each simulacra has its own model because identical copies do and cannot exist. The reason for this is that time is the unfolding of difference. Nothing can be the same, because there is no stable being on which sameness can be based, there is only movement. There is an internal self differing within the different itself; the different differs from itself in each case. Everything that exists only becomes and never is.

Summary

As I explained at the beginning of this section, the concepts of difference, repetition, time and becoming are interconnected within the philosophy of difference. I briefly want to summarize and visualize the connection of the concepts presented here.

Repetition differs from resemblance since beings are not fixed but constantly in a movement toward a (different) becoming. There cannot be a repetition based on sameness, since that would assume a transcendental and a priory identity. Furthermore, if repetition would be the same as resemblance, this would mean that time does not move and neither influences concepts. Repetition can thus only be the unfolding of difference in time. This gives the possibility for beings to distinguish themselves from themselves since they constantly change as they develop in time. When everything is in movement, it constantly differs in content and can thus be self-differential.

4.4. Difference as identity

How can Deleuze's ontology of becoming and difference be used with regard to (cultural) identity? And how does this theory of difference function within a multicultural society? Before elaborating on these questions, let me first make clear that Deleuze himself speaks of a non-identitarian world and argues for a world where identity does no longer exist. I, however, do not want to do away with identity all together. In my view, we live in a world where we have to deal with the concept. My aim is to change the concept of identity as we know it, and transform it into something else. In order to do this, I take Deleuze's vision on difference as an inspiration and working model.

In chapter three of this thesis, I have explained how identity is not a fixed matter, but should rather be seen as a construct; a construct that is formed in a process of differentiation between sameness and difference. On the one hand people build their identities on commonalities with other people, but simultaneously dis-identify with that which is different and unfamiliar. Identity, in this view, is thus constructed through recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. The same counts for cultural identities.

The issue with approaching identity in such a constructive way, is that there always needs to be an Other to dis-identify from. As Hegel argues, being only comes into existence in relation to its Other, and this Other only comes to be in relation to *his* Other; being. (Grier 2007: 21) This Self and Other are not only present at the individual level, but also on a group and cultural level. Cultures are never pre-existing, stable entities. Rather, they are constructed through encounters with other cultures marked by their Otherness. The Other, the different, is abjected and placed in a subordinate position with regard to the Self. Deleuze argues against difference as a negative factor, and sees difference as something positive. He moves beyond the opposition of difference and sameness by taking difference in itself.

Using Deleuze as a starting point, I want to move from identity as being the identical, toward identity as 'the unfolding of difference in time'. (May 2003: 150) As argued by Deleuze, there cannot be 'the identical', nothing and nobody is exactly the same. As such, there is no identification on the bases of sameness, but only on the basis of difference in itself. An identity is

a becoming, a constantly moving, changing and fluid subject. If we look at identity in this way, it does not come into existence, as Hegel (1969: 83) stated, through opposing sameness and difference, but rather as a self-differentiating process. There is no longer the need to dis-identify from something outside yourself, since you are a becoming that can constantly dis-identify from itself. Difference between two things does not exist. Difference is already always relational because there is no opposition. This does not mean that we, as subjects, are all identical, but neither does that mean that there are differences *between* us. In fact, we are all constantly becoming, meeting and influencing each other along the way. The oppositional boundaries between us are blurred, and as such, we become a unity. Not a unity in terms of sameness, but a unity that is a multiplicity; a differential unity. We, as becomings, are constantly in-between, moving beyond dualisms. In these movements, we constantly shape and reshape each other through the encounters we have. “Deleuze’s work highlights the relationality of all developmental processes, including the affective and material engagement that grounds the person in context. Taken from a Deleuzean perspective, human development is a discontinuous record of affective encounters; of the creation and suspension of relations between diverse bodies and the affects these relations support.” (Duff 2010: 629) So we influence not only each other, but also the world we live in and vice versa. When dualisms are transgressed, we get to a point where we can all identify with each other on the basis of being different. Or better said, there is not even such a thing as identity anymore, there is only difference, which forms identities, not as identities, but as difference.

