

THE DISPLEASURES OF HYBRIDITY

***A CRITICAL APPROACH TO CINEMA BY AND ABOUT PEOPLE
WHO MIGRATED FROM THE REGIONS OF TURKEY AND NORTHERN KURDISTAN TO
GERMANY***

MASTER'S THESIS

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dr. Christine Quinan, Main supervisor
dr. James Turner, Support supervisor





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*“Freedom is always the freedom of dissenters. But how free are they?
And how free do they think?”
Rosa Luxemburg*

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Abstract

The thesis provides a critical perspective onto cinema by/about people who migrated from Turkey and Northern Kurdistan to Germany and their descendants – the post-migrants.

As the topic deals with issues of cinema, I first discuss the virtual-real character of images with Slavoj Žižek's take on the Lacanian triad, the *imaginary*, the *symbolic* and the *real*. This leads me to theorize the virtual character of power to underscore that the production of images are a key factor in the creation of European hegemony. I then hint to the danger of victimizing (post-) migrants in the global North as solely located at the margins, which obscures moments of possible complicity in hegemonic forces.

In my analysis of current academic literature on the cinema under consideration, I found a predominant teleological narrative of progress to freedom and self-re(-)presentation, which is a frame that re(-)produces colonial concepts of time and development. Despite that more recently produced films are widely theorized to resist the hegemonic notion of monocultural nationality through a celebration of hybridity, I show that this can also be understood as a contribution to the 'ethnic' branding and a re(-)shaping of European virtual power.

In the analysis section, a critical examination of Fatih Akin's film *Im Juli* (2000) in contrast with Yüksel Yavuz's *Kleine Freiheit* (2003) provides an alternative to the unquestioned application of the myth of equal mobility in Europe. By applying conceptual metaphor theory to Hark Bohm's film *Yasemin* (1988) and Akin's *Crossing the Bridge* (2005) I then contrast a multicultural with a feminist decolonial notion of the bridge-metaphor. Finally, I provide a counter-reading of cinematic history in making continuities of Orientalist narratives on (post-)migrant femininities and masculinities visible. The critical economic analysis of discourses on (post-)migrants offers an unconventional reading together of cinematic images and German labor market and citizenship policies.

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1. Introduction

This thesis critically engages with issues of cinematic re(-)presentation of the different people(s) who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey'¹ and Northern Kurdistan (Bakurê Kurdistanê) to 'Germany' and their descendants – the post-migrants. While the groups under consideration are re(-)presented in films produced in 'Germany' (addressing a non-migrated 'Germans' audience as well as migrants and post-migrants) and 'Turkey' (addressing a 'Turkish' non-migrated audience), this thesis will #focus on the former. For this, I will discuss cinematic images in a selection of films between 1970² and today, and trace their connection to political systems of power and oppression in 'Germany' and 'Europe' as a whole. This analysis will be preceded by a short introduction of my own positionality as a researcher and the conclusions I make from my own situatedness about the issue of self- and external identification (chapter 2.). As the overall thesis-topic traces matters of images, I will then theoretically #reflect on the virtual character of images and what this means for 'European' epistemic violence and hegemony. A brief outlining of the methodology of this thesis (chapter 3) #shows it to be a multi-methods approach which derives from my own interdisciplinary education. The combination of two linguistic methods, i.e. conceptual metaphor theory and critical discourse analysis, with the overall #lens of postcolonial theory is an innovative approach to the analysis of cinematic images. This approach is based on a notion of film as a field for the re(-)production and

¹ To pay justice to the critique of methodological nationalism in this thesis (#see chapter 4), names of nation states are written in parentheses throughout this thesis, including the joint federation of countries named 'Europe' (but excluding the institution *European Union*). As the concepts of nations and race are intricately connected (Loomba, 2005: 57), the use of nation states' names contributes to the ongoing obfuscation of sub-national cultures and peoples without a nation (such as the Kurds in 'Turkey'). The only exception is the name Northern Kurdistan (Bakurê Kurdistanê), which is not yet formed as a country due to ongoing struggles for national freedom in the occupied regions of what is still considered 'Eastern Turkey'. Northern Kurdistan, therefore, does not (yet) inherit the powers of and discursive formation as a nation state. Thus, this nation state name in particular is not written in parentheses. Names of languages remain unmarked as well (i.e. '*German*' film versus *German text*).

² The first produced films within this genre are dated in the 1970s. Before there was no distinctive filmic engagement with migrants in 'Germany'.

re(-)invention of public, dominant discourses, but also of resistant counter-discourses – depending on the addressed audience and location of the film-makers. I agree with Helma Lutz with #regard to the correlation of popularity of a film with its tendency to re(-) produce dominant discourses:

(...) the funding and production of films are subject to laws of the markets. Films that are able to reach a big audience have to include elements of suspense, adventure, and the exotic. Specific expectations of the audience are discounted in films, that means: The contents of films need to connect to existing needs and prior knowledge in a specific way. (Lutz, 1995: 77).³

However, despite that in this thesis I will predominantly #focus on fairly 'successful' films (meaning films that were widely distributed and reached numerous audiences), I do not consider them as sites of mere replication of preexisting knowledges. Because “films are not only indicators, but also promoters of social consciousness”⁴ (Karpf, Kiesel & Visarius, 1995: 7), film-makers can choose to de(-)construct as well as to replicate prior knowledges of the audience, they can work with or resist hegemonic images.

I will then consider questions of terminology (chapter 4). My argument against the use of the term 'identity' as well as methodological nationalism simultaneously suggests the application of the alternative term 'identification' as well as it uncovers what is usually obfuscated by the unquestioned adoption of nation state names – namely marginalized groups within the (post-)migrant communities. After this very important critique of terms, I will then investigate the state of the art of scholarly work on the topic of migrant

³ My translation. Original: “(...) daß die Finanzierung und Produktion von Filmen bestimmten Marktgesetzen unterliegt. Filme, die ein großes Publikum zu erreichen vermögen, müssen Elemente von Spannung, Abenteuer und Exotik enthalten. Ganz bestimmte Erwartungen des Publikums werden in Filmen verdiskontiert, das heißt: Die Filminhalte müssen in bestimmter Weise an vorhandene Bedürfnisse und vorhandenes Vorwissen anschließen.”

⁴ My translation. Original: „(...) schließlich sind Filme nicht nur Indikatoren, sondern auch Promotoren gesellschaftlichen Bewußtseins.“

and diasporic cinema in 'Germany' (chapter 5). The main thrust of my engagement with current academic writings aims to create a profound critical discussion of predominant theorizing that narrates cinematic history as a teleological story to progress and freedom through self-re(-)presentation. This scholarly narrative roughly divides cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants into pre- and post-fall of the Berlin Wall periods. In the 1970s and 80s film-makers were predominantly white 'Germans', so their re(-)presentations of the migrant community are considered to be dutiful, problem-oriented outsider #perspectives from a social realist point of #view. The 1990s and 00s, however, are thought of as demarcating a shift towards pleasurable self-re(-)presentations from insider #perspectives as film-makers increasingly come from migrant communities themselves. This shift is often theorized to symbolize a progress towards the freedom of self-identification and self-re(-)presentation, the *cinéma beur*⁵ of 'Germany'. I will nurture my critique of this notion of cinematic history by #showing the colonial discourse on time and progress that underlies this notion. Connected to the story of cinematic progress is the widely applied notion of Homi Bhabha's (1994) term 'hybridity' – understood mostly as a space in-between two disparate, static 'cultures'. My critique especially #focuses on the epistemic violence of categorizing post-migrant film-makers as hybrids against their voiced self-identification as 'German'. I consider this act as violence in part from my own experience of forced external (mis-)categorization, which I discuss in chapter 2. Furthermore, the notion of hybridity is problematic because it supports current aspirations of the institution 'Europe' to re(-)brand itself as a multi-ethnic melting pot. While hybridity in current scholarly work⁶ is understood in a fixed ('strong') notion of 'identity', which is acquired passively, it is simultaneously thought of as anti-hegemonic resistance. I, however, consider this to be an apolitical idea of hybrid resistance with the underlying assumption that the mere

⁵ According to Tarr (2005), *cinéma beur* was first coined in a special issue of the 'French' magazine *Cinématographe* in July 1985 and it describes films made by 'French' (post-)migrants of Maghrebi descent (Tarr, 2005: 2).

⁶ In the discussion in chapter 5.3 I refer to the publications by Deniz Göktürk, Daniela Berghahn, Claudia Sternberg, and Ögür Yaren mostly.

presence of racially non-white/mixed peoples de-constructs the idea of the nation state as a monocultural entity. I counter this idea with Nikita Dhawan's rephrasing of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's call for caution when it comes to migrants in the global 'North'. As I translate Spivak's appeal to the issue of (post-)migrants from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants, I understand them to be located in a position that makes resistance as possible as complicity. When (post-)migrant film-makers help to re(-)brand images of 'Germany' – and consequently of 'Europe' – towards the motto “united in diversity”⁷, I consider this to be complicity in the making of a postcolonial 'European' hegemony that ahistorically imagines its diverse Others to be on a level playing field. This form of imaginative complicity obfuscates global as well as local power differences and therefore works with, rather than against, hegemonic power.

The last part of the thesis (chapter 6) forms my own analysis of selected films⁸ and mainly centers around the points of critique discussed in previous chapters. First, I will question the categorization of the popular film-maker Fatih Akin as a hybrid, which leads to an understanding of his films as an automatic anti-hegemonic resistance. Instead, I read his film *Im Juli* (*In July*, 2000) as a decisively 'German' film, because Akin clearly self-categorized as such during this time and because the film's protagonists are popular white 'German' actors. Also, the travel-narrative of the film addresses a white middle-class 'German' audience and is complicit in re(-)producing the myth of today's 'Europe' as multi-ethnic, borderless, and adventurous grounds. Despite that scholars tend to theorize issues of mobility to be inherently connected to 'migrant cinema' such as Akin's, I

⁷ “The EU motto” The European Union, accessed July 28, 2015, http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/motto/index_en.htm.

⁸ The discussed films include *Shirins Hochzeit* (*Shirin's Wedding*, dir. Helma Sanders-Brahms, 1975), *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland* (*40 Sq. Meters of Germany*, dir. Tefvik Başer, 1986), *Yasemin* (dir. Hark Bohm, 1988), *Berlin in Berlin* (dir. Sinan Çetin, 1993), *Kardeşler – Geschwister* (*Brothers and Sisters*, dir. Thomas Arslan, 1996), *Im Juli* (*In July*, dir. Fatih Akin, 2000), *Der schöne Tag* (*A Fine Day*, dir. Thomas Arslan, 2001), *Anam* (dir. Buket Alakuş, 2001), *Kleine Freiheit* (*A Little Bit of Freedom*, dir. Yüksel Yavuz, 2003), *Gegen die Wand* (*Head-On*, dir. Fatih Akin, 2004), *Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul* (dir. Fatih Akin, 2005), *Zeit der Wünsche – Dilekler Zamani* (*Time of Wishes*, dir. Rolf Schübel, 2005), *Auf der Anderen Seite* (*On the Edge of Heaven*, dir. Fatih Akin, 2007), *Die Fremde* (*When We Leave*, dir. Feo Aladağ, 2010). For a list of all mentioned films, see filmography.

consider this film in particular to rather display a privileged form of travel that is usually restricted to white citizens of 'Europe', while in 'Germany' migrants and post-migrants from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan faced increasing limitations. A counter-example of the paradox status of immobility and urban motion can be found in Yüksel Yavuz's film *Kleine Freiheit (A Little Bit of Freedom, 2003)*, where the limited lives of two young queer refugees, circulating the urban grounds of Hamburg, sharply contrast with Akın's white protagonist's unlimited form of traveling.

Connecting to my previous critique of the application of Homi Bhabha's term 'hybridity', I then go on to show that a similarly limited reading dominates scholarly discussions of metaphoric bridges in films. In my analysis, I can show that there are at least two possible readings of the bridge-metaphor; one that understands it rather as a painful, unstable space with unclear demarcations that provides precarious grounds for the process of bridging, and another divergent reading of the bridge as an in-between space that 'overcomes' two distinct and clear mainlands. I argue that the latter notion stays within the paradigm of multiculturalism in assuming distinct cultures that need connecting. The former reading, however, seems to fit much better a feminist take on marginal women's liminality as exemplified by Gloria Anzaldúa and Ana-Louise Keating's anthology *this bridge we call home* (2013). In Anzaldúa and Keating's bridge-metaphor, the act of bridging is not executed by an identified hybrid, but also by the people on the 'mainlands'. This all-encompassing moving, transitioning, and crossing eventually works to do "away with demarcations like 'ours' and 'theirs.'" (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2013: 3). Advocating for this feminist, decolonial reading of the metaphoric bridge I conclusively re(-)theorize the crossing of the bridge as an undirected liminal becoming that is not sufficiently described with the notion of a multiculturalist celebration of difference and hybridity as it is done in much scholarly work in the field of cinema by/about people who migrated the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants.

The last part of the film analysis will provide a #reading against the progress-narrative of film history that I criticized before. In exploring continuities and discontinuities of narratives that re(-)produce 'European' dominance since the inception of cinematic images on (post-)migrants in the 1970s until today I find that the predominant frames for depicting 'Oriental' femininities and masculinities are oriented at the labor market dynamics in 'Germany' of the respective time. A #class-perspective onto such images is therefore not only highly innovative, but also very applicable. Because at least since the 1990s (post-)migrant women are encouraged to accept any kind of labor through cinematic images promising feminist liberation through work, I understand these narratives to #clearly #show continuities of colonial images rooted in what Edward Said coined 'Orientalism'. The frame of the submissive, oppressed, 'Oriental' woman that needs to be liberated by the 'Western values' of freedom, emancipation, and democratic equality – despite changes from the 1970s to today – is still the matrix for images in very recent films.

Images on 'Oriental' masculinities, by #contrast, #demonstrate a bigger variety of possible characteristics, ranging from highly colonial accounts of the archaic, oppressive father figure and neo-colonial images of the criminal hyper-masculine post-migrant youth to rather bourgeois forms of more rational, educated, unemotional masculinities. Fatih Akın's film *Auf der Anderen Seite* (*On the Edge of Heaven*, 2007) #illustrates that this newly emerging form of post-migrant masculinity is depicted within a frame of a generational shift, in which the archaic, hypersexual, women-beating father alienates his son, who transgressed class (and overcame the imagined 'limits' of his race/ethnicity) in accumulating educational capital and incorporates universalist values, such as human rights.

2. Reflections on Self-Location, Re(-)presentation, Vision, and the Making-of Images

One should not put me in the position of theory – theory is in the head and the head is part of the body.

(Gayatri Spivak, 2014: Material Matters Conference, Giessen)

A consistent feminist approach to images – when critical towards the locations of knowledge production – claims a need for a story of the author's social position(ing)s. One of the main feminist critiques (Haraway, 1997; Hartsock, 2004; Hill Collins, 1990; Harding, 1991, 2004; Smith, 2004) of traditional philosophies of science and epistemology is the researcher's putative speaking from nowhere. The linguistic #manifestation⁹ of this #invisible author is the absence of personal indicators such as 'I', 'we', 'me', 'us', etc. in scientific publications. While much of the successively produced feminist literature still avoids these terms despite famous critiques of this imperative of distance, in this chapter I deliberately uses these words grammatically challenged by an *absurd* use of the third person singular in accompanying verbs¹⁰. This absurdity hints to the fact that my research attempts to produce counter-hegemonic, decolonial, feminist knowledge, but tries to do so within the constraints of institutionalized academia which is taking part in producing hegemonic knowledge – this is an inherent contradiction. The

⁹ As a means of auto-critique which Gayatri Spivak calls for, I will make metaphors #visible that privilege #vision over all other senses to describe arguments, conclusions, knowledge, and other related processes of research in the text of this thesis. As Evelyn Fox Keller and Christine Grontkowski (1983) #showed, the metaphor of the #visual is deeply connected to the idea of a necessary distance between the researcher subject and the #observed object, between mind and body. This distance implies a disembodiment of the researcher which leads us back to Haraway's above mentioned 'god-trick'. The overvaluation of the metaphor of #vision, which has its roots in the Age of the #Enlightenment (#'light' might even be the crux of the idea of #vision as knowledge), can be considered the main reason to explain the predominance of images (static or moving) as they are the #focus of this thesis. The field of psychoanalysis can provide another strand of argument for this point, which I will not elaborate on here. Metaphors of #vision will be preceded by a hashtag # to make the limits of this thesis #visible.

¹⁰ This is merely an exemplary critical stance, as for reasons of #readability the grammatically 'correct' use from chapter 2.1 on will ease the #reader's confusion.

use of 'I' followed by a verb in the third person therefore is a linguistic diversion to critique the realm I studies in, which is institutionalized academia. This critique is one of the main impacts that feminist philosophy of science has released.

The author – I – is telling the story of this Masters thesis from a certain #perspective which attempts to resist a non-locatedness, a #seeing and speaking from nowhere and the universality of Eurocentric academic productions. The 'god-trick', as Donna Haraway (1997) would call it, lacks the #insight of its own partiality, its own motivation and particularity. As a dedicated anti-racist I can only #see that universalist feminist approaches have done much harm to the struggles of non-white, PoC, Black, queer, etc. feminists, whose locations provide limited access to hegemonic power and who inhabit a location that is multiple. Kimberlé Crenshaw, Teresa de Lauretis, bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Homa Hoodfar, Karina Bidaseca, Chandra Mohanty, and for the 'German' context María do Mar Castro Varela, Iman Attia, Kien Nghi Ha, Hito Steyerl, Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, and many more have made #visible to the I that #sees (academia) how this lack of holistic approaches fails to achieve what it claims to have achieved: #see everything. But also postcolonial theorists, such as Edward Said (1995 [1978]), Mary Louise Pratt (1992), or Richard Grove (1995), have #shown that it was academia which provided tools for the biggest atrocities in human history.¹¹ As Thomas Kuhn aptly puts it, “a paradigm is half a guess” (Kuhn, 1996: 32), my aim in this thesis is to #show where the current scholarly paradigm on so-called 'Turkish-German cinema' relies on assumptions that do not necessarily account for the films under consideration. I want to #show where the research on images – a field most susceptible to reification – relies on premises that reinforce hegemonic beliefs. To #reveal, where science and research are confined by the limits of academic possibilities is the main aim of feminist postcolonial critique. This thesis, therefore, is not only an individual project to acquire an academic

¹¹ The notion of cannibalism, for instance, was used to devalue natives that resisted 'Spanish' colonial rule (Hulme, 1986). Even the very idea of 'race' stems from eighteenth century natural sciences (Lomba, 2005: 57). Ideology, hidden under 'objective' scientific 'facts', has fueled the emergence of colonialism, the naturalized divide of two assumed sexes, National Socialist race theory, and many more ongoing phenomena of scientific 'proven' othering.

degree – but I #sees it as a political project to make #visible what is usually not #seen. As my #sight is as limited as everyone else's, this thesis should be understood as a piece of the puzzle in the field of migration and diaspora studies and the other fields with which it intersects, such as postcolonial studies, women's and gender studies, linguistics, and critical theory.

Naming these theories that have been made hegemonic (today they are recognized fields of study), I needs to #show the lack and the particularity of this thesis in the very beginning. The I that the author learned to inhabit is the #seeing #eye. The only way students in many 'European' universities (and those re(-)producing 'the gift' of 'European' thought (Argyrou, 2013)) learn to think and write is from a Eurocentric #perspective of lack; one that privileges #vision. Thus, the only way to unthink Eurocentrism that I can offer is located in the very school of thought it doubts. My critical approach therefore makes my own ground disintegrate and the lack of stability of this endeavor only renders the need for new ways of counter-hegemonic theorizing an imperative. Consequently, what I describes here as a lack of this thesis is both its appeal and its contradiction.

I myself has partially transgressed a migrant working-class background through the accumulation of educational capital. Thus, despite being a 'halfie' researcher¹², I cannot claim to speak from a location within (if that is even possible). However, the solution to the “burden of representation” (Shohat & Stam, 1994: 182) is not to refrain from re(-)presentation altogether. Well-known postcolonial cultural critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988: 279) has problematized the issue of representation (i.e. 'heroes', paternal proxies, agents of power: *Vertretung*) versus re-presentation (#portrayal, scene of writing: #*Darstellung*) in Marx's work. Spivak pointed out that the question of re(-)presentation is not that easily answered. She most prominently doubted Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze's assumption that the oppressed can re(-)present themselves: “In the Foucault-

¹² Feminist anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod uses this term to describe the advantage of academic re(-)presentatives with a mixed marginal background. According to her, 'halfie' researchers are “people whose national or cultural identity is mixed by virtue of migration, overseas education, or parentage” (Abu-Lughod, 2006: 153).

Deleuze conversation, the issue seems to be that there is no representation, no signifier (...); theory is a relay of practice (...) and the oppressed can know and speak for themselves” (ibid.). Marx, according to Spivak, wanted to keep his work open to a “Hegelian critique of the individual subject as agent” (ibid.). That is why for this thesis, post/decolonial discussions on agency, re(-)presentation, and the S/subject versus the O/other (the oppressed and the subaltern oppressed), initialized by Spivak's critique of French poststructuralist philosophy, shall serve as a matrix.

What I learned from a contribution Spivak made at a conference called *Material Matters in Times of Crisis Capitalism: Transnational Feminist and Decolonial Approaches* on November 13th to 15th at Justus-Liebig University (Giessen, 'Germany'), is that Spivak's initial appeal 'to unlearn one's privilege' is too #focused on the self. Today she prefers to suggest using one's privilege temporarily to create a will for social justice and finally make oneself unnecessary. At the conference Spivak stated “I use my privilege to serve, warning that if you use it too often, you will lose” (own notes).

Taking her words as an imperative, I considers this thesis an attempt to use my gained educational privilege (I was not born into it, but nevertheless I does have it) not to step back and let the subaltern speak – because she does not speak the language used in this thesis – but to create a will for social justice by translating and making my ongoing auto-critique (another term Spivak used in the mentioned contribution) speak between the lines.¹³

This well-intended attempt cannot but fail. It is work in (a non-linear) process. What is left is a stack of paper with words to earn a university degree.

¹³ The auto-critique finds #visibility through linguistic markers, such as the use of parentheses to indicate the paradox of criticizing methodological nationalism and the inability to avoid using names of nation states. The hashtag #shows that, despite my voicing of the feminist critique of notions of objectivity, metaphors of #vision are ubiquitous also in this thesis. The first person singular combined with third person verbs in this chapter also #visualize this failure. Also, I will participate in the 'German' postcolonial/decolonial theorists use of the hyphen to indicate simultaneous processes: re(-)produce with a bracketed hyphen indicates that there is no such thing as a pure reproduction, but that all reproductions also produce something new; representation analogically also always refers to re-presentation.

This is my story.

2.1 The Making-of 'Identity'

The #insights in this research #show a very personal #view onto 'identity' politics and its #manifestation in popular culture. I #draw the motivation for this research from my own #perspective and will make this #visible in the least modest way – by talking about myself.

I am the first person in my family who acquired a diploma qualifying for university admission. Then I acquired a B.A. degree and this thesis finalizes my absolute departure from a family heritage of the international working-class. Like so many of us class-transgressing people, certain ironies belong to our daily experiences. For instance, meeting my father on a random weekday would have to make me answer the question: “Did you do your homework already?”.

My mother, a 'German' nurse from strict catholic upbringing, and my father, a 'Turkish' socialist and militant unionist who went through military torture for his political activism and migrated to 'Germany' in the early 1980s left me in a position of partial affiliations. These affiliations are rather by 'choice' than by inherent 'identity', because of the way I grew up – isolated and without what Max Weber termed as 'Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl' (feeling of belonging together, Weber 1972: 21) to a certain group. Therefore, my belonging to what is commonly termed 'Turkish-German migrant community' is a partial affiliation, because I was not automatically part of this community, like the discourse that merely substituted 'race' with 'culture' would suggest. Instead, I am still trying to find my place of belonging, which underscores my feeling of disidentification. In a speech I once was asked to give to a university audience on the question of why the memory of National Socialist atrocities is relevant for 'us' (i.e. current students of the *Technical University Berlin*) today¹⁴ I described how I was

¹⁴ This contribution was given during a book presentation by the Center for Research on Antisemitism (ZfA) of a publication about the Technical University Berlin during National Socialism:

brought up thinking I belong to the white 'German' majority. The privilege of passing as a white 'German' made me forget the many times I had to spell out my name to others and answer to investigative and uncomfortable questions about what I call a lacking 'Aryan family-line'. However, the recent rise of #manifest 'European' racism in popular culture has troubled this unquestioned affiliation. The contradiction of self-identification to majority society versus increasing processes of othering that I encountered made it finally impossible to keep up an unrestricted self-identification as white 'German'. Despite the individualistic believe 'we' (i.e. everyone who is brought up with 'Western' hegemonic ideas) are taught that people can affiliate with the groups they feel closest to and which re(-)present their own needs most – a basic assumption of today's 'identity' politics – this has proven wrong in my case (and most likely many others'). I came to learn that the decision over the place where I 'belong' is not entirely up to me. 'German' discourses that are rooted in our National Socialist past¹⁵ as well as in 'Europe's colonial history, co-determine the formation of groups and identifications. These formations require multiple actors who exist under regimes of epistemic violence and hegemonic power. In my own story, this epistemic violence found its way to me through the 'German' neo-racist discourses which evolved after the fall of the Berlin Wall. After the break of the old world order due to the 'end' of the Cold War, racism was on the rise and predominantly #focused on migrants, who either came as recruited workers or as refugees. In this discourse notions of race, nationality, ethnicity and culture were/are powerfully conflated with the racist notion of 'the Muslims' (in the 1990s predominantly 'the foreigner'). Due to the recent shift to religious frames, 'Muslim', became interchangeable with 'Turkish' or 'Turkish culture', and 'Turk' became a substitute for 'Arab'. The 'new' 'Oriental' in today's 'German' discourse is the non-integrated 'migrant guest-worker' from the 'parallel society'.

Diskriminierung, Ausgrenzung, Vertreibung: Die Technische Hochschule Berlin während des Nationalsozialismus (2013) by Carina Baganz, accessed July 28, 2015, https://www.pressestelle.tu-berlin.de/fileadmin/a70100710/Virtueller_Presseraum/Vertriebene_Wissenschaften_Redebeitrag_Dagci.pdf.

¹⁵ It is a quite controversial hypothesis that National Socialist discourses survived the Cold War and are still valid today. However, there is much evidence to prove this point which can be easily be found in the many publications of the Center for Research on Antisemitism (Technical University Berlin).

All these markers are not applicable to my own feeling of belonging, but this self-location became less and less relevant. Soon in my teenage years, I realized a limit of my own chosen affiliation and resigned in the #eye of the powerful epistemic violence that categorized me as a 'German-Turkish hybrid' (or as commonly referred to 'the German with migration background'). Because of the epistemic violence that pushed me into it, my affiliation with 'the Turkish-German community' (a group of people who more or less self-categorize as such) remains partial.

Today I strategically position as a queer post-migrant Person of Colour (PoC), but these affiliations are active political choices that grew out of a need to constantly re(-)locate. I understand this experience of identification to be an active and ongoing process. The basic #insights for my research here are, that 'roots' in the static sense are an inadequate description of one's location. It is rather 'routes' as a metaphor of motion and constant change that can account for what I just narrated as my experience. This idea can be found in various academic productions and has been put forward by Paul Gilroy (1993) in his book *The Black Atlantic*, where he rejects the idea of stable 'roots' as a colonial fantasy that assumes an “integrity and purity of cultures” (Gilroy 1993: 7). However, unlike Gilroy, I understand from my own struggle between forced external and self-affiliations that the notion of 'routes' and hybridity is violently imposed on me and I find it impossible to reject this category. I therefore want to start from this premise of discursive hybridity as epistemic violence to ask in which ways the construction of 'hybrid cultures' have contributed to re(-)shape 'European' global hegemony. The fact that 'the hybrid' is a violent dispositive leads me to the assumption that it contributes to hegemonic power structures which define 'Germanness' and 'Europeanness'. Thus, my own take on certain notions of hybridity is rather critical (#see chapter 5.3).

