

INTERROGATING INTEGRATION

SPORT, CELEBRITY, AND SCANDAL
IN THE MAKING OF NEW GERMANY

KATE ZAMBON



Interrogating Integration

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Interrogating Integration

Sport, Celebrity, and Scandal in the
Making of New Germany

Kate Zambon

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*To my family—by birth and by choice—
and to all those who strive for radical hospitality.
In loving memory of my mother, who wished for her children
to learn languages and play soccer to connect us to the world.*

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Abbreviations

AfD	Alternative for Germany (Far-right party)
CDU	Christian Democratic Union (Center-right party)
DbD	<i>Du bist Deutschland</i> (You Are Germany)
DFB	German Football Association
DOSB	German Olympic Sports Federation
FIFA	International Association Football Federation
GDR	German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
NPD	National Democratic Party of Germany (Far-right, neo-Nazi party)
NSU	National Socialist Underground (Neo-Nazi terror)
SPD	Social Democratic Party (Center-left party)

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Acknowledgments

This book developed from a set of questions I have been exploring for almost as long as I can remember. How does a person come to belong in a new place? How are particular forms of difference made meaningful and relevant for determining membership? How do the stories a country tells about itself influence whether newcomers are claimed as members? These questions come from growing up in the United States, where the mythologies of a settler colonial nation include new arrivals who become members by claiming the culture as their own and proclaiming their cultures as part of the whole. As a white American from a loving middle-class, secular Christian home, growing up also meant becoming aware that not every American story of belonging was as simple as mine or that of my cross-European ancestors. Not all who arrived did so by choice; not every claim to belonging is broadly recognized; and the consent of Indigenous peoples was never part of the story. The privilege of my easy belonging became apparent as the stories of many groups of racialized—above all Black and Indigenous—Americans laid bare the yawning gaps between the promises of *e pluribus unum* and the hierarchical realities of different groups' access to agency and belonging across history.

My route to exploring these questions in the German context is long and winds through experiences of exchange and building a chosen transnational family, starting from my rural Wisconsin home, through Mexico, Poughkeepsie, Philadelphia, and on to Germany. At each stage, mentors, strangers, family, and friends helped me find my way and develop lenses of understanding. As flawed and incomplete as any attempt to capture complex phenomena must ultimately be, I have received enormous support to make this book possible.

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Introduction

Integration, Race, and Popular Nationalism

“I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose.”

—Mesut Özil, July 2018

“When we win, we’re German heroes. When we lose, the monkey comments come out and we’re once again just the Blacks.”

—Youssoufa Moukoko, June 2023

A decade after changes to citizenship law introduced birthright or *jus soli* citizenship, nearly half of Germany’s national soccer team in the 2010 men’s FIFA World Cup had at least one immigrant parent. Many of the team’s newest stars were Black and Muslim Germans. In response, the press heralded the debut of the German “international team”—a moniker that simultaneously touts new diversity and implies that athletes of color are not truly German. Despite having been born and raised in Germany, star midfielder Mesut Özil was hailed as the “new leading figure of integration politics” (Schupp 2010) and was awarded a prestigious prize for his “successful integration” (see chapter 7). Meanwhile, praise for Özil was peppered with persistent reminders of his difference from “normal” Germans. Recalling antisemitic “dual loyalty” tropes from the past, the press raised pointed questions about his practice of silently praying during the national anthem (see Zambon 2023) and speculated about his true allegiances and “torn heart” (Beeg 2010). These themes resurfaced once again before the 2018 World Cup, after Özil and two other Turkish-German footballers posed for photographs with Turkey’s increasingly authoritarian president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The appearance stoked speculation about Özil’s commitment to liberal democracy and drew overtly racist attacks from German fans and public figures, which only intensified after the team’s disappointing World Cup performance. With the tourna-

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ment behind him, Özil shocked the nation by renouncing his national team jersey in a statement released on Twitter. Özil stated that the constant scrutiny and everyday racism targeting his Turkish heritage and Muslim faith spurred his resignation. Events like these capture the public imagination, providing moments of identification for some and fuel for cultural grievances for others, all of which circulate to form the stories that define the nation and its Others.

Özil's resignation catalyzed a heated national discussion on racism, the "failure of integration," and the ideals of sport as a vehicle for producing a confident cosmopolitan nation (Fischer and Mohrman 2020; Waas 2023; Zambon 2022). Five years later, national U-21 team member Youssoufa Moukoko echoed Özil's statement, after he and another Black German teammate were inundated with racist abuse online following missed penalty shots in a European Championship match. Tracing evolving constructions of national identity in the media after the introduction of birthright citizenship in 2000 leads repeatedly back to men's national soccer and the increasingly diverse athletes and fans that came to represent new national ideals and anxieties. The cultural politics of the mediated public sphere—including popular culture, industry campaigns, and media commentary and controversy—are the focus of this book, but sport is its strongest throughline; more than any other forum, men's national soccer provided the stage and narrative material shaping new national imaginaries in the early 21st century.

Beginning with the 2006 men's FIFA World Cup hosted in Germany, media commentators coalesced around stories promoting renewed national pride. They built on mythologies going back to the 1954 "Miracle of Bern" (Dawson et al. 2022), West Germany's unexpected World Cup victory that established the idea of soccer as a safe, "apolitical" national symbol less than a decade after the defeat of fascist Germany. Adding to these established mythologies as hosts in 2006, the media emphasized the patriotic sporting celebrations of immigrant citizens to frame national pride as a public virtue. A "lack of pride" among white Germans was purportedly an impediment to integration—after all, who would want to identify with a "self-hating" nation (see chapters 1 and 5)? Yet many of the same commentators who extolled the virtues of the "colorful" new Germany of the World Cup seamlessly transitioned to new stories enumerating the dangers of "unassimilable migrants" living in "parallel societies."

What is the relationship between the renewal of celebratory nationalism with an inclusionary emphasis and the normalization of racist anti-immigrant politics? How has the symbolic place of the descendants of immigrants changed after their inclusion through birthright citizenship? How do debates

about the inclusion of transnational populations play into struggles around memory and the meaning of historical national atrocities? To answer these questions, this book explores media debates and spectacles that stage discussions of national identity in a global era of rising nationalism. These events define who belongs to the nation—and who does not. The storytellers in the media and popular culture frame the world and our place in it. In these stories, “integration” emerged in recent decades as a guiding concept in Germany and across Europe to regulate and control cultural difference.

Integration became a watchword in Germany after the introduction of birthright citizenship. Despite the rapid growth of the foreign-national population after World War II—especially through “guest worker” programs—until 2000 a child could only acquire German citizenship by descent from a German parent. Naturalization was technically possible but was complicated and rare (Abraham 2008, 148). Birthright citizenship, though still subject to many limitations, opened new possibilities for belonging. It also threatened the imagined homogeneity of the nation based on blood (*jus sanguinis*) and spurred increased scrutiny of people identified as “migrants.” This led to what Damani Partridge (2012) calls “exclusionary incorporation,” whereby conditional and precarious inclusion reinforces lines difference from the white Christian German norm. Expanding citizenship also created opportunities to rebrand Germany, make a break from the past, and normalize nationalism. The concept of integration connects these phenomena, producing racialized forms of national identity despite appearing benign and even progressive.