5. Relationality

5.1. Toward a relational society

Now that I have explained how identity in terms of difference in itself functions, I want to have a look at what happens to multiculturalism when identities do no longer exist as identities, but

rather as difference. Scholars in favor of multicultural politics argue that equality between citizens can be achieved through treating them differently. (Modood 2007, Taylor 1994) These arguments are based on the idea that societies exist out of different cultures with different needs and values. By emphasizing the difference between cultures, boundaries between them are constructed, creating an idea of Us and Them. Cultural identities are produced on the basis of the exclusion of that which is different. That which is different is alienated and put as the Other. This hierarchy becomes visible when the Other is not only placed outside the Self (not within), but also reduced to an essentialist difference, to that which is alien and inferior. Binaries, thus, become constitutive difference, in which the Other is defined by its negativity. Identity groups are constructed within a play of power and exclusion, and are the result not of a primordial cultural existence, but rather of a process of inclusion and exclusion. Modood recognizes this issue when he says that that multiculturalism is the politics of difference, and that this difference can be perceived as a distinctness and inferiority, and that this in turn can create an Us vs. Them relationship. (Modood 2007: 37) In order to reverse this, he argues for a politics of positive difference. However, my argument is that even though the goal of multiculturalism is to bring forth a positive difference, this difference will still be placed opposed to sameness.

How then, can a multiculturalism be envisioned where oppositions between Us and Them can be transgressed? I want to use the theory of difference as proposed by Gilles Deleuze to further develop and transform the concept of multiculturalism, and as such bring it beyond the question of oppositions. Multiculturalism is based on the idea of a societies that entail different cultural groups with boundaries between them. These groups, although not static and fixed, are still marked in their distinctness by boundaries. However, if we take difference not as opposite to sameness, but in itself, oppositions no longer exist. If we are all becomings instead of beings, there is no such thing anymore of cultures marked by boundaries. Culture, in the sense of being constructed on the basis of different values with regard to other cultures, can no longer exist. There is only difference, we are all different, and that is which relates us. The world thus becomes relational; a patchwork were boundaries between cultures are blurred. A world in which we are all different but related. This does not mean that people do not operate in (cultural) groups anymore. But these groups are not markers of a unity that works on mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. Groups are rather swarms, changing form and direction and constantly influencing

whatever comes on its path. Just as it changes shape because it is effected through its environment.

5.2. Feelings of belonging; identity formations among refugee girls in Germany

In this section, I want to discuss the interviews I did with the girls at the Teresa von Avila Haus and use these as an example to show what an identity based on difference can look like. I chose to only use the interviews I did with Forough, Chris and Maryaam in detail, since they were most explicit in their ideas on identity and culture. The two themes I want to put emphasis on in my analysis of the interviews are feelings of belonging, and the girls' perception of culture, nationality and identity.

Forough is a 16 year old girl who fled Iran one and a half years ago. She now lives in Germany and goes to school every day. Although she has started to build up a new live in here, she still does not feel at home in the country and doubt if she ever will.

“ I would not feel at home in Germany. I think I still would not, ever after 30 years. The streets, the trees, they simply do not belong to me. I am a stranger for the people here, and the people here are strange to me. But what would be helpful to feel at least a little bit more at home, is when the Germans would change their view on foreigners. They are so focused on people to integrate. That is important, but it is taking away the room for people to be themselves.” (Interview Forough 2012, translation SV)

With regard to her contact with Germans, Forough said that she does not have many commonalities with them. Her problems are different, and she thinks differently than they do. (Interview Forough 2012, translation SV) On the other hand, she does not feel very connected to Iranians anymore either. She states: “ I cannot really connect with Iranians. We do not have a lot in common. With Iranians, everything has to be perfect. I live in a refugee home, that is a

situation which is difficult for Iranians to understand. It is a very shameful thing for them.”

(Interview Forough 2012, translation SV)

It is difficult for Forough to create a feeling of belonging, an issue Maryaam, 19, is dealing with as well. She came to Germany 4 years ago and still does not feel at home here. She explains: “I do not feel at home in Germany, but I would not feel at home in Somalia either. I cannot return there, as soon as you have left the place, it is very difficult to come back.”

(Interview Maryaam 2012, translation SV) Both Forough and Maryaam do not feel at home in Germany, but neither do they feel they belong to the people from their home country. They do not identify with any culture or nationality anymore, but live between and across cultural identities.