I do not consider my personal story as an individual inability to fit, but like to theorize it as an issue of political and academic relevance. The popular feminist idea that the personal is political (and the political is personal) motivates this step. As a matter of fact, there have already been public debates in 'Germany' about terms such as 'Turkish

migration background', where activist groups and individuals have voiced their resistance to the violence of categorizing the descendants of migrant families who entirely grew up in 'Germany' with the migration-routes of their parents or grandparents. In these debates, which mostly happen at the margins in fairly liberal (green) platforms, the actors make #visible the racial undertone of such mainstream categorization through family histories of migrant descendants. If people like myself are forced into the concept of 'migrants' or 'hybrids', then this category ceases to be based on the act of migration (because 'we' descendants did not migrate ourselves), but rather on the fact that we 'stem' from migrants who have a different 'race'. Thus, it is obvious why also the multiculturalist discourse happens to slip into blatant racism every now and again. In my #eyes, this disidentification with the category of the hybrid, to borrow José Muños's term, is a form of resistance to multiculturalist (as well as racist) hegemonic discourses, because it rejects the very notion of difference it is based on¹⁶. According to Muños “[d]isidentification negotiates strategies of resistance within the flux of discourse and power” (Muños, 1999: 19).¹⁷

The discomfort and simultaneous necessity of categories in my own and many others' stories made me question three basic assumptions: a.) the fixity of categories; b.) that 'identity' is an essential trait which is passively acquired and c.) that people can self-determine what their affiliations are.

¹⁶ Shermin Langhoff, director of the Berlin theater Ballhaus Naunynstraße coined the alternative term 'post-migrant' as a means of resistance. The term found wide application in feminist and critical 'German' academia so far. Cf. Katharina Donath, “Die Herkunft spielt keine Rolle” Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (bpb, 10.03.11), accessed July 28, 2015, <http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/kultur/kulturelle-bildung/60135/interview-mit-shermin-langhoff?p=all> and Naika Foroutan, “Post-Migrant Society” (bpb, 21.04.15), accessed July 28, 2015, <http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/kurzdossiers/205295/post-migrant-society>.

¹⁷ Applying Muños's notion to the 'German' context, one can #observe that Queers of Color not only disidentify with the 'race' ascribed to them, but additionally with white lesbian and gay movements that exist in 'Germany'. Homonationalism and gay and lesbian racism has been debated on the margins (of the margins), especially after Judith Butler rejected the *Civil Courage Prize* at the commercial Berlin pride parade *Christopher Street Day* in 2010 with a powerful speech on 'German' homonationalism. “Judith Butler 'I must distance myself from this complicity with racism, including anti-Muslim racism.' 'Civil Courage Prize' Refusal Speech” published by the European Graduate School (EGS), accessed July 28, 2015, <http://www.egs.edu/faculty/judith-butler/articles/i-must-distance-myself/>.

I want to take these #insights from my own experience as a basis from which my analysis of cinematic productions by/about migrants from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants¹⁸ begins. From the particularities of my own constantly shifting location, which is shaped by disidentifications as well as (re-) identifications, I will try to understand identification as a process which needs multiple actors. This process is influenced by experiences, the narrative of one's own story (as Oral History understands it), family narratives, etc. which all also take their tropes, metaphors, and protagonists from the stories we tell in pop culture. I therefore locate the cinematic stories under consideration as the locus of 'identity' politics. Like Thomas Elsaesser's refusal to “differentiate between the formal analysis” and “the 'political' or ideological interpretation” in analyses of the Wilhelmine cinema (Elsaesser, 1996: 10f.), I consider formal and ideological layers in cinematic images as conflated.

Furthermore, this thesis aims to shed #light on the complicit acts that migrants in the so-called 'First World' engage in and which strengthen 'European' hegemonic narratives. The premise is that complicit (post-)migrants profit from the power of 'European' nation states in a way that undermines their position as resisting forces. As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has pointed out on various occasions, oppression is not to be equated with subalternity, therefore, the marginalized (post-)migrants in the global 'North' shall not be confused with the subaltern Anatolian woman. In her elaboration on re(-)presentation in Foucault and Deleuze in *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, Spivak comes to discuss the Euro-hegemonic interpretative authority over what is 'concrete experience' and makes a significant remark on the side of this discussion:

Neither Deleuze nor Foucault seems aware that the intellectual within globalizing capital, brandishing concrete experience, can help consolidate the international division of labor by making one

¹⁸ This term is a compromise between the need to name the object of investigation in this thesis and the criticism of the usually used terms I #reflect on in chapter 4. It is admittedly cumbersome, but compromises usually are.

model of 'concrete experience' *the* model. We are witnessing this in our discipline daily as we see the postcolonial *migrant* become the norm, thus occluding the native once again. (Spivak, 2010: 27f.)

This last sentence contains a call for caution not to present migrants in the global 'North' as the 'innocent' location of subalternity. When it comes to people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants, it cannot be said that there is no position for them to speak from. Instead, there is only a limited amount of possible speakers (mostly Sunni 'Turkish' men) who receive the power to re(-) present an enormously heterogeneous group. In this thesis I aim to make #visible why certain re(-)presentations are possible in multiculturalist politics and how they are complicit with the hegemonic project of 'Europe'. And why other re(-)presentations (such as Queer and/or Kurdish cinema) do not receive attention and resources. This discussion of modes of re(-)presentation shall not lead to the assumption that epistemic violence takes place on the symbolic realms only. This is why, I connect this symbolic layer of cinematic images to the actual material wars on 'European' frontiers, which is possible due to the working definition of virtuality that I develop in the following pages.

In a 'Europe' of increasing precarity – not only for the working-class, but slowly also for the 'European' petite bourgeoisie – the distribution and access of material resources becomes the battleground for more and more social fights and exclusion. The many dead Black bodies at the 'European' frontiers are the most obvious victims of this fight over material resources. I suggest in this thesis that this war is fought in metaphors and discourses and has very material fatalities executed by border-guarding institutions such as *Frontex*, *Europol*, *EASO*, and *Eurojust*. This frame of ideas shifts responsibility from individual actors (as 'European' legal systems tend to do) to societies as a whole. Therefore, every participant in harmful, excluding discourses that consolidate the power of the 'holy trinity' of 'Europe' ('France', 'Germany', and the 'UK') inherits a part of the

responsibility for the numerous fatalities that come with it. Ironically, as much as every 'European' citizen has received a small part of the Nobel Peace Prize 2012, we also all share the responsibility for the war¹⁹ over frontiers and transnational migration. The awarding of this prize could be #seen as the #manifestation of the linguistic trick that George Orwell has narrated as early as 1949: War is Peace.

2.2 The Making-of 'Europe'

In this sub-chapter I will discuss the nature of 'European' hegemonic power. This is relevant because I want to underscore my premise that hegemonic (cinematic) images produced in 'Europe' contribute to the execution of its powers. Unfortunately, despite attempts to theorize minority cinemas in individual 'European' countries in a pan-'European' context, there is a tendency to understand these cinemas either as entirely marginal or as a resistance to monoculturalism and thus as a means to diversify images of 'Europe'. There is, however, a lack of accounts of minority cinemas that try to re(-) conceptualize their meaning as part of the multiculturalist *EU*-project from a critical economical #perspective. To enrich the current research on cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants with such a political and economic #reading, I will discuss the virtuality of 'European' power with reference to Slavoj Žižek here and then link this to the idea of a re(-)defined, ethnically branded 'Europe' as an economic strategy, which will be developed in chapter 5.2.

¹⁹ I consider the term 'war' to describe the ongoing deaths at *EU* borders, especially in the Central Mediterranean, as adequate #regarding that 'rescue' missions such as the Italian *MareNostrum* was mostly operated by Italian military and was exchanged by a joint *EU*-mission called *Operation Triton* in November 2014 with a much smaller budget stemming from the Internal Security Fund and does not even claim to be a 'rescue' mission anymore, but now openly is a 'border control and surveillance' mission. "MareNostrum to end – New Frontex operation will not ensure rescue of migrants in international waters" European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ecre), accessed 28 July, 2015: <http://ecre.org/component/content/article/70-weekly-bulletin-articles/855-operation-mare-nostrum-to-end-frontex-triton-operation-will-not-ensure-rescue-at-sea-of-migrants-in-international-waters.html>.

I am starting this discussion with Žižek's ideas on the reality of the virtual, which he derives from a psychoanalytical #perspective, starting from Lacan's triad of the *imaginary*, *symbolic* and the *real*.²⁰ Actually, talking about the institution 'Europe' and the wars at its borders we already #see a text-book example of how symbolic authority needs to be virtual – a point Žižek makes in his filmed lecture on the reality of the virtual. The European Union as an authority can only be convincing in that sense if it executes a virtual symbolic power not giving direct orders to murder non-'European' citizens at its borders. Apparently its authority would rapidly fall if *EU* staff would go to the borderlands and actually massacre people. Just as the father beating the son, the *EU* would “undermine(...) itself as authority” (Žižek 2004: n.p.). Thus, letting people die on international waters and on borderlands is justified by the belief that 'Europe' is virtual and therefore cannot kill bodies and that the responsibility lies in the victim's own hands. This is the locus of 'Europe's hegemonic power.’²¹

I start from the virtuality of 'European' power to ground my analysis on the premise that (cinematic) images are political. Not only does the funding for many films literally come from the European Union (via the European Cinema Support Fund *Eurimages*), but I also want to explore how films contribute to the constant re(-)production of 'Europe' as a virtual image which is actual in the material sense of murdered Black and other racialized bodies at its frontiers. Cinema is a strong tool for the 'European' project of virtual authority, because it stands in the (colonial) tradition which prioritizes the #eye/I. The (white, heterosexual, bourgeois, able-bodied, male, etc.) #gaze that #sees othered bodies has its origins in colonialist literature such as travel writings (#see Pratt, 1992) and

²⁰ This is taken from the Tour de Force filmed lecture *Slavoj Žižek: The Reality of the Virtual* (dir. Ben Wright, 2004), accessed July 28, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RnTQhIRcrno>.

²¹ While Žižek uses Lacan to make this point, we can of course also use a critique of modernity from a less Marxian #perspective. Speaking with Michel Foucault's notion of the individualizing and totalizing power of a pastoral type (Foucault, 1983: 215) we would most likely arrive at a similar conclusion about 'Europe's power, because both authors reject a simplistic concept of power (what Foucault calls the 'repressive hypothesis'). Of course, an attempt for a productive comparison of the two thinkers needs to be executed very carefully. For a bold attempt to do so, #see Fabio Vighi and Heiko Feldner (2007): *Žižek: Beyond Foucault*, who start from a similar point in both thinkers, the real as a symbolic fiction.

since the invention of the motion picture camera (1888) this tradition has been taken from literature and photography to cinema.

Especially for an analysis of cinema, a working definition of 'fiction'/'image' and how it relates to the 'real'²² is necessary. Žižek's analysis of political images, exemplified with the National Socialist image of 'the Jew', derives from his discussion of trauma as a virtual phenomenon. To explain the emergence of the image of 'the Jew' as the crux of the pseudo-scientific *Rassenlehre*²³, Žižek starts with an account of Sigmund Freud's patient Wolfsmann. Žižek claims that Freud later came to understand that Wolfsmann's trauma of #observing his parent's sexual intercourse only became traumatic several years later when he started to develop his infantile theories of sexuality and was unable to account for sexuality: “In other words, because the symbolic space of his sexual theories was curved, it is only at this point that he resuscitated the traumatic scene” (Žižek, 2004: n.p.). From the time gap between the traumatic scene and the development of trauma, Žižek concludes that the primordial fact of the trauma is not “some brutal intrusion of the real” (ibid.). The development of trauma in the young Wolfsmann is rather due to a formal imbalance/an antagonism/a curving of the symbolic space – the inability to account for sexuality in Wolfsmann's development of theories of sexuality. Žižek then goes on to transfer his conception of trauma as the virtual real – “trauma is virtual” (ibid.) – to political images:

Let us recall how antisemitism functions. In its fascist version, antisemitism – rather the figure of the Jew; the 'Jewish blood' – is precisely an external trauma which brutally intrudes, disturbing social balance, curving as it were the social space. Society was

²² Robert Paul Resch describes the Lacanian real as: “Actual social relationships between the individual and his or her conditions of existence”, which “are experienced through interpellated 'mirror-connections' or subject-object relations (the Lacanian imaginary)” (Resch, 1992: 212).

²³ This term is not accurately translated with the English translation 'racial ideology' and is better described with the literal translation 'race theory'. 'Race theory' contains the element of the National Socialist claim to provide a 'scientific' theory. This pseudo-scientific claim holds this ideology apart from the religiously motivated anti-Judaism of the 19th century (Nipperdey & Rürup, 1972).

supposed to be harmonious, balanced, then, Jews intervened, disturbed it. It's as if it were a natural order. But of course, here at least we should be Marxist and turn things around. It's not that there is this order, antagonism, disintegration, class struggle because of the Jews. Class struggle, or more generally, social antagonism comes first. That is to say, social space is in itself already curved, imbalanced. And in order to – in an imaginary way – account for it, we invent the figure of the Jew. That is to say we project the cause of it into the figure of the Jew. (Žižek, 2004, transcribed by me)

Žižek understands such political images with the notion of the 'virtual real', which is – using Žižek's previous argument about authority – even more powerful *because* it is virtual – very #insightful for an analysis of a cinema that imagines 'Europe'. It leads us out of a misplaced debate about the question of whether images are constructed or 'real' by #showing that they are both simultaneously.²⁴ The primordial social imbalances (Žižek uses the term equivalent with 'antagonism' and 'curved symbolic space') are accounted for with the development of (racist) political images. Such a #reading can spark an analysis of 'European' cinematic images as political, which is the premise I want to work from for the film analysis in chapter 6.

Following Žižek's analytical dichotomy he makes to understand the film *The Sound of Music* (1965) between 'narrative reality' (the actual story) versus 'virtual texture' (the underlying messages) of films (ibid.) I aim to make this virtual texture of the films under

²⁴ I think, Arjun Appadurai's analysis of the Lacanian triad would lead to a similar conclusion, as his concept of the imagination as a social practice does equally reject a distinction between the 'image' and the 'real': “The image, the imagined, the imaginary – these are all terms that direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes: the imagination as a social practice. No longer mere fantasy (...), no longer simple escape (...), no longer elite pastime (...), and no longer mere contemplation (...), the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (...), and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility. (...) The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order.” (Appadurai, 1996: 31).

consideration #visible and will #show how the underlying metaphors used by film-makers either re(-)produce or resist what is commonly called stereotyping and how they participate in the production of an imagined 'European identity'. Images transport information about what Žižek goes on to call the 'unknown known' (or what is called the unconscious in psychoanalysis). It is information about the things we are not aware we think, say, and #show. The 'Dutch' neo-colonial Christmas 'tradition' of *Zwarte Piet* or the beloved 'German' chocolate-covered cream cake *M*-Köpfe (N*-heads)* are examples of how the existence of this unknown knowledge is even openly denied when activists fight for the recognition of the colonial history of certain words and acts (racist 'traditions').

The main thrust of this thesis, therefore, #focuses on the ways that images are complicit (or not) in the making-of hegemony. This analysis goes beyond what Ella Shohat and Robert Stam called a 'stereotype approach' that, on the one hand, has the possibility to #reveal that stereotypes “are not an error of perception but rather a form of social control” (Shohat & Stam 1994: 198), but on the other:

(...) the stereotype entails a number of theoretical pitfalls. First, the exclusive preoccupation with images, whether positive or negative, can lead to a kind of *essentialism*, as less subtle critics reduce a complex variety of portrayals to a limited set of reified formulae. Such criticism is procrustean; the critic forces diverse fictive characters into preestablished categories. Behind every Black child performer the critic discerns a 'pickaninny'; behind every sexually attractive Black actor a 'buck'; behind every corpulent or nurturing Black female a 'mammy.' Such reductionist simplifications run the risk of reproducing the very racial essentialism they were designed to combat. (ibid.: 199)

The stereotype approach becomes especially unproductive when it falls into an ahistoric conception of language and a static notion of stereotypes (ibid.: 199). This is why I will #focus my film analysis in chapter 6.3 mainly on the deciphering of (dis-)continuities of gendered colonial images along the history of cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants.

Furthermore, a “stereotype approach” (Shohat & Stam, 1994) cannot explain the complexity of the virtual real of the image, it can only simplify a complexity by stating the obvious: that the image is not accounting for the social antagonism very well. Such an approach makes an analytic distinction between an assumed 'truth'/'real' and a false 'image', negating that the virtual is set in a liminal space. That is why, in this thesis, the argumentation attempts to transgress such a limited approach which #focuses on #showing that images are constructed, therefore not 'real', but rather understands these layers to be conflated and messy. Or in other words, using Queer Theorist Shaka McGlotten's (2012) liquid metaphor, the analysis shall #show how the image *bleeds* into what we spectators perceive as 'real' and vice versa. McGlotten's #insightful critique of intersectionality also provides a way out of stereotype approaches. Referring to Jasbir Puar's ideas on assemblage theory, McGlotten (2012) rejects the notion of #clear-cut static categorical 'identities'. Instead, his concept of 'the bleed' incorporates notions of fluidity and temporality into the simplified metaphor of the static 'intersectional accident' (McGlotten, 2012: 50). The bleed is “a violent and messy dissolution of categories, in which things like identities or desires or, even and especially, violence bleed into one another in ways that are terrible but also generative and vital” (ibid.: 52). With this productive concept that rejects reifying and simplifying notions of 'identity' we can now enter a discussion on the terminology of 'identity' and why the terminology of 'identity' and nationalism is problematic for this thesis. But first I will elaborate on the methodology that finds use in the following.

3. Methodology

Just as the field of gender studies, this thesis is located at the intersection of diverse scholarly traditions. This finds expression in a methodology mix, derived from multiple scholarly traditions in linguistics, social sciences and philosophy. In this chapter, I will first briefly outline Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as a linguistic method (3.1) and then explain why postcolonial theory is applicable to the context of this topic (3.2).

3.1 Conceptual Metaphor Theory and Discourse Analysis

“Metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities. A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action. (...) This will, in turn, reinforce the power of the metaphor to make experience coherent. In this sense, metaphors can be self-fulfilling prophecies.”
(Lakoff & Johnson, 1958: 132)

The methodology provided by Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) stands in the tradition of the paradigm shift that occurred during the so-called *linguistic turn*. Since then, among others, speech act theorists such as John Austin or John Searle suggest that language is inherently performative and therefore tightly connected in creating reality. This tradition stands in opposition to classical positivism in that it does not consider positive facts to account for 'reality', but rather thought patterns determine how we see the world and consequently, how we act. Austin summarized this understanding of language poignantly with the sentence: „In saying something we do something” (Austin, 1962: 109) and Searle even goes so far to equate speaking with performing: „Speaking a language is performing acts according to rules” (Searle, 1969: 29). The cognitive linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson developed CMT in their noted publication *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), where they took this stance to yet another level by claiming that metaphors are not only one of many means of language, but are figurative thought patterns that mainly influence the way how humans think. This is because

conceptual metaphors (as the word 'conceptual' already implies) play a role in prelingual processes (Chilton, 2009: 458). Lakoff and Johnson assume that, according to the functioning and shape of our brains, all humans perceive the world through these figurative thought patterns, which makes them prelingual phenomena. The fact that we perceive things by connecting them metaphorically to other (known) things is universal, whereas the exact content of the metaphors is socially determined. For instance, in the 'West' the concept ARGUMENT is metaphorically linked to the concept WAR, which is why utterances such as “He *attacked every weak point* of my argument” or “I’ve never *won* an argument with him” are possible (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 124):

The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another. It is not that arguments are a subspecies of war. Arguments and wars are different kind of things (...). But ARGUMENT is partially structured, understood, performed and talked about in terms of WAR. (...) The metaphor is not merely the words we use – it is our very concept of an argument. (ibid.: 125)

Conceptual metaphors are considered to be the means to make sense of what we (humans) perceive and to shape the world by acting on it simultaneously: „Since we act in accord with our conceptual systems and since our actions are real, our conceptual systems have a major role in creating reality” (Lakoff, 1987: 296).

I will combine CMT with Stuart Hall's notion of symbolic power, which is “the power to represent someone” (Hall 2001: 328). Through this connection, I understand metaphors, as a means of re(-)presentational practices, as the sites of *symbolic power*. From this can be inferred that hegemony is discursive predominance and it is re(-) produced or resisted through discourses, of which metaphors form part. This is why conceptual metaphors can be located in a liminal space 'between' the symbolic and what we think of as 'the real'. Postcolonial theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notion of

epistemic violence makes a similar re(-)connection when she conflates discursive predominance with physical violence. 'German' postcolonial theorist Miriam Popal describes the term 'epistemic violence' in Spivak as “western knowledge and western epistemology, that is used to execute and legitimize global political and military violence” (Popal, 2011b: 392). Thus, metaphors – as they form part of hegemonic discourses – are what makes the symbolic 'real'. Same accounts for my understanding of discourses as the sources of symbolic power and epistemic violence. In the film analysis (chapter 6), I will therefore ground the interpretation of cinematic pictures on the existing scholarly work about hegemonic 'German' discourses at the specific time of film production. As I understand cinema as a site where discourses are de(-)constructed, re(-)produced, and re(-)shaped, I find it very productive to consider cinema within the overall frame of popular discourses and to investigate into how cinematic images contest or re(-)produce common dispositives.

3.2 Application of Postcolonial Theory

Despite the fact that the interest in cinematic productions by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants is in a process of constant accretion, the literature remains scarce and fragmentary. When it comes to feminist approaches from a postcolonial #perspective to the cinema under consideration here, there are only few individuals who have taken up the #angle (cf. Adil, 2007; El Hissy, 2014; Ewing 2006a, 2006b, 2008), despite several more or less successful attempts by cinema scholars to incorporate notions developed in postcolonial theories into their analysis²⁵. Interestingly, the applications of such terms and notions from postcolonial theory #show their inherent flaws as they do not always provide a good tool

²⁵ *Hybridity* of 'identities' and/or cinema genre (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014; Berghahn, 2011b; Göktürk, 1999, 2002, 2014; El Hissy, 2014; Karanfil & Şavk, 2013; Yaren, 2009) or *belonging* (Adil, 2007; Berghahn & Sternberg 2014; Berghahn, 2006, 2011, Karanfil & Şavk, 2013) are such notions that are a reoccurring topic in literature about so-called 'Turkish-German cinema'. Also, there are some instances in which other Marxist theories come to application, e.g. Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* in Fenner (2000).

to avoid underlying problematic assumptions and lead to a limited analysis of 'European' cinemas. For instance, Katherine Pratt Ewing noted that the popular use of Homi Bhabha's term 'hybridity' perpetuates an image of fixed, distinct 'identities' or 'cultures', between which so-called hybrids are caught (Ewing, 2006).

Some scholars, on the other hand, work from the premise that the entire field of postcolonial theory is only applicable to countries with a colonial history instead of understanding postcoloniality as a global condition:

(...) we have avoided the use of 'postcolonial' for two reasons. First, as Shohat and Stam quite rightly note, 'postcolonial' is a highly ambiguous term, which obfuscates rather than clarifies the particular perspective adopted in the kinds of film in question (...). Second, many migrant and diasporic subjects whose films we consider in this volume or who appear as central characters did not migrate to Europe from former colonies. For instance (...) no colonial prehistory connected Turkey with Germany. (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014: 36)

In the corresponding footnote the authors even points to a historical connection between 'the Ottoman Empire' and 'Germany', fighting on same sides in World War I (ibid.: 44), implying a relationship on equal terms. Not only here, 'Germany's colonial history'²⁶ is widely overlooked, especially when it comes to imperial dreams in form of

²⁶ For instance, at this moment the 'German' government officially appealed to the 'Turkish' government to acknowledge the Armenian genocide as an actual 'genocide', while at the same time still hardly acknowledges the genocide of the Herero and Nama in an attempt to counter anti-colonial resistance. The genocide of the Herero and Nama marks the (real) first genocide of the 20th century and took place in today's 'Namibia' which was colonized as 'German South-West Africa' (DSWA) 1884-1915. Connected to the obfuscation of 'German' colonial history is the neglect of academia to inquire into the longstanding history of the Black 'German' community or the refusal of city councils to change colonial street names. The *Initiative Schwarzer Menschen in Deutschland (Initiative of Black people in Germany, ISD)* can be mentioned here as one of many examples of Black 'German' resistance to the obliviousness about 'German' history.

discourses, rather than actual colonial settlement. We should not forget that 'Germany' always participated in 'European' colonial fantasies, including white bourgeois women (Mamozai, 1989), and the National Socialists were able to make use of discourses about the lost 'piece of the colonial cake' in the *League of Nations Mandate* which formed part of the *Paris Peace Conference* as a victimizing strategy within the 'European' nation states to justify World War II – let alone the actual 'German' colonies and the atrocities committed there. Such obliviousness leads to comments like the following:

A post-colonial context is particularly important with regard to the work of most diasporic women film-makers in France and Britain (...), whereas in Germany and Switzerland the context largely derives from the history of non-post-colonial labour migration. (Tarr 2014: 176)

A postcolonial critique can counter this assumption by #showing that so-called 'labor migration' between 'Germany' and 'Turkey' was founded on an economic as well as a discursive ground: first, there is the global imbalance serving as a source for 'European' and 'U.S.' economic dominance which is deeply rooted in the trajectory of colonialism. Secondly, the discursive ground is based on Orientalist narratives which are similarly rooted in colonialism and today #manifest in the ideology of a binary opposing world order of 'the West' against 'the rest', popularized by Samuel Huntington (1996) as the 'clash of civilizations'. Edward Said in his well-known analysis of 'Orientalism' describes 'Germany's participation in colonialism as a fantasy rather than 'actual':

(...) the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least, classical, Orient: it was made the subject of lyrics, fantasies, and even novels, but it was never actual, the way Egypt and Syria were actual for Chateaubriand, Lane, Lamartine, Burton, Disraeli, or Neval. (...) What German Oriental scholarship did was to

refine and elaborate techniques whose application was to texts, myths, ideas, and languages almost literally gathered from the Orient by imperial Britain and France. Yet what German Orientalism had in common with Anglo-French and later American Orientalism was a kind of intellectual *authority* over the Orient within Western culture. (Said, 1995: 19)

Said here points to the fact that, despite owning 'only' a few actual colonies, 'Germany's participation in 'European' colonialism is to be found in the creation of Orientalist images in the fields of Arts and Science. 'German' Orientalism, therefore, was much more located in the virtual, imaginative layer of 'European' colonialism. This is why Friedrichsmeyer, Lennox, and Zantop (1998) underscore the need for an analysis of 'German' colonialism that goes “beyond historical facts and programmatic statements to investigate the mentalities and imaginary configurations that persisted throughout the colonial period and lingered long after” (Friedrichsmeyer, Lennox, and Zantop, 1998: 18). The authors refer to Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991) and Jacqueline Rose's *States of Fantasy* (1998) to show that especially 'German' colonialism relied on a national 'identity' that “is the product of collective, albeit largely unconscious, efforts to imagine and define national interest, national desires, and a collective will” (ibid.). The importance of images and narratives for colonialism is perfectly summarized by Rose when she points out that fantasies and social reality are deeply conflated: “Fantasy is not (...) antagonistic to social reality; it is its precondition or psychic glue” (Rose, 1998: 3). I therefore find an understanding of colonial images as a virtual real, as discussed in chapter 2.2, very helpful.

From a postcolonial perspective, 'borrowing' labor from 'Turkey' is understood as a continuation of the colonial dominance of 'Europe' (a 'Europe' dominated by 'Germany') over its Others. It nurtures its ideological basis from Orientalist strategies to dehumanize the colonial Other, exploiting their labor, and subordinate them despite admitting entrance

to 'European' soil. The making-of the image of 'Europe' today still relies on the othering of colonized peoples to constitute the 'European' self – a self in opposition. Postcolonial scholars in 'Germany' have produced a vast amount of literature making postcolonial theory applicable for 'German' contexts²⁷. I, therefore, can conclude that despite the fact that 'Turkey' was never a colony of 'Germany' a postcolonial approach to cinematic productions by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants is a valid point of entry. After all, the global post(-) colonial condition is a complex system of power that trickles into every research matter.