This book theorizes the interrelationship between mediated constructions of national identity and the emergence of integration as a model defining the place of immigrants in the national public. Starting with mediated events, campaigns, and debates that provided crucial platforms for renewing national narratives, this book addresses a significant theoretical gap in critical research on integration. Public discourse mobilizes ideas of cultural difference to create and politicize ontological categories. The cases in this book support findings in other European countries that the figure of the Muslim is a critical node in this discursive formation (Norton 2013; Yılmaz 2016), while proposing that the category of the integrant is broader and more flexible, selectively including many forms of racial and ethnocultural difference. Fundamentally, integration defines who counts as “the people” (Canovan 2005), which is to say, those whose belonging is assumed as opposed to those, like Özil, whose integration and loyalty must be constantly demonstrated but can never be definitively proven.

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Global Populism and Nationalist Revivals

The themes woven throughout this book will be familiar to readers across European and European settler colonial countries like my home country, the United States. The stories that animate this project effortlessly mix suspicion and celebration of difference. They combine ideas about (Muslim) minorities as culturally and congenitally deficient with celebrations of minoritized celebrities for their grit, determination, and success. The achievements of exceptional individuals like Mesut Özil support neoliberal mythologies of meritocracy and a postracial society, reassuring the majority that the status quo is fair and just. In this networked age, it is more important than ever to understand white supremacy and nativist national populism as a globalized and historically grounded system of ideas; appeals to make the nation “great again” can be heard from the mouths of national populists worldwide. These movements share a drive to define who counts as the “pure people” and to recover their political and cultural status from “dilution” caused by the policies of liberal democratic “elites” that support immigration, asylum rights, and the enfranchisement of minoritized groups (see Judis 2016; Mudde 2004). While suspicion and resentment of minoritized groups is central to this constellation, national populists also frequently highlight minoritized individuals who support their movement to dismiss critiques of racism. Integration discourse provides a coherent logic allowing the embrace of selected individuals while presenting the group as an aggregate threat. While this broad ideological framework links national populist movements globally, local contexts and histories shape its narrative content.

Germany holds a symbolically potent place in global politics and cultural memory, making it a crucial site for understanding the fragility of liberalism in the face of nationalist revivals across the globe. Germany’s history is emblematic in at least two ways. Its history of genocide made Germany the global posterchild for the perils of unchecked nationalism as fuel for fascism. Thereafter, postwar reparations efforts made it into a model for how countries can learn from their past wrongs. This narrative of a nation’s great fall into fascism and almost miraculous democratic redemption strengthens Germany’s international image as a beacon of liberal democratic values.

When asylum demand peaked in 2015, Chancellor Angela Merkel’s government garnered international praise for its response to the intensifying global refugee reception crisis when Merkel upheld domestic and international humanitarian laws governing borders and asylum rights. Whereas Hungary, Austria, and many other EU countries violated their legal and ethi-

cal obligations to refugees arriving at their borders, Merkel followed the law permitting people arriving at the German border to make their case for asylum. This decision was framed by many in hyperbolic terms (see fig. 1). One article from the left-leaning *Die Zeit*, ominously titled “The Night Germany Lost Control,” set up the events not in terms of legal and ethical responsibilities but as a moment of irreparable rupture that “divides history into a time before and a time after” (Blume et al. 2016), turning Germans against themselves and causing more refugees to follow. While data tracking changes in demand for asylum contradict the assertion that Merkel’s supposed “opening of the borders”¹ was an invitation that led to increased demand (Faigle, Polke-Majewski, and Venohr 2016), this narrative became deeply entrenched. The far right turned this false narrative into a national populist battle cry, inspiring a surge in violent attacks on politicians, refugee housing, and visible minorities (Fekete 2018). It is tempting to see these tensions as a polarization of society between “dark” and “light” Germany, as the then president Joachim Gauck put it in a speech following violent antirefugee riots in 2015. However, this idea suggests that the problem lies with bad actors at the margins, rather than with enduring structures and discourses that permeate society. Instead, this book reveals how mainstream narratives around integration and national identity normalize the nativist convictions of the revanchist far right.

Until very recently, the postwar constitution and norms of the German Federal Republic successfully prevented far-right parties from gaining traction and entering the federal government (Arzheimer 2019).² The far-right populist Alternative for Germany party (AfD) broke this tradition, winning seats in the European parliament in 2014 and gaining 94 seats in the Bundestag in 2017. While the extremism of the AfD is only becoming more blatant, recent polling finds growing support and that a full one-third of Germans view it as “a normal democratic party” (Solomon 2023). In June 2023, 19 percent of respondents stated they would vote AfD, second only to the center-right Christian Democrats (*Tagesschau* 2023). Despite its long exile from

1. It is more accurate to call this a decision not to close borders that were open by law and treaty. The narrative of Merkel “opening the borders” is an inversion of the legal status quo and reframes the exceptional action of closure as the norm.

2. Approaches to rightwing extremism differed in East and West Germany. While the East German one-party state and politics of antifascism inhibited right-wing politics, Jarausch (1991) argues it prevented confrontation with complicity in past atrocities and left the East vulnerable to authoritarianism. Although not exclusive to the former East, nativist, authoritarian, and populist sentiments are substantially higher there than in the former West (Arzheimer 2023).

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Fig. 1. This cover of *Der Spiegel* depicting Chancellor Merkel as Mother Theresa includes the subtitle, “Merkel’s Policies Divide Europe,” exemplifying the ambivalent domestic media response to Merkel’s decision to meet basic human rights obligations. (© DER SPIEGEL 39/2015.)

government, white nationalist extremism has persisted in Germany in dedicated organizations and subcultures (Backes and Mudde 2000; Miller-Idriss 2009; Weisskircher 2023) as well as in the mainstream (Miller-Idriss 2017; Zick, Küpper, and Berghan 2019). Domestically, public commitment to critically engaging racism—past and present—has always been more uneven than the international stories of Germany’s triumph over right-wing nationalism suggest (see chapter 3). Domestic discussions of identity and national pride entail an ambivalent relationship with the past and with cultural change in an increasingly diverse population.

Racism under Erasure

As many scholars of race have argued, race is a modern technology for ordering and making meaning from an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Racial conceptions group people to invent homogeneity from real existing diversity. They provide frameworks for interpreting difference and inequality, typically for the purposes of naturalizing currently existing social and economic inequities. The category of race represents “a way (or a set of ways) of being in the world, of living, of meaning-making. Those ways of being, living, and representation differ across space and time” (Goldberg 2009, 152). More controversial among scholars and commentators is when mobilizations of race can be characterized as *racism*. Does racism require intentional animus? To qualify as racist, must a policy, action, or statement assert a group’s inferiority? While conceptual clarity is vital for analysis, a greater problem is the tendency to focus on drawing this defining line, centering the “debatability of racism” (Lentin 2016; Titley 2020) (see chapter 6). In these debates, the concrete harms of racism are overtaken by anxieties about protecting “abstract liberalism” (Goldberg 2009) like “freedom of speech” and protection from “cancellation” for those implicated in racism. Instead of engaging in debates about the delimitations of race and racism, this book focuses on processes of racial fragmentation, their role in producing white Christian national normativity, and their consequences for determining whose lives matter.