Chris is a 20 year old Turkish girl who grew up in a Turkish neighborhood in Germany. She is currently going through a transition from female to male, something which is not accepted in the Turkish community. Chris emphasizes how she feels being different from everybody else. She does not want to identify with any concept, be it German, Turkish, gay or man. To her, “culture is like a character, a manner in which someone is acting. Culture has nothing to do with where you come from. I am not determined by where I come from, I have my own culture and my own character. I am not gay or transsexual, I do not want to identify myself with any of those concepts” (Interview Chris 2012, translation SV)

Maryaam talks about national identity in a same manner. She states: “I do not really like to think in terms of nationality. The place I come from does not determine my identity. It is when you feel happy in a certain place that you start to identify with it. A connection to a certain place it what creates identity.” (Interview Maryaam 2012, translation SV)

At the beginning of this section, I outlined two themes I wanted to focus on. These were feelings of belonging, and ideas on nationality, culture and identity. These girls have the feeling of not belonging to any culture. Interestingly, Forough, Chris and Maryaam refer to nationality and cultural identity not as something that is determined by a country or a culture, but as something created through encounters with the environment. They do not identify with preserved cultures, but rather approach cultural identity as a fluid, constantly changing concept. For Maryaam, identities are constructed through the encounter with a place. And Chris refers to identity as something that is created from within. Furthermore, she does not want to identify

herself with 'stable' concepts like man, gay or transsexual. She rather perceives identity as something fluid and changeable. For these girls, it is difficult to find a space in a society where cultures are determined by characters and boundaries that distinct them from other cultures. They do not feel at home in any given culture, but rather perceive their cultural identities as blurry and changeable, they speak of identities in becoming.

5.3. Thinking Multiculturalism Differently

My aim in this thesis is to further develop multiculturalism as we know it, and transform it into something else. In order to do this, I use Deleuze's vision on difference as an inspiration and working model. Multiculturalism takes into account the differences between people and it respects these differences. Something Deleuze argues for as well. However, multiculturalism still leaves us with the question of oppositions between cultures. Cultures that are denounced not only as being different, but simultaneously as being inferior. Modood (2007) wants to deal with the abjection of other cultures through the emphasis on positive difference. I, however, want to move even further, beyond boundaries between cultural identities. Deleuze argues for a difference not as an opposition, but as a unity, as federative and in itself. When difference is taken as used as a connective aspect instead of a contradiction to sameness, multicultural society can become much more relational. Then cultures do no longer include and exclude, since the boundaries between them are blurred. I am not arguing for a world with a mono-culture here, but a world where one culture automatically melts into another and where cultural identities constantly become something else. As such, cultural identities do not have clear borders anymore but are constantly (re)created through encounters with the other becomings and the environment. The stories of the girls from the Teresa von Avila-Haus already refer to a relational world. They do not speak in terms of nationality or culture but experience this very differently. They are a clear example of becomings who no longer belong to any nation-state or culture anymore. However, Forough, Chris and Maryaam also explain how they feel different and not belonging anymore at all. If, on the other hand, difference in itself is taken as a basis to identify on, then these girls can belong to society again. When society is seen in relational terms, they no longer

have to put themselves in one culture or the other, but rather belong to the patchwork they create themselves.

The proposition I want to make here, is that we need to think differently in order to further develop multiculturalism toward a relational concept. If we stop thinking in boundaries, but start thinking in relations, we can create new perspectives on society; an society in which we all belong.

6. Conclusion

Germany, among many other countries, has a long history of what we nowadays call multiculturalism. Scholars in favor of multiculturalism argue that equality between people can only be achieved by the means of recognizing the different values and needs of distinct cultural groups within society. Difference should thus be respected, and transformed from a negative aspect into a positive one. The means to achieve this is by the positive affirmation of difference. But as I have argued, I do not think positive affirmation of difference is enough to bring forth an equal notion of culture. The issue with difference seen in relation to sameness is that it easily takes the position of the negative and the excluded. But how then, can people live together and identify on the basis of cultural difference without falling into oppositional terms of sameness and difference? In this thesis, I have proposed a society where multiculturalism moves beyond cultural boundaries toward a relational composition of the world. In order to achieve this, difference needs not be seen in opposition to sameness, but in itself.

Gilles Deleuze suggests not to see difference in identical terms, but rather as a concept in itself. He even argues that the identical does not exist, since repetition can never be resemblance. There is only the unfolding of difference in itself. As such, there is no such thing as being, but only becoming; everything and everyone is always becoming. A becoming is fluid, changeable and in relation to the world and other becomings. Identity in the sense of sameness is no longer existing, and neither are cultures with specific values marked by boundaries. There is only

difference, we are all different, and that is what related us. As becomings, we are no longer subjects with clear boundaries that divides us from other subjects and the world. We constantly shape each other and ourselves through our encounters with each other and the world.