'German' postcolonial theorists traced the continuities from this colonial authority that manifests in novels, images, and fantasies very profoundly. For the analysis here, I will therefore agree with the view that postcolonial theory is indeed very applicable to 'German' contexts.²⁸

²⁷ Cf. Castro Varela & Dhawan (2011); Steyerl & Gutiérrez Rodríguez (2003); Gutiérrez Rodríguez (1999); Rommelspacher (2010, 2009a, 2009b, 1995); Attia (2007; 2009); Ha (2005); Ha, Samarai, & Mysorekar (2007); Mamozai (1989); Dietrich (2007); Popal (2011a, 2011b, 2007); Uremović & Oerter (1994); Arndt & Ofuatey-Alazard (2011); and many more.

²⁸ Despite that it is not relevant for the discussion in this thesis, it shall be remarked at this point that postcolonial theory is indeed also applicable for analyses of policies in 'Turkey' and its predecessor – the Ottoman Empire. Selim Deringil, for instance, points out that the Ottoman Empire participated in the civilizing mission of colonial 'Europe' (Deringil, 2003). Despite that they played a minor role compared to the 'great' colonial powers of 'France', 'Britain', and 'Germany', the Ottomans functioned as a colonizer at its own peripheries (ibid.).

4. Problems of Terminology

This chapter starts with an act of refusal and why this matters for cinema studies, especially when it investigates what has been called “migrant and diasporic cinema” by Daniela Berghahn and Claudia Sternberg (2014) and others. I develop this refusal in several steps that provide the tools to question the means of analysis in current scholarly work discussed in chapter 5. First, I explain why I discarded my initial research questions entirely by #showing what questionable premises they presupposed, namely that the cinema under consideration deals with questions of 'identity'. I will then investigate the terminology of this premise with a discussion of Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper's (2000) #insightful critique of the term 'identity'. The next step will depart from Brubaker and Cooper's analytic distinction between external and self-identifications by weaving in a non-teleological notion of liminality that adds to the discussion of the Lacanian triad in chapter 2. From there, I will discuss another cluster of terminology which #focuses on the names of nation states that are necessarily part of (critical) migration studies. For this, I will elaborate on Ulrich Beck's critique of methodological nationalism and #show that it re(-)produces violent discourses in subsuming all the different groups who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan to 'Germany' under the category of Sunni 'guest-workers'. This discussion will finally lead me to Nikita Dhawan's (2007) elaboration on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's call for caution in scholarly debates about migrants in the 'West'. Dhawan reminds us that a victimizing approach to the struggles of migrants in the global 'North' (in this case, 'Europe') can work against global social justice. My final argument of this chapter will therefore consider the possibility of complicity in hegemonic exploitation. This argument serves to shape my approach to criticize current scholarly work in the field of 'migrant and diasporic cinema' (#see chapter 5).

I have discarded the initial research questions I attempted to explore in this thesis and will now explain why I consider describing this development in my writing process important. As a radical queer anti-racist feminist I feel personal pleasure by starting with an act of productive rejection – I consider this as the most #insightful of all possible starting-points.

These were my initial questions of investigation:

- how do filmic representations articulate questions of belonging, 'identity', and transnationalism? How did the foci of the films and the depictions of central themes change over time?
- how are the cinematic depictions of belonging, 'identity', transnationalism and gender roles perceived by migrant #viewers and how do the films affect their own understandings of these issues?
- how are aesthetic depictions of belonging, 'identity', transnationalism and gender roles (in migrant communities) intertwined with the current (and past) popular discourse on migration and 'Turkish' communities in 'Germany'? Are they in juxtaposition, reaction, compliance and/or opposition to each other?

The assumption that I came to challenge after a close investigation of the films mentioned by the academic literature is what is hidden in the presupposition of the above questions: that the films under consideration *do* deal with questions of belonging, 'identity', and transnationalism. Instead of asking the question “*do* filmic representations articulate questions of belonging, 'identity', and transnationalism?” I followed the current literature and simply assumed that this question has been positively answered already and therefore added a 'how' to the beginning of the research question. However, there are three possible scenarios in which this question had been prematurely answered in the affirmative:

1. the set definition of the genre 'migrant cinema' already implies that the film-makers under investigation deal with these questions and therefore excludes films that do not,
2. that these questions of 'identity', belonging, and transnationalism are usually dealt with in any kind of cinema genre, but the academic literature tend to #focus on these issues dealing with what people perceive as 'migrant cinema',
3. and/or the authors tend to #see these questions dealt with when they are actually not.

I will take a closer #look at these three possible scenarios that all seem to hold at least partially true, in the following chapters. But to understand where the flaws lie in the mentioned presupposition, I first must take a critical stance #regarding the commonly used terminology and its implications. Despite there having been crucial debates about the use of terms such as 'identity' (cf. Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Anthias, 2008), 'diaspora' (cf. Brubaker, 2005; Anthias, 1998), and 'experience' (cf. Scott, 1991), amongst others, the voiced criticism does not seem to have profoundly influenced the literature on cinematic productions by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. Taking into account the critical intervention into the terminology of 'identity' that is used in theorizing what is called 'migrant and diasporic cinema' by Brubaker and Cooper (2000), I want to #show how this critique might inform a different #angle onto the topic of this thesis.

4.1 'Identity', Liminality and the Making-of the Real

“At some point, films need to stop being films, stop being stories and start to become lively, so that one asks, how does this relate to me and my life.”²⁹ (Rainer Werner Fassbinder, as quoted in Koebner, 2006: 422)

In the initial research questions of this thesis, I re(-)produced a trend in the current literature which uses terms such as 'identity' and 'experience' too readily despite the ambiguity of these fairly controversial ideas. To exemplify these debates and to inspire the following film analysis, this chapter will name a central critique of the term 'identity'/'belonging' and explain why the notion of the 'virtual real' problematizes the idea of 'European identities'. For this I will summarize Rogers Brubaker's and Frederick Cooper's profound critique of the term in their contribution *Beyond 'identity'* (2000) to take a critical stance towards the terms 'identity' and 'belonging'.

The 'U.S.'-based sociologist Rogers Brubaker and historian Frederick Cooper identify some crucial problems in the common application of the term 'identity' in the social sciences and humanities. According to them, the term was used to describe two different, but equally problematic, clusters of semantics. One semantic application #appeared when the term was employed in a 'strong sense', meaning too much, #contrasting with another 'weak' use, where the term tended to mean too little (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 1). The constructivist tendency to 'soften' terms that are commonly essentialized in politics and instead understand 'identity' as “constructed, fluid, and multiple” leave scholars invested in social justice “ill-equipped to examine the 'hard' dynamics and essentialist claims of contemporary identity politics” (ibid.: 1). The main problem lies in the fact that 'identity' politics essentialized the category on the one hand and on the other, scholars tend to soft-wash the term while still failing to avoid essentialist claims in their argumentation (ibid: 6):

²⁹ My translation. Original: “Filme müssen irgendwann einmal aufhören, Filme zu sein, müssen aufhören, Geschichten zu sein, und anfangen, lebendig zu werden, daß man fragt, wie sieht das eigentlich mit mir und meinem Leben aus.”

We should seek to explain the processes and mechanisms through which what has been called the 'political fiction' of the 'nation' – or of the 'ethnic group,' 'race,' or other putative 'identity' – can crystallize, at certain moments, as a powerful, compelling reality. But we should avoid unintentionally reproducing or *reinforcing* such *reification* by uncritically adopting categories of practice as categories of analysis. (ibid.: 5)

The common problem with the scholarly tradition of taking “categories of practice” (such as 'identity', 'Turkish-German', 'migrants', etc.) as the categories of academic analyses lies not so much in the fact that the same terms are used with shifted semantics, but rather that many scholars still reify categories despite claiming a constructivist use of the terms “in a manner that implies or asserts that 'nations', 'races', and 'identities' 'exist' and that people 'have' a 'nationality', a 'race', an 'identity'” (ibid.: 6).

Summarizing what Brubaker and Cooper identified as five different usages of 'identity', they #show that these usages are not only divergent, but fundamentally contradictory:

Clearly, the term 'identity' is made to do a great deal of work. It is used to highlight non-instrumental modes of action; to focus on self-understanding rather than self-interest; to designate sameness across persons or sameness over time; to capture allegedly core, foundational aspects of selfhood; to deny that such core, foundational aspects exist; to highlight the processual, interactive development of solidarity and collective self-understanding; and to stress the fragmented quality of the contemporary experience of 'self,' a self unstably patched together through shards of discourse and contingently 'activated' in differing contexts. (ibid.: 8)

From all these different usages, Brubaker and Cooper open up the above-mentioned binary opposition between strong and weak conceptions of the term 'identity'. The strong conception serves to “preserve the common-sense meaning of the term” as used in 'identity' politics. Rightfully, they point out four different crucial and problematic assumptions that comes with a strong use of the term:

1. Identity is something all people have, or ought to have, or are searching for.
2. Identity is something all groups (...) have, or ought to have.
3. Identity is something people (and groups) can have without being aware of it. In this perspective, identity is something to be *discovered*, and something about which one can be *mistaken*. (...)
4. Strong notions of identity imply strong notions of group boundedness and homogeneity. They imply high degrees of groupness, an 'identity' or sameness among group members, a sharp distinctiveness from nonmembers, a clear boundary between inside and outside.

(ibid.: 10)

On the other hand, Brubaker and Cooper criticized the #contrasting soft use of 'identity', which comes with “standard qualifiers indicating that identity is multiple, unstable, in flux, contingent, fragmented, constructed, negotiated, and so on” (ibid.: 11), for its tendency to become a mere gesture, a place-holder to free scholars from critiques of essentialism without actually applying this weak notion when it comes to analyses. Furthermore, they remark that the weak notion of 'identity' “may be *too* weak to do useful theoretical work” and, most importantly for this thesis, they suggest that “it is not clear why weak notions of 'identity' are conceptions *of identity*” (ibid.: 11). The authors then go on to describe some examples, where the concept of 'identity' does not actually contribute anything to the argumentation and therefore could be abandoned.

As I will #show in chapter 5, a major part of the current literature on what is called 'migrant and diasporic cinema' falls into this “clichéd constructivism” criticized by Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 11), where certain softening qualifiers are named, but not consequently applied. In these works, notions such as 'identity' and 'hybridity' are initially introduced in a constructivist manner underscoring their fluidity and multiplicity, but with #regard to the subsequent analysis, such a weak conception of the terms does not prove to be applied and instead one can find some of the above mentioned four problems that usually occur in an underlying strong notion of the term.

That is why in this thesis, the mentioning of 'identity' will always refer to existing scholarly use of the term, with the quotation marks indicating its problematic status. I myself advocate for an abandonment of the term 'identity' as Brubaker and Cooper suggest and instead my own analysis will use the provided alternative terms which serve to be a less ambiguous ground, which additionally #reflects the #insights I gained from my own experiences described in chapter 2. Brubaker and Cooper's (ibid: 14-21) suggested alternatives consist of the following term-clusters:

1. *identification* and *categorization*
2. *self-understanding* and *social location*
3. *commonality, connectedness, and groupness*

The first cluster helps me to theorize what I mentioned in chapter 2.1 to have understood from my personal story: the doubt that 'identity' is a.) static, b.) essential, and c.) self-determined. With the first term-cluster, Brubaker and Cooper exert a linguistic trick which turns the noun 'identity' as something that people/groups passively 'have' to a noun that implies an active process through the addition of the productive suffix -(i)fication which is derived from -ify (French -ifier, to 'make') and -ation (Latin -ātiō, 'process'): *identification*. The term 'categorization' has a similar linguistic advantage, but additionally contains an analytical undertone that alludes to the power of categories as markers of difference. In the description of the first and second cluster of alternative

terms, Brubaker and Cooper already argue for a distinction between external *categorization*, internal *self-understanding*, and the passive notion of *social location* – all these do not necessarily coincide (ibid.: 14). Most importantly, they underscore a distinction between self-identification and external identification which “may vary greatly from context to context” (ibid.: 14).

And this last analytical distinction I would like to intervene in without doubting the validity of Brubaker's and Cooper's criticism of the term 'identity'. #Drawing from my own story of a conflicted external and self-identification, I want to argue that this conflict is not merely oppositional – which would overly simplify the lived experience of many others in a similar situation to mine – but rather messy and conflated. External and self-identification rather – to transfer McGlotten's term to this context – *bleed* into one another. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) imply a somewhat analytic dichotomy of actors (self or external) who do the act of identifying in this useful active term 'identification'. The dichotomy implies that external and self-identification could be understood as disparate phenomena, in which the categories either coincide or vary. This however implies that self-identifications are independent from externally set categories. Self-identification in this case becomes a detached process that is non-referential to social dynamics of categorization-power. Such an approach fails to account for the complexity of lived experience. It denies the power that external categorizations have on the understandings of our own selves. For this thesis I would like to queer this analytic dichotomy between external and self to #reveal their bleeding.

The external/self-identification divide in Brubaker and Cooper leads me to the 'real' versus 'virtual' question, which connects to the discussion of the Lacanian triad in chapter 2. This discussion shall prevent the analysis from re(-)producing a simplified essentialism versus constructivism debate that I find unproductive. The tools of my analysis that examine the discourses, tropes, and metaphors in film are of a linguistic trajectory and therefore might seduce the critical #reader to assume this thesis merely deals with the symbolic matters in cinema. But the analysis in chapter 6 shall not give the impression

that the matter of analysis is 'constructed', meaning that it is not 'real' or immaterial. This is why we need to trace the linkages of the symbolic with the imaginary which ties back to the 'real' (i.e. the conditions of existence). For instance, Benedict Anderson's notion of the nation as an imagined community (Anderson, 1991) does not imply that there is no such thing as nations – in fact, quite the contrary. When Brubaker and Cooper name this notion a 'political fiction' (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 5) this cannot be confused with the idea that there is no-one who identifies with a nationality. Analogically, the cinematic images to be analyzed are neither self-descriptions of a primordial 'identity' by migrant film-makers who are speaking 'from within', as it is the underlying approach of many scholars in the field of 'migrant and diasporic cinema', nor are they merely constructed external identifications of white 'Germans' who do not know the actual 'real experiences' of the group they identify. As I will show in chapter 5.1, it has become a common scholarly notion to describe the history of 'Turkish-German' cinema as a progress of exactly this: a development from external depictions by white 'Germans' in the 1970s and '80s to self-re(-)presentations by (post-)migrant film-makers from the 1990s on. To argue against such a simplistic account of cinematic history, I need an alternative approach that rejects the colonial frame of progress and freedom. The image as a 'virtual real', as discussed in chapter 2.1 provides such an alternative, because it refuses to make the distinction between 'image' and 'real'. I understand the creation of the image as a joint project by film-makers of various identifications who have been granted the privilege to re(-)present. These actors participate together in the 'making-of' what we perceive as 'the real'. The metaphors, tropes, figures, etc. that are used in films occur as well in public discourses, #seen in political #talk-shows, in (post-)migrant literature and literature about (post-)migrants; they are used in (post-)migrant families to re(-)construct their imagined histories as much as they are the source for ('identity') policies, and serve to imagine a multicultural 'Europe'. They are the site of oppression and pleasure simultaneously. There is no point in debating about their 'realness' or 'constructedness' – images are becoming real as soon as they #appear on screen.

To further the previous discussion of the 'virtual real' in Žižek (2004) the notion of the 'lamella' (or amoeba) in Lacan, is useful to understand the fantasmatic character of, in this case, the libido. Žižek describes the Lacanian lamella as “an entity of pure surface without the density of a substance”, which is why “its status is purely fantasmatic” (Žižek 2007: 35). In Lacan the “mythic creature” (ibid.: 35) of the lamella is used to describe libido – “life that has need of no organ” (Lacan, 1978: 185, as cited in Žižek 2007: 35). A literary example is the smile of the Cheshire Cat in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*: a smile without a body or to underscore the indestructible monstrosity of this concept: the undead – cinematic zombies (Žižek 2007: 35f.). The Lacanian lamella finds wide application in Media Theory as the concept of liminality. We can approach an understanding of the virtual in Žižek by using a term liminality which he explains with the Deleuzian notion of “pure becoming without being”: liminality.³⁰ “The virtual is a liminal space that consists only of its becomingness-state, and not an actual being or object to become” (Wright n.d.: n.p.). Here, we arrive at an understanding of the virtual – that is becoming without being – which is fundamentally opposed to what Brubaker and Cooper (2000) pointed out to be the strong notion of 'identity': being without becoming. Or how I described it earlier, #drawing from my personal conflicts of identification: a lack of the procedural character of 'identity'. However, unlike in Brubaker and Cooper (2000), this notion transgresses a mere dichotomy between a constructivist weak understanding versus the strong, essentialist notion of 'identity'. Most interestingly, we do not depart entirely from Foucault here, despite the common #reading of him as the founding father of the linguistic turn. Actually in his conception of events and time in the notion of Evenementalisation in *The Archeology of Knowledge* (2002 [1969]) we can find

³⁰ Connecting to my later critique of the teleological narrative to progress, I need to stress at this point that the notion of liminality applied in this thesis is decidedly undirected. This contrasts an understanding of liminality as a *rite of passage* as developed in classical anthropology (Van Gennep, 1909; Turner, 1967) which indicates a becoming from a premature state into a state of wholeness, assuming a progress towards a final end.

a link to a Deleuzian becoming in his understanding of utterances as language events.³¹ That is why the methodology of this thesis is based on linguistic methods, such as Conceptual Metaphor Theory and critical discourse analysis, applied on the grounds of the here depicted notion of the image as a virtual real. This prevents the methodology from a confinement to the symbolic realm and permits it to enter the imaginary layer of film.

4.2 Methodological Nationalism and the Possibility of Complicity

There are some more obsolete binary categories that prevent the current academic literature on 'migrant and diasporic cinema' from theorizing the messiness of their subject matter. On the one hand, the notion of 'migrant/diasporic' groups versus the majority 'Germans' cannot be kept alive without falling into culturalist explanations of why 'diasporic' groups are theorized as a distinct phenomenon, especially when it comes to post-migrants. On the other hand, using terms such as 'Turkish', 'German', or 'Turkish-German' demonstrates the flaws that Ulrich Beck made visible by criticizing methodological nationalism in scholarly work. Beck (2007) pointed out the problems of methodological nationalism, which he located at the heart of the history of social sciences. Sociology, according to Beck, makes unquestioned assumptions, for instance, it “equates society with nation state societies” (Beck, 2007: 287) and works on the premise that nations are quasi-natural divisions of the globe, which organize their politics around borders and competition with other nations (ibid.). Beck's critique therefore centers on the limits that methodological nationalism sets for sociological analyses:

Indeed, the social science stance is rooted in the concept of the nation-state. It is a nation-state outlook on society and politics, law, justice, and history, that governs the sociological

³¹ Using Evenementalisation as a basis for film analysis has been proven very productive, as Ezli (2010) exemplifies in the publication *Kultur als Ereignis: Fatih Akin's Film 'Auf der anderen Seite' als transkulturelle Narration (Culture as an event: Fatih Akin's film 'On the Edge of Heaven' as a Transcultural Narration)*.

imagination. And it is exactly this methodological nationalism that prevents the social science from getting at the heart of the dynamics of modernization and globalization, both past and present: the *unintended* result of the radicalization of modernity is a disempowerment of Western states, in sharp contrast to their empowerment before and during the 19th-century wave of globalization. (ibid.)

According to Beck, methodological nationalism inhibits social theories that take globalizing forces into account – a critique that is very applicable to the topic of this thesis which deals with phenomena of migration and 'diaspora'. However, I would only partially agree with Beck's assumption that globalization has disempowered 'Western' states, which connects to Beck's popular notion of the risk society. This notion has been criticized for misrecognizing global power imbalances by assuming equally increasing precarity for the 'West' and the so-called 'Third World' (Rommelspacher, 1992: 82). If we want to respect the starting point of postcolonial and decolonial theories, we need not ignore the ongoing predominance of 'Western' (economic) power continued with the invention of financial markets and with the help of so-called 'development work' (cf. Amoroso, 2007; George, 2007; Sparr, 1994). However, as laid out in chapter 2, 'Europe' faces a need to re(-)shape its hegemonic power with new images of multiculturalism and diversity due to changed global market forces.

Beck's criticism of methodological nationalism can be underscored by Benedict Anderson's (1991) understanding of nations as imagined communities, or with what Slavoj Žižek might call the virtual real. While Beck puts emphasis on the fact that borders and national competition should not be reified by academic theories, they nevertheless are a crucial part of hegemonic discourses and therefore cannot be ignored in an analysis of (moving) images. However, using the categories of nationalities too self-evidently and uncritically, we tend to forget what the image of the nation does not #show.

To make the obfuscated groups #visible, I will now take a closer #look at the composition of the migrant communities in 'Germany' that are usually simply referred to as 'Turkish'.

The creation of the 'Turkish Republic' in 1922 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, a military officer who became the god-like father figure of the nation, was based on the idea of a 'Turkishness' that obscured the existence of many minorities. Constant oppression through discriminatory laws, such as the prohibition against speaking any of the Kurdish languages, or the various coup d'états, brought a range of migrants with different affiliations to 'Germany'. This was possible thanks to the people who migrated according to the recruitment contracts of the 1950s and 1960s who established paths and routes between the two locations. Consequently, what is usually referred to as 'the Turkish minority' consists of various people and groups with many different affiliations, such as Yazidi/Muslim/and other Kurds, Anatolian Muslims, (Hoharane) Roma, Zazaic people mostly from the Black Sea regions, non-religious and radical secularist Marxists who fled the 1980 coup d'état, queer and non-heterosexual migrants – only to name a few. One of the main discriminatory powers of popular 'German' discourses about (post-)migrants from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan is the ongoing homogenization of these diverse groups of people into 'the Turkish Muslim guest-workers'. To use the term 'Turkish-German migrants' means to participate in two discriminatory traditions: the obscuring of the in-group heterogeneity and the continuation of the narrative of 'Turkishness' which comes with a trajectory of oppression of all non-Sunni or non-Secularist, ethnic and political minorities.

Unfortunately it is a common habit also in counter-hegemonic, decolonial scholarly work to decipher the discrimination of the peoples who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan within an Orientalist frame when they exclusively #focus on Sunni migrants from central Anatolia. It is unfortunate, because such a framing does not escape the essentialism that scholars aim to deconstruct. Of course, decolonial feminist scholars must name discrimination and in 'Germany' this is mainly executed in an Orientalist discourse #focused on Sunni Anatolian workers who migrated in the 1950s

and 60s as so-called 'guest-workers'. But decolonial feminist academia need not re(-) produce the simplification and homogenization that comes with this discrimination. Thus, I consider it as my own political goal of this research project to not only #show which peoples and groups are discriminated against, but also to #reveal how processes of discrimination make other peoples and groups #invisible, so that they cannot even claim a marginal position in 'identity' politics. This is exemplified by the huge re(-)presentative power given to the *Islamkonferenz* (*German Islam Conference*) and the *Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland* (*Central Council of Muslims in Germany*), which are Sunni institutions with an increasing role in 'German' ('identity') politics and which have the power to re(-)present a vast group of very heterogeneous migrants, whether Sunni or not. This #contrasts the unrecognized political work, done by non-Sunni institutions, such as the *Alevitische Gemeinde Berlin* (*Berlin Alevi Toplumu/Alevi community Berlin*), the many different Kurdish groups and other ethnic and political alliances that struggle for recognition.³² The continuing #focus on what scholars tend to name as 'Turkish-German migrants', meaning Sunni Anatolian 'guest-workers', is therefore a continuation of oppression and colonization concealed by the flaws of methodological nationalism, even among feminist decolonial academia in 'Germany' – and among the few who write about minorities in 'Germany' in English publications³³. A more auto-critical use of terminology for such research is crucial. Especially when it comes to the many incidents when scholars depict the group they refer to with the term and exclusively describe Sunni males who came during the 'guest-worker' recruitment agreements.³⁴ To pay justice to the

³² It is especially a continuation of oppressive power to refer to Yazidi people as 'Muslim' (i.e. Sunni) as this is oblivious of the trajectory of violence that oppressed their groups in the Middle East and is culminating at the very moment of the production of this thesis in crimes committed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) – especially against Yazidi women and girls. A similar concealment of trauma would be continued by referring to (most) Kurdish peoples as 'Turkish' for obvious reasons.

³³ Homi Bhabha even once mentioned the film *The Seventh Man* by John Berger to make a point about the occurring image of a voiceless 'Turkish' migrant man in the chapter "DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation" in his publication *Nation and Narration* (Bhabha, 1990: 315ff.).

³⁴ It is a common habit to introduce an analysis by starting with the history of the recruitment agreements between 'West Germany' and 'Turkey' from 1961 to 1973. However, the above described in-group heterogeneity is hardly ever mentioned, let alone the people who traveled the paths that the agreements

heterogeneity of the group of people under consideration here, I adjusted the terms with which I describe them (i.e. 'people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan') and my analysis will #focus on films that re(-)present different ethnic and political groups; e.g. *Kleine Freiheit (Little Freedom, 2003)*, directed by Kurdish film-maker Yüksel Yavuz:

The discussion of obscured heterogeneity, however, has a major flaw that must be avoided by putting forward another argument at this point. The flaw lies in the danger of victimizing migrants in the global 'North', because they suffer from discrimination. To avoid such a simplification, we need to consider the decolonial attempts to theorize the power of re(-)presentation in ('German') postcolonial theory. Nikita Dhawan made an #insightful analysis of minorities in the global 'North' and shallow alliance politics that take the factor of complicity into our analysis. Dhawan (2007), in her contribution to the research project *translate. Beyond Culture: The Politics of Translation*, helps us to understand Gayatri Spivak's call for caution for theorizing minorities in the global 'North':

Our self-representation as marginal in the north might involve a disavowed dominant status vis-à-vis the rural and indigenous subaltern in the south. Not surprisingly, members of indigenous elite [sic] find the language of alliance politics attractive. Belief in the plausibility of global alliance politics is increasingly prevalent among women of dominant social groups interested in 'international feminism' in the 'developing' nations as well as among well-placed Southern diasporics in the North. (...) She [Spivak, 1997: 120] warns explicitly that this South-in-the-North confined to migrant struggles in First world countries can work against global social justice. She unfolds socio- and

opened through connections to the workers who came during the 1960s and 70s. These connections lead to an ongoing movement in both directions that is still ongoing. Some examples of such framing of the term can be found among others in Göktürk, Gramling, Kaes (2007a); Berghahn (2009); Özsari (2010).

geopolitical situatedness as complicity and asks her implied readers, the economic and political migrants to the North, to rethink themselves as possible agents of exploitation, not as victims. (Dhawan, 2007: n.p.)

Dhawan here hints at a prevailing problem in current writings about (post-)migrant minorities in 'Europe' and in literature about cinema by/about migrants from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. At times, the #focus lies too much on the discrimination of minorities in 'Europe' without taking into account that migrant institutions and individuals do occupy a role as political actors and therefore need to be thought with a critical stance towards the powers of re(-)presentation that comes with it. The above mentioned *Islamkonferenz* and the *Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland* is an example of how (Sunni) Muslim institutions and individuals gain an increasing role in 'German' ('identity') politics and are granted the power of re(-)presentation. They are on no account to be compared with colonized peoples from the global 'South', despite the fact that colonial narratives are still intact in 'Europe' and serve as a means of marginalization. The following analysis of cinema by/about (post-)migrants from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan therefore should not lead to the assumption that film-makers with a personal history of migration are simply the victimized subaltern voices speaking from the margins and enriching cinema with entirely different images that automatically resist stereotypes. As I will discuss in chapter 5, such an approach can be considered oblivious of the means how hegemonic discourses can incorporate complicit marginal voices. Migrant film-makers acquired the power to re(-)present – might even be 'burdened' by this duty to re(-)present (Shohat & Stam 1994) – because they accumulated social capital, probably even transgressed social class, which changed their situatedness.

Beck's critique of current scholarly work that stays within narratives of nationalism is very useful in its application to the current literature on cinematic productions by/about (post-)migrants from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan. Especially because such a critique opens the path to theorize peoples who migrated from the same nation

(e.g. 'Turkey') as not necessarily incorporating the same location and similar access to resources and power.

Connected to this discussion, I #revealed a major flaw in victimizing approaches to migrants in 'Europe' that is too #focused on the instances, where power and access to resources is absent. Instead, I take Nikita Dhawan's remarks on Spivak's call for caution seriously and therefore incorporate the possibility of complicity by marginalized groups in 'Europe' into my analysis.³⁵

³⁵ As I myself am a post-migrant in the 'West', my own work also has to face the possibility of complicity. As I remarked in chapter 2, there is, in fact, an ongoing contradiction that critical work from 'Western' academia inherits. But, as Donna Haraway (2010) has taught us: it is important to stay with the trouble!