Racialization is critical for modern national self-construction globally and for patching together a coherent identity from the heterogeneity of Europe. Barnor Hesse (2007) argues that the establishment of modern *Europeanness* from the 16th century onwards depended on racialized distinctions created through colonial relations. Meanwhile, what Stuart Hall (1991) calls the “internalist” narrative of European identity focuses inward and erases the

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constitutive role of the colonial Other. In contemporary Germany, this constitutive Other does not come primarily from former colonies but from post-war “guest worker” (*Gastarbeiter*) policies, which restricted labor recruitment to “European” countries. Karin Schönwälder (2004) shows the white supremacist underpinnings of these policies against “non-Europeans,” which excluded groups who were conflated in internal discussions as “Afro-Asians,” while including exceptions for white-majority settler colonial nations (United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Israel). When guest worker treaties were established in the 1950s and 1960s, Turkey was generally considered a part of Europe (Schönwälder 2004). However, Turkey’s status at the margins of Europeaness was reflected in attempts to include restrictions on residence duration and family reunification in the Turkish labor contracts not present in Germany’s other labor migration treaties (Triadafilopoulos and Schönwälder 2006). Ultimately, West German liberal democratic commitments prevented the draconian policies of forced return that a true “guest worker” program requires, making Germany a de facto country of immigration. The varied, ambivalent public reactions to this reality took center stage in German national self-conception (see Chin 2007; Miller 2018), with Turkish immigrants and their descendants becoming the paradigmatic Other.³ The decades-long maintenance of the myth of impermanence combined with discriminatory labor practices and housing policies (Stokes 2022) to sow the seeds of intergenerational inequities.

Fatima El-Tayeb (2011; 2016) picks up this thread to argue that race in Germany and Europe is constructed by making internal Others into permanent foreigners through “the externalization of racialized populations,” aided by the supposed racelessness of the categories of religion and culture. Religion, here, is more significant as a cultural than spiritual practice. The association of Europeaness with both whiteness and Christianity (and selectively and strategically Jewishness) does not depend on religious faith, but rather the culturally grounded, racialized distinction from Muslim Others. As the era of European colonialism receded beginning in the second half of the 20th century, El-Tayeb observes that the unification of Europe was facilitated by the construction of a shared discourse on alterity focused on the “migrant.” The category of the “migrant” is disconnected from the action and experience of immigration. In practice, the individuals signified by the term are more likely to be native-born Europeans of color with migration histories—often from Muslim majority countries—at least

3. See Ferruh Yılmaz’s book, *How the Workers Became Muslims* (2016) for an analysis of similar transformation in Denmark.

one generation back. As such, El-Tayeb argues the “migrant” is a fundamentally racialized category, while the presumption of a natural basis in cultural distinctions obscures this racialization. This follows what David Theo Goldberg calls a “project of racelessness” (2009, 189). Along with its conceptual fellows—postracialism and colorblindness—racelessness obliterates the category that is necessary to explain shared experiences and political, economic, and social outcomes that both plague and unite groups within a population. In Europe, racism is ascribed to historical or geographic Others, to the monstrous crimes of previous generations held in thrall by a charismatic leader, to the distant and external colonial past, or the persistent anti-Black racism of the United States.

Critical engagement with the racism of the Nazi past grew over time in West Germany and later the unified Federal Republic, along with a robust debate and protest culture that sensitized German society to racist right-wing extremism of the past and at the margins of contemporary society. At the same time, as Jarausch and Geyer observe, the great emotional effort required to deal with the past has also fed a public desire “to make sure that their past remained past. They could deal with stereotypical Germans of an earlier age but not with people like themselves being implicated in a past that looked like the present” (2003, 10). Chin, Fehrenbach, Ely, and Grossman (2009) see the “retreat from race” as a category for analyzing contemporary inequalities as a means of denying continuities with the past, not only between the Third Reich and what came before but stretching from German unification through the Third Reich to contemporary society. Against this impulse, Chin et al. argue that across time “each form of prejudice became a kind of weapon in the effort to assert a uniquely German identity; each singled out a specific group of people as antithetical and antagonistic to the German social body in an attempt to create ethnic homogeneity” (2009, 11). Germany’s story reflects issues in all countries with histories of racialized violence, a commonality that is tragically widespread. Paradigmatic forms of racism—such as the Holocaust, South African apartheid, and American chattel slavery and Jim Crow segregation—can paradoxically enable the free flow of contemporary racism by “freezing” racism in the past (Lentin 2016, 35). Against shameful histories, there is a strong temptation to draw a bright line dividing the past from the present. This allows current cultural grievances against minorities to be characterized as both legitimate and completely distinct from historical racisms.

The history of genocidal antisemitism affectively burdens discussions about race in Germany in ways that make today’s white supremacy difficult to address. The idea that Germans must feel “shame” and “guilt” over the

Holocaust primes collective hypersensitivity around racism. Yet guilt is an individualist framework ill-suited to addressing racism. As Bonilla-Silva argues, “if racism is a collective phenomenon that precedes all of us, we are not individually responsible for its existence and must not feel guilty for its existence” (2006, 202). He adds, however, that this history *does* entail the responsibility to recognize and act against the perpetuation of racial inequities. Instead, the perceived expectation of guilt feeds white victim narratives that treat any mention of racism as akin to accusing all white Germans of being Nazis (see chapter 1). This framework silences discussions of racism while expanding sympathy for white nationalist movements that are fueled by aggrieved victimhood.

In popular and official discourse, racism is commonly treated as a phenomenon of a hateful fringe, ignoring how it appears in media and political discourse in a positive guise—for example, as part of sporting and other media spectacles—to perpetuate racialized hierarchies. Using biopolitics to theorize integration as racial fragmentation enables the comparison of a broader range of time and space, without suppressing or homogenizing contextual particularities. *Interrogating Integration* explores how the integration paradigm has paved the way for a new nationalist resurgence.

Studying Integration

Discourse on migration and cultural pluralism in Europe must be examined as a process of “racial formation” (Omi and Winant 2015) in which European and national subjects are constituted through and against Others (Chin et al. 2009; El-Tayeb 2011; Korteweg and Yurdakul 2014; Partridge 2012). Although research on migration, transnationalism, and cultural change in Europe is expanding across multiple fields, few works critically dismantle the logics behind prevailing ideas of integration in popular culture and journalism. Indeed, the term’s vague but positive associations make integration difficult to interrogate. Often mistaken for a synonym of “inclusion,” integration as a goal is difficult to argue with, making it even more powerful.

European conceptions of integration differ from the American usage, where integration typically refers to measures for remediating the systemic segregation, immiseration, and disenfranchisement of Black Americans and other racialized groups over generations (see Reck 2013). In this context, integration is not only about ending formal discrimination but also actively dismantling inequities preventing minoritized groups from full participation

in public life (Darity 2008). In contrast, the European usage frames integration as cultural issue related to values and social incentives. The textbook definition centers the extent of contact and cohesion between different social units in any social order (Münch 2001). This foundation evacuates questions of power and encourages thinking about integration as a matter of managing naturalized cultural characteristics and shaping economic incentive structures guiding individual behavior. The textbook definition sounds neutral but, in practice, sets up stigmatizing discourses wherein immigrant neighborhoods and dialects represent a threatening “parallel society.” Failures of integration in this framework result from a combination of cultural deficits in “migrant” communities and the perceived unwillingness or inability of the public sector to manage unruly difference through harsh-but-fair policy (see chapter 6). This conception of integration erases structural racism while discursively marking racialized difference.

The concept of integration has received proportionally little critical attention given its importance in European cultural politics following the backlash against multiculturalism beginning around the turn of this millennium (Lentin and Titley 2011; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). There is a well-established body of research that uncritically accepts integration as a social program, assessing and comparing integration policy across Europe (Cole 2000; Ersanilli and Koopmans 2010; Joppke 2007; Sackmann 2004). Complementing this are lines of research that attempt to define integration (Borstner and Gartner 2007) and provide indicators to assess the efficacy of integration policy (Ager and Strang 2008). The most common approach to integration in scholarship is to accept the term’s broad definition as a humane middle ground between permissive multiculturalist and coercive assimilationist policy (Favell 2001). Although a number of authors have critiqued the ambiguity of the concept of integration (Brubaker 2001; Ehrkamp 2006; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010), fewer have deconstructed its logic or theorized its social and political function.