When all this is taken into account, people can live together and identify on the basis of cultural difference. Not a cultural difference in the sense of a culture being constructed on the basis of different values with regard to other cultures. Or a society were cultural groups and identities are markers of a unity that works on mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. Rather, society should be seen as a patchwork, were cultural groups are fluid swarms that constantly change their shape and content. This will make the world a unity, a differential unity where everybody is different, but related. This will make a world, where Forough, Chris and Maryaam might feel at home as well. If we start to think differently, we can create a multiculturalism that moves beyond boundaries toward a relational society.

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Annex 1.

Home is where the heart is

Interviews über Integration, Identifikation und Heimat

Ich bin selbst aus den Niederlanden nach Deutschland gekommen. Obwohl die kulturelle Unterschiede zwischen diesen beiden Ländern nicht so groß sind, habe ich trotzdem oft das Gefühl gehabt nicht zu Hause zu sein. Es hat bei mir neue Ideen bezüglich Heimat und Identität erloscht und ich habe mich die Frage gestellt was es eigentlich bedeutet mich irgendwo zu Hause zu fühlen und was ich brauche.

Die meisten Mädchen im Teresa von Avila-Haus haben einen Immigration- oder Flüchtlings-Hintergrund und haben ihr Heimatland verlassen. In Deutschland müssen diese Mädchen ein neues Zuhause machen und neue Verhältnisse mit ihrem früheren Heimatland entwickeln.

Mein Interesse liegt im *homemaking processes*², das heißt, die Weise worauf diese Mädchen ein Gefühl von Heimat konstruieren. Meine Idee ist um durch Mittel von Interviews und Bildern einen Eindruck zu geben in diese so genannte *homemaking processes*.

Die Interviews sind aufgeteilt in drei verschiedenen Themen. Das erste Thema handelt über Heim und hingehören.

- Wenn ich 'Heim' sage, was ist denn das erste woran du denkst?
- Was repräsentiert Heim für dich?
- Was brauchst du um dich zu Hause zu fühlen?

Das nächste Aspekt das behandelt wird ist *homemaking* in Deutschland: was wäre nötig für dich um dich mehr zu Hause zu fühlen in Deutschland?

² Für eine Definition von *Homemaking Processes* weise ich hin auf Yen Le Espiritu's Buch 'Home Bound' (2003)

Die letzten Fragen gehen über Identität Konstruktion.

- Wie würdest du dich selbst identifizieren?
- Hat der Umzug nach Deutschland deine Identität beeinflusst? So ja, wie?
- Fühlst du dich zu einer Gemeinschaft gehören?

Demnächst noch zwei Fragen über die Position von Frauen in Deutschland:

- Wie verschieden ist die Position von Frauen in dein Heimatland und hier in Deutschland?
- Fühlst du dich mehr emanzipiert in Deutschland oder nicht?

Xiao Yao Zhang

Geboren in China 11-11-1994

In Deutschland seit 29-03-2011

Wenn ich Heim sage, was ist dann das erste woran du denkst?

Ich denke dann an ein Platz wo es keine Streit gibt, ein Platz wo Leute einander helfen und in Frieden mit einander zusammen leben und einander begrüßen und fragen wie es geht.

Hier im Teresa von Avila-Haus fühl ich mich wohl und zu Hause.

Hat der Umzug nach Deutschland deine Identität beeinflusst?

Ja sicher, ich bin hier eine andere Xiao als ich in China war. In China war ich viel ruhiger. Ich hatte viel Angst. Hier in Deutschland nicht. Hier habe ich keine Angst und bin ich viel froher. Ich kann mich gut äußern und gut reden mit meine Freundinnen, ich fühle mich wohl. In China könnte ich mich nicht gut äußern, ich hatte Angst Sachen zu sagen den ich sagen wollte.

Fühlst du dich zu einer Gemeinschaft gehören?

Ich fühl mich wohl in beide Kulturen; in die Chinesische und die Deutsche. Ich will aber in Deutschland bleiben. Manchmal aber, fühl ich mich Ausländer in Deutschland, dann gucken Leute mich fremd an und fühl ich mich als ob ich hier nicht gehör.

Wie verschieden ist die Position von Frauen in dein Heimatland und hier in Deutschland?