5. A Critique of Scholarly Literature in the Field of 'Turkish-German' Cinema

In this chapter I will provide a critique of some common assumptions in current academic literature about cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. This criticism will give the incentive for the film analysis in chapter 6, which offers an alternative. The chapter critically argues against certain recurring themes that find wide application in the current state of the art of scholarly work in the field of so-called 'Turkish-German cinema'. My argument is that current research can be informed by a consistent postcolonial approach to avoid a re(-)production of colonial narratives in discussions of the cinema under consideration. The first point of criticism #focuses on the teleological narrative of progress to freedom and self-re(-)presentation, which is widely applied to describe the history of the cinematic productions. Then I will briefly problematize the creation of the 'migrant and diasporic cinema' genre in general before moving to a 'Europe'-wide #perspective that critically examines economic processes of 'ethnic' branding. The main argument here is, that images of migrants in the 'North' (in this case 'Europe') serve as a means for ethnic marketing, in which (post-)migrants can be complicit. This leads to a final discussion about an uncritical application of Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity that ignores the epistemic violence of categorizing the post-migrants as hybrids. I consider the danger of the category of the hybrid in becoming a means to imagine 'Europe' as diverse and equal – a narrative that ignores the power dynamics within 'Europe' and its (post-)migrant Others. After all, the applied notion of the hybrid does not escape the exotification, othering, and devaluation of (post-)migrants in 'Europe'.

But first, this chapter needs to begin with a disclaimer to prevent overly broad generalizations about the current literature on cinematic productions by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. The following discussion functions as a punctual critique of certain

assumptions that can be found in some of the literature³⁶. This selective intervention is not intended to create the impression that there is no good academic theorizing on the issue of this thesis, nor that any of the remarks made here can be universalized.

The cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants is categorized under various terms, for instance, “independent transnational cinema” and “accented cinema” (Naficy, 1996), “postcolonial hybrid films” (Shohat & Stam, 1994), or “World Cinema” (Roberts, 1998). The different terms in the here discussed literature, however, are used to describe mostly the same grouping of films. Most prominently, this genre is called 'migrant and diasporic cinema' (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014a).

5.1 Cinematic History as a Teleological Narrative to Progress and Freedom

My critique will start with a problematic narrative that finds wide application in historical classifications of so-called 'Turkish-German' cinema in scholarly contributions. The predominant theme narrates the history of the cinema under consideration as a story of progress from marginalization in the 1970s and 80s towards freedom through self-re(-)presentation since the 1990s. This story of a gradual break-out from the paternalist cinematic presentations to self-re(-)presentation is probably the most common simplification of cinematic productions by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. This simplification is based on the idea of a linear progress of time that inevitably leads from a backward and uncivilized culture towards modernity, freedom, and democracy (that is, self-re(-)presentation and the end of oppression). The notion that the progress of time leads to modernity is also congruent with a popular

³⁶ The scholarly publications dealing with issues of the cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants discussed in the following are Adelson (2001); Berghahn (2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2013); Berghahn and Sternberg (2014a, 2014b); Brauerhoch (1995); Burns (2006, 2009); Eken (2009); El Hissy (2014); Elsaesser (1989, 2005); Ewing (2006a); Fenner (2000, 2003); Gemünden (2004); Göktürk (1998, 1999, 2002, 2007, 2010, 2014); Göktürk, Gramling, Kaes (2007); Hake and Mennel (2012); Jones (2003); Mennel (2002); Özsari (2010); Reinecke (1995); Schäffler (2012); Seeßlen (2000); Yaren (2009). Because my selection of the points of critique #focus on widely distributed notions in current theorizing, the tendencies mentioned herein are fairly re(-)presentative for the relatively small field of research.

prevailing trope of 'German' discourses on the colonial 'Turkish' othered woman who is supposedly oppressed by (Sunni) Muslim archaic patriarchy and needs to be liberated by adopting the 'Western values' of freedom, secularism, democracy, and individualism (cf. Attia 2007, 2009; Lutz, 1992; Rommelspacher, 2009b, 2010). Aram Ziai, who holds the only professorship for postcolonial theory in 'Germany', points to a continuity from the colonial civilizing mission to today's discourses on the development of nation states (Ziai, 2010: 24). According to Ziai, the figure of thought (German: *Denkfigur*) of development places the 'Western' economic and social status at the end of a time scale, whereas other nation states are understood to be at the pre-stages (ibid.). The imperative to become a certain model of the nation state (continuous economic growth, secular, and democratic) implies that the 'West' is the norm, while 'the rest' (still) has deficits, which make them deviant from the norm:

The own society serves as an ideal historical norm, other societies are identified to be in deficit. Simultaneous to this diagnosis, a therapy is implied: these societies need to become more modern, more productive, more secular, and more democratic – in other words: like our own society. (Ziai, 2010: 24)

It is quite striking that Ziai's analysis of the development-dispositive is congruent with both some of the stories told in films from the cinema under consideration and the academic literature that theorizes the history of this cinema. As I will #show in the film analysis in chapter 6, the notion of progress/development as described by Ziai, is one of most re(-)produced dispositives in cinema. This interesting parallel of narratives in film and scholarly productions about the history of these films is perfectly summarized by Deniz Göktürk (1999) in describing the film *Bhaji on the Beach* (dir. Gurinder Chadha, 1993, UK). The film tells the story of a group of women on a trip to an 'English' sea side resort:

Gurinder Chadha's film (...) presents the women as a diverse group which is by no means unified by common bonds to one tradition. The elderly bitch about the immorality of the young, while the visitor from Bombay is dressed in fashionable Western clothes and tells her old compatriots that home is no longer what they imagine it to be. Migrants develop new tastes and pleasures, such as having their fish and chips flavoured with hot chili powder. In relation to some Black British films of the 1990s, it has recently been argued that a shift has been taking place from the social realism of a 'cinema of duty' towards the 'pleasures of hybridity'. (Göktürk, 1999: 2f.)

This description of today's hybrid sensations (the “new tastes and pleasures”) which develop in the state of post-migration according to the linear progression of time to modernity, reminds me of the critical description Anne McClintock gives on the 'Hybrid State exhibit on Broadway': “(...) the way out of colonialism it seems, is forward. A second white word, POSTCOLONIALISM, invites you through a slightly larger door into the next stage of history, after which you emerge, fully erect, into the brightly lit and noisy HYBRID STATE.” (McClintock, 1992: 84). The exhibition – just as the accounts of cinematic history – re(-)produces “one of the most tenacious tropes of colonialism” (ibid.): time as 'progress'. Since Sarita Malik has described Black 'British' cinema with the opposing terms 'cinema of duty' versus 'pleasures of hybridity'³⁷, these dichotomous counterparts – connected to a timely development

³⁷ Originally, the term 'cinema of duty' was coined by Cameron Bailey and Sarita Malik (1996) applied it to Black and Asian 'British' cinema in her contribution *Beyond 'the cinema of duty'? The pleasures of hybridity: Black British film of the 1980s and 1990s*. It is important to remark at this point, however, that Malik was aware of the danger to theorize a teleological narrative and therefore did not preclude possible continuities over time: “There has not been a simple progress model in the history of Black British film from the 'cinema of duty' to a 'cinema of freedom.' There are aesthetic and political concerns which overlap the two, and there is nothing to suggest that, with institutional support, both types of films will not continue to be made.” (Malik, 1996: 215). According to Barbara Mennel (2002), also Hamid Naficy's analysis of a transnational discourse of exile incorporates films produced in very different times and in different continents in one analysis. Mennel herself states that “there is, to be sure, a shared concern with space, boundaries, identity, and language in both the cinema of Tevfik Başer and the young Turkish-German filmmakers” (Mennel, 2002: 137). Here the continuities are rather found in an assumed shared dealing with

from the 1970s and 80s towards the 90s up to today – are widely applied to films by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants.³⁸ Early 'German' films such as *Angst Essen Seele Auf* (*Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, dir. Rainer Werner Fassbinder, 1974)³⁹, *Shirins Hochzeit* (*Shirin's Wedding*, dir. Helma Sanders-Brahms, 1975), *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland* (*40 Sq. Meters of Germany*, dir. Tefvik Başer, 1986), or *Yasemin* (dir. Hark Bohm, 1988) are named as examples of such a 'cinema of the affected' (Burns, 2006) or 'cinema of duty' (Malik, 1996). These films were mostly produced by white 'German' *auteur* filmmakers who marked the genre of the *New German Cinema* and who are criticized for adopting a “social worker's perspective” (Göktürk 1999: 1) while producing images about 'the Turkish migrants' that mostly depict their lives as marginal, conflicted, and silenced. Even Homi Bhabha mentioned 'the Turk' (i.e. 'guest-worker') in 'Germany' in *The Location of Culture* (1994). In his brief description, the 'Turkish guest-worker', according to Bhabha, is silenced through the “foreignness of languages”, is *unheimlich* (uncanny), and is always longing for a mythic return (Bhabha, 1994: 236ff.). Stefan Reinecke notices the inevitable depiction of 'foreigners' in 'German' cinema with the duality of “silence and victimhood” (Reinecke, 1995: 14). The negative cinematic #portrayals of such sinister figures are also described as “Kino der Fremdheit” (cinema of alterity) by Georg Seeßlen (2000) or the “West-German Problemfilm” (social problem film) by Angelika Fenner (2003). They predominantly narrate problem-oriented stories “with a heavy dose of documentary realism” and aim

'diasporic/migrant' issues, such as mobility, space, and 'identity'. However, a continuing presence of Orientalist narratives, as I provide in chapter 6, has not yet been examined.

³⁸ Cf. Berghahn (2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2013); Berghahn and Sternberg (2014b); Burns (2006, 2009); Eken (2009); El Hissy (2014); Gemünden (2004); Göktürk (1998, 1999, 2002, 2007); Göktürk, Gramling, Kaes (2007); Hake and Mennel (2012); Jones (2003); Özsari (2010); Schäffler (2012); and Seeßlen (2000).

³⁹ Different scholars make diverging selections of films. Fassbinder's production – which, on a side note, initially had the working title *Alle Türken heißen Ali* (*All Turks Are Called Ali*) – is sometimes referred to as an early example of cinema with a critical approach; e.g. Göktürk (1999) refers to it as an “exceptional film because it featured a black man (Ben Hedi El-Saalem) as an object of desire and erotic projection” (ibid.: 7). While elsewhere, the same film is named as an example of the “ethnocentric” cinema that addresses “a hegemonic viewership by evoking the viewer's pity and sympathy” (Fenner, 2000: 116). According to Angelika Fenner, the protagonists of movies like *Angst Essen Seele Auf* “never really achieve(...) the status of agent or truly serve(...) as an object of identification” (ibid.).

to “bring to public attention a variety of social concerns” (Fenner, 2003: 23). Especially victimizing depictions of 'Turkish' women in the early films have attracted attention in academic opinions. For instance, Tefvik Başer's *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland* (1986), and also his later film *Abschied vom falschen Paradies* (*Farewell to False Paradise*, 1989) deal with marginalized women in confined places. The entire 1986 movie was shot in a 40 m² Hamburg apartment, where the protagonist Turna (Özay Fecht) is locked in every day when her forced-married to husband Dursun (Yaman Okay) leaves for work. A rape scene culminates her suffering until finally, Dursun dies from a heart-attack and Turna steps out of the door for the first time, which marks the end of the movie.⁴⁰

Similarly, Helma Sanders-Brahms produced an early film about the suffering of migrant women with a (white) feminist motivation. *Shirins Hochzeit* (1975)⁴¹ depicts the life of Shirin (Ayten Erten) who escapes a small central Anatolian village, where she was promised to Mahmud (Aras Ören) before he left to work in 'Germany'. When the men in the village decide over Shirin to marry another man, she flees and registers as a 'guest-worker' herself to go on a dramatic quest to find Mahmud in 'Germany'. The 'German' reality is harsh, she loses her job and her accommodation in a women worker's home. Threatened by homelessness she is talked into becoming a sex worker by a white 'German' man. As a prostitute she finally meets Mahmud in the role of a suitor who pays to sleep with her. In the end, Shirin is shot on 'German' streets and Helma Sanders-Brahms's voice-over tells about the universal female suffering while the credits run over Shirin's dead body.

⁴⁰ Başer's following film *Abschied vom falschen Paradies* depicts the life of Elif (Zühal Olcay), who is sentenced to 6 years in prison after murdering her abusive husband. Ironically, in prison she finds a 'false paradise', learns the German language and departs from the “rigid Turkish values” (official film description) she grew up with. When she finds out that she will be deported back to 'Turkey', she commits suicide. Next to the mentioned negative academic criticism for such films, Göktürk (1999) depicts their good reputation among white 'German' feminists: the film “is a good illustration of cinematic imprisonment of immigrants within the parameters of well-meaning multiculturalism feeding on binary oppositions and integrationist desires. However, Başer's treatment of female subjectivity was taken as authentic and even acclaimed by feminist critics for 'measuring the cultural no man's land which Turkish women have to live in – equally exploited and misused by German men and their compatriots'.” (Göktürk, 1999: 8).

⁴¹ Cf. Brauerhoch (1995) for an #insightful feminist decolonial critique of Helma Sanders-Brahms's film.

The heaviness of the films from the 1970s and 80s is widely #contrasted with more recent productions that are said to demarcate a turn to the so-called “pleasures of hybridity” (Göktürk, 1999):

In cinema too, migrants are gradually liberating themselves from the prison of sub-national paternalism, forging transnational alliances and evading ethnic attribution and identification through ironic role-play. *Im Juli* reminds us of the liberating pleasures of cinema, of its potential in projecting fantasies of travel, transgressing the boundaries of realist representation and performing national identities with self-conscious irony. (Göktürk, 2002: 255)⁴²

With *Im Juli* (*In July*, dir. Fatih Akin, 2000) Göktürk mentions the protagonist of this “Turkish turn”⁴³ of 'German' national cinema: star director Fatih Akin⁴⁴. Together with Michael Haneke and Krzysztof Kieślowski, he is #seen to be the director of a “multi-lingual, multi-local, European cinema on the road, which circulates on international film festivals and which is increasingly visible also in American contexts” (Göktürk, 2010: 35). Akin is widely proclaimed to have completed an assumed 'shift' from victimizing, problem-oriented images produced by white 'German' film-makers about 'Turkish' migrants towards a celebratory hybrid self-re(-)presentation by young 'Turkish-German', 'hyphenated' *auteurs*. This turn shall symbolize a generational shift in the population of migrants. The 'Young Turks' – as Berghahn describes the 'Turkish' post-migrants with an ambiguous term⁴⁵ – ostensibly

⁴² With this “prison of sub-national paternalism” Göktürk means public funding policies that preferably subsidized films oriented at migrant problems. Similarly Thomas Elsaesser says that during the 1970s and 80s “many films suggest that state-funded cinema is primarily a force for social work” (Elsaesser, 1989: 53).

⁴³ This turn has already been described for literature by Leslie Adelson (2005).

⁴⁴ Akin's made his breakthrough with the Scorsese-inspired urban thriller *Kurz und Schmerzlos* (*Short Sharp Shock*, 1998). Already six years later, he received international acclaim when his film *Gegen die Wand* (*Head-On*, 2004) was the first 'German' contribution to win the Golden Bear in the category 'Best Film' at the Berlin Film Festival in eighteen years.

⁴⁵ *The Young Turks* (*Jön Türkler*) formed the *Committee of Union and Progress* (CUP) during the Ottoman Empire and were responsible for the Armenian Genocide. It was also the CUP which brought

managed to have overcome their parents' #invisibility and silence. They are said to envisage “broader, less provincial horizons and embarking on mutual border traffic” (Göktürk, 1999: 6), are considered to be “situated in a multiplicity of urban and metropolitan environments, where they may demonstrate a new, confident mobility” (Burns, 2009: 12); they are finally “speaking back' from margin to centre” (Göktürk, 1999: 3).

#Observing this proclaimed celebratory shift with a postcolonial #lens, it is only plausible that the mute 'Oriental' comes to the 'West' and is given a voice to speak with, taking up the “burden of representation” (Shohat & Stam, 1994) within the implied narrative of clashing civilizations. The story of self-re(-)presentative pleasures, however, proves to be flawed, when we critically examine the films produced since the 1970s with a #focus on continuing Orientalist narratives up to today's productions. Later in chapter 6, I provide an alternative #reading of the cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants outside of the teleological modernity-narrative of a progressing history that leads to freedom and self(-)representation. To do so, I will #focus on the continuities and discontinuities of Orientalist narratives of femininities and masculinities in selected films. This analysis #shows that films considered as celebrating the 'pleasures of hybridity' still continue to replicate Orientalist narratives in changed frames. Overall, the chapter #shows that an analysis with a postcolonial #focus can provide #insights into the cinema under consideration that have not yet been explored due to the here described discursive frame of 'modernity through progress' in academic contributions in the field.

Furthermore, we need to question the making-of the 'migrant and diasporic cinema' genre⁴⁶ as a frame of analysis in general. The genre of 'migrant and diasporic cinema' in the 'German' context is most prominently put forward by Daniela Berghahn and

'Turkey' in an alliance with 'Germany' during WW I – an incidence that Berghahn and Sternberg (2014) mentioned to underscore the equal and longstanding 'Turkish-German' relations.

⁴⁶ As there is still a lack of #clear genre-definitions due to the small number of publications in this specific field, I consider the different terms 'Turkish-German cinema', 'migrant and diasporic cinema', 'hyphenated cinema', etc. to describe fairly the same genre. One of the reasons to infer this, are the similar selections of films that are made in elated discussions.

Claudia Sternberg's co-edited publication *European Cinema in Motion*, subtitled *Migrant and Diasporic Film in Contemporary Europe* (2014). In the first chapter, the editing authors demonstrate their awareness of the essentializing dangers of defining the genre by the racial background of the film-makers only:

(...) a considerable number of non-migrant and non-diasporic screenwriters and directors have produced films that are centrally concerned with questions of migratory and diasporic existence. By including such films (...) under the rubric migrant and diasporic *cinema*, we wish to circumvent the biographical fallacy and contend that it is not the film-maker's nationality or ethnicity which determines the classification of a production as migrant or diasporic. (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014: 16f.)

However, this initial non-ethnic definition of the genre proves to have a lack of application when we examine the selection of films throughout this and other publications. One example is especially crucial, as it occurs in several publications in the field of cinema studies. It is the fact that all films made by Fatih Akın are considered as part of the genre. This is remarkable, because the already mentioned film *Im Juli* (*In July*, 2000)⁴⁷ does not necessarily fit the genre, even with its broadest definition. Despite that Göktürk (1999) mentions the film as an example marking the shift to the new 'pleasures of hybridity', it is actually a story about the white 'German' Daniel, played by star actor Moritz Bleibtreu, who is on his way to İstanbul, where he wants to find Melek (Idil Üner) whom he briefly met in Hamburg and fell in love with. On the road he is accompanied by the white 'German' Juli (Christiane Paul), with whom he experiences a range of adventures on the road. In the end, when the two arrive in İstanbul, Daniel finally realizes that he rather wants to be with Juli after

⁴⁷ *Im Juli* is mentioned, for instance, in Jones (2003), where the film is already described as “Turkish-German cinema today” in the title; in Göktürk (2014), where she describes the film as “another example of migrant cinema hitting the road” (Göktürk, 2014: 254); or in El Hissy (2012), where it is seen as “a comical approach to intercultural encounters” (El Hissy, 2012: 203).

she has assisted his personal development from a shy trainee teacher to a cannabis smoking adventurer, who proved his masculinity by rescuing her from an invasive truck driver in his attempt to abduct Juli. Despite *Im Juli* being a road-movie, it does not remotely deal with issues of 'migration', but it rather stands in the 'Western' film-tradition depicting travel-adventures and personal growth. Ironically, the film was funded by the 'Turkish' travel agency *Argos Filmcilik Turizm* and it was screened together with an *Öğretmen* commercial (Göktürk, 2002: 255). This fact #reveals what audiences were addressed with the images depicted in *Im Juli*, which #clearly is the well-off cosmopolitan white 'German' citizen, who is allowed to enter nation states of the global 'South' with an 'access-all-areas' passport. This brings up the question, why the film is theorized as 'migrant and diasporic cinema' and what this tells us about the genre as a whole. Despite the initial promise by Berghahn and Sternberg not to define the genre by the ethnic background of the film-makers, they do not sufficiently justify why they consider *Im Juli* (or any other selected film) as part of 'migrant and diasporic cinema'. The inclusion of this film rather seems to be based on the (racial) hybridity of its producer than on a specific content and thus #reveals that the making-of this genre cannot, in fact, completely escape mechanisms of racialization. A description of the genre as incorporating a 'diasporic optic' (Moorti, 2003), a 'haptic visuality' (Marks, 2000), an 'accent' (Naficy, 2001), or – derived from W.E.B. DuBois 19th century notion about African American minorities – a 'double-consciousness' (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014b: 23) similarly presupposes a certain difference of this genre from other popular cinemas. In the end, it stays #unclear, if this difference marks the genre, because only such films are selected that prove to have this different #optic, haptic, or accent; or if it is the film-makers' specific hybrid background, which make them almost automatically inherit the diasporic #perspective; or if this specificity is only assumed and may not even be different from other cinemas. The three possible scenarios of genre-definition that I mentioned in chapter 4 might have precluded the selection of films according to my examination of the existing literature:

1. the set definition of the genre 'migrant cinema' already implies that the film-makers under investigation deal with specific questions and therefore excludes films that do not,
2. that the specific 'optic' usually occurs in any kind of cinema genre, but the academic literature tends to #focus on these issues dealing with what people perceive as 'migrant cinema',
3. or/and the authors tend to assume certain topics dealt with from specific 'optics' when they actually are not.

Unfortunately, academic theorizing in the field of cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants do not grapple with these questions of genre sufficiently. It rather seems that the selection of films is carefully made to support the argument for the above described shift to the 'pleasures of hybridity' (*Im Juli* is one of only few comedies that Akin produced and the only film with a white 'German' protagonist). The mentioned academic publications therefore contribute to the creation of a genre described with characteristics that are assumed to stem from a racial origin with terms such as 'Turkish-German', 'hyphenated', 'hybrid', and 'migration background'.

5.2 Ethnic Branding of 'Europe' – Strategies of Global Expansionism

To return to a point raised above, I will now criticize a scholarly tendency to theorize the above mentioned turn to self-re(-)presentation and 'hybridity' as resistance. This is because the assumed 'multilocal' (Göktürk, 2010: 35) backgrounds of post-migrant film-makers are considered to contest mono-cultural national 'identities', which is a notion usually connected to hegemonic discourses. However, this tendency slightly #overlooks post Berlin Wall 'European' (cinema) policies⁴⁸ to

⁴⁸ For instance, Kayhan Karaca states that the main incentive for launching the 'European' cinema funding program Eurimages in the onset of the post Berlin Wall period 1989, was the protection of cultural diversity which is considered “one of the vital ingredients of European pluralist democracy” (Karaca, 2003: 22). This cultural diversity is #seen to be in danger of destruction by the market dominance of Hollywood productions (ibid.). That is why “Both the EU and Eurimages focus heavily on multinational cooperation, networking and a general sense of 'European-ness'.”

re(-)define this mono-cultural image towards the idea of a 'European melting pot' of mixing, equal, and peaceful 'cultures', where migrants flavor their fish and chips with hot chili powder (Göktürk, 1999: 2f.). In this chapter I will take a step back from this narrative and re(-)think what we assume the hegemonic discourse actually is. I want to suggest that it is constantly shifting, incorporating ideas of multiculturalism as a means to exploit 'foreign' labor. If we take former 'British' Labour Party parliamentarian Robin Cook's popular *Chicken Tikka Massala speech* as an example, we #see how this melting pot dispositive can serve to re(-)define colonial power with an innocent metaphor of celebration:

Tonight I want to celebrate Britishness. (...) It is not their purity that makes the British unique, but the sheer pluralism of their ancestry. (...) Today's London is a perfect hub of the globe. (...) This pluralism is not a burden we must reluctantly accept. It is an immense asset that contributes to the cultural and economic vitality of our nation. Legitimate immigration is the necessary and unavoidable result of economic success, which generates a demand for labour faster than can be met by the birth-rate of a modern developed country. (Cook, 2001: n.p.)

Cook here re(-)defines 'Britishness' from the concept of a mono-cultural entity that openly excludes its Others towards a notion that pretends to have overcome its Imperial aspirations while continuing the colonial legacy with less obvious means,

(De Vinck, 2014: 336). The film funding policies go in accordance with the policy framework of the European Commission which is summarized in the motto *Unity in Diversity*. It #seems, as if the diversity-argument is meant to function as a counter-force against the influence of 'U.S.' global market dominance. Jobst Plog, former director of the 'German' public broadcasting service NDR #illustrates this point perfectly in his speech for the 25th anniversary of 'Eurimages' in 2014: "Eurimages was a block in the construction of what was then called 'Fortress Europe'. The Fund was created partly to protect us from the invasion of American productions from Hollywood, from big-budget commercial films. (...) Eurimages is nothing but an instrument of DEMOCRACY since it reflects our multi-cultural, multiconfessional, multi-racial societies." ("President Speech, Gala Dinner, 14th October 2014, Palais Rohan – Strasbourg" Council of Europe, accessed July 28, 2015: https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eurimages/Source/News-headlines/25th%20Anniversary%20of%20Eurimages_President.pdf).

e.g. global development and lending policies or the exploitation of foreign precarious labor. This change of definitions in Cook's speech powerfully connects ideas of multiculturalism with an economic argument, which I will explore below.

Academics like Deniz Göktürk, Daniela Berghahn, and Rob Burns, however, assume that the movie productions of the 'next generation' of migrants can be theorized to have a counter-hegemonic power that elevates the 'Turkish-German' (post-)migrants to a level playing field with white 'Germans' and therefore succeed in 'mixing' and 'transitioning'. Göktürk's (and others') point of departure is a criticism of national purity, which she #contrasts with hybridity as a possibility of resistance that overcomes 'dutiful' multiculturalism:

I believe that by drawing attention to processes of cultural mix and transition, we can disrupt notions of cultural purity which are prevalent, not only in the hegemonic discourse of nation states, but also in the discourse of marginal diasporic communities. By addressing hybridity as a source of strength and pleasure, rather than lack and trouble we might eventually move beyond dutiful performances of multi-culturalism and community bonding grounded in restrictive notions of cultural purity and rootedness.

(Göktürk, 1999: 3)

However, contrary to Göktürk's point of departure, I suggest that multiculturalism has already passed its 'dutiful' moral status and advanced to a powerful economic argument. As can be #seen in Cook's speech, cultural purity no longer defines the “hegemonic discourse of nation states” in the leading countries of 'Europe' – at least not in every political agenda and not consistently over time. Instead, it seems that newer political frames have already incorporated the notion of hybridity as a source of pleasure. Therefore, we need to re(-)consider both the question of resistance and how much the ideals of anti-racist activism are already been highjacked by fluctuating hegemonic discourses. Do the films produced since the 1990s and their celebrated

hybridity really talk back to power as bell hooks (1989) called the liberating practice of discursive resistance? Are the films by the 'Turkish-German' post-migrants comparable to decidedly post/decolonial film-makers such as Trinh Minh-ha? Are they resisting categorizations, “always working at the borderlines of several shifting categories, stretching out the limits of things” (Trinh, 2012: 137)? As a film-maker who is celebrated for a decolonial approach to cinema by postcolonial theorists, Trinh's insights into the means of a *successful* cinematic resistance are helpful to explore the question of counter-hegemonic strategies here. Trinh states that her work attempts to go beyond a simple “anti-repressive rhetoric of modernist ideology”, because she found that a “straight counterdiscourse is no longer threatening” (ibid.). Taking this thought as a starting point, we need to ask, if the 'pleasures of hybridity'⁴⁹ that Deniz Göktürk, Daniela Berghahn, Barbara Mennel, Rob Burns, Georg Seeßlen, and many more consider a threat to hegemony, is not, in fact, merely such a 'straight counterdiscourse' with limited possibilities of resistance and with the danger of hegemonic complicity.