One exception is Lentin and Titley’s (2011) trenchant critique of racism in Europe’s “crisis of multiculturalism,” including their observations about the category of the “integrant,” or the imagined target of integration discourse. Lentin and Titley argue that “integration talk” functions as a governmental technology to control minoritized populations while “functioning as a display for the ‘majority’” (2011, 199) to reassure them that steps are being taken to manage suspicious strangers. One point of agreement among critical scholars is the recognition of integration discourse’s role in forming normative national identity (Chin 2007; Favell 2010; Hinze 2013; Schuster-Craig 2017; Yilmaz 2016). In his research on European policy, Favell (2001; 2010)

argues that nationalist assumptions provide the implicit foundation of the disparate issues addressed by integration policy, namely that the nation-state is a natural and bounded societal unit. Hinze's book, *Turkish Berlin* (2013), broke new ground by investigating the gap between the ways integration is conceived by policymakers and how it is lived by immigrants and their descendants. Hinze provides an important corrective to narratives of integration, revealing the complexity and deep local attachments of transnational and hybrid lives in a contemporary European capital.

As the promises of belonging through integration prove false, rejection of integration discourse is growing in Germany, particularly among critics from racialized communities (see Arndt and Ofuatey-Alazard 2011; Czollek 2020; Ha, Samarai, and Mysorekar 2016). This book contributes to this critical work by extending analysis into the arena of media discourse, aiming not to redefine the term or shed light on what lived integration looks like but instead to make sense of the ambiguity, complexity, and flexibility of its operation in service of maintaining the normative white Christian core of German identity. I ask not what integration *is* but what work it *does* in the mediated public sphere.

Integration as Biopolitical Fracture

The prevailing narratives about integration in popular culture illuminate how the media bolsters nationalism using ideas about minorities and immigrants. The events analyzed in this book reveal how integration discourse supports a form of citizenship guided by the biopolitical logics of utility and productivity. In short, biopolitics is a way of thinking about society that categorizes human worth in terms of productivity and economic rationality (Foucault 2008; Lemke 2011). In this framework, successful minoritized individuals who can be cast as emblems of national pride and productivity are held up as models of integration, earning an always provisional form of membership in society. Meanwhile, those who do not thrive or are unable or unwilling to conform are framed as an existential threat to the future of the nation, particularly when combined with anxieties about the supposed decline of white Christian German identity and demographics. This ambivalence is inextricable from integration discourse, which strives to optimize life of "the people," even at the cost of the lives of "Others."

Integration only rose as the primary framework for regulating transnational diversity after citizenship law changes affirmed that long-term immigrants and their descendants were a permanent part of the German popula-

tion. Germany originally adopted a territory-based rule of citizenship (*jus soli*) at its foundation as a modern nation in 1871. However, “blood” (*jus sanguinis*) has been the primary qualification for German citizenship since 1895, when German conservatives pushed a rightward populist shift that eventually led to the fully descent-based citizenship laws of 1913.⁴ Those rules remained in effect, with the addition and later removal of Nazi policies of exclusion and racial expulsion, through the end of the 20th century. Despite the rapid growth of the foreign-national population, until 2000 a child acquired German citizenship only by descent from a German parent. Although naturalization was contemplated in law, the process was ambiguous, arbitrary, and prohibitive, even for highly qualified candidates (Göktürk, Gramling, and Kaes 2007, 151). When revisions to the Nationality Act⁵ enacted *jus soli* citizenship in 2000, there were approximately 7.5 million foreign nationals living in Germany, which represented nearly 10 percent of the country’s population (Abraham 2008, 149). Of these “foreigners,” nearly 1.5 million were born in Germany.

The introduction of *jus soli* citizenship rights through the Nationality Act revisions in the late 1990s was highly contentious (Göktürk, Gramling, and Kaes 2007). It was passed with varying degrees of resignation, even among many leaders in the governing coalition that proposed the reforms (Nathans 2004, 252). This is clear in the remarks in the Bundestag by then chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who focused on the need to face what he called “reality,” that is, that recent immigrants were unlikely to leave. The lack of enthusiasm for the changes is even clearer in the statements of one of the Social Democratic Party experts on citizenship law, Dieter Wiefelspütz, who said in a 1997 debate that “we aren’t going to be rid of the people here now” (quoted in Nathans 2004, 255). Territorial rights to citizenship introduced new forms of uncertainty into the definition of society and the population. Under the sole rule of “blood” rights to citizenship, the biopolitical metaphor of the social body functioned with seeming transparency. The blood connection limited the types of birth that were relevant in biopolitical terms. Territorial birthright introduced new concerns about disparate fertility rates among various groups for the national future (see chapter 6). What the reluctant architects of citizenship law changes and their opposition did not seem to immediately realize, however, was that these changes also provided new symbolic material for creating a break with the past and reshaping Germany as a cosmopolitan modern nation.

4. 1913 Reichs- und Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz.

5. Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz, StAG.

With the expansion of the definition of the population to include territorial rights, the increased complexity of defining the population spurred new forms of surveillance, control, and optimization under the rubric of integration. Integration logic rejects critical political engagement and undermines discussions about the structural problems that perpetuate racialized inequalities. Instead, it prompts self-governance, respectability politics, and the social regulation of targeted minorities. This appears in youth sport and culture programs, public service campaigns, and welfare reform and reduction. Although its meaning is contested, integration is broadly supported as a necessary task across the mainstream political spectrum, even as its racializing consequences have long been ignored. This racializing discourse of integration runs from the popular cultural politics of nation-building and “branding” (Aronczyk 2013) through the national populist movements that have gained electoral and cultural traction in the past decade.

Despite integration’s surface-level promise of providing a route to belonging for “migrants,” the primary function of integration discourse is to reinforce white Christian national normativity. Although integration discourse involves incessant scrutiny of differentially marked groups, it is not primarily a way to think about difference. Whereas multiculturalism is myopically concerned with difference—its protection, its representation and recognition, and the moderation of problems that can result from making exceptions to universal norms for its preservation (Benhabib 2002)—integration is concerned with difference insofar as it relates to productivity and the welfare of national society. Above all, integration is a framework for conceptualizing the national population. It is framed as a mechanism for constructing a better, more productive population. It is also a means of representing and managing threats to the population. Both tasks use difference as their axis, but the first treats difference as a source of life while the second revolves around difference as a threat to life that must be managed or neutralized. In both cases, the subject of concern is the normative population, the nation.

Integration discourse depends on an evaluative framework that classifies the population first according to their status as *national* or *integrant*, and second according to the threats and benefits the latter represent for the population at large. Foucault defines racism as “a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power’s control: the break between what must live and what must die” (2003, 254).⁶ Although different permutations

6. Although Foucault’s work explicitly addressing racism is sparse, as critics have rightly noted (see Weheliye 2014), his theories on biopolitical fragmentation speak directly on the determination of whose lives matter.

of group-based discrimination existed long before the modern state, under biopolitics racism becomes a technology of power. Foucault defines race not by what it is but by its function in fragmenting the population. Racism makes it possible to establish a relationship between the life of the normative population and the death of the Other that is purely civil in nature. It is not the military or warlike relationship of confrontation but rather the rational and civic assessment of “the greater good” (Foucault 2003, 255). It evacuates the antagonism from this relationship by substituting a biological-type rationality that converts the us-them conflict into a calculation whereby the more the inferior species die out, the stronger I—as a species rather than an individual—will be and the better I can live (Foucault 2003, 255). It is here, according to Foucault, that state racism appears: “a racism that society will direct against itself, against its own elements and its own products. This is the internal racism of permanent purification, and it will become one of the basic dimensions of social normalization” (Foucault 2003, 62). In this way, racism is a requirement for the state to exercise sovereignty, which is to say, its right to kill and let die.⁷

Based on supposedly objective measures of promoting population welfare, integration itself becomes a marker of race and the means of fragmenting the population. The population is divided into two categories in relation to integration. First, there is the category of the national, which stands in for the population. The integration status of the national does not need to be assessed. The national is the normative subject whose life indicates the health and well-being of the population. The national does not qualify to be evaluated in relation to integration since the national *is* the population.