Wenn Frauen in China unter 18 schwanger sind, dürfen sie nicht mehr in die Schule gehen. Hier in Deutschland ist alles viel lockerer, und kann man solche Sachen einfach machen. Die Schule in China ist sowieso anders. Dort geht Man ab 5 Jahre in die Schule und lernt von morgens bis abends. Hier ist die Schule ein bisschen lockerer.

Bild

In mein Zimmer im Teresa von Avila-Haus fühl ich mich wohl und zu Hause.



Forough Maleki

Geboren in Iran, 06-02-1996

In Deutschland seit 1 Jahr und 2 Monaten.

Wenn Ich Heim sage, was ist denn das erste woran du denkst?

Iran, unser Haus.

Was repräsentiert Heim für dich?

Essen. Essen. Wenn ich früher in Teheran aus der Schule gekommen war, hatte ich immer Hunger. Auf meinem Weg zu Hause habe ich immer verschiedene Gerüche gerochen. In alle Häuser wurde gekocht. Und wenn ich nach Hause angekommen bin, war das Mittagessen schon fertig und das Haus so sauber und wohnlich wie ein Schloss! Bei mir geht essen nicht um Satt werden, es geht für mich vielmehr um zusammen zu sein mit der Familie. Essen heißt (L)leben! Ich habe immer ein Bild in meinen Gedanken, ein Bild von einem kleinen Fenster, Wenn man dadurch guckt, sieht man eine Familie, die gemütlich am Tisch zusammen essen. Das essen wird begleitet durch das tikken von Geschirr.

Was brauchst du um dich zu Hause zu fühlen?

In ein richtiges Haus leben. Das Heim wo ich jetzt Wohne fühlt sich immer noch wie ein Hotel an. In einem richtigen Haus leben mit meinen Familien, ein Haus mit Teppich und Möbel. Jetzt habe ich das Gefühl immer noch auf eine langdauernde Reise zu sein. Ich kann noch nicht zu

Hause kommen. Obwohl ich mich schon besser fühle, in meinem Zimmer gibt es mich immer noch das Gefühl in ein Hotel zu leben.

Das nächste Aspekt dass behandelt wird ist *homemaking* in Deutschland: was wäre nötig für dich um dich mehr zu Hause zu fühlen in Deutschland?

Ich würde mich nie zu Hause fühlen in Deutschland. Ich glaube nach 30 Jahren immer noch nicht. Die Straßen, die Bäume, sie gehören mir einfach nicht. Ich bin fremd für die Leute hier, und die Leute sind fremd für mich. Aber was hilfreich wäre um mich zumindest ein bisschen besser zu fühlen, wäre so wenn die Deutschen einfach ihre Absicht bezüglich Ausländer ändern. Sie sind so darauf fokussiert dass die Leute integrieren müssen. Das ist auch wichtig, aber damit werden Menschen auch den Raum entnommen selbst zu sein. Dazu kommt dass die Leute sehr dumme Fragen stellen. Sie denken falsch über Iran. Sie sollte vielleicht mehr lernen über wo ich her komme bevor sie ein Urteil fertig haben. Die meisten Deutscher denken auch sehr materialistisch. Wenn ein Ausländer hier ein Zimmer und essen bekommt muss er sehr glücklich und dankbar sein. Wenn ich dann traurig bin dann wird gefragt was überhaupt das Problem ist?

Hat der Umzug nach Deutschland deine Identität beeinflusst? So ja, wie?

Ich habe immer Angst nicht mehr die alte Forough zu sein. Ich bin nicht mehr dieselbe wie letztes Jahr. Dass tut mir leid aber ich muss das akzeptieren. In Iran war ich sehr kreativ, viele Jugendliche da sind kreativ weil dort die Fazilitäten nicht so einfach wie hier in Deutschland zu Verfügung stehen. Man kriegt nicht einfach, was man will, und muss immer kämpfen einen Weg zu finden. Ich hatte viele Ambitionen, aber ich habe sie vergessen. Ich wollte immer was für die Gesellschaft machen, Menschen ethisch denken beibringen, die Stadt ändern und mehr Verbindung zwischen Menschen bevorzugen. Ich wollte studieren und einen guten Job machen. Jetzt aber ist meine Ambition weg weil ich einfach nicht Weiß wie mein Zukunft aussieht. Wann

kann ich wieder normal mit etwas anfangen? Wann ist mein Leben wieder normal wie früher? Hier kämpfe ich nicht mehr um etwas zu ändern, ich mache vielleicht Abitur, suche einen Job, bekomme Geld und mache Urlaub! Ich werde ein richtig normales Leben bekommen, genau wie die meisten Deutschen machen, genauso wie sie nach Lebenszielen denken, wurde ich auch denken! Ich habe Angst von dem Tag, in dem ich mich so gelassen fühle, und von der Zeit, in der ich keinen Drive mehr habe.