I would like to strongly disagree with the mentioned tendency within academic literature assuming this trend to 'pleasure', not only because the very notion of pleasure has already been corrupted by today's #manifestation of neo-liberal capitalism, as Slavoj Žižek has made #clear in *A Pervert's Guide to Ideology* (dir. Sophie Fiennes, 2012). But also when having in mind that a simple counter-discourse, as Trinh says, does not really pose a threat to the hegemony of a re(-)imagined 'Europe'. On the contrary, these new hybrid pleasures might even contribute to a 'Europe' that is increasingly imagined as a diverse melting pot of different cultures living together peacefully. Difference becomes an economic asset in this context. Not

⁴⁹ If we take a #look at the examples mentioned in these contributions, we can #observe that the celebrating character of 'hybridity' is widely located at the 'culture clash comedy'. Indeed, there is a notable trend towards comedy; *Berlin in Berlin* (dir. Sinan Çetin, 1993), *Ich Chef, du Turnshuh* (*Me Boss, You Sneaker*, dir. Hussi Kutlucan, 1998), *Im Juli* (*In July*, dir. Fatih Akın, 2000), *Kebab Connection* (dir. Anno Saul, 2004), *Evet, Ich will!* (*Evet, I Do!*, dir. Sinan Akkuş, 2008), *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* (*Almanya: Welcome to Germany*, dir. Nesrin & Yasemin Şamdereli, 2011), *Türkisch für Anfänger* (*Turkish for Beginners*, dir. Bora Dağtekin, 2012), *Fack Ju Göhte* (*Fuck You, Goethe*, dir. Bora Dağtekin, 2013) are only a few examples of a meaningful increase of comical stories within this genre since the 1990s. These recent productions are said to play with stereotypes and #demonstrate “moments of playful irony” (Göktürk, 2010: 252).

only since the diversity of 'human resources' has been made profitable in globalized financial markets, the *EU* started to fund cultural productions which re(-)define the image of 'Europe', #mirroring the global ease with which 'Western' transnational corporations (TNCs) monopolize markets around the globe. The cinema by/about people who migrated from 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants is not the only place where “notions of cultural purity which are prevalent (...) in the hegemonic discourse of nation states” get disrupted, as Göktürk said in the above quote. It is no coincidence that the end of the nation state as we know it ('pure', monocultural, and local) is widely proclaimed, because the global market was much faster in adopting to the new challenges that technological advancements posed in the onset of globalization.

A critical film analysis that takes these tendencies into account, needs to depict both the counter-hegemonic, resisting images as well as moments of complicity and re(-)production of 'European' predominance. It also needs to re(-)think the current literature taking up well-known postcolonial critiques. We should therefore add to Berghahn and Sternberg's (2014) analysis of cultural productions of migrants in the global 'North' a #perspective that examines complicity and powers of re(-)presentation, as depicted by Nikita Dhawan's words that I cited in chapter 4. When Berghahn and Sternberg use Mary Louise Pratt's concept of 'contact zones', which are “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived across the globe today” (Pratt, 1992: 4), and apply this notion to migrants in 'Germany', we need not to follow this analogy without reservations:

Even though the transculturation which occurs in the contact zone refers originally to the encounter between the coloniser and the colonised, the concept extends to the deterritorialised diasporas which developed in the wake of decolonisation. (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014b: 30)

Here, we should keep in mind Dhawan's interpretation of Spivak's call for caution: Spivak “unfolds socio- and geopolitical situatedness as complicity and asks her implied readers, the economic and political migrants to the North, to rethink themselves as possible agents of exploitation, not as victims” (Dhawan, 2007: n.p.). Being such an implied #reader lets me ask whether the teleological narrative of a migrant cinematic history as a story of progress and freedom towards self-re(-)presentation might be such a complicity in the colonial lie which claims to lead its colonized Other to freedom, education, #enlightenment, and so on. This colonial image seems to find another #manifestation now, as 'Europe' needs to redefine itself in order to adjust to globalization and the 'growing together of cultures'. Similarly, Gayatri Spivak repeatedly underscores the dangers of unquestioned multiculturalism:

A strengthened multicultural U.S. subject, the newest face of postcoloniality, still does nothing for globality and may do harm. The point remains worth repeating, alas. (Spivak, 2010: 70, footnote 21)

Instead of celebrating the diversity and pluralism of 'Europe', Spivak and other postcolonial theorists call attention to an unquestioned analogy between subalterns in the global 'South' and migrants in the 'North'.

When Berghahn and Sternberg (2014) mention Ella Shohat and Robert Stam's (1994) call to unthink Eurocentrism, they state they “too, are eager to overcome” Eurocentric thinking (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014: 4). However, when they then go on to *eagerly* assume great counter-hegemonic possibilities of the 'World Cinema' genre, we need to rethink what Eurocentrism is and in what forms it presents itself today. If we want to participate in the project to provincialize 'Europe', as put forward by Dipesh Chakrabarty, we need to address the “everyday habits of thought” (Chakrabarty, 2007: 4). It requires to re(-)think the concepts we use to theorize, such as equality, democracy, citizenship, the state, the individual, the subject, etc. which “all bear the burden of European thought and history” (ibid.). There is room to assume that Berghahn and Sternberg's (2014) attempt to unthink Eurocentrism is limited in

success and infer that what they call a “growing cultural empowerment of ethnic minorities within the nation state” which “challenge[s] Eurocentric assumptions about national identity and national cinema” (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014b: 21), might rather be a strategy to partially incorporate (some) minorities into a constantly changing form of hegemonic power. As I pointed out in chapter 4.2, the cinema under consideration as well as multiculturalist discourses are far from giving voice to all kinds of minorities, but rather homogenize 'the Turkish migrants' to a predominantly Sunni Anatolian group, whose children finally adopt values of 'freedom' by gaining a voice to speak thanks to 'Western' democratic principles.

Interestingly, we find an ethnic marketing argument in Berghahn and Sternberg's call for a #revision of terms such as 'accented cinema' (Naficy, 1996), 'Third cinema' (Shohat & Stam, 1994), 'postcolonial hybrid films', 'intercultural cinema', 'transnational cinema', 'hyphenated identity cinema', 'cinéma beur', 'cinéma du métissage', etc. towards a re(-)theorization of the genre into the broader term of 'World Cinema'⁵⁰. To Thomas Elsaesser's criticism of 'World Cinema' as promoting “self-

⁵⁰ It shall be noted here, that previously the authors have refrained from using the term 'postcolonial' because of its ambiguity. A concern they do not raise when applying such all-encompassing terminology like 'World Cinema' and 'World Music'. #Disregarding the reservations that Shohat and Stam (1994) have uttered, Berghahn and Sternberg simply align the concept of 'Third Cinema' to the broad category of 'World Cinema'. Paraphrasing Shohat and Stam, they conclude: “(...) in fact, there has been a notable shift away from a politics of resistance to a 'politics of pleasure' (1994: 29), reflected in the use of music, humour, sexuality and other stratagens of depoliticisation and mainstreaming. However, many Third World Cinema scholars would argue that, once productions cross the borderline to mainstream commercial cinema, they betray the radical political and aesthetic agenda of Third Cinema and are no longer part of that tradition. Nevertheless, those diasporic hybrid films can still be recuperated under the concept of World Cinema.” (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014: 36). Using the terms 'World Cinema' and 'migrant and diasporic cinema' interchangeably, the authors remark that 'migrant and diasporic' film-makers' #focus on 'identity' and 'identity' politics is a solution to homogenizing effects of, for instance, 'U.S.'-Americanization. Similarly, so-called “Euro-Puddings' and certain international co-productions downplay issues of national, ethnic and cultural identity” (ibid.: 22). However, Daniela Berghahn previously dedicated an entire chapter to a comparison between the 'culture-clash' romantic comedies *Evet, ich will!* (*Evet, I Do!*, dir. Sinan Akkuş, 2008) with the 'U.S.' production *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (dir. Joel Zwick, 2002) in another publication (Berghahn, 2012). In her analysis, she reiterates the already mentioned narrative of progress and freedom as a basis to theorize the history of wedding images in 'migrant and diasporic' film, which started with stories of archaic forced marriages “irreconcilable with Western notions of romantic love and individual self-determination” (Berghahn, 2012: 19) and developed into more recent films which “celebrate inter-ethnic romance” (ibid.). It remains questionable, if the new 'culture-clash' comedies – a German term meaning a 'fish-out-of-water comedy film' about cultures, mostly depicting cultural clichés and stereotypes in a comical way – are ways to overcome the flaws of multiculturalism. In the end, they might merely

exoticization, in which the ethnic (...) expose themselves, under the guise of self-expression, to the gaze of the benevolent other (i.e. Western audiences)” (Elsaesser, 2005: 509f.), the two editing authors respond:

These cynical remarks seem to denounce self-othering as an exploitative and derogatory practice. We also need to acknowledge, however, that (...) the rapidly growing interest in World Cinema in the West translates into an enormous opportunity for hitherto marginalised film-makers and productions (...). (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014: 39)

They go on to make the argument, that 'migrant and diasporic' cinemas are an opportunity for rebranding in a “constantly shrinking” market for 'European' cinema⁵¹:

In a cultural climate with a voracious appetite for 'ethnic' and 'fusion' products such as music and cuisine from around the world, European cinema is well advised to jump on the World Cinema bandwagon, utilising the exotic appeal of the other to rebrand itself. (...) Their competitive advantage and creative distinctiveness lie in their 'double consciousness', their 'polycentric vision' (Shohat and Stam 1994) and their 'dialogic imagination' (Mercer 1994) (...). (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014: 40)

With this praise for ethnic branding in order to save 'European' productions a space in the world market, the authors unintentionally underscore Spivak's call for caution

re(-)produce racist stereotypes as a source for humor. The costs for this pleasure and celebration of difference remains with the marginalized groups.

⁵¹ Really, the market share for 'European' productions is slowly, but constantly growing due to the influence of added value that comes from 'Europe'-wide cultural funding by *Eurimages* and *MEDIA*. According to the *European Audiovisual Observatory* data of 2012, 'Germany' is among the countries with a significant increase of market share with national productions (De Vinck, 2014: 336). It seems that 'European' policies try actively to fight 'U.S.' market dominance in 'Europe', despite the ongoing problems in “crossing borders within and beyond Europe” (ibid.).

and my argument that images of 'Europe' are adjusting to new global market forces. Despite using terms from postcolonial critics, they entirely depart from a critical analysis when it comes to mechanisms of the global market economy and adjustment policies by the *EU*.

In this chapter I have #illustrated that the tendency to celebrate hybridity in current academic productions in the field of cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants fail to take a critical stance towards the multicultural re(-)invention of 'Europe' to fit global market dynamics. In the following sub-chapter, the question if the Bhabhaian term hybridity in this work is thought of rather as an 'in-between' will be discussed.

5.3 Homi Bhabha's Hybridity as an In-Between

In this sub-chapter I will now discuss why an analysis that unquestionably celebrates hybridity as a form of cinematic resistance usually does not go beyond a strong notion of 'identity' as Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000) phrase it. To underscore my criticism of the celebratory approach to hybridity, which often is rather theorized as an 'in-between' two distinct locations, I will depict Katherine Pratt Ewing's (2006a)⁵² stance in this matter. Ewing's anthropological #perspective on cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants leads her to doubt prevailing applications of Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity, claiming that it does not go beyond the 'identity' politics of multiculturalism.⁵³ According to Ewing, the celebration of hybridity in

⁵² Ewing is only one of various critics of the term, but her #focus on cinematic productions by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants helps to shed #light on concepts of hybridity in this particular context.

⁵³ However, Ewing also remarks that a simple rejection of the concept of hybridity is not possible as “it has nevertheless become a part of popular culture and, along with the principle of multiculturalism, an ideological force in political discourse” (Ewing, 2006: 266). For Ewing, hybridity is not merely an analytical concept that can be discarded and replaced with a better idea, but it now is a prevailing discursive figure that is “particularly visible in cinema images produced both by German filmmakers and by filmmakers of Turkish background” (ibid.: 285). Therefore, she calls for a re(-) conceptualization of the term with a #focus on the micropolitics of everyday life that takes into account the multiple positionings and contradictory situations of the people who are usually referred to as 'hybrids' (ibid.: 286). Such an approach can pay justice to the heterogeneity of people who migrated countries and find themselves at the margins of society and it underscores individual differences in negotiating this marginal position. For this paper, Ewing's discussion of hybridity is

popular culture and some academic writing functions as a means of multiculturalist politics that disseminate invested notions of cultural difference:

Focusing on representations of the cultural practices of Turks in Germany in social policy literature, the media, and cinema, I argue that an ideology based on the assumption of cultural difference and the celebration of hybridity as a strategy for the mediation of this difference actually makes the process of integration more difficult. (Ewing, 2006: 267)

For the discussion here it is especially interesting that Ewing identifies hybridity as part of the social worker discourse⁵⁴ which she locates in the social realism of earlier cinematic productions. While scholars like Berghahn (2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2013), Berghahn and Sternberg (2014a), Göktürk (1998, 1999, 2002, 2007), and Burns (2006, 2009) identify the celebration of hybridity as part of the turn towards the “politics of pleasure” (Shohat & Stam, 1994: 29) in the new age of 'Turkish-German cinema' that started in the 1990s, Ewing #shows us a different conceptualization of cinema history. Her analysis rather #reveals a continuity of the notion of the hybrid that finds its roots in the social work approaches of earlier film productions such as *Yasemin* (dir. Hark Bohm, 1988). As I #showed above, Berghahn and Sternberg (2014) most prominently #contrast these earlier films with a new trend to overcome confined notions of social realism with new pleasures of hybridity. However, according to Ewing's analysis, this notion of hybridity is the very essence of social realist depictions that have found their way into the political realm through notions of

of crucial relevance, whereas the alternative she provides is more applicable to #interviews and people's self-descriptions in oral narratives rather than for the images in cinematic productions which this thesis analyzes.

⁵⁴ To exemplify how the trope of hybridity leads to misunderstandings and homogenizations, Ewing describes the “competing myths of the Turkish woman” (Ewing, 2006: 268) in what she analyzes as three different discourses: 1. the discourse of 'German' social workers, which was made popular by “the limited repertoire of images of Turkish immigrants constructed by filmmakers in the 1980s” (ibid.: 272) and similarly determined the lived experiences of women (ibid.: 270ff.), 2. “the rural Turkish discourse” (ibid.: 276ff.), and 3. the Islamic discourse put forward by “several Turkish Islamic groups in Germany” (ibid.: 268).

multiculturalism. Ewing #shows that the emphasis on cultural difference in the social service sector made the celebration of hybridity a crucial element:

(...) the provision of social services emphasizes the importance of recognizing cultural difference. Not only has there been government sponsorship of a youth culture that celebrates hybridized art forms (...), but both state and private welfare organizations have also produced ethnic and cultural differences where they otherwise would not have been salient (...). This process gave rise to a complex administrative apparatus of counseling centers, support systems, and learning courses that reinforced cultural difference along the lines of language and religion. Migrants were no longer dealt with in their social roles as workers or family members or whether they were unemployed, homeless, pregnant, school failures, alcoholics, or drug addicts, but as bearers of a cultural identity and therefore representative of their national culture. (Ewing, 2006: 272)

From Ewing's analysis I conclude that the here applied notion of hybridity can only reinstate difference as it is used as a marker of a location 'in-between' two disparate 'cultures'.⁵⁵ Similarly the term 'integration', which dominates current debates on multiculturalism in 'Germany' at the moment, is not only a call for merging but also presupposes a deep chasm of difference between two entities that needs to be overcome. Ewing #demonstrates how this multiculturalist discourse, while claiming to overcome differences, presupposes the idea of cultural difference in the first place:

⁵⁵ Floya Anthias (1998) made a similar argument in her discussion of Stuart Hall's definition of "the diaspora experience" in which he relied on the terms 'difference' and 'hybridity' (Hall, 1990: 235). Anthias made the critical stance that Hall's definition is based on racialization, as it "reinserts a black subject" (Anthias, 1998: 560). In general, Anthias's critique of applications of the term 'diaspora' is analogous to the examination of the terms 'identity' and 'hybridity' in this thesis.

In German public discourse, the trope of hybridity operates as a mediator between the irreconcilable opposition of Turkish and Islamic traditional values with modern democratic values. A prime figure of mediation is the modern Turkish youth who manages to succeed in German society as a cultural hybrid. (Ewing, 2006: 274)

Ewing also makes the point that this discourse on hybridity as 'in-between' is especially harmful when it comes to young migrant women who find themselves in difficult situations which are discursively marked as an instance of cultural difference. What I will call the 'break-free' metaphor in the analysis in chapter 6 is one of the main depictions of young 'Turkish' hybrid femininities in popular culture. Ewing underscores that this “theme of the oppressed young woman” (ibid.: 275) marks a continuity throughout the history of cinematic productions by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. Despite Ewing also admitting a certain change in newer productions to a “new flexibility” (ibid.), she simultaneously points out that the idea of hybridity as a state of 'in-between' is still predominant and that also the more recent films “continue to be shaped by these founding dichotomies” (ibid.). For instance, *Gegen die Wand* (*Head-On*, dir. Fatih Akin, 2004) is based on the story of Sibel (Sibel Kekilli) who wants to escape the confinements of her oppressive family, which is why she first attempts suicide and then formally marries Cahit (Birol Ünel) to 'break free' from the influence her family hold over her life. Despite the film having certain elements which resist traditional notions from the social work #perspective (for instance, it refrains from depicting 'Germany' as a metropolitan and 'Turkey' as a rural archaic place), Ewing considers *Gegen die Wand* as an example of more recent cinema productions that nevertheless “do not escape a reification of Bhabha's 'third space': they create a bounded category that is betwixt and between, in which the hybrid is caught and readily marginalized” (ibid.: 275). This reification of Bhabhaian terms like 'hybridity' and 'third space' have created an imperative for young women who struggle with the gendered restrictions that are imposed on them by their families, to overcome the

chasm between dichotomous 'cultures' and break with their family to successfully 'escape' into 'freedom'. In depicting films and #interviews about/with young women who left home at an early age, Ewing pinpoints that underlying polarizing notions of cultural difference foreclose the possibility of reconciliation between daughters and their families which is a significant constraint on their possible actions (ibid.: 283). In the following chapter I will #demonstrate how the 'break-free' metaphor is a continuity in images of migrant femininities and, following Ewing, that the celebration of hybridity has not significantly diminished the dominance of this image. Furthermore, I consider the bridge as a metaphoric example for the trope of hybridity, implying simultaneously connection and divide. In this discussion I will elaborate on possible alternative #readings of the metaphoric bridge, which is also applicable to the concept of hybridity.

There is evidence that current scholarly productions in the field of cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants, re(-)produce a notion of hybridity as a place 'in-between'. Before I name these examples I want to remark that I understand Homi Bhabha's work about hybridity and third space as leaving enough room for various interpretations of the terms. In this chapter, however, I depict and criticize a particular understanding of hybridity as 'in-between' which has become dominant in multiculturalist politics and popular culture. An adoption of this dichotomous understanding of hybridity into scholarly work has led to hegemonic complicity of scholars in multiculturalist discourses, instead of developing the notion of hybridity to become a tool of decolonial resistance. As Floya Anthias has elaborated elsewhere, the existence of hybridity alone, also when not understood as a possessive attribute, “need not necessarily lead (...) to changing ethnic solidarities or the diminution of ethnocentrism and racism” (Anthias, 2008: 10). This means that hybridity cannot automatically be thought of as anti-racist and/or anti-hegemonic. She is not the only scholar who pinpointed such a critical stance to terminology. Ewing names a range of existing critiques of the term itself (Adelson, 2001; Werbner & Modood, 1997; Young, 1995), but I prefer to #focus on the criticism of a specific polarizing notion of

hybridity without foreclosing other possible, more decolonial #readings of Bhabha's book *The Location of Culture* (1994). While the most popular interpretation of Bhabha's hybridity is that it attempts to make instances #visible where colonial regimes have failed to produce fixed 'identities' based on racial difference (Loomba, 2005: 92), many scholars who write about the cinema under consideration here tend to re(-)produce this “Manichean allegory” (JanMohamed, 1985: 60) by using the term as a proof of two or more distinct 'cultures' that need to be 'bridged'. The hybrid 'identity', in these interpretations, tends to be an essence, which accounts for a certain failure to (re-)consider 'identity' and 'difference' as constructed, as Stuart Hall has advocated for (Hall, 1996: 447). Hall, however, also notes, that terms cannot simply be semantically changed at will for anti-racist politics – the signifier for terms such as 'ethnicity', 'difference', and 'culture' cannot infinitely slide (ibid.): “We still have a great deal of work to do to *decouple* ethnicity, as it functions in the dominant discourse, from equivalence with nationalism, imperialism, racism and the state (...)” (ibid.). For the analysis here I cast constructive doubt on the current scholarship which elevates the cinematic 'pleasures of hybridity' to the level of anti-hegemonic resistance, and does not succeed in *decoupling* the notion of hybridity from colonial and (neo-)imperial notions of diversity and multiculturalism. In the following, I will give a few examples, where hybridity is already thought of as *decoupled* and resisting hegemonic discourses. A conclusion prematurely made as my own analysis #shows.

For instance, in the above mentioned publication by Berghahn and Sternberg (2014a) the two editing authors make #clear that they connect hybridity to 'cultural identity' as well as to resistance. In their discussion of Hamid Naficy's term 'accented cinema' (Naficy, 2001) and Laura Marks's notion of the 'intercultural cinema' (Marks, 2000) they #show that such terms are widely used in discussions of what they term 'migrant and diasporic cinema' in 'Europe':

Like Naficy's accented cinema, Marks's intercultural cinema contains the notion of resistance, which is connected with the hybrid cultural identity of the film-makers. (...) She places emphasis on 'culture' rather than 'nation', because commonly

the exchange is between cultures (...) that coexist and mingle in one nation state. (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014b: 25)

Interestingly, the instance of resistance is #seen here as connected to the “hybrid cultural identity of the film-makers”. The idea of resistance – which I interpret as a resistance to hegemonic power – I conclude is hollowed out by a de-politicized connection to essentialized 'identity' (or: strong notion of 'identity' according to Brubaker & Cooper (2000)). It is not anymore the actions of (anti-racist) politics that are thought of as bringing the margins to the center, but rather the perceived 'identity' of artists which automatically implies resistance. In such scholarly work, the mere existence of so-called migrants in 'Europe' is thought of as unsettling for hegemonic constructions of racial purity. Göktürk interprets Homi Bhabha's work in the same publication, and underscores this idea that the existence of 'foreigners' in 'Europe' lead to a re(-)conceptualization of the 'nation':

Bhabha and other post-colonial critics have generated an understanding of the status of border-crossers and migrant populations as a productive provocation of the concept of a pure national culture. The presence of foreigners is here acknowledged as a challenge to imagine new narratives of the nation from its margins. (Göktürk, 2014: 248)

While Göktürk #clearly makes a stance against the politics of multiculturalism, her analysis implies, similarly to multiculturalist ideas, that re(-)representatives with a 'diverse' background bring the margins to the center. A discussion of the politics of re(-)presentation and the role of migrants from the global 'South'/(former) colonies in 'Europe' as possible actors of hegemonic discourses is unfortunately absent from this celebration of 'migrant film-makers'.

Connecting to my previous discussion about notions of 'identity' in chapter 2, I also cast doubt on the understanding of hybridity as a space 'in-between' as this results from a strong, i.e. essentializing notion of 'identity'. As I #showed in mentioning

Ewing's counter-arguments on the term, hybridity as 'in-between' implies two distinct locations between which exists a somewhat free-floating space. The notion of the 'third space' leaves the idea of the first and second space untouched and unpronounced, but necessarily presupposed in this current discussion. The Other yet again contributes to the construction of the self. In this analysis I want to ask if the celebration of the 'in-between' in 'Europe' is only another, more fashionable way to celebrate the self in opposition. The filmic metaphor of the bridge perfectly summarizes this problem when we take it as an image of multiculturalist politics. While today's 'Europe' #focuses on 'crossing' and celebrates the connection that the bridge makes between disparate 'identities', it found a less threatening means to define 'cultures' (which implies 'races', 'ethnicities', and 'difference') as distinct. The bridge connects what is perceived as not otherwise connected. 'The hybrid film-maker' in this metaphor is only a token to prove flexibility (through the trope of *motion*) and crossing in the new global, 'diverse' 'Europe'. She does not, however, necessarily challenge, unsettle, or resist hegemonic narratives.

Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez is the only contributing scholar to *Migrant Cinema in Motion*, who gave voice to her doubts of such an understanding of hybridity as 'in-between' with her criticism of a major voice in the field of cinema by/about people who migrated 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan, Georg Seeßlen:

German film critic Georg Seeßlen (2000) claims that, since the 1990s, European films about migration and multiculturalism have adopted a new perspective. In Germany, he notes, directors Fatih Akın, Thomas Arslan, Kutluğ Ataman, Ayşe Polat and Yüksel Yavuz have developed a 'cinema of two cultures', emphasising the ordinariness of multiculturalism and hybrid identities. Seeßlen interprets Homi Bhabha's notion of 'hybridity' as 'cultural mixing' and 'living between cultures'. For Bhabha, however, hybridity is not just about the fusion of cultures. Rather it represents continuous and discontinuous processes of identification, dis-identification and re-

identification, a 'Third Space', which questions and transforms national identity. (Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 2014: 114)

Referring to Bhabha (1994: 38), Gutiérrez Rodríguez remarks that an understanding of hybridity as a space between a duality, as Seeßlen and many others promote, is not necessarily what Bhabha intended with this term.⁵⁶

On other occasions, the buzzword 'hybridity' with its most popular understanding as a space between two, finds application when it is not necessarily helpful for the development of an argument. If we have a #look at scholarly literature outside of 'Germany', for instance, Özgür Yaren (Ankara University) gives very productive #insights into queer migrant cinema in 'Europe'. Yaren, despite describing the term as 'in-between' initially, later gradually shifts this understanding of hybridity taking concepts of Queer theory into account. Yaren develops his notion of hybridity towards something fluid and shifting rather than something fixed between two distinct categories:

Migrants and citizens of postcolonial countries have unavoidably hybrid identities. Referring to postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha's term, they are somewhere 'in-between' their homeland and new land; original culture and colonial culture (127, 219)⁵⁷. Queer identities share similar hybrid features in the realm of social gender. By quitting the predefined gender roles and transgressing the hetero-normative borders, they also locate themselves in-between. Being in-between is a trans-identical situation. There is no certain formula which leads hybridity. The hybrid may locate itself closer to one of its various references or it can shape itself in (...) a 'third space' (Bhabha 218). It is not fixed in a particular location, either. It can transform, move between its

⁵⁶ For this reason, Gutiérrez Rodríguez makes use of an alternative approach by Fernando Ortiz (1995), who works with the term 'transculturation'.

⁵⁷ Yaren references Homi Bhabha (1994).

different references or lean in another direction altogether. (...) As a matter of fact, the features of hybrid and trans-identitcal identities mentioned above can easily be attributed to the very notion of identity. Once we admit that every identity is perpetually reforming itself, we can unhesitatingly argue that there is no 'pure' identity beyond hybridity (...). (Yaren, 2009: 300)

Such an understanding of hybridity as unfixed, constantly moving, and as constantly changing locations #focuses on the characteristic 'trans' rather than on 'double' that both can be inferred from Bhabha's term. This understanding can be helpful to avoid homogenizing and a certain reification of the experience of migration and the notion of hybrid 'identity'.⁵⁸ Despite this alternative notion of hybridity which tries to circumvent a possible homogenizing outcome of hybridity-talk, the rather fixed 'identity'-related understanding of hybridity still finds wide application. This is why I cast doubt on the unquestioned application of the term, especially when a 'hybrid identity' is automatically thought to have the powers of resistance. Such notions only support 'identity'-political maneuvers and depoliticize the very notion of resistance itself.

⁵⁸ Göktürk even called for caution in this respect as early as 1999: "While celebrating this 'third space', however, we ought to be cautious not to forget about local specificities and differences as we create a third box for 'mixed pickles' and group all the hybrids together in a space of 'in betweenness'" (Göktürk, 1999: 4). Unfortunately, such calls for caution are still relatively soft-spoken and/or unheard.