The category of the *national* is presumed to belong and is, thus, exempt from qualification through integration. This category is self-evidently associated with whiteness, German-sounding names, and Germanic-Christian traditions. Although those who possess these characteristics are presumed as nationals, that status may be lost by violating “hegemonic conceptions of modernity (e.g., ‘rationality,’ ‘liberalism,’ ‘capitalism,’ ‘secularism,’ ‘rule of law’)” (Hesse 2007, 644). Those nationals who pose a threat to the population, which is to say, to the health of the “multiple national body” (Foucault 2003, 245), can be disqualified as *asozial*. The Duden dictionary defines *asozial* as “1) incapable of life in society, not fitting into society; living on the margins of society; 2) damaging to community, society; or 3)

7. With “killing,” Foucault is not talking only about murder but also “the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on” (Foucault 2003, 256).

possessing a low intellectual, cultural level; uneducated and ill-bred” (“Asozial,” n.d.). *Asozial*, or the slang version, *assi*, indicates a type of person who is harmful to society. Currently, it is primarily used in slang form as mockery or an insult. Although it is not the focus of this book, the category of the *asozial* is noteworthy as it emerged as inseparable from hereditary and eugenicist thought. Under National Socialism, it was used to describe and then deport to concentration camps a category of social undesirables that included the heterogeneous groups of vagrants, criminals, beggars, mentally ill, addicts, “work-averse” (*Arbeitsscheuen*), nutritionally deficient, and prostitutes (Willing 2003). The term continues to be used today in relation to the same referents.

The *Asoziale(r)*⁸ is not only outside the norms of society but also poses a threat to the well-being of society, or the population at large. In addition, they are often blamed for other social ills, such as racism and xenophobia, relieving normative society of the burden of answering for the violence of fragmentation through integration discourse (see conclusion). Though not limited to white people, this term overlaps with the American derogatory term “white trash,” both in terms of its present-day usage and its emergence in 20th-century eugenicist thought (see Newitz and Wray 1997). The tropes of the *Asoziale(r)* and of white trash disqualify individuals or groups who would otherwise qualify from belonging to the *national* category. As such, their life is no longer an indicator of the health of the population, but rather exists as a threat to the health of the population.

The second category is that of the *integrant*,⁹ which overlaps with El-Tayeb’s category of the “migrant.” This category has two subcategories: the “examples of successful integration” and the failed category of “integration-refusers” (*Integrationsverweigerer*). The category of the integrant must constantly be evaluated and managed to determine, both at the individual level and at the level of the group, whether integrants fall into the subcategory of successes or failures. This evaluation determines whether non-nationals are beneficial or deleterious to the national population. Crucially, it is a perpetual evaluation that can never be definitively settled. As the cases of Mesut Özil and others studied in this book show, an integrant who is celebrated as a “successful example” in one situation may later be judged a failure or traitor to the cause of integration based on another situation. In short, (white Chris-

8. The term is used both in adjective form (*asozial*) and in noun form (*Asozialer, Asoziale, Asozialen*).

9. Here I am borrowing from Lentin and Titley (2011) who use the term to discuss subjects of integration.

tian) nationals are presumed to belong to the valued population but may lose their status through perceived economic and social transgressions. On the other hand, the value and belonging of integrants are always precarious and to-be-determined.

Method and Chapter Overview

The primary source material for this book is press coverage in the print media along with the content and documentation of public service campaigns and projects, policy documents, and entertainment programs. Although the global newspaper crisis is also impacting Germany (Schnibben 2013), print media remain central to the increasingly diverse German media sphere based on two important indicators: first, journalists from across the field regularly consume print sources more frequently than other media (Weischenberg, Malik, and Scholl 2006); second, print sources are cited more frequently across the media sphere than other media (PMG Presse-Monitor 2014). The sources in these chapters reflect some of the regional imbalances that have characterized Germany's national public after reunification, as the top media companies and national press outlets are all situated in the former West. While recognizing the overrepresentation of perspectives from the West, the chapters in this book draw on a range of media and press archives, sometimes focusing on major national outlets and sometimes including regional and local sources depending on the scale and character of the story.

As Ernest Renan argued, “the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things” (1990, 11). But who decides on the form those commonalities should take? How is it determined what should be used or discarded in constructing national identity? This book explores the role of popular culture and media commentary in “a battle for hegemony, by which a part claims to speak for the whole nation and to represent the national essence” (Billig 1995, 27). Given its privileged position in selecting fragments from the universe of events to represent, frame, and publicize, the professional media offer a prime site of analysis for discourse theory. Yet, according to Carpentier and De Cleen, relatively few studies of media have used discourse theoretical analysis. Perhaps the most crucial affordance of discourse theory and analysis's approach is the theoretical support it provides “for the in-depth analysis of the construction of political identities, embedded in the sociology of conflict and antagonisms” (Carpentier and De Cleen 2007, 278). Since this book

focuses on how public representations create and reinforce ideas of the nation and its Others, a discourse theoretical method provides the most focused framework for identifying points of fixity and pulling at their seams to examine their constituent parts and to ask how it might be otherwise.

Laclau and Mouffe show that discourse is the ultimately futile attempt to tame and fix the surplus meaning of the social realm. Through the concept of overdetermination, they focus on every form of fixity as the object of critique. Overdetermination is the process of creating symbolic order by fixing a privileged meaning from the manifold possible meanings. The attempts at fixation will always remain partial since “the presence of some objects in others prevents any of their identities from being fixed” (2001, 104). Discourse is a battle against the surplus of meaning that can only ever partially succeed. “Any discourse is constituted as an attempt to dominate the field of discursivity, to arrest the flow of differences, to construct a center” (2001, 112). They call the “privileged discursive point of this partial fixation, *nodal points*” (2001, 112). Fixity can succeed to greater or lesser extents but can never succeed definitively. The partial successes of discursive articulations provide an always incomplete and impermanent, but still potent, sense of society. Just as a complete form of fixity is impossible, it is also impossible to completely eliminate fixity. To do so would eradicate the conditions of possibility of social practice and even the social altogether.

This notion of the discursive field complements Foucault’s archeogenological approach to discourse. In *The Archeology of Knowledge*, which was originally published in 1969, Foucault instructs that the first step for analyzing discourse is to question familiar categories or groupings and other notions that provide continuity through ready-made syntheses. “All these syntheses that are accepted without question must remain in suspense” (2002, 28). Foucault seeks to unsettle the tranquility with which familiar nodal points are accepted. Like Laclau and Mouffe’s exhortation to critique every form of fixity, Foucault is not arguing that they should be definitively rejected. However, the first step to understanding the operations of hegemony is to question the forms of knowledge and the common sense that knowledge supports. According to Foucault, we must show that these categories and continuities “do not come about of themselves, but are always the result of a construction the rules of which must be known, and the justifications of which must be scrutinized” (2002, 28). So, in summary, the first step in analyzing discursive formations is to unsettle and examine the foundations of its unity and continuity and ask under what conditions this unity is made legitimate. Having taken it apart, we must ask if it can be put back together again or whether it could be reformed in another way.