Fühlst du dich zu einer Gemeinschaft gehören?

Mit Iranern kann ich nicht gut zusammenkommen. Wir haben wenig gemeinsam. Alles muss bei Iranern immer perfekt sein. Ich wohne im Heim, das ist eine Situation, die für die Iraner schwierig zu verstehen ist. Es scheint ihnen peinlich.

In der Schule habe ich eine bessere Kommunikation mit Ausländern als mit Deutschen. Die Deutschen sind nett, aber mit ihnen habe ich weniger gemeinsam. Meine Probleme sind anders. Ich denke über andere Sachen nach. Ich habe eine gute Freundin aus Rumänien. Sie fragt nicht viel. Sie spricht nicht oft über meine Geschichte und auch nicht sehr neugierig darauf.

Wie verschieden ist die Position von Frauen in dein Heimatland und hier in Deutschland?

Hier in Deutschland geht jede Frau zur Arbeit. In Iran passiert das relativ wenig. Wenn die Frau arbeiten will, kann sie es machen, manchmal fragen Jobs sogar Frauen die gut aussehen. Die Männer wollen nur schöne Frauen in Betrieb, damit sie sie angucken können. Frauen werden auf der Straße auch mehr als hier angeguckt und angesprochen. Bei uns können die Männer auf der Straße einfach anmachen! Hier in Deutschland findest du gar nicht, darfst du eigentlich nicht.

Was auch anders ist sind die Trennungen von Ehepaaren. Eine Trennung sieht man in Iran nicht viel. Manche Männer und Frauen bleiben zusammen, haben aber neben ihrer Ehe geheime

Beziehungen. Sie heiraten, haben Kinder und Familien, aber machen dann was sie wollen. Solches gibt es immer mehr. Weil sie die Trennung sehr schwierig finden und die Situation nach der Trennung noch schwieriger.

Bilder: Diese Straße erinnert mich an Teheran



Christopher Harlem Celik

Geboren in Deutschland in eine türkische Familien, 09-09-1991

Wenn ich Heim sage, was ist denn das erste woran du denkst?

Ich denke dann nicht an Nationalität. Dass ist für mich eine Nebensache. Heim ist ein großes Spektrum an Sachen. Allererst bedeutet Heim für mich mein Körper. Ein Körper womit man sich wohl fühlt, das ist ein zu Hause.

Was repräsentiert Heim für dich?

Meine Familie ist sehr wichtig für mich, meine Schwester ins besonders. Meine Schwester und ich sind ähnlich in dieses anders sein. Wir müssen beiden lernen damit um zu gehen dass wir *nicht* behindert sind.

Meine Eltern sind auch wichtig für mich, sie haben mich, nach meiner Vorstellung, richtig erzogen und haben mich immer liebevoll über Religion und Kultur aufgeklärt aber mich zu nichts gezwungen.

Was brauchst du um dich zu Hause zu fühlen?

Der richtige Körper. Ein Raum wo ich mich wohl fühle. Mein soziales Umfeld. Wenn ich das habe ist er mir egal wo ich bin. Ich bin nicht so fixiert auf die Türkei, ich fühl mich nicht Türkisch und nicht Deutsch. Kultur ist für mich ein Charakter, eine Weise worauf jemand sich verhält und nicht wo du her kommst. Ich habe meine eigene Kultur, mein eigenes Charakter. Ich bin auch nicht gay oder transsexuell, ich will mich damit nicht identifizieren.

Findest du dass Deutschland tolerant ist?

Besser als die Türkei. Man hat hier in Deutschland viele Möglichkeiten. Es gibt hier vielen Leuten die sich kümmern, damit muss man zufrieden sein. Es gibt aber immer noch wenig Betreuung für Transleute. Aber man muss sich auch nicht die ganze Zeit bemängeln.

Wie würdest du dich selbst identifizieren?

Das hängt von der Situation ab. Ich bin Mann und Frau zusammen, ich bin die Mitte.

Fühlst du dich zu einer Gemeinschaft gehören?