6. An Analysis Against the Grain

Based on the previous discussion on some of the terminology used in scholarly work about 'migrant and diasporic' cinema, I now provide an analysis of selected films that tries to pay justice to all raised points of criticism.

First, I will explore some assumed characteristics that are commonly ascribed to the 'Turkish-German cinema' genre. One of such characteristics, which might be derived prematurely, is that so-called 'hyphenated' film-makers predominantly deal with issues of motion and mobility due to their assumed 'identity' as migrants or hybrids. I conclude that this violent association of film-makers' identification with mobility precludes #reflections on how the myth of unlimited mobility within 'European' borders can be re(-)produced by these film-makers. My previous #reflections on the power of re(-)presentation and complicity will guide this first part of the film analysis.

Then I will come back to the above discussed notions of hybridity (as 'double' or as 'trans') that are #reflected in metaphors of the bridge in films. I want to suggest that the metaphoric bridge does not automatically imply a departure from multiculturalist politics, but – as it holds true for Bhabha's term hybridity as well – there are possible alternative understandings. To make this point #visible, I will #show that the bridge can indeed re(-)produce assumptions on a dichotomy of two reified entities/mainlands that need a celebratory bridging through hybrids. This multiculturalist #reading on the metaphoric bridge can, however, be opposed with a feminist decolonial notion, as exemplified by Gloria Anzaldúa and Analouse Keating's anthology *this bridge called my back*.

The final part of the film analysis will provide a #counter-reading of the previously criticized hypothesis of cinema history as a story progress to self-re(-)presentative freedom. I will doubt the idea that more recent film productions tend to resist hegemonic discourses in 'Europe' by making #visible the continuities of Orientalist narratives on femininities and masculinities. My analysis will #demonstrate that also cinematic depictions – as one site of hegemonic, post/colonial discourses – contribute

to the exploitation of migrant (and post-migrant) labor through the production of certain images. To do so, the analysis exemplifies an unconventional #reading together of cinematic images and labor market policies. It can be said that cinematic masculinities, in comparison to femininities, prove to have a greater range of possible characteristics. The possibility of a generational shift from the archaic, oppressive father figure to the rational, bourgeois son, however, still implies an Orientalist frame of time as progress to 'Western' (universal) values.

6.1 The Myth of Mobility

One of the reasons why the existence of migrants in 'Europe' is #seen as unsettling for hegemonic notions of the 'nation' in academic work about the cinema under consideration, is the fact that migrants are considered to stand for mobility and motion. 'Motion' in this discussion is #contrasted with an assumed stagnancy and rigidity of national cultures (in this case 'Germanness'). The fact that the already mentioned publication on the so-called 'migrant and diasporic' cinema in 'Europe' is called *Migrant Cinema in Motion* already exemplifies current discussions that #focus on an element of motion, as in moving images, crossing bridges, or transgressing borders. This element of motion is #viewed as the crux of resistance to *rigid* concepts of nation states:

Traditional concepts of culture assume a locally rooted, self-contained system of shared practices, rituals and beliefs. The mobility of migrants stands in critical contrast to any such closed system and opens up what Bhabha terms a 'third space' of transnational translation. Constructions and appropriations which arise in definitions of culture on the basis of national or ethnic membership are thus destabilised in favour of scenarios which allow for mobile citizens. (Göktürk, 2002: 248)

My goal in this sub-chapter is to unsettle this assumed dichotomy between rigid 'national cultures' versus the supposedly resistant mobility of migrants, which takes

the above discussion of the possibility of resistance or complicity a step further and connects the arguments made there to the films discussed in this thesis. If opinions about globalization – as controversial as they may be – have one thing in common, then it is the fact that increased mobility is a crucial element of globalization. The EC treaty defines four types of mobility – the 'four freedoms', which is the free movement of people, goods, services and capital.⁵⁹ Speaking about the *EU* and 'Germany' in particular with a decolonial thrust, the most pertinent question to grapple with is whether there are possible power differences between mobile subjects. Colonialism itself grounds global expansionism as a highly unequal endeavor of mobility, and today we can #observe these unequal mobilities (note the plural) as a means of *EU*-policies. Chandra Mohanty similarly identified unequal access to mobility in the globalized neo-liberal world: “while neoliberal states facilitate mobility and cosmopolitanism (travel across borders) for some economically privileged communities, it is at the expense of the criminalization and incarceration (the holding in place) of impoverished communities.” (Mohanty, 2013: 970). For the 'German' context we need to consider the judicial grounds that determine the mobility of migrants with 'Turkish' passports in #contrast to 'German' citizens. The possibility for migrants in 'Germany' to receive 'German' citizenship only came with a vital limitation: double citizenship became almost impossible with the 2000 change of naturalization policies.⁶⁰ The prohibition of double citizenship excludes cases of migrants from member states of the *EU*, what automatically produces a vital inequality of mobile subjects from within and outside *EU*-borders.⁶¹ People who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan suffered under this law

⁵⁹ “General Policy Framework” European Commission, accessed July 28, 2015, http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/top_layer/index_en.htm.

⁶⁰ The law was changed with the hope that 'Turkish' loyalty to their national citizenship is high enough to prevent them from naturalizing as 'Germans'. After this change, non-naturalized 'guest-workers' and their families faced the fear of deportation. This was certainly one of many strategies to stop migration from 'Turkey' after the recession of the economy in the 1970s and the overload of the immigrant labor market in the midst of the asylum and immigration paranoia of post Berlin Wall period in the 1990s.

⁶¹ It also privileges those who naturalized according to the *Jus sanguinis* ('right of blood') principle, such as so-called “Spätaussiedler” (ethnic 'Germans' who migrate to 'Germany' from the former 'German' settlements) do have the right to double citizenship as their 'ethnic' origin – contrary to other ethnicities – is considered to secure the national 'loyalty' that is imagined to be vital for citizenship.

disproportionately in 'Germany' as it requires them to decide on a single citizenship and thus makes it extremely difficult to travel back and forth. Especially migrants who decided to exclusively keep their 'Turkish' citizenship and abstained from 'German' citizenship – which is connected to the privilege of nearly unlimited mobility – fell back to a position of immobility despite their initial migration to 'Germany'. Access to the regions of 'Germany' or the *EU* suddenly required a 'German' Schengen visa, which is disproportionately difficult to gain as a person with 'Turkish' citizenship.

This is why, for this thesis, I appeal for a discussion of the striking power difference between moving peoples, which can be exemplified by the different terms we apply to white and middle-class mobile subjects as *expats* or *travelers*, opposed to PoCs and/or working-classes who are understood as *migrants*.⁶² As we can see from the distinctions that are made between (post-)migrants and 'German' citizens, (post-)migrants are constantly defined by the act of motion, understood as *coming from some place else*. It seems almost impossible for so-called 'hyphenated' 'Turkish-German' film-makers to self-categorize without this ethnic marker of mobility. When Fatih Akın refers to himself as exclusively 'German', this claim is rendered unimportant for the sake of defining Akın by his ethnicity which is unmistakably bound to mobility: In fact, when Akın was a young film-maker, but also later when he gained a strong voice as artist, Akın decisively referred to himself as 'German', because he spent his formative years in 'Germany' and identifies as 'German' rather than 'Turkish'. As I

⁶² As it is highly relevant for the analysis in chapter 6, I want to advocate for an intersectional class-ethnicity approach at this point. As I can show in chapter 6, power differences in migration/mobility are based on an intricate conflation of social class and ethnicity. The terms 'expat/traveler' and 'migrant' account for a difference in the perceived class status of nation states, within and outside of 'Europe'. 'Eastern European' mobile subjects, for instance, experience a different status of mobility in 'Europe' than 'Germans', 'French', or 'British' people due to the lower economic strength of their nation states. While the race/ethnicity approach dominates theories of migration from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan (or from former colonies of 'European' empires), I suggest that perceived class differences are similarly relevant in the context of labor migration to 'Germany'. This is – among other issues – because the 'guest-worker' recruitment contracts between the states of 'Germany' and 'Turkey' focused on the recruitment of working-class labor, which is why the migrant demographics demonstrate a class difference in comparison to both the 'German' and 'Turkish' majority society. This is why labor market considerations dominated the early discourses on 'the Turkish' community in 'Germany'. Theoretical descriptions of such discourses as exclusively racist are too simplified and leave the class factor out of sight.

discussed before with #view on hybridity, we need not #overlook the epistemic violence in external categorizations as 'hybrid' – no matter how much *celebration* scholars ascribe to it. In my examination of literature about Fatih Akin's films, I #observed a tendency to dismiss Akin's self-identification for the sake of creating a particular 'migrant cinema' genre:

Fatih Akin (...) describes himself as a German filmmaker and (...) downplayed the relevance of his ethnic background for his creative career. And yet, his feature films exhibit most of the characteristics associated with 'accented cinema', a type of cinema which has been identified by Hamid Naficy as an aesthetic response to displacement through exile, migration or diaspora. The underlying theme of Akin's films is the migrant's experience of rootlessness and the redemptive promise inherent in the return to ones *Heimat*. (Berghahn, 2006: 141)

Such an analysis of Akin's work that violently defines it as determined by questions of mobility (with the buzzword *displacement*) and belonging (*Heimat* is a popular 'German' cinematic trope with a nationalist impetus and loosely translated with 'homeland'), fails to recognize Fatih Akin as a 'German' film-maker who could also display Eurocentric tropes and narratives. In such an analysis, Akin's entire stack of work becomes a mode of supposedly accurate re(-)presentation, stylizes Akin to a voice 'from the margins' and fails to #see possible complicity. Such an analysis also misrecognizes that for a long time, Akin firmly rejected “the label of a hyphenated identity filmmaker” (ibid.: 142).

To enrich this discussion, I will now exemplify the blind spots that an analysis of Akin's earlier film *Im Juli* (*In July*, 2000) holds when it fails to investigate Eurocentric complicity and instead assumes that mobility is an equal global phenomenon. According to Deniz Göktürk, “performances of border-crossing are at the core of the film” (Göktürk, 2002: 254), which projects “a new southbound 'axial'

geography” (ibid.: 255). However, Göktürk in her analysis of *Im Juli* re(-)produces the 'European' myth of equal mobility when she assumes that 'Turkish' and 'German' citizens in this film are “equals travelling (sic)” (ibid.: 255). Indeed, Akin's film does not engage at all with questions of immobility or global imbalances of access or the resulting restrictions of certain citizens to enter 'Western' nation states. The character of Melek, who is absent during most of the film, gives the impression that her journey to 'Turkey' is fairly unproblematic – in comparison to the adventures that Daniel and Juli experience. In fact, the absence of Melek's journey already exemplifies a certain obliviousness in Akin's early work for the restrictions that people with non-'German' passports have to face. There is merely a single scene in the film that deals with problems of border crossing, which occurs when Daniel lost his passport in one of their adventurous undertakings. In this case, complicity with the colonial trajectory of 'European' images needs a more critical reexamination, especially because Akin made very #clear that he considers the film to be 'German': “Im Juli is a German film. It was made in Germany. (Pause) It was shown in here, in German theaters” (Cited by Gemünden, 2004: 180). At the 'Hungarian'-'Romanian' border, a stoic border patrol (played by Fatih Akin) prevents Daniel from passing. The problem, however, is comically solved through an improvised formal marriage of Daniel and Juli, filmed partly from a camera that is placed on top of the border barrier with the two nation-flags on either side (#see image A).



Image A: Daniel and Juli at the 'Hungarian'-'Romanian' border

The scene humorously engages with the imaginative character of borders and the formal performance that is required to uphold the idea of borders. However, in *Im Juli* the border remains only a minor obstacle functioning as a means to bring the two white travelers closer together, enabling their love story to unfold. Daniel's mobility – despite his lost passport – remains unlimited throughout the rest of the film, which alludes to the unquestioned normality with which white 'Europeans' are allowed unlimited traveling. This #reading is supported by the fact that the film was produced before Akın founded his own production company (*Corazón International*) and therefore relied on funding from a 'Turkish' travel agency that apparently wanted to address possible 'German' travelers to 'Turkey'. By no means, I conclude, are Daniel and his projection of desire, Melek, 'equals traveling'. It is not Melek's journey that is #portrayed here, in fact, it is entirely absent from the movie. The film rather speaks to 'German' travel desires, connected to a fairly unrestricted mobility and entertaining adventures that are #shown to help in developing a more appealing, interesting character. The act of traveling functions as a means for the development of a stronger masculinity, as the emasculated teacher-to-be Daniel chases after his absent and passive 'Oriental' sexual fantasy, proving his manliness by rescuing Juli and engaging in his first drug abuse. This traveling for entertainment and personal development is

essentially different from acts of (labor and/or refugee) migration and perfectly exemplifies racial/ethnic differences in the access to mobility. The illusion that in 'Europe' all are equals traveling lets us forget the wars at 'European' borders and the fact that 'Western' tourism is a one-dimensional act that privileges those with passports that grant access to almost everywhere. Moreover, this “southbound 'axial' geography” (Göktürk, 2002: 255) is far from being new – it actually finds its routes in 'European' colonialism. *Im Juli*, therefore, re(-)produces the myth of a 'Europe' without borders – within.

There are films from the same period, however, that do deal with questions of immobility and unequal access to nation states, exemplified in the work of the Kurdish film-maker Yüksel Yavuz.⁶³ While *Aprilkinder* (*April Children*, 1998) deals with immobility in the sense of confined life choices, Yavuz's 2003 film *Kleine Freiheit* (*A Little Bit of Freedom*, 2003)⁶⁴ most directly problematizes the restrictions on mobility, in this case for two illegalized⁶⁵ underage migrants. The impossibility of mobility for the two protagonists, opposite to Akin's *Im Juli*, is the main issue of this film. Yavuz repeats a reoccurring trope from cinemas by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants – the image of the harbor. Repeatedly, the two boys, who spend most of their time on Hamburg's streets, stand at the harbor, #watching departing ships and talk about traveling to 'Australia' (#see image B). Their homeless friend whom they regularly

⁶³ His work encompasses among other films, a documentary #portray of his father, who migrated from Northern Kurdistan to 'Germany' in *Mein Vater, der Gastarbeiter* (*My Father, the Guest-Worker*, 1995); *Aprilkinder* (*April Children*, 1998), which is a film about a Kurdish family in 'Germany'. Cem (Erdal Yildiz), the first of two sons departs from the parents' plans for his life by falling in love with the 'German' sex-worker Kim (Inga Busch) and refusing to marry his promised Kurdish fiancée from the parents' village, while his brother engages in drug dealing. The biggest problem faced by little sister Dilan (Senem Tepe), on the other hand, is to get her brother's shy friend Arif (Kaan Emre) to be interested in her. A little bit later Yavuz directed *Kleine Freiheit* (*A Little Bit of Freedom*, 2003).

⁶⁴ *Kleine Freiheit* #portrays the life in 'Germany' for two underage refugees, Baran (Cagdas Bozkurt), who had to flee his Northern Kurdish village after his parents were murdered, and Chernor (Leroy Delmar), a gay 'African' (not specified) youth of the same age. When the two displaced boys turn 16 – the legal age for deportation – they are forced to go into hiding, which makes their life in Hamburg extremely confined and precarious.

⁶⁵ I refrain from describing people as 'illegal immigrants' and instead #focus on the institutional and legal process of making people illegal, which is a less dehumanizing word-choice. This is derived from the most well-known 'German' refugee activism phrase “Kein Mensch ist illegal/ No human being is illegal”, thus there cannot be 'illegal immigrants', only those that are illegalized.

meet on a bench near the harbor tells them stories about his travels earlier in life. Interestingly, there are two fables, told by the homeless man and another one told by Baran, which #draw a picture of the impossibility of departure for the two boys. In a conversation about the departing ships at the harbor, the two boys guess that the ships go to 'Australia'. Then Baran remarks: “Do you know why kangaroos can jump so far? It is because they always trained to be able to leave 'Australia' one day. But they never made it that far.”⁶⁶ A little later in the film, the homeless man recites another fable that matches the boys' situation: “Once upon a time, there were two ants, who wanted to go to 'Australia' one day. In Altona⁶⁷ on the Chaussee, their feet hurt. So they resigned wisely the last part of their journey.”⁶⁸ The impossibility of departure and the simultaneous longing for it that are exemplified by these two fables, determine Baran and Chernor's lives until Chernor is arrested after a police control. When Baran tries to rescue his friend from deportation with a gun that he previously was ordered to stash, the police shoots at him and detains him as well. The film ends with this foreboding of their most unwanted type of 'mobility' – deportation. What is most notable about this film is the intricate paradox that Baran and Chernor have to live with as illegalized immigrants: the simultaneous restlessness of a life on the streets and their immobility due to their legal status. Especially Baran is constantly on the move throughout the film. Long shots of Baran riding his bicycle take a lot of time to #portray him as a character in motion on the realms of public spaces. In Yavuz's, contrary to Akın's above discussed film, however, motion is not connected to the pleasures of hybridity, but the opposite is the case here: motion is both the cause and result of precarity and struggle.

⁶⁶ My translation. Original: “Weißt du, warum Kängurus so weit springen können? Weil die immer geübt haben, eines Tages Australien zu verlassen. Aber sie hams nicht so weit gebracht.“

⁶⁷ Altona is a district of Hamburg which became famous for its high number of immigrants and sex-work establishments.

⁶⁸ My translation. Original: “Es gab schonmal zwei Ameisen, die wollten nach Australien reisen. Bei Altona auf der Chaussee taten ihnen die Füße weh. So verzichteten sie weise auf den letzten Teil der Reise.“



Image B: Baran and Chernor longing for departure at the Hamburg harbor in Kleine Freiheit

While this sub-chapter could not answer the question if motion really is an intrinsic element of the cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants, it at least could undermine approaches that are based on the assumption of equal mobility. To provide an alternative approach, I started from the premise of pivotal global inequality of access to mobility between the white, bourgeois *expat* and the PoC, working-class *migrant*, which informed my analysis of Fatih Akin's film *Im Juli* (2000) and Yüksel Yavuz's film *Kleine Freiheit* (2003). Both films were directed in a time of 'Turkish-German' cinematic history that is widely theorized as an era that celebrates the 'pleasures of hybridity' (#see chapter 5), however, the latter film is far less celebratory. While *Im Juli* re(-)produces the 'European' myth of free and equal mobility across borders, *Kleine Freiheit* allows a #counter-reading of this image. Mobility, here, becomes a substantially unequal phenomenon that conflates motion and absence of choice, which accounts for many stories of illegalized migration. While the film is dominated with undirected motion throughout the public places of Hamburg, wanted mobility remains an impossibility for the two young friends who are longing for a departure to 'Australia'. To conclude, this sub-chapter tried a #reading of motion in cinema as highly contradictory in an exemplifying analysis of films of roughly the same period that #portray different

cases of mobility according to race/ethnicity and social class. The sub-chapter could therefore underscore the importance of approaches that consider possible complicity of film-makers in 'European' myths of unlimited mobility in the act of migration. This complicity cannot be located only in white 'German' film-makers, but it is rather existent in floating images of a borderless 'Europe' that are re(-)produced in different instances, in this case, by Fatih Akın.

6.2 Metaphoric Bridges – Between Pleasure and Pain

In this sub-chapter I will discuss the metaphor of the bridge, which is a reoccurring image in cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan. My argument is that the metaphoric bridge can be theorized to have at least two divergent meanings. One of these notions account for a feminist take on bridges and the act of bridging, which can provide a possibility of resistance to hegemonic multiculturalism. However, the bridge-metaphor in the cinema under consideration here is often theorized in academic literature with a second notion which accounts for an underlying dichotomous understanding. I attempt to deconstruct such a #reading in this sub-chapter in favor of #reading the bridge in a more feminist anti-hegemonic way.

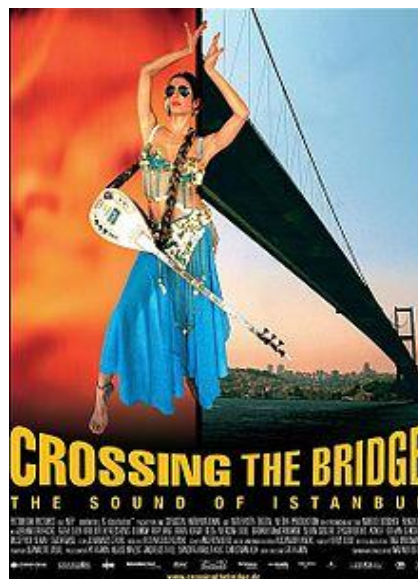


Image C: Movie poster of Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul

The metaphoric bridge is used in the cinema under consideration in very different contexts with divergent directions. The most literal example is probably Fatih Akin's well-known documentary *Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul* (2005), which describes the city of İstanbul with the metaphoric bridge in its title. Tightly knit to the urban space of İstanbul, the documentary #portrays the 'Turkish' metropolitan music scene. Starring Akin himself and Alexander Hacke⁶⁹, the two artists #interview a range of popular musicians such as Sezen Aksu, Orhan Gencebay, Romani clarinet player Selim Sesler⁷⁰, and the rock band *Duman*. The description of the film in the 'German' encyclopedia of film *Lexikon des Internationalen Films*, annually published by *Rowohlt Verlag*, depicts the prevailing #reading of İstanbul and the bridge in Akin's film:

15 different bands and artists reveal a tremendous spectrum that range from punk, rock and Hip Hop to Aynur or traditional Saz virtuosos and crystallizes as a melting pot between Orient and Occident. The tantalizing mosaic substantiates its transcultural hypotheses only superficially, but it makes a highly vital underground popular with a sophisticated audio track and excelling musicians.⁷¹ (*Lexikon des Internationalen Films*)

The city of İstanbul is understood to function as a bridge between 'Orient' and 'Occident' by Akin's critics. Words like 'mosaic' and 'melting pot' decipher an exotifying, multiculturalist #reading of the bridge. Unfortunately, this #reading generally comes to application in German and English texts about Akin's work and

⁶⁹ Hacke received outstanding reputation on 'German' and international stages since the 1980s with his industrial band *Einstürzende Neubauten*.

⁷⁰ Sesler already performed in Akin's film *Head-On*.

⁷¹ My translation. Original: "15 unterschiedliche Gruppen und Interpreten enthüllen ein gewaltiges Spektrum, das von Punk, Rock und HipHop bis zu Aynur oder traditionellen Saz-Virtuosos reicht und sich als brodelnder Schmelztiegel zwischen Orient und Okzident erweist. Das spannende Mosaik begründet seine transkulturellen Thesen zwar nur oberflächlich, macht aber durch eine ausgefeilte Soundspur und exzellente Musiker mit einem höchst vitalen Underground bekannt.", *Lexikon des Internationalen Films*, accessed July 28, 2015, http://www.zweitausendeins.de/filmlexikon/wert=524_405&sucheNach=titel.

does not necessarily pay tribute to his film which has gained international popularity and thus could be understood from many different angles. However, in this case, the underlying assumption about the metaphoric bridge delineates it as a means to connect two distinct entities (the 'Orient' and the 'Occident') that need to be brought together through 'hyphenated' artists like the musicians portrayed in *Crossing the Bridge*. Daniela Berghahn interprets the film in a similar manner:

His recent documentary *Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul* (2005) makes the point that Istanbul is, indeed, the bridge between East and West, a multicultural melting pot in which diverse musical traditions and cultural influences happily coexist. (Berghahn, 2006: 142)

Similar to Homi Bhabha's term 'hybridity' the metaphor of the bridge is used merely as a marker of an 'in-betweenism' that leaves the binary of the 'West versus the rest' intact. Crossing bridges in this multicultural reading of the metaphor could be understood as a moving on from cultural 'backwardness' to the 'progressive' culture of 'European democracy'. The bridge in such a reading would symbolize the progression of time which is equated with the perceived 'Western' values such as freedom, equality, democracy, and emancipation.

We can find such notions of the bridge-metaphor in one of the most stigmatizing film portrays of 'Turkish-German' women in 'German' film history, Hark Bohm's film *Yasemin* (1988). The final scene of the film culminates in Yasemin's (Ayşe Romey) total break with her family and her progressing to freedom and (sexual) self-determination, symbolized through a passing over a bridge. The scene begins with Yasemin's abduction by her father and a male cousin who attempt to escort her to central Anatolia as they consider her behavior in 'Germany' inappropriate. The reasons for this are that she wants to graduate from gymnasium, does judo, is interested in a 'German' man, and tries to determine her own future in general. The car that is supposed to bring her to the airport passes a long tunnel which is the moment when Yasemin realizes that there is a knife in the car. When the car stops at what appears

to be a gathering of 'Turkish' people around a fireplace, Yasemin threatens to commit suicide with the knife. In her white dress she slowly walks backward while her father Yusuf (Şener Şen) tries to convince her to let the knife go. In doing so, another man, dressed entirely in red, approaches him and tries to convince Yasemin's father to overpower and escort her, because she threatens the family's honor. Yasemin realizes that the white 'German' man, Jan, whom she is interested in, is present at the scene as well. She finally runs, jumps onto Jan's motorcycle and they both drive off into the night. Yasemin cries and leans her head against Jan's shoulder while they cross one of the many bridges of Hamburg. The airy music and the crossing of the bridge forebode a better future for Yasemin and make this scene – despite her hurtful break with her family – the happy-ending of the film. The bridge in this 1988 movie exemplifies a #reading of feminist emancipation as a progress that still needs to be successfully accomplished by young 'Turkish' women and necessarily requires a break with her 'backward' family and a crossing over to the 'Western' values of freedom and self-determination. The white 'German' man here, who symbolizes the magical White Knight with his horse (here: a motorcycle), inhabits the role of hero and savior, who slowly needs to convince the 'Oriental' woman to cut the inhibiting ties to her oppressive family over the course of the film and finally drives her over the bridge towards a better future in 'Germany'. In Hark Bohm's film, this archetypical break-free story of 'Western' emancipation is symbolized through the bridge and implies a necessary step forwards – in time and space simultaneously. This crossing is painful, but at the same time inevitable.

#Readings of Fatih Akın's *Crossing the Bridge* merely change the type of crossing within the bridge metaphor and with it the affective component – from pain to pleasure. While the bridge is still thought of as a fragile connector of two dichotomous entities, in Berghahn's analysis it becomes a space of hybridity, “a multicultural melting pot in which diverse musical traditions and cultural influences happily coexist” (Berghahn, 2006: 142). On the one hand, such a #reading obfuscates the harsh social realities of metropolitan areas like İstanbul, where massive numbers of refugees from war driven states wait in endless transition for an impossible passage

to 'Europe' (again, the traveling on the bridge is only pleasurable for certain citizens while for others the passage is denied). On the other hand, this #reading accounts for a vital change of semantics in the bridge-metaphor, from an inevitable teleological progress of time to freedom towards an understanding of two connected sides with equal legitimization. Migrants in the 'North' in this metaphor are considered to be the crossing travelers who do the work of connection through their hybridity between these two different sides. This #reading of the bridge-metaphor, however, does not escape a certain binary reading of an imagined Eurocentric, Huntingtonian global division between the 'West and the rest'. The people who are #read as hybrids are considered to be mediators in this “politics of pleasure” (Shohat & Stam, 1994: 29), which is on the verge of becoming a forceful imperative.

Because of the mentioned flaws of a dichotomous understanding of the bridge as a connector between two distinct entities, I want to suggest an alternative, feminist and decolonial #reading that is critical of a multiculturalist forced happiness. For this, I discuss Gloria Anzaldúa's depiction of the bridge as a feminist metaphor and connect this to the notion of liminality which is a frequent term in film theory.