This book is roughly organized in chronological order, but each chapter will also connect to historical context and subsequent developments. The chapter progression also traces thematic developments, moving from debates about identity, belonging, and memory at the time of citizenship law changes through the precarious symbolic incorporation of immigrants and Germans of color through “sport integration.” The first two chapters of this book outline two frameworks of identity formation that underlie assumptions about national belonging: the rooted affective community evoked by the idea of home (*Heimat*) and the nation as a utilitarian, cosmopolitan society where belonging is based on contributions to economic productivity. While citizenship law changes in Germany have gradually extended formal citizenship to those outside the white Christian German population, informal mechanisms of normative citizenship reproduce the category of the “migrant” candidate for integration across generations. Chapter 1 analyzes how the culturally specific notion of home evoked by “Heimat” has functioned in postwar Germany as affective resource for maintaining a rooted national identity in the face of “identity threats” posed by both past atrocities and ongoing social change. *Heimat* is currently undergoing one of its periodic revivals. Politicians across the ideological spectrum have rediscovered their enthusiasm for *Heimat*, each with their own definitions and conception of how the term connoting security and natural belonging can serve national interests.

This revival has also inspired a range of responses from minoritized Germans, who have long experienced the term as an everyday form of boundary-making that distinguishes those who are assumed to belong in and to Germany from those whose homeland is presumed to be elsewhere (see Aydemir and Yaghoobifarah 2019; Bota, Özlem, and Pham 2012). For some, the term’s flexibility and personal nature mean it can be revised to capture the multiplicity of new German affiliations and identifications. For others, the term’s history of aiding and abetting white Christian supremacy means that it should be abandoned altogether in favor of the freedom of rootlessness. Ultimately, however, in a global system where rights are granted by the nation-state, the right to claim belonging in a homeland is not simply a personal issue. As the arbiter of what Arendt calls “the right to have rights” (1973, 298), belonging in a homeland is a crucial part of determining who counts as a politically legitimate citizen—a determination with potentially life-or-death consequences.

The desire for a more vocal and uncomplicated form of German pride has long been stymied by the specters of German nationalisms of the past. Chapters 2 and 3 examine the new forms of public relationships to nationalism cultivated under the auspices of hosting a global sporting spectacle.

These chapters examine how hosting the men's FIFA World Cup in 2006 contributed to a renaissance of German symbolic nationalism and how the incorporation of "new Germans" has been invoked by the media to create a break from the traumatic past. In this process, the media frames national pride as fundamental to the health and well-being of the national population. In preparation for the tournament, German industry, media, and government cooperated to roll out a slew of international and domestic media campaigns in a coordinated effort to use the wave of enthusiasm for one of the world's largest and most popular sporting events to debut a new self-confident brand Germany.

The largest and most successful of these projects was the social marketing campaign targeting domestic audiences under the slogan, *Du bist Deutschland* ("You Are Germany"), which is the focus of chapter 2. This campaign is significant not only because of its unprecedented scale but also because it demonstrates the development of neoliberal economic logics of citizenship that build on postwar West German mythologies connecting national identity to economic growth (see also chapter 4). The first run of the *Du bist Deutschland* focused on creating a "positive mood" and stimulating national sentiments among the German population. This campaign illustrates the internal component of nation branding, which depends on the buy-in of citizens as part of national projects of self-representation on a global stage. In the case of Germany, this required the neutralization or at least the suspension of complicated domestic politics of memory around national symbols and sentiments. In addition, the campaign's self-conscious inclusion of visible minorities also promised the possibility of a new post-racial German nationalism, creating further distance from the complications of the past. Hosting the global sporting spectacle of the World Cup provided both the means and the justification for remaking German national pride—one that maintained the normative white Christian core while also conspicuously performing diversity.

After exploring the attempts of media industries and the government to lay the foundations for normalizing nationalism, chapter 3 shows how those ambitions played out in the media's construction of "soccer patriotism" as an exceptional space of celebratory nationalism. In the media and in everyday conversations, the mention of the 2006 World Cup is often accompanied by passionate declarations about its personal and national significance. Central themes are pride, freedom, national cohesion, and the feeling of joining the world of "normal" nations. This chapter details why the return to "uncomplicated" nationalism was so difficult and so desired. Past attempts to normalize the past and recover a "usable" form of nationalism failed to make national-

ism “banal” (Billig 1995). A subsection of the media discourse in 2006 focused on the support among minority and immigrant communities for the German national team, building foundations of postracial narratives of this new German nationalism. Analysis of press coverage of “soccer patriotism” shows how the features and expectations of this event normalized celebratory nationalism in Germany, setting it above critique.

During the 2006 World Cup, football was proposed as a model for national identity and global engagement. At the same time, in the period surrounding the tournament, integration reached an unprecedented level of importance in public policy¹⁰ and in mediated public debates.¹¹ The implementation of a limited form of birthright to citizenship in 2000 required the renegotiation of national belonging in Germany, which has traditionally been seen as a paradigmatic example of ethnic nationalism. Since the first German state was established in 1871, there have been many “new Germanys.” In fact, since its foundation as a state every generation (all but the youngest) has lived through the foundation of at least one new iteration of Germany, from unification through two world wars and a cold war to reunification. However, the newest Germany, based on the legal inclusion of long-term immigrants and their children as citizens, is the first to include “new Germans” (Bota, Özlem, and Pham 2012; Ezli 2014).

Chapter 4 explores the development of integration discourse as a means of including and simultaneously constraining diversity within the German population. Sports, and above all soccer, have played a central role in the conceptualization of integration. While celebrity athletes of color provide focal points for national media attention, sport integration also operates at the amateur level, targeting racialized youth in urban areas. This chapter analyzes documents from the federal government, the German Olympic Sports Confederation, and the German Soccer Association to explain the symbolic and practical value of sport in integration discourse. Germany’s main sport authorities, in conjunction with industry and government, established a range of sport integration programs and prizes to showcase how sport can attract young people into a disciplinary program that prepares them to be economically valuable citizens. This chapter argues that integration discourse

10. In 2004, the first law governing immigration went into effect (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*). For the first time, “integration” became a matter of law.

11. In March 2006, a moral panic about “failed integration” swept the German media sphere surrounding the supposedly violent and out-of-control Rütli School in Berlin’s diverse Neukölln neighborhood (see Cohen and Muhamad-Brandner 2012). This event is another significant touchstone of public memory and identity formation in the period covered by this book.

is an extension of biopolitical and disciplinary technologies for constituting and governing the national population, which have been a fundamental part of the national project since the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949.

After the 2006 FIFA men's World Cup in Germany normalized celebratory nationalism, flag-waving was cemented as an almost obligatory national sporting tradition in subsequent Euro and World Cup tournaments. As commentators in the media enthused, the multiethnic German national team of the 2010 World Cup inspired minoritized Germans and immigrants to join in the patriotic displays in greater numbers. Chapter 5 discusses a heavily mediated "flag fight" between immigrant patriots and antinationalist Germans during the 2010 World Cup. This case exemplifies the symbolic and pedagogical value of immigrant patriotism for promoting civic nationalism. The story of the display and adamant defense of one of Germany's largest flags by Lebanese immigrants in Berlin attracted national and international attention. The story was framed in the media as a surprising reversal of the expected: the flag's attackers were leftist white Germans and its defenders were immigrants. Yet the story was framed not only as a surprising reversal but also as a rebuke of those who continue to dislike mass displays of symbolic nationalism. The fervor of the Lebanese-German patriots supported arguments about symbolic nationalism as a healthy and natural form of social cohesion that is compatible with—and even necessary for—the functional development of diverse societies.