Ich habe so dass andere denken. Es gibt wenigen Leuten die das Leben so ansehen wie ich. Ich kann mich nicht immer mit Leuten meine Gedankenvorgänge austauschen. Ich bin auch lieber aus der Masse heraus und tanze gerne aus der Reihe.

Bild

Ein gemaltes Bild von meiner Schwester. Sie schreibt:“ Ob du Lesbisch oder Schwul bist, bist du mein Leben. „, Wie gesagt, ist meine Familie und ins besonders meine Schwester für mich sehr wichtig. Sie gibt mir ein Gefühl von zu Hause sein. Auch das Bild repräsentiert Heim für mich, es ist egal was man ist, oder wozu man gehört, jede Person ist wichtig so wie sie ist.



Maryaam Warsame

Geboren in Somalia 06-12-1992

In Deutschland seit 4 Jahre , vorher schon 3 Monaten als Flüchtling in Den Niederlanden gewohnt.

Wenn ich Heim sage, was ist denn das erste woran du denkst?

Ein Heim kann für mich überall sein wo jemand Friede hat und nicht alleine ist. Wo Familien ist und Menschen wem du liebst. Ein Haus, Liebe, Warme. Es ist dann egal in welchem Land man ist. Wir haben immer die Wahl zurück zu gehen zu unserem Heimatland. Es gibt aber ein Grund dass ich nach Deutschland gekommen bin. Jedoch, wo ich auch hingeh, ich nehme mich selbst immer mit.

Was repräsentiert Heim für dich?

Etwas worauf ich stolz sein kann, etwas was ich geschafft habe, wofür ich gearbeitet habe um es zu erreichen. Im Heim habe ich nicht das Gefühl zu Hause zu sein. Ich will mein eigenes Haus, das ich selbst dekoriert habe und selbst bezahle. Ich will unabhängig sein. Ich habe aber das Idee dass ich noch nichts selbst gemacht habe, mein Zimmer fühlt sich nicht an als wäre es meins. Ich habe das Gefühl in ein Hotel zu sein. Ich bin hier aber auch nur zeitlich.

Was brauchst du um dich zu Hause zu fühlen?

Mich selbst finden. Ein Platz finden wo ich mich wohl fühle und sicher und zu Hause. In Deutschland kann ich mich nicht zu Hause fühlen. In Somalia wurde ich mich aber auch nicht mehr zu Hause fühlen. Ich kann auch nicht mehr zurück, sobald man da Weg gewesen ist, ist es sehr schwierig wieder zurück zu kommen.

Das nächste Aspekt dass behandelt wird ist *homemaking* in Deutschland: was wäre nötig für dich um dich mehr zu Hause zu fühlen in Deutschland?

Mehr Freiheit. Ich fühle mich hier nicht frei. Ich lebe den ganze Zeit unter Druck. Die Erwartungen die man hier hat sind hoch. Man muss in die Schule gehen, und prätieren. Ich bin aber vorher noch nie in der Schule gewesen, und es kostet Zeit und Geduld um mich daran zu gewöhnen. Zeit und Geduld, dass kennen die Deutscher aber nicht. Wenn man etwas Kleines falsch macht gibt es direkt ärger und Problemen. Ich erfahre die ganze Zeit Druck, man muss sich erweisen, bewerben, eine gute CV haben etc. Dann denke ich, ich bin das nicht, ein CV ist nur Papier. Ich will mich gerne einarbeiten, und lernen, aber hier muss man alles schon können. Ich will eine Chance bekommen zu lernen, die Chance krieg ich hier aber nicht.

Wie würdest du dich identifizieren?

Ich kann mich einfach anpassen. Ich brauche aber Freiheit, ich muss mich bewegen können um mich echt wohl zu fühlen. Mit Nationalität habe ich nicht so viel, wo ich her komme bestimmt nicht meine Identität. In den Niederlanden fühl ich mich am meisten zu Hause. Ich war total verloren, und Menschen dort haben mich aufgenommen und versorgt. Ich habe gute Erinnerungen an meiner Zeit in den Niederlanden. Wenn man sich glücklich fühlt auf einen bestimmten Platz, dann fangt man an sich damit zu identifizieren. Einer Verbindung mit einem Platz macht eine Identität. Man fühlt sich zu Hause wenn man weiß wer man ist.

Hat der Umzug nach Deutschland deine Identität beeinflusst? So ja, wie?

Ich bin immer noch Maryaam. Ich bin aber viel weiser geworden und habe viel gelernt. Ich bin erwachsener geworden.