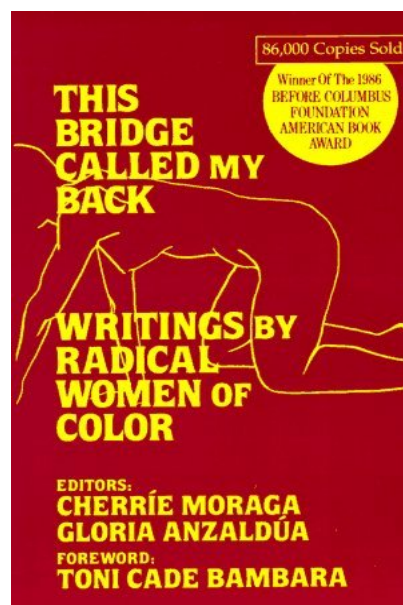


Image D: book cover of This Bridge Called My Back, edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga in 1981

this bridge we call home, edited by Anzaldúa and Keating in 2013, is the follow-up volume of its 1981 predecessor *This Bridge Called My Back* (#see image D), edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga – both anthologies feature a range of respected radical feminist writers of Color. In the foreword *(Un)natural bridges, (un)safe spaces*, Anzaldúa provides a #reading of the metaphoric bridge that completely departs from the above mentioned notions and re(-)introduces an element of precarity into the semantics of bridging:

Bridges are thresholds to other realities, archetypal, primal symbols of shifting consciousness. They are passageways, conduits, and connectors that connote transitioning, crossing borders, and changing perspectives. Bridges span liminal (threshold) spaces between worlds, spaces I call nepantla, a Nahuatl word meaning tierra entre medio. Transformations occur in this in-between space, an unstable, unpredictable, precarious, always-in-transition space lacking clear boundaries. Nepantla es tierra desconocida, and living in this liminal zone means being in a constant state of displacement – an uncomfortable, even alarming feeling. Most of us dwell in nepantla so much of the time it's become a sort of 'home.' (...) Change is inevitable; no bridge lasts forever. (Anzaldúa, 2013: 1)

The first part of Anzaldúa's above description of bridges can already be found in Berghahn's understanding of Fatih Akın's cinematic bridge – a symbol of shifting, crossing borders, changing #perspectives, a liminal space of in-betweenness. However, Anzaldúa refrains from idealizing this process of crossing and underscores the precarity and uncomfortableness of this seemingly never-ending endeavor. Despite demarcating the unpleasing aspects of the liminal space/nepantla/tierra entre medio, she does not advocate for creating a joint victimhood of suffering. On the contrary, she wants to motivate “to a more extensive level of agency”, which enables

“to act collaboratively” (ibid.: 2). The point of departure from above described notions of the bridge arrives when she theorizes the bridge as a connector that works towards an eventual undoing of itself: “A bridge (...) is not just about one set of people crossing to the other side; it's also about those on the other side crossing to this side. And ultimately, it's about doing away with demarcations like 'ours' and 'theirs.’” (ibid.: 3). I understand Anzaldúa's notion of crossing here as an undirected process that avoids re(-)producing a teleological idea of becoming whole, of progressing to a final state. This bridge is not a *rite of passage* (Turner, 1967) leading someone to their full being, but rather allows movement in both directions. The bridge, therefore, despite being in-between two imagined spaces, fulfills its actual task: to connect, which means, to undo separation. The emphasis here, is on the act of crossing rather than the separation itself. Similar to alternative notions of the hybrid, this bridge slightly diverges from a multiculturalist #reading, one that #focuses on the difference of the entities that the hybrid is 'in-between'. Anzaldúa's description provides an alternative notion that underscores the imagined character of this separation which is unsettled by the crossing hybrid. An emphasis of the procedural character of crossing over the bridge, in my #eyes, is a feminist decolonial endeavor as it #focuses on the possibility of change rather than celebrating the existing. Anzaldúa, moreover, does not idealize the heavy conditions of the act of crossing as we can find, for instance, in Berghahn and Sternberg's shift from the 'politics of resistance' to the “politics of pleasure”,⁷² (Berghahn & Sternberg, 2014: 36). Resistance does not simply happen through the mere existence of a so-called hybrid 'identity', but it is rather a painful act of feminist agency.

The bridge is not merely an image used in cinema, but it is actually used for accounts of lived experience⁷³. The metaphoric bridge exemplifies the interconnection

⁷² The term was first coined by Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (1994: 29).

⁷³ There was a certain moment during the research phase for this thesis that let me re(-)consider the importance of the metaphoric bridge for a discussion of cinema by/about the people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan. This moment occurred when I talked to a longstanding friend of my father, Tacide, who told me about her difficulties as a young girl right after the migration of her parents to 'Germany'. Tacide's narrative was loaded with elements of suffering, from the long separation between her and her parents who were 'guest-workers' in 'West Germany' – a status that made it impossible to take children to 'Germany' for many years. After a

of discourses, especially cinematic images, with how people who are considered to be the 'second generation' of migrants narrate their own lives. This instance, where the bridge-metaphor trickles into the lived experience of the spectators of films, accounts for the argument that I made earlier in chapter 2 about the 'virtual real'. As I argued before, actors like institutions, film-makers, artists, etc., who are granted the right to re(-)present, participate in the 'making-of' what we understand is the 'real'. The so created metaphors help people to account for her own experiences. Thus, the bridge is as real as it is metaphoric – it is *liminal* in multiple ways. In one way, the metaphor itself is a virtual real, which means, it is located in a lamella (Lacan) or nepantla (Anzaldúa) space of virtuality. Just like the Lacanian lamella, “its status is purely fantasmatic” (Žižek 2007: 35). In another way, the bridge re(-)presents the painful, undirected liminality of (post-)migrants in the 'North'. What I would like to add to Anzaldúa's description of the bridge as a painful metaphoric space for Women of Color which #contrasts the rather celebrating mood of the “politics of pleasure” (Shohat & Stam, 1994: 29), is that it not merely victimizes its crossing subjects, but it also enables the crosser to become a re(-)representative connector of the imagined two sides. This position bears the possibility of resistance against victimhood as much as it holds the danger of complicity with the different hegemonic powers of either side. The 'hybrid' film-maker, therefore, is in a position of different re(-)representative possibilities that they has to choose from. The painful undoing of the bridge, thus, is an active process rather than already implied to the location on a bridge. But in no way is it a teleological process to modernity.

In this sub-chapter I provided an analysis of the different possible #readings of the bridge-metaphor in cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. I conclusively want to remark

phase of alienation from her parents during which her grandmother took care of the children, Tacide migrated at a young age to 'Germany'. She described her position as translator (language-wise as well as culturally) with the metaphor of the bridge by saying that her and the other children, who gained knowledge of the 'German' language much faster than her parents, were the bridge between their care-takers and the 'German' society. Tacide described this position as a demanding situation in which she had to grow up very fast and take on administrative responsibilities for her parents, for instance, filling out forms for the local authorities. Her narrative of painful bridging seems to connect to Anzaldúa's account of nepantla.

that I consider a re(-)theorization of this cinema with a feminist take on the bridge as useful, because it enables to include the possibility of resistance as well as complicity into the analysis. I therefore understand the crossing of the bridge as an undirected liminal becoming that is not sufficiently described with the notion of a multiculturalist celebration of difference and a 'hybrid identity'.

6.3 To Be continued: Orientalist Narratives

The following sub-chapter takes the previously discussed possibility of complicity of film-makers from families with a migration history a step further by examining instances, where Orientalist metaphors are continued and/or re(-)shaped. This analysis is based on the premise that hegemonic narratives, tropes, metaphors, etc. are prevalent in the entire society – the margins included. Therefore, I do not follow the assumption that a standpoint of anti-hegemonic resistance is necessarily connected to social marginalization. This premise departs from some feminist traditions that are located in standpoint epistemology (Hartsock, 2004; Hill Collins, 1990; Harding, 1991, 2004; Smith, 2004) in a way that it does not connect race/ethnicity, class, sexuality and other markers of 'difference' as a quasi-natural producer of non-hegemonic viewpoints. In the chapters 2, 4, and 5 I critically engaged with the concept of hybridity as a source of pleasure and I doubted that the mere existence of so-called hybrids necessarily causes a resistant disruption of hegemonic 'Europe'. Instead, the existence of (post-)migrants in the 'West' rather lead to a re(-)imagining of 'Europe' as an ethnically branded multilocal, diverse melting pot – which is a new form of hegemonic dominance served with antiracist vocabulary. This critical starting point is the reason why I refrained from adding another text of celebrated hybridity to the list of scholarly work on the cinema by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants, and instead will explore continuities and discontinuities of metaphors that re(-)produce 'European' dominance. This approach does not consider time to be a linearly progressing dimension that leads towards a certain 'development' of societies. As a consequence, I do not follow the widely proclaimed break in cinematic history from negative external re(-)presentation by white 'German' film-makers (1970s and 1980s) toward

pleasurable self-re(-)presentations (since the 1990s) by post-migrant film-makers, as I outlined in chapter 5. Instead, I want to underscore that other conditions of film production might be more relevant than the ethnic background of the film-makers, for instance, funding institutions or the kind of #viewers that are addressed. Furthermore, I consider popular films to be producers of general discourses about 'Europe' and its others – irrespective of the film-makers' locations – as successful films are most often the ones that address the majority population as intended #viewers. Economic considerations necessarily play into this for two reasons: first, 'European' productions are one of the biggest global markets for film⁷⁴, and second, when we follow Edward Said's (1995 [1978]) connection of discourses and colonialism, metaphors and other elements of discursive formations are tightly connected to economic power. Therefore, the overall question of this chapter is how Orientalist stereotypes continue and due to what economic circumstances. Informed by postcolonial/decolonial academic traditions, the analysis will keep in mind the international ethnic- and gender-based division of labor as the driving force of prevailing discourses in 'Europe'. Economic and cultural domination can be thought of as a matter of social consent rather than direct oppression, which is Edward Said's use of Antonio Gramsci's hegemony theory: “culture (...) is to be found operating within civil society, where the influence of ideas, of institutions, and of other persons work not through domination, but by what Gramsci calls consent” (Said, 2000: 73). This consent is created discursively, which is what gives the following analysis a political thrust.

6.3.1 To Be Continued: Oriental Femininities Breaking free

When we think about the international division of labor, the #class-perspective of analysis probably presents itself as the most intuitive.⁷⁵ What often remains

⁷⁴ The latest numbers provided by the *European Audiovisual Observatory*, indicate a market share of 33.6 per cent, which is the highest recorded since 1996. “05/05/2015: Press release-Box office up in the European Union in 2014 as European films break market share record” European Audiovisual Observatory, accessed 28 July, 2015: <http://www.obs.coe.int/documents/205595/3477362/MIF2015-CinemaMarketTrends2014-EN.pdf/3a393b66-1428-4e38-8484-ecdb60962236>.

⁷⁵ Applying a #class-perspective to the migration waves to 'Germany' from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan, it becomes obvious that the 'guest-worker' recruitment contracts between the 'Turkish' and 'West German' governments lead to a redistribution of labor that resulted in a class

#overlooked is the distinctive intersection of a gender-related and ethnic division of labor within the 'West German' labor forces. This division was mainly influenced by the fact that the recruitment contracts between 'West Germany' and 'Turkey' #focused on job positions such as metal workers, mechanics, craftsmen, etc. due to the high influence of the metal and automobile industry on the development of the contracts (these were also the industries with the greatest labor union success). As these occupations are traditionally male dominated – in 'West Germany' as well as in 'Turkey' – the recruitment mainly #focused on male workers. This is why 'Turkish', Kurdish, Zaza, Roma, etc. women were, if at all, only mentioned in domestic contexts, for instance, in political debates about visa for family reunification purposes. The figurative positioning of 'the Turkish woman' solely in domestic spaces already withheld broad access for migrant women to 'West German' labor markets, especially in sectors that were already dominated by migrant men. Instead, (post-)migrant women tended to access the domestic service sector after white 'West German' women entered the labor markets due to the second wave feminist movements during the 1960s and 1970s. Later, the religiously motivated discourse on the oppression of 'the Turkish woman', with prominent tropes like the 'docile hijabi'⁷⁶ woman' #manifested the place of 'Turkish' women in domestic and unskilled labor markets. These discourses stand for a predominant externalization of feminist claims onto 'the

advantage on the basis of race/ethnicity: “The guest workers rapidly altered labor relations throughout the country. Between 1960 and 1970, approximately 2.3 million West Germans left industrial and agricultural jobs to become managers and clerks, while foreign 'temporary' laborers took up the vacated positions. The West German Ministry of Labor also reported in 1976 that guest workers had paved the way for a shorter workweek and longer vacations for Germans.” (Göktürk, Gramling & Kaes, 2007 10) This historical shift almost automatically connected the label 'Turkish' ethnicity (i.e.: 'Turkish', Kurdish, Zaza, Roma, etc. ethnicities) with the label 'working-class' within a tight relation that did not allow migrants of other social classes to either enter 'Germany' or take up occupations outside of production (male) and domestic services (female) jobs. While the white 'German' agricultural workers and working-classes experienced upper class-mobility through the political opening to foreign labor, highly educated middle-class 'Turkish' citizens faced a contradictory class-mobility (Parreñas, 2013: 203) in 'Germany', if they were even permitted entry. At the same time, marginalized ethnicities like Kurdish, Zaza, Roma, etc. and religious communities like the Alevites, were forced into the ethnic/religious categorization of Sunni 'Turkish guest-workers'. Post 9/11, the religious element of this category became increasingly dominant through “the construction of Muslims as terrorists and as 'racial' and sexual other” (Puar, 2010: 1).

⁷⁶ The Muslim *hijab* is the most common kind of headscarf worn by Muslim women in 'Germany' and elsewhere.

Turkish migrants' of 'German' popular state-feminism (Rommelspacher, 2009b: 38), which #appear mainly in 'white savior' attempts to lead 'the oppressed Turkish woman' to freedom (Attia, 2007). In this demand for 'emancipation', Women of Color who are subjugated under Orientalist myths, were forced into the role of the passive recipient of rescue, at times even as the object of a self-harming love for her 'archaic' family. The above discussed film *Yasemin* (dir. Hark Bohm, 1988) is a cinematic #manifestation of this discourse inspired by white popular feminist politics that considers the only possible way to emancipation for the 'Oriental' young woman lies in a break with her family.⁷⁷ Racist feminist discourses in 'Germany' were described by Helma Lutz already in 1992 as a means to set 'our Western' femininity apart from 'the Oriental woman':

Images and self-perceptions about 'our' emancipation are in need of (...) the daily reconstruction of the oppression and backwardness of Islamic women. *The Turkish woman* is a desirable negative matrix not only for the reconstruction of European femininity, but also for European masculinity; it can reassure its own progressiveness in an emancipatory sense through the demarcation to the Turkish despotic patriarch. (Lutz, 1992: 86)

According to Lutz, 'Western/German' notions of femininity and masculinity are constituted on the basis of a negative #contrast to Orientalist images. Lutz describes a connected popular feminist oblivion of 'German' colonialism as “a case of collective

⁷⁷ This discourse is ongoing as one can #see in the work of well-known secular and anti-sex-work feminist Alice Schwarzer (2010a), who published the book *Die große Verschleierung (The Great Veiling)*. Here, Schwarzer et al. #demonstrate a simplifying and monolithic understanding of Islam as inherently connected to sexist oppression and #contrast it to 'Western civilization' that supposedly already ended patriarchy with its progressive republican values. Schwarzer describes Islamic cultures as resistant to the gifts of #enlightenment and emancipation (Schwarzer, 2010b: 248) as opposite to post-'French' Revolution 'Europe', for which a “loosening of the worldly and republican principles that apply to everyone equally, irrespective of their religion or gender, is out of question/ Für sie [die Erben der Aufklärung und der französischen Revolution] kommt eine Aufweichung der weltlichen und republikanischen Prinzipien, die für alle, unabhängig von Religion und Geschlecht, gelten, nicht infrage.” (Badinter, 2010: 111).

amnesia” (ibid.: 81) that made feminist racism possible.⁷⁸ Such oblivious feminist claims built the basis for an ethnicization of sexism: through a secularist #lens⁷⁹, forms of sexism and misogyny are ascribed to ethnic others as a cause of their 'backward' religion (Jäger, 2004).⁸⁰

This discussion can be translated to film here, if we consider cinema to be one of many sites where discourses are constructed, re(-)shaped, and deconstructed. It goes without saying, that in earlier films, produced during the onset of 'West German' popular feminism, savior narratives – for instance, in the shape of the bridge-metaphor – found wide application in films about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan.⁸¹ If we followed the narrative of cinematic history as a story to progress and freedom through self-re(-)presentation, we would have to assume that such Orientalist metaphors ended as soon as so-called hyphenated film-makers take the camera into their own hands, which happened in the 1990s. However, savior narratives of 'the oppressed Turkish woman' are still ongoing in 'German' discourses – today with a stronger #religion-focused thrust. Neo-racist publications like Alice Schwarzer's *Die große Verschleierung (The Great Veiling, 2010)* or Thilo Sarrazin's *Deutschland schafft sich ab (Germany Does Itself In, 2010)* and the vast media debates surrounding them are only two examples of very recent events, where anti-Muslim racism is supported with pseudo-feminist claims (#see image E).

⁷⁸ Birgit Rommelspacher #revealed, how this ethnization of feminist claims is actually harmful also for white feminists, as it makes the impression that their political goals are already accomplished (Rommelspacher, 2009b: 38).

⁷⁹ For a profound critique of secularist feminist thinking, #see Joan Scott (2009) and for a historical account of the feminization of (Christian) religion, #see Rommelspacher (2010) and Ziemann (2009).

⁸⁰ It is also interesting that discourse analyst Margarete Jäger differentiates two forms of the ethnization of sexism with either a static or a dynamic character. While the static ethnization of sexism assumes misogynist oppression to be a natural trait, the dynamic form accounts for a thinking that locates the 'Turkish/Muslim' minorities in 'Germany' simply to be 'backward', which will eventually change with a longer stay in a 'Western' nation state (Jäger, 2004: 461f.). This latter form is especially interesting with #regard to Orientalist depictions of masculinities that presuppose a generational shift (#see chapter 6.3.2).

⁸¹ Such early examples are *Shirins Hochzeit (Shirin's Wedding, dir. Helma Sanders-Brahms, 1975)*, *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland (40 Sq. Meters of Germany, dir. Tefvik Başer, 1986)*, *Yasemin (dir. Hark Bohm, 1988)*, or *Abschied vom falschen Paradies (Farewell to False Paradise, dir. Tefvik Başer, 1989)*.



Image E: Major weekly magazine Der Spiegel (The Mirror) with a circulation of at least one million, titles: “Allah's disenfranchised daughters. Muslim women in Germany” (November 2004)

I suggest that the 'break-free' narrative, which I briefly mentioned before, is one of the main frames that dominates cinematic re(-)presentations of (post-)migrant women, also – if not especially – since the 1990s. During this time, books, documentaries, newspaper articles, protests and other sites of public discourse were marked by an exponential growth of accounts on forced marriage, girl abduction, honor-related violence (HRV), female genital cutting/mutilation (FGM) – often #portrayed from the victims' #perspective in commercially successful self-re(-)presentative accounts. Interestingly, cinematic depictions of women from migrant families are not even considered *authentic* if they lack a story of violence and oppression. For, instance, Thomas Arslan, a film-maker who is member of the Berlin School, was criticized for his #portrayal of the young Berliner woman Deniz (Serpil Turhan), daughter of 'Turkish' migrants, in *Der schöne Tag* (*A Fine Day*, 2001), because the #portrayal did not follow the imperative to #show her in the context of ethnicized social problems:

Turhan's subdued acting style, coupled with the film's focus on her daily life, allows the viewer to witness the life of a confident young female urbanite, without foregrounding her

Turkishness. In the discussion following the film's premiere at the 2000 Berlin Film Festival, however, *Der schöne Tag* was critiqued for its perceived failure to engage in established ways with the social problems of Turkish women. (Göktürk, 2002: 254)

The film was the last part of Arslan's *Berlin Trilogy* and depicts the life of 21-year old Deniz, whose breakup with her boyfriend is #portrayed rather as an act of self-growth and maturity than within the frame of the break-free narrative (#see image F).



Image F: Deniz's self-confident breakup from her white 'German' partner in Der schöne Tag

It seems that #portrayals of (post-)migrant women need to be either an account of her position as a victim of patriarchal, Muslim oppression by an archaic father-, brother-, or cousin-figure and/or of her breaking-free from this oppression mostly with the help of a white savior or with the help of her post-migration 'development', i.e. an alignment to 'Western progressive values'. Whereas the breaking-free in earlier cinematic examples was a rather passive act – Turna in *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland* was freed from the 40 square meters of her prison-like apartment due to the seizure and subsequent death of her husband – today, the motivation for breaking out of

patriarchal families is more often #portrayed to come from the women themselves. There are numerous examples of films produced since the 1990s, in which the break-free narrative is applicable for at least one female migrant character.⁸²



Image G: Umay (Sibel Kekilli) finds liberation and a new loving partner in the workplace in *Die Fremde*

The fact that more recent and successful films like *Die Fremde* (*When We Leave*, dir. Feo Aladağ, 2010), which was the 'German' candidate in the pre-selection of the Oscars, even structure the entire story around the breaking free of a female character, makes an analysis of this admittedly stereotypical narrative interesting. The film depicts the story of Umay (Sibel Kekilli⁸³), who leaves her violent husband in İstanbul to start a new life with her son in 'Germany', where she was born herself –

⁸² For instance, *Berlin in Berlin* (dir. Sinan Çetin, 1993), Ayşe Polat's breakthrough short *Ein Fest für Beyhan* (*Beyhan's Wedding*, 1994), *Kardeşler – Geschwister* (*Brothers and Sisters*, dir. Thomas Arslan, 1996), *Ein Mädchen im Ring* (*Girl in the Ring*, dir. Aysun Bademsoy, 1996), *Yara – Die Wunde* (*The Scar*, dir. Yılmaz Arslan, 1998), *Dealer* (dir. Thomas Arslan, 1998), *Anam* (dir. Buket Alakuş, 2001), *Gegen die Wand* (*Head-On*, dir. Fatih Akin, 2004), *Eine Andere Liga* (*A Different League*, dir. Buket Alakuş, 2005), *Meine verrückte türkische Hochzeit* (*My Crazy Turkish Wedding*, dir. Stefan Holtz, 2005), *Zeit der Wünsche – Dilekler Zamani* (*Time of Wishes*, dir. Rolf Schübel and scripted by Tefvik Başer, 2005), *Chiko* (dir. Fatih Akin, 2008), *Ich gehe jetzt rein...* (*In the Game*, dir. Aysun Bademsoy, 2008), *Die Fremde* (*When We Leave*, dir. Feo Aladağ, 2010) – a film for which leading actress Sibel Kekilli (*Gegen die Wand*) was nominated for the Oscar, *Evet, ich will!* (*Evet, I Do!*, dir. Sinan Akkuş, 2008), *Türkisch für Anfänger* (*Turkish for Beginners*, dir. Bora Dağtekin, 2012), *Nach der Hochzeit* (*After the Wedding*, dir. Antonia Lerch, 2013), *300 Worte Deutsch* (*300 Words of German*, dir. Züli Aladağ, 2015).

⁸³ Interestingly, Sibel Kekilli narrates her own life-story within the break-free narrative herself. In a speech she gave on an event about honor-related violence, organized by president Gauck and the women's organization *Terre des Femmes*, she says that she lost big parts of her (Muslim) culture “on the way to freedom” (Kekilli, 2015).

against the will of her family who also live in 'Germany'. When her father plans to abduct her son to bring him back to his father, Umay calls the police and finds refuge in a women's shelter. Despite having already started a new life with her white work colleague Stipe (Florian Lukas), the love for her family brings Umay to her sister's wedding, where she is immediately thrown out. Finally, her brother Acar (Serhad Can) accidentally murders her son with the knife that he directed to her in an attempt to preserve the family's honor. As I said above, accounts of honor-related violence (HRV) have become the dominant frame in the narration of women who come from communities that are (considered to be) Sunni. The fact that films which depart from this frame are criticized for a lack of 'authenticity' #shows that the HRV-frame is part of hegemonic discourses in 'Germany'. This is part of a shift that occurred since September 11, 2001, in which the dominant discourses in 'Germany' changed from labor market considerations and the anti-asylum resentment in the post Berlin Wall period of the 1990s towards a religion-based frame (Rommelspacher, 2010)⁸⁴.



Image H: In Anam women find empowerment in each other at their cleaning jobs

What I consider one of the most #insightful result of my film analysis is, that despite shifting frames over time, the break-free narrative was consistently used in cinematic depictions of the 'Turkish' (post-)migrant community in different contexts. This confirms my initial assumption that the break-free narrative is indeed a trope

⁸⁴ Birgit Rommelspacher (2010) names at least two reasons for this “religious turn” in racist debates: one is the connection of security-considerations with Islam after 9/11, and another reason is that migrant communities tend to turn to religion as an answer to social exclusion due to discrimination.

with roots in Orientalism, as colonial frames of knowledge are likewise notably consistent over time. Throughout recent history, the 'backwardness' of (post-)migrant families was considered the main obstacle to migrant women's emancipation – the imagined female outbreak of an oppressive family context therefore, was thought to come from taking part in paid labor, which paves the way to liberation for women who adapt to 'our Western values'. In the 1970s and 80s the cinematic stories #focused on women's position in the 'West German' labor market. For instance, director Helma Sanders-Brahms in *Shirins Hochzeit (Shirin's Wedding, 1975)* takes quite some time to #exhibit Shirin's oppression by her white 'West German' boss and her precarity due to the loss of her job, animated with archival video material from the period of 'guest-worker' recruitment. This fits very well into public debates in the 1970s and 80s that followed the economic recession and the emerging public anxiety about the ongoing presence of the 'guest-workers'. This frame was partly ongoing in the 1990s, when Thomas Arslan produced the second film of his Berlin trilogy. Contrary to Sanders-Brahms, however, in his film *Kardeşler – Geschwister (Brothers and Sisters, 1996)* paid work is considered the means for breaking free for Leyla (Serpil Turhan), the daughter of the family who works in the textile industry. Similarly, this is true for Buket Alakuş's *Anam (2001)*, where the 'Turkish' cleaning woman Anam (Nursel Köse) breaks out of her role as victim that her unfaithful husband puts her in, thanks to the support of her work colleagues (#see image H). Carrie Tarr perfectly sums up the Orientalist heritage of this story:

The main thrust of the film, however, is Anam's trajectory from conventional if (sic) working German Turkish wife and mother to active, independent, liberated woman who eventually casts off her headscarf (following Mandy's analysis of its significance as a sign of patriarchal subjugation). Not only does she heroically save her sons life, she also demonstrates, more subversively, (...) her readiness to enter into a relationship with the sympathetic non-Turkish German policeman. (...) then, she opts to pursue the path of integration,

open to the opportunities life in Europe affords her. (Tarr, 2014: 188)⁸⁵

While Tarr recognizes that films like *Anam* “run the risk of invoking problematic Eurocentric discourses” (ibid.), she points out that the women depicted in these films do free *themselves* rather than be freed *by others* and the films' positive endings “avoid the miserabilism often associated with what has been referred to as a 'cinema of duty” (ibid.). Despite agreeing that differentiation between active and passive saving – between the rescued and the self-liberated woman – is relevant, I do consider the idea that (post-)migrant women need saving (of whatever sort) as a continuity of Orientalist narratives. The saving through job-environments, from my analysis, can be theorized within the overall discourse on 'Turkish' migrants of the 1990s, which mainly #focused on the post-recession unemployment of the so-called 'guest-workers'. The asylum and migration discourses were highly conflated at this time and suspected any 'foreign' people of taking advantage of 'German' welfare benefits (Wengeler, 2006), thus there was a considerable thrust to get the 'Oriental' other into the workplace (or alternatively, out of the 'country'). The narrative of self-liberation through work is part of an overall attempt to encourage (post-)migrant women to take on *any kind* of labor, no matter how miserable the conditions are. The promise of freedom functioned to make jobs attractive which were unwanted by white 'German' women, for instance domestic work, or the cleaning of public facilities. In my analysis, I found that stories like *Anam* or *Kardeşler – Geschwister* contribute to the ethnic/class division of the 'German' labor market with the help of the liberation-promise. The break-free narrative, therefore, is tightly connected to economic interests and labor market dynamics that benefit white women according to my approach. While in *Shirins Hochzeit* the recession was still the cause of her grim fate, the narratives that #see low-skilled working life as a way out of patriarchal Muslim oppression as in *Anam* or *Kardeşler – Geschwister* did not only save the (post-)migrant woman from oppressive family contexts, but at the same time made her exploitable in an economic sense. I have found the break-free story as a work-related outcome in numerous films

⁸⁵ Mandy is one of Anam's work colleagues.

from the 1990s until today. The film *Zeit der Wünsche – Dilekler Zamani* (*Time of Wishes*, dir. Rolf Schübel, 2005) is a more recent example that depicts freedom through work for the female character Melike (Lale Yavas). The film was honored with the noted Grimme price and the official description on the Grimme website summarizes this narrative, when it states: “Work in a foreign country gives Melike a feeling of freedom and independence for the first time in her life” (Grimme Institute, 2005: n.p.)⁸⁶. The freedom that Melike gains in 'German' working life is completely destroyed by her archaic, oppressive husband, who murders Melike at the end of the film. The dramatic ending of *Zeit der Wünsche* exemplifies the post 9/11 “religious turn” (Rommelspacher, 2010: 2) in popular discourses, which tended to use religion-based explanations of the “Migrantenprobleme” (migrant problems, Grimme Institute, 2005: n.p.), while leaving the work-related salvation narrative intact. Work environments seem to become the secular islands in 'Turkish' women's (and their daughters') lives that are otherwise controlled by the perceived static and oppressive rules of Islam. This is why films like *Die Fremde* are enormously popular today, despite hardly departing from the older highly stereotypical depictions such as *I* (and many others) have #shown to be true for *Yasemin* in 1988.