The final two chapters analyze the construction and fortification of divisions between unquestioned citizens and perpetual integrants and between integration failures and successes. They demonstrate how divisions made using biopolitical logics fracture the population so that the power to make live can be optimized by confining social ills to certain segments of the population. While national pride and sporting integration define the optimal forms of life for white Germans and worthy integrants, these chapters investigate the assessment and condemnation of "unfit" populations. The precariousness of the support for the new cosmopolitan Germany that was touted during the 2010 World Cup was thrown into sharp relief mere weeks after the tournament's end. In August of that year, one of the most intense recent debates in Germany broke out around the publication and record-breaking popularity of Thilo Sarrazin's book titled *Deutschland schafft sich ab* ("Germany Does Away with Itself"), which is the focus of chapter 6. As its title suggests, Sarrazin's book was part of a global revival of eugenicist ideas popularized around the same time by the French white nationalist writer Renaud Camus under the moniker of the "great replacement." The arguments of the

book are built on nativist pseudoscience bolstered by statistics that supposedly prove that while intelligent (white Christian) German women are not procreating, less intelligent populations, particularly Muslim “migrants,” are proliferating, thus incrementally abolishing German society.

As the 2010 World Cup became an iconic event celebrating Germany’s new diversity, the 2010 Sarrazin debate is remembered as a shocking revelation of the broad public support for racist theories about the heritability of intelligence and migration as an existential threat to the nation. This chapter investigates the progression of the Sarrazin debate in the public sphere, including the interpretation of his arguments by public figures, the media, and his readers. Although many took issue with his tone, Sarrazin was widely praised for bringing to light an important and supposedly taboo issue. Although Sarrazin was universally condemned by German politicians and public figures immediately after the release of the anti-Muslim tome, these critiques softened and changed as it became clear that Sarrazin’s ideas were widely popular. The Sarrazin debate quickly transformed into an “integration debate” and inspired calls for Sarrazin to establish a new political party focused on immigration and economic nationalism. Just six weeks after the first days of condemnation, Merkel declared the failure of multiculturalism and her governing Christian Democratic coalition called for constraints on immigration and stronger measures to enforce integration.

Although Sarrazin declined calls to start a new party, his economic and social policies were soon picked up by the new far-right *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) party, which quickly became one of Germany’s largest political parties over the course of the following decade. The Sarrazin debate was a crucial precursor for the rise of the AfD as well as racist far-right political movements like PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident). These political movements are intertwined with a pan-European and global network of white nationalism that has driven a surge in violent attacks against religious and ethnic minorities from Christchurch, New Zealand, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Racist violence is on the rise across Europe and European settler colonial countries worldwide. While this trend is widely agreed upon, public discussions put more emphasis on the shocking change this trend represents rather than on its continuity with long-established transnational ideas about race and the politics of culture.

Finally, chapter 7 examines a media award for integration that debuted just after the Sarrazin debate, which illustrates the depth of entanglements between processes of celebration and condemnation in integration discourse. According to Sarrazin’s critics, his book was the antithesis of productive integration work. However, positively framed integration campaigns and pro-

grams developed in the wake of the debate bear a strong resemblance to the many of the arguments and assumptions of Sarrazin and his supporters. This chapter investigates the process of distinguishing between successful and failed integrants in the celebratory mode through the creation of a new prize category honoring “examples of successful integration” by Germany’s oldest media prize institution, the Bambi Awards. This chapter compares the framing of and responses to the first three award recipients, beginning with Mesut Özil, in the context of the logics of social prizes. Integration Bambi recipients were used to define the ideals of integration and the threats posed by its failure. The first three years of the award exemplify tropes of the good Muslim, the bad Muslim, and the threat posed by bad Muslims to good minorities and German liberal democratic values. Controversy around the award only heightened the importance of the award and strengthened the normative assumptions behind the category. Through the examples of the Integration Bambi, this chapter examines how the media construct minority celebrities as both models of and threats to integration, sometimes at the same time.

The conclusion of this book contemplates the future of integration discourse, using reactions to the global refugee reception crisis to extend the implications of a politics of selective cultivation of life categorized as worthy and valuable. German public discourse and policy reacting to the reception crisis highlight how biopolitics involves perpetual decision-making about which lives represent a value for the life of the population, which is conceived in terms of the normative national. At the same time, the growing populist right has embraced the racist logics of this decision-making process. In response, mainstream politicians and public figures have scrambled to isolate racism as a marginal social phenomenon, rather than an inherent part of integration discourse. The conclusion turns to critical voices writing from a minoritarian perspective to challenge this move to confine conceptions of racism to the margins. These writers propose a new way forward that insists on confronting racism as a structural and institutional problem and engages the complexity of cultural dialog in diverse societies.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this book will show that discussions about integration contribute to colorblind racism, which divides the population into the categories of the worthy and the unworthy. The approach to understanding racism in this book encourages making connections across different periods and

places. Although racism may target groups with very different histories and cultures, the stories that divide society are disturbingly consistent. The dichotomy of good patriotic immigrants versus “problem” immigrants depends on an ongoing process of public evaluation, often through sport and popular culture. The flexibility of this process enables the portrayal of a minority group as an aggregate threat while still applauding those who have supposedly broken away to become productive members of society. As such it is possible to represent a segment of the population as a threat, while still holding up and celebrating exceptional individuals as “fully integrated” members of the healthy, productive national population. Promoting these examples obscures the precarity of this membership and the racism underlying this process.

This book examines these associations as they emerge and are reproduced in the context of media spectacles and controversies. These events, and related public campaigns, have created new national narratives based on the renegotiation of German belonging to include civic nationalism and to exploit internal diversity. As the media analysis in these pages shows, the voices of minoritized people and groups are too often limited to those that support the status quo. While there is a strong tradition of Germans of color challenging racism and white Christian norms of German identity, these perspectives remained rare in the pivotal mediated debates and spectacles of this period. However, there is a growing cadre of activists and scholars of color making an impact on the public sphere in recent years (see Arndt and Ofuatey-Alazard 2011; Aydemir and Yaghoobifarah 2019; El-Tayeb 2016; Florvil 2020; Ha, Samarai, and Mysorekar 2016; Hasters 2019; Sow 2018). This book seeks to complement that work but does not presume to speak to the actual struggles and diverse experiences of minoritized Germans and immigrants, though it does highlight the media’s selective inclusion. It aims to illuminate the field of play established by the rise of integration discourse in the mediated public sphere.

Although it is often couched in positive terms, the judgment process of integration is open-ended. While cultivating cosmopolitan dividends, the frameworks of integration produce new modes of colorblind racism ensuring that belonging will always be precarious for minoritized groups. A person remains under scrutiny so long as they are identifiable—through appearance, practices, or speech—as a candidate for integration. As Mesut Özil’s experience of alternating public adulation and suspicion shows, it is possible to hail the successful integration of an individual one day and to declare them an example of failed integration the next.

1 • Sentimental Citizenship

Heimat and Being at Home

In a video that made the rounds on Facebook in December 2017, a middle-aged white man in a navy parka accosts Yorai Feinberg, the 36-year-old owner of an Israeli restaurant in Berlin after spotting a menorah in the window. In the middle of a hate-filled six-minute rant including reference to gas chambers and a prediction that “in 10 years, you won’t be alive,” the man justifies his right to pass judgment, arguing that “I live here. This is *my* homeland. You have no homeland.” In 2018, André Poggenburg was pressured to resign his leadership role in the far-right Alternative for Germany Party (AfD) after a speech in which he referred to Turkish-Germans as “camel jockeys” who “have no place and have no say here.” Poggenburg was responding to a statement from the Turkish Community in Germany (*Türkische Gemeinde in Deutschland*) that questioned the wisdom of establishing a new federal institution with the name Ministry of the Homeland (*Heimatsministerium*) led by one of Germany’s most outspoken opponents of immigration and asylum rights, Horst Seehofer. Poggenburg railed against this critique, arguing that it demonstrated multiculturalism’s failure and proved that those with dual citizenship are a “homeless mob” (*Heimatloser Gesindel*). At this, the crowd burst into applause and spontaneously chanted, “Deport [them]!” (*Abschieben!*). In 2023, the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party rebranded itself as Die Heimat.

An emotionally charged and deceptively innocent term links these racist events: *Heimat*, or home(land). The story of *Heimat* in postwar Germany entails struggles over memory culture and the significance of historical racism and its afterlives. It emerges in battles between advocates of comforting, privatized notions of the past where guilt and innocence are individual matters and those who view the past as a critical social responsibility with relevance for the present. It also provides a historical throughline connecting

complex negotiations of identity and belonging involving Jewish Germans after unification in the late 19th century to those of Black Germans, Muslims, and other racialized groups today. These threads are all part of the complex network of ideas that are activated in representations of Heimat.

This chapter examines how this foundational concept of subjectivity mobilizes personal and affective attachments to construct and defend the boundaries of national belonging. It draws on examples of public statements by prominent writers and artists, whose discourses around Heimat and history reveal the hegemonic foundations reproducing white German normativity and the return of normalized nationalism. There is also a growing movement of immigrants and Germans of color who seek to denaturalize Heimat and reconstruct it around active citizenship and pluralist community. Heimat divides the population between those who find comfort and security in normativity and those for whom the concept signifies social precarity (Aydemir and Yaghoobifarah 2019). The history of Heimat is a recurrent theme in a tumultuous modern history characterized by the pursuit of wholeness in a population that refuses to be homogenized.

The conception of “home” evoked by Heimat is difficult to define because it draws on affective experience, on feelings that are intangible, pre-discursive. Definitions often take narrative form and evoke place memories. One such description appears in a special issue of *Der Spiegel* magazine on Heimat, conjured as “the memory of a basement stair that creaks, the smell of homemade jam, the view of the clothesline in the back courtyard, the sentence that father always utters before supper, the Christmas tree, childhood” (Kurbjuweit 2012, 62). This description is individualistic, yet its framing suggests all readers will recognize these elements and the feeling of remembering them. They are general but, as the iconic Christmas tree reminds readers, not universal. Some memories are more generally representative and symbolic than others.

Recalling Foucault’s (2003) definition of biopolitical race war as the fragmentation of the population into the categories of the normative and the potentially threatening, the personal narratives and public debates explored in this chapter show how Heimat discourse reinforces white Christian normativity and defends it from threats posed by historical and contemporary “Others.” Heimat undergirds the enduring distinction between *the national*, who is presumed to be “at home” in Germany, and *the integrant*, who belongs elsewhere. Lentin and Titley (2011) borrow and elaborate on the term “integrant” from an empirical study by Hvenegård-Lassen (2005) and who define the category of the integrant as the imagined recipient of integration programming, the “subject for integration.” Discourse constructing the integrant tells us more about the category’s cre-

ators than its targets. Heimat serves as a seemingly innocent means of fragmenting the population, where norms of liberal democracy condemn intolerance and overt racism (Brown 2009). Although these norms have been deeply shaken by growing white supremacist populism on both sides of the Atlantic, colorblind forms of racism remain more palatable for white citizens who fear being accused of racism.

The rootedness of the imagined Heimat makes those with transnational ancestry permanent foreigners, particularly when that ancestry marks them as visible minorities. Furthermore, it does so within an affective framework that is difficult to criticize. Heimat's intimacy resists analysis. As Peter Blicke observes, "the tacit assumption is that Heimat can only be understood from within. Therefore, true understanding can only come out of a form of identification, not from a form of analysis" (2002, 12). Heimat is conceived as fundamentally constitutive of the self. It is the place of origin, the place of individual security, and the root of social harmony. It is often considered untranslatable, but the concept evokes a basic human need that crosses borders. Second-generation German writer Mithu Sanyal recognized Heimat in Maya Angelou's description of home as "the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned" (2019, 118). Thus this deeply personal concept also depends on social recognition. As an unmarked citizen, this freedom to go unquestioned as oneself is expansive and unremarkable, and the idea of Heimat can feel natural, apolitical, and even antinationalist. The political stakes are much clearer for those whose belonging and heritage are constantly scrutinized.

After sketching out a brief history of Heimat, the following section explores how the concept renders those with traces of transnational ancestry permanent strangers. This process links racial projects across time and categories of difference. Meanwhile, the ethnocultural foundations of Heimat transform a subsection of white Christian immigrants into "Germans returning home." Finally, this chapter analyzes the arguments of writers and cultural producers who propose competing views of racism and German history around the idea of Heimat. These examples show, on the one hand, the grievance-driven push to restore German racial innocence by isolating the crimes of the past and, on the other, the push to affirm the lives of people of color in Germany by critically engaging with racism and the German past as structural social problems. Considering the growth of white Christian nationalism in the past decade, it is vitally important to understand the stakes of cultural keywords like Heimat for communicating whose lives matter.

Heimat in the Making of a Modern Nation

The modern conception of *Heimat* emerged in the first half of the 19th century, alongside terms like nation, *Volk*, *Vaterland*, and *Staat* to create new political imaginaries in the diverse and unstable German states after the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 (Applegate 1990). To provide solid ground for German nationalism, writers and civic leaders reinvented the term, which had long existed in the German language but was previously of little social or political importance. This reinvention entailed a new mode of language, one that was aware of its audience, which was imagined in national terms. As Celia Applegate writes, *Heimat* “is a term that dwelt in one world, that of the self-conscious centralizers, modernizers, and nationalists of the General Estate, while evoking another” (1990, 8). Emerging from the new bourgeois public sphere, it evoked an imagined, mythologized version of the hometown—the secure society of childhood memory.

Although the concept of *Heimat* drew on deeply localized notions, these notions were primarily a means of transferring the emotional and social attachments of the lived world to a broader, more abstract level than ever before: to the nation. As Applegate observes, “the utility of *Heimat* lay in its capacity to obscure any chasms between small local worlds and the larger ones to which the locality belonged” (1990, 10). At the same time, the idea of provincial diversity of the German territory was maintained as a constitutive part of the new German state after unification in 1871. In this way, *Heimat* acted—and continues to act—as a wedge that props up the uneven parts of the German nation to produce an illusion of cohesion and continuity. The emptiness of the gap creates the imaginary space necessary to generate a conception of community in the abstract.

However, *Heimat*’s flexibility does not necessarily encompass all forms of difference. The term’s openness obscures how it racializes groups who carry transnational markers in their names, accents, or physical features such as “*schwarze Haare*” (black hair). These traces of foreignness index individuals and groups as “strangers,” to use German sociologist