Fühlst du dich zu einer Gemeinschaft gehören?

Nein, ich habe mich noch nie gefühlt zu eine Gruppe oder Gemeinschaft zu hören. Ich gehör mich selbst. Man kann nicht zu einer Kultur gehören, oder zu jemand. Man kann sich anpassen, aber ich gehör keiner Kultur. Kultur ist mehr ein Name.

Wie versschieden ist die Position von Frauen in dein Heimatland und hier in Deutschland?

Ein riesiger Unterschied. Die Frauen in Somalia sind naiv und leben unter den Füßen von Männern. Weibliche Beschneidung ist ein Beispiel. Frauen erfahren es als schrecklich, aber machen es trotzdem. Frauen unterdrücken einander für die Männer. Die Männer interessiert es aber gar nicht. In Europa machen Frauen ihren eigene Sachen. Die Somalischen Frauen entwickeln sich aber nicht, auch nicht wenn sie nach Europa kommen.

Frauen in Europa haben mehr Freiheit, mehr Rechten und dürfen arbeiten, sie dürfen sogar Polizist werden. Dadurch können Frauen sich auch besser entwickeln.

Bild

Dieses Bild ist auf 'Koninginnedag' fotografiert. In den Niederlanden fühl ich mich am meisten zu Hause. Ich war Verloren und Menschen dort haben mich geholfen. Wenn man sich wohl fühlt auf ein Bestimmte Platz dann fangt man an sich damit zu identifizieren.



Muna Tamiru

Geboren in Dar es Salaam, Äthiopien am 28-11-1990

In Deutschland seit 5,5 Jahren.

Wenn ich Heim sage, was ist denn das erste woran du denkst?

Äthiopien

Was repräsentiert Heim für dich?

Wohlfühlen. Frieden. Sicherheit.

Wo fühlst du dich am meisten zu Hause?

Teilweise in Deutschland, teilweise auch nicht. Ich komme aus ein Staat wo glauben sehr wichtig ist. Es ist schwierig für mich zu verstehen dass Leute hier nicht glauben.

Ich habe das Glück das ich keine Problemen habe ein soziales Netzwerk auf zu bauen. Deshalb fühle ich mich hier auch wohl. Ich fühl mich aber nicht Deutsch, eher Äthiopisch.

Das nächste Aspekt dass behandelt wird ist *homemaking* in Deutschland: was wäre nötig für dich um dich mehr zu Hause zu fühlen in Deutschland?

Weniger Verbot. Deutschland hat so viele Gesetzen und sehr Strenge bezüglich Ausländer. Mit ein Aufenthaltserlaubnis darf man nicht arbeiten, nicht zu Schule gehen und nicht aus Köln raus. Solche Gesetze funktionieren demotivierend.

In Deutschland muss man so perfekt sein, sehr gerade aus. Das nervt mich.

Wie würdest du dich identifizieren?

Ich würde mich nicht nur mit Äthiopiers identifizieren. Ich habe auch viele Deutsche Freunde. Ich hatte aber weniger Freunde gehabt, wenn ich die Sprache nicht sprechen konnte. Ich fühl mich Äthiopisch, aber wenn ich jetzt nach Äthiopien gehe gibt es wahrscheinlich auch wieder ein Kultur Clash.

Hat der Umzug nach Deutschland deine Identität beeinflusst? So ja, wie?

Nicht wirklich. Natürlich habe ich mich geändert. Ich habe jetzt eine andere Ansichtweise. Ich bin auch viel pünktlicher und disziplinierte geworden. Ich bin sehr fokussiert. Ich lebe hier aber nicht wie ich will. Man muss integrieren, muss alles mitmachen.

Fühlst du dich zu einer Gemeinschaft gehören?

Ich habe mich in Berlin sehr Fremd gefühlt. Ich hat echt dass Gefühl als ob ich von eine Andere Welt kam. In Köln fühle ich mich mittlerweile aber zu Hause.

Wie versschieden ist die Position von Frauen in dein Heimatland und hier in Deutschland?

Frauen in Äthiopien haben eine andere Verantwortung als die Frauen hier in Deutschland. Emanzipation ist hier viel starker. Frauen hier sind selbständiger.

Bilder

Lalibela, eine heilige Stadt in Äthiopien. Es erinnert mich an mein Heimatland und meine Religion. Es ist mein Traum dort och mal hin zu gehen.