My analysis of these, at times still very grim, accounts of (post-)migrant femininities and the 'salvation through work' narrative #contrasts the proclaimed end of victimizing stories from the 'cinema of duty'. In my analysis I found that this story of progress does not accurately describe the partly anticyclical patterns of different overlapping narratives. A close analysis of the 1993 film *Berlin in Berlin*⁸⁷, directed by Sinan Çetin, which has been mentioned as an example of counter-discourse by Burns (2006), Göktürk (1999), Göktürk et al. (2007), and with some reservations by Fenner (2000) and Neubauer (2011), #shows that the film does not only reverse

⁸⁶ My translation. Original: “Die Arbeit in dem fremden Land bringt Melike erstmals ein Gefühl der Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit.”, Grimme Insitut, accessed July 28, 2015, <http://www.grimme-institut.de/html/index.php?id=234>.

⁸⁷ Despite the extraordinary attention that *Berlin in Berlin* receives in scholarly work that subsumes it under the 'Turkish-German migrant cinema' genre, it actually is an entirely 'Turkish' production and reached merely 335.000 viewers. This only strengthens my argument further that the selection of films in scholarly discussions needs to be questioned or rather the integrity of the genre as a whole can be doubted.

Orientalist discourses, but also re(-)produces well-known colonial tropes. In the movie a white 'German' man, Thomas, finds refuge in an apartment of a 'Turkish' family. Mocking the 'cinema of the affected' by Tevfik Başer's *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland*, the 'Turkish' production is a parody, as the protagonist Thomas (Armin Block) here needs to assimilate to his 'Turkish' environment, where he depends on the hospitality of the family of a hijabi woman Dilber (Hülya Avşar) who he had previously sneaked after to covertly photograph her. Hiding in the family's apartment after accidentally murdering Dilber's husband, he finds himself in a reversed situation, where he needs to assimilate to 'Turkish' customs. In the end, Dilber returns his 'admiration' and they leave the apartment together. According to Göktürk, the scene, in which the #camera adopts the #lens of Thomas's photo-camera – we hear the clicks of the individual #shots – marks the starting point of a #voyeuristic #gaze which is continually reversed throughout the movie until the white #voyeur finds himself exposed to the ethnographic #gaze of the 'Turkish' family. When Thomas #observes his object of desire, Göktürk comments:

The camera adopts a voyeuristic gaze of the photographer on the Turkish woman. Despite her headscarf, she becomes an object of erotic attraction and is objectified by the camera. When finally she looks back into the telephoto lens her gaze, too, appears to be somewhat threatening. (Göktürk, 1999: 11)

However, taking into account the vast productions of post-/decolonial literature about the colonial fetish of veiled 'Oriental' femininity, especially Harem women, (McClintock, 1995), there is room to interpret Dilber's #look rather as a subservient gesture that already precludes the end of the film where the white man's erotic fantasy comes true. It is definitely the case that the 'threatening' return of the #gaze had fundamental consequences for Dilber, as she is accused of being responsible for her husband's death when her family finds the pictures Thomas took. Instances of re(-) produced Orientalist ideas, however, are #overseen in an attempt to interpret the film as a celebration of hybridity. The final scene, in which Thomas leaves the apartment

together with his 'Oriental' object of desire, therefore brings some confusion into the interpretation:

They leave the flat and walk hand in hand into an unknown future. Once again a Turkish woman liberated by a German man? The ending seems slightly forced. On the whole, however, *Berlin in Berlin* shows more potential in exploring the pleasures of hybridity than previous attempts to portray German-Turkish encounters. (ibid.: 13)

As I #demonstrated, there is reason to disagree with this conclusion.⁸⁸ As much as previous 'encounters', *Berlin in Berlin* (1993) has both a reversal and a continuation of Orientalist, discriminatory images. The reversal only goes so far to make possible white/ethnic male bonding (Thomas finally reconciles with the family's clichéd macho-son, who threatened to revenge the murder, by repairing the rooftop dish for the men to watch a men's football game together), whereas the 'Oriental' femininity still serves as a backdrop for a savior narrative. *Berlin in Berlin* even goes so far to re(-)introduce the white man as the agent of the break-free.

In this sub-chapter I summarized the main findings of an alternative approach to the history of cinema by/about people who migrated from 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants. This approach #focused on the continuities of Orientalist narratives on (post-)migrant femininities, instead of taking an assumed departure from discriminatory cinematic practices due to self-re(-)presentation as a starting point. I embedded the film analysis in dominant discourses on migrant labor at the times of production. For this, I took general ethnic/white and female/male labor

⁸⁸ Neubauer (2011) comes to a similar conclusion despite recognizing the stereotypical #portrayal of Dilber: “Despite that the decision to leave her husband's family is made by herself, the rather passive and speechless Dilber would probably not be able to take care of herself, but is dependent on a strong man by her side. The film's ending as well as the depiction of the female protagonist fall back into stereotypical patterns. / Auch wenn die Entscheidung zum Verlassen der Familie ihres Mannes von ihr selbst getroffen wird, wäre die insgesamt eher passive und sprachlose Dilber wohl nicht in der Lage, sich alleine zurecht zu finden, sondern bleibt auf einen starken Mann auf ihrer Seite angewiesen. Sowohl das Ende des Films als auch die Darstellung der weiblichen Hauptfigur fallen in stereotype Muster zurück”:

market dynamics as possible sources of (racist) discourses into consideration. This unconventional starting point led me to understand the ubiquitous break-free narrative on migrant femininities as a result of the economic need for cheap low-skilled female labor to enable the entering into the work force by white 'German' women.

6.3.2 To be continued: Oriental masculinities in Generational Progress

As I pointed out above, (post-)migrant women are disproportionately depicted in (oppressive) domestic environments, so their engagement in paid work is economically, and thus discursively, encouraged through the promise of liberation since the 1990s. This sub-chapter will now explore differences and similarities in cinematic images of (post-)migrant masculinities by pointing out where Orientalist images continue and where and why they are changing. The overall result of my film analysis is that (post-)migrant men are #portrayed with a wider range of possible characters than (post-)migrant women. Next to continuing Orientalist discourses in the 1990s on the archaic first generation father or the troubled, criminal youth, there is another parallel tendency to depict the post-migrant sons and grandsons as performing a generational shift towards white bourgeois lifestyles in newer films. I want to argue that here, too, class still plays a pivotal role in (post-)migrant images, however more subtle than in earlier films.



Image 1: The oppressive father figure in Yasemin

In films before the 1990s, migrant men were either entirely absent (*Shirins Hochzeit, Die Kümmeltürkin geht*), unable to fully express themselves due to lacking language skills, isolated, and alienated (*Angst essen Seele auf, In der Fremde*), or the archaic oppressors of their female relatives and spouses (*Yasemin, Gölge – Schatten, 40 Quadratmeter Deutschland, Abschied vom Falschen Paradies*). Here, like in images of migrant femininities, we can observe a shift in cinematic depictions since the 1990s, when (predominantly) post-migrant men started to produce their own films. However, I did not find an instant celebration of hybridity in these cinematic self-re(-)presentations. On the contrary, in the beginning social realist, problem-oriented narratives similarly spread in films of the so-called 'second generation'. Thomas Arslan and Fatih Akın are the most well-known film-makers who gained increased attention during this time. They are also the two main inventors of 'the criminal youth' images, in which the post-migrant male youth is located out on the streets in criminal, socially disadvantaged, and violent urban milieus. These 1990s images could be understood as a continuity of social realist depictions in the 1990s, instead of a celebration of hybridity or a “politics of pleasure” (Shohat & Stam, 1994: 29). Thomas Arslan's first and second part of his Berlin Trilogy, *Geschwister – Kardeşler (Brothers and Sisters, 1996)* and *Dealer (1998)* paved the way for a cinema of post-migrant youth urban culture. *Geschwister* portrays the life of three post-migrant siblings, Erol (Tamer Yiğit), Ahmed (Savaş Yurderi, later known as Hip-Hop artist Kool Savas), and Leyla (Serpil Turhan). Always in motion, the brothers Erol and Ahmed meet their friends on the streets, engage in drug dealing, and street fights. While Ahmed likes to read, has a white 'German' girlfriend, and does well in school, Erol's hyper-masculinity seems not to fit in. After aimlessly meandering on Berlin's streets, he finally takes on 'Turkish' citizenship and departs for 'Turkey' to do his military service in the end of the film. Erol functions as an example of failed integration, which is a result of his hyper-masculine character, regularly working out (see image J), aggressive, easy to aggravate, and prone to criminality. On the other hand, Ahmed, as Erol's counterpart, has a more nuanced parlance with a less strong sociolect. His interest for books and ability to voice emotions makes him appear as

an integrated 'hyphenated' masculinity, who is the 'Western' #enlightened counterpart to his brother. This continuing Orientalist dichotomy of sciences versus (Anatolian) backwardness can already be found in the 1988 film *Yasemin*. When Yasemin sits at her desk doing biology homework – only interrupted by her smiling #look at a picture of the secular reformist Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and another photo of her win in a judo competition – her younger sister gives voice to her struggle with a math question by saying “Oh, I wish I was born in Anatolia!”. The opposition of sciences (biology and mathematics), 'German' progressiveness, feminist emancipation (through sports) and Central Anatolia, which is defined over the absence of all this, was an underlying frame to imagine the 'in-between' of the 'second generations'. In Thomas Arslan's *Geschwister*, the proximity to either of these two sides decided over the success or failure of the young masculinities.



Image J: Erol (Tamer Yiğit) performing an ethnicized hyper-masculinity

This frame of the academic, cerebral, and rational masculinity versus the aggressive hyper-masculinity is taken even further by Fatih Akin's *Auf der anderen Seite*. While this film is usually theorized as a prime example for 'migrants in motion', who successfully negotiate the spaces they are imagined to be in-between, I found the narration of a generational shift to be a much more relevant theme. A wide generational gap is depicted between the migrant father Ali (Tuncel Kurtiz) and his

German philology professor son Nejat (Baki Davrak). Ali and Nejat, in this 2007 film, are depicted to perform similar masculinities like Erol and Ahmed in Arslan's *Geschwister*. Ali's obsession with paid sex and his misogynist domination of the sex-worker Yeter (Nursel Köse), whom he pays to be a live-in caretaker (#see image K), causes him assaulting her with resulting death. The following conviction of Ali entirely alienates his son Nejat, who is an educated middle-aged post-migrant.



Image K: Ali Aksu (Tuncel Kurtiz), served by his live-in sex-worker Yeter (Nursel Köse) in Auf der anderen Seite

There is a clear-cut 'ethnic' difference between the hypersexual, drinking, 'Oriental' father, who is dominated by his impulsive aggressions, and his educated, cerebral, rational son with light skin and hair, who #displays a calm, unemotional, reserved character. This opposition is not only marked by ethnicity, but similarly as a class difference that results from Nejat's accumulated educational capital. His job as a professor in 'Germany' (#see image L) privileges him to live in a spacious middle-class apartment, even after he resigned from his profession to move to 'Turkey' in order to find Yeter's daughter Ayten (Nurgül Yeşilçay) in an attempt to expiate his fathers misdeed. By #contrast, Ali comes from a small village close to Trabzon (Black

Sea region), where he returns due to his deportation to 'Turkey' after his time in prison.⁸⁹ On the search for Ayten, Nejat gets into a conversation with a 'Turkish' police officer in İstanbul. Here, Nejat justifies his goal to support Ayten's education financially by pleading the International Human Rights, while his 'Oriental' counterpart remains untouched by the grim fate of individuals like Ayten. In this and many other scenes, Nejat functions as the educated (#enlightened) 'Western' advocate of universal knowledge and human rights who stands in sharp #contrast to his own father as well as the figure of the police officer who symbolizes the non-migrated 'Turkish' masculinity, whose authority is arbitrary, who smokes and behaves disrespectful. Unlike in cinematic generational gaps between freedom aspiring daughters and oppressive fathers, in *Auf der anderen Seite* Fatih Akın does not foreclose a possible reconciliation between the two male parties. The film ends with Nejat sitting at the sea-side in his father's village where Ali took off for a fishing trip and waits for Ali's return which would mark their first encounter after Ali's prison sentence. The film leaves open whether this encounter will take place.



Image L: Post-migrant professor of German language and literature studies Nejat Aksu (Bakir Davrak) in Auf der anderen Seite

⁸⁹ Although not entirely #clear, there is reason to assume Ali initially migrated to 'Germany' under the 'guest-worker' recruitment contracts – his age and working-class background strongly indicate this.

As I described in the introduction to this sub-chapter, (post-)migrant men are depicted with a wider range of possible masculinities than women. The main fact that led me to this assumption is that even the archaic, backward, hypersexual, first-generation migrant father is not necessarily always a rigid image. Instead, such father-figures can also be #portrayed as opening up for change. Films like *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland* (*Almanya: Welcome to Germany*, dir. Nesrin & Yasemin Şamdereli, 2011) or *Evet, ich will!* (*Evet, I Do!*, dir. Sinan Akkuş, 2008) depict fathers who incorporate and/or develop white middle-class parenting values that lets them reconcile with their alienated children.

From my analysis of masculinities in films by/about people who migrated from the regions of 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan and their descendants, it #appears as if there are four possible masculinities that (post-)migrant men can incorporate: the archaic, oppressive first-generation father, the progressive father with a forgiving, bourgeois parenting style, the criminal troubled young hyper-masculine man, or the educated, cerebral, and rational man. The range of images exceed by far the possible characteristics of femininities in cinema. Here, we #see as many discontinuities as continuities of Orientalist narratives. However, the discontinuities, which open up possibilities of (post-)migrant men to step outside the 'backward', oppressive father role, still hold up white middle-class ways of parenting to be the only way to 'bridge' the generational chasm. The underlying dichotomy between the irrational 'Oriental' man and the bourgeois, rational 'Western' man is left intact despite the possibility for post-migrant men to cross (i.e. progress) to the other, 'developed' side.

7. Conclusion

This thesis provided a critical #perspective on films by/about people who migrated from 'Turkey' and Northern Kurdistan (Bakurê Kurdistanê) to 'Germany' and their descendants – the post-migrants. I suggested that a postcolonial approach can offer new ways of theorizing the so-called migrant cinema in 'Germany' as I could #demonstrate in my film analysis that rejects current frames of theorizing in scholarly contributions. A critical #perspective of current scholarly paradigms is especially interesting as it can #reveal that certain colonial tropes and narratives are reoccurring in both the analyzed films and the academic literature *about* the films. Here, we can #see that the cinema under consideration is theorized in a development-frame that assumes a linear progression from the 'cinema of duty' in the 1970s and 80s towards a cinema that celebrates the 'pleasures of hybridity' from the 1990s onwards. The shift is accounted for with the argument that the post-migrants finally took the cameras into their own hands and started a re(-)presentation from within. However, a consistent postcolonial approach proves that such a frame of analysis produces at least five different flaws, which I named throughout the thesis.

1. It re(-)produces the colonial teleological narrative of a linear development to modernity;
2. It puts (post-)migrants in a position as marginalized victims and assumes that self-re(-)presentation is automatically resistant to hegemony, not complicit;
3. It is based on an apolitical notion of resistance that is based on one's 'identity' instead of one's agency;
4. It fails to account for the epistemic violence implicated in categorizing post-migrant film-makers as hybrids and in ascribing a specific cinematic language, 'haptic visuality', or 'accent' to them.
5. It homogenizes the (post-)migrant community with an unquestioned notion of methodological nationalism

The colonial concept of linear time and development, in which the 'Oriental' other comes to a position of freedom through progress and departure from a 'backward culture' – 'backward' is even the literal #manifestation of the idea of progress – finds a toehold in both film-plots and academic theorizing. It is especially interesting that, on the one hand, such colonialist depictions of (post-)migrant subjectivities are harshly criticized, but on the other hand, most

scholarly work has not found a way to narrate cinematic history without relying on the very same narrative. While in many 1970s and 80s films such as Hark Bohm's *Yasemin* (1988), the post-migrant woman is led to liberation by a white savior, the cinematic history is thought to have led to liberation through self-re(-)presentation and the celebration of hybridity. By contrast, my own analysis was embedded in an account of popular discourses in the 1990s, which re(-)produced a great phobia of asylum seekers as well as the migrants that came to 'Germany' according to the labor recruitment contracts of the 1950s and 60s.⁹⁰ Instead of reading a celebratory appeal into the films produced by post-migrants in this hostile time, I found many instances of continuing social-realist, problem oriented images of young migrant masculinities in an urban, criminal milieu in the cinema of Thomas Arslan (*Geschwister*, 1997 and *Dealer*, 1999), Yüksel Yavuz (*Aprilkinder*, 1998), and Fatih Akin (i.e. *Kurz und Schmerzlos*, 1998). Despite that this slightly changed in more recent productions where depictions of (post-)migrant men performing white bourgeois masculinities are possible, this development is also accounted for with the teleological narrative of modernity. In films such as Fatih Akin's *Auf der anderen Seite* (2007) the 'modern', educated, assimilated post-migrant man is contrasted with his archaic, hypersexual, misogynist, criminal father in the narrative of a generational shift. Similarly, (post-)migrant femininities were depicted within an ongoing discourse of oppression and the need to break free. The historical shift of agency from the external white savior (in *Yasemin*, 1988) towards an internally driven will to liberation (in *Die Fremde*, 2010) did not significantly change the overall frame. Instead, I suggest, an economically motivated need for a discursive entanglement of the break-free narrative with low-skilled labor, made stories of women who self-induce liberation in the public domain of the workplace, dominates the discourses on (post-)migrant femininities since the 1990s.

My own film analysis provided an alternative. It refrained from assuming a self-re(-)presentative authenticity and did not imply an automatic anti-hegemonic resistance due to an external categorization as 'hybrid'. A postcolonial lens can offer a reopening of the question of re(-)presentation and reveal that also in the case of migrant cinema, this question cannot be that easily answered.

⁹⁰ It is well known that the neo-racist resentments reached a peak with the pogroms in Hoyerswerda (1991), Rostock-Lichtenhagen (1992), Mölln (1992), Frankfurt an der Oder, Magdeburg, and Solingen (1993). Already since the 1990s, the public media made a vital connection between migrant men and criminality (Jäger, 2000, Hafez, 2006, Ruhrmann, 2006; Geißler 2008) before the events of 9/11 even happened. This imaginative connection of (post-)migrant men with danger (Wengeler, 2006) and criminality was one of the main reasons why the terrorist attacks on the 'German' migrant communities by the neo-Nazi group National Socialist Underground (NSU) with at least 10 fatalities remained unrevealed for over a decade until 2011. For police and media the predominant discourses lead to the assumption that the committed murders were part of the drug and danegeld criminality that was supposedly located within the migrant community (Virchow, Thomas & Grittmann, 2014).

The question of resistance through celebratory comedy is similarly complex and needs a deeper #look than a simplistic connection of the 'culture-clash comedy' to anti-hegemonic resistance has to offer. At first #sight, Homi Bhabha's concept of colonial mimicry would suggest that comedy offers the possibility of power. María do Mar Castro Varela and Nikita Dhawan describe mimicry as a comical form of resistance:

Mimicry, as Bhabha underscores, depicts neither forceful assimilation to the reigning culture nor is it the blind imitation of it. For him, mimicry is to imitate in an exaggerated way the language, culture, behavior, and ideas. The exaggeration makes mimicry to a 'repetition with difference' (...). It shall not and could not be seen as proof of the submission of the colonized. (...) Mimicry is understood as a reaction to the circulation of stereotypes, as a comical approach to subversion⁹¹ (Castro Varela & Dhawan, 2011: 230)

However, if we go along Gayatri Spivak's pledge not to equate migrants in the 'West' with the colonized peoples in the world, we should not over-interpret every comical engagement with stereotypes (such as in *Evet, ich will!*, dir. Sinan Akkuş, 2008) as a form of resistance. The 'culture-clash comedy' strongly relies on stereotypes as the basis for humor, which might provoke an analysis that assumes a celebratory resistance. Alternatively, one can also suggest that the migrant as a comical figure might be one of few possible images, not despite, but because it does not leave room for problematizing social injustice like racism. However, I do not want to preclude the possibility of resistance. I strongly think that especially in films made from 'the margins of the margins'/ from the 'other other' (Puar, 2010: 2) can offer the possibility of a comical anti-hegemonic opposition. The film *Lola + Bilidikid* (1999), directed by the queer 'Turkish' film-maker Kutluğ Ataman offers a range of highly interesting scenes that could inform an analysis of (post-)migrant, transnational, queer comedy as a form of going beyond a mere stereotype-based humor. In the film gay migrant Lola (Gandi Mukli), who engages in cross-dressing and who dances in the drag cabaret #show 'Die Gastarbeiterinnen' (the guest-worker women), is threatened from many sides by her aggressive, homo- and transphobic brother, 'German' neo-Nazis, and by the denial of her 'macho' partner Billy who wants to convince her to undergo sex reassignment surgery (SRS), so he can live with her as a heterosexual couple. Her migrant sex-worker friend Kalipso, who

⁹¹ My translation. Original: "Mimikry stellt (...), wie Bhabha betont, weder gewaltsame Assimilation in die herrschende Kultur noch die blinde Nachahmung derselben dar. Für ihn besteht Mimikry darin, Sprache, Kultur, Verhaltensweisen und Ideen in übertriebener Weise nachzuahmen. Die Übertreibung mache Mimikry zu einer 'Wiederholung mit Differenz' (*repetition with difference*, ebd.). Sie sollte und könne nicht als Beleg für die Unterwerfung des Kolonisierten verstanden werden. (...) Mimikry wird als eine Reaktion auf die Zirkulation von Stereotypen – als einen spaßigen (*comic*) Zugang zur Subversion – gedeutet."

longs for SRS (but cannot afford it) at one point decides to leave her apartment in Berlin-Kreuzberg, where mostly 'Turkish' migrants live, to fully withdraw from her male identification as Fikret. Fully dressed in female clothing, she walks out of her apartment and explains her hijab-wearing, middle-aged neighbor in Turkish, why she leaves:

- Hijabi neighbor:** “Who are you?”
- Kalipso:** “It's me, Fikret.”
- Neighbor:** “Like a woman! What is this outfit?”
- Kalipso:** “H&M, of course.”
- Neighbor:** “You look like a whore. Families live here.”
- Kalipso:** “Don't worry. I'm leaving you, your family and this shitty house.”
- Neighbor:** “I always knew that you didn't tick quite right...From the moment you first moved in. Always pretending to be a man.”
- Kalipso:** “Imagine, a woman like me, alone, surrounded by your hungry husbands. (...) So I said to myself: Girl, this is a man's world. So, to keep your womanly honor, you've got to dress like a man.”
- Neighbor:** “It's confusing, but I think I get it.”
- Kalipso:** “The best way to maintain my virginity, my pride, my honor, my self-respect, my dignity, and er...”
- Friend waiting for Kalipso:** “We get it, let's go!”
- Kalipso:** “I'll miss you. Allah knows, you were very kind to me.”
(Takes the first steps downstairs) “But your husband was even better. Pray for me.” (They laugh and quickly disappear)

Kalipso (Mesut Özdemir) in this scene does not simply re(-)produce stereotypical notions of 'Turkish' migrant honor which is used for misogynist objectives. She rather comically inverts the honor-parlance for accounting for her living as a man. The comical incentive is not offered by a supposed 'truth' of the stereotype as in the 'culture-clash comedy', but by the fact

that her neighbor instantly believed that Kalipso's assigned-at-birth-gender was a masquerade after all. She then could #highlight the burdens that the idea of honor puts onto women by invoking male privilege that, she pretends, has motivated her 'decision' to live as a man.

This brief example #reveals simultaneous cinematic resistance to two hegemonic sources of discrimination, racist stereotypes and transphobia within migrant communities. I suggest that a closer #look at the 'other others' of migrant cinema – if this can even be understood as a distinct genre – provides the anti-hegemonic resistance that is assumed to be found in more mainstream productions of the 'culture-clash' section. A specific analysis of queer and/or Kurdish cinema can be more productive and it #shows a way out of obscuring the minorities within the minority which happens when methodological nationalism is applied.

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9. Filmography

- *300 Worte Deutsch | 300 Words of German* (dir. Züli Aladağ, 2015)
- *40 Quadratmeter Deutschland | 40 Sq. Meters of Germany* (dir. Tefvik Başer, 1986)
- *Abschied vom falschen Paradies | Farewell to False Paradise* (dir. Tefvik Başer, 1989)
- *Almanya: Willkommen in Deutschland | Almanya: Welcome to Germany* (dir. Nesrin & Yasemin Şamdereli, 2011)
- *Anam* (dir. Buket Alakuş, 2001)
- *Angst Essen Seele Auf | Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* (dir. Rainer Werner Fassbinder, 1974)
- *A Pervert's Guide to Ideology* (dir. Sophie Fiennes, 2012)
- *Auf der Anderen Seite | On the Edge of Heaven* (dir. Fatih Akin, 2007)
- *Berlin in Berlin* (dir. Sinan Çetin, 1993)
- *Bhaji on the Beach* (dir. Gurinder Chadha, 1993, UK)
- *Chiko* (dir. Fatih Akin, 2008)
- *Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul* (dir. Fatih Akin, 2005)
- *Dealer* (dir. Thomas Arslan, 1998)
- *Der schöne Tag | A Fine Day* (dir. Thomas Arslan, 2001)
- *Die Fremde | When We Leave* (dir. Feo Aladağ, 2010)
- *Eine Andere Liga | A Different League* (dir. Buket Alakuş, 2005)
- *Ein Fest für Beyhan | Beyhan's Wedding* (dir. Ayşe Polat, 1994)
- *Ein Mädchen im Ring | Girl in the Ring* (dir. Aysun Bademsoy, 1996)
- *Evet, ich will! | Evet, I Do!* (dir. Sinan Akkuş, 2008)
- *Fack Ju Göhte | Fuck You, Goethe* (dir. Bora Dağtekin, 2013)
- *Gegen die Wand | Head-On* (dir. Fatih Akin, 2004)
- *Ich Chef, du Turnshuh | Me Boss, You Sneaker* (dir. Hussi Kutlucan, 1998)
- *Ich gehe jetzt rein... | In the Game* (dir. Aysun Bademsoy, 2008)
- *Im Juli | In July* (dir. Fatih Akin, 2000)
- *Kardeşler – Geschwister | Brothers and Sisters* (dir. Thomas Arslan, 1996)
- *Kebab Connection* (dir. Anno Saul, 2004)
- *Kleine Freiheit | A Little Bit of Freedom* (dir. Yüksel Yavuz, 2003)
- *Meine verrückte türkische Hochzeit | My Crazy Turkish Wedding* (dir. Stefan Holtz, 2005)
- *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (dir. Joel Zwick, 2002)
- *Nach der Hochzeit | After the Wedding* (dir. Antonia Lerch, 2013)
- *Shirins Hochzeit | Shirin's Wedding* (dir. Helma Sanders-Brahms, 1975)
- *Slavoj Žižek: The Reality of the Virtual* (dir. Ben Wright, 2004)
- *Türkisch für Anfänger | Turkish for Beginners* (dir. Bora Dağtekin, 2012)
- *Yara – Die Wunde | The Scar* (dir. Yılmaz Arslan, 1998)
- *Yasemin* (dir. Hark Bohm, 1988)
- *Zeit der Wünsche – Dilekler Zamanı | Time of Wishes* (dir. Rolf Schübel, 2005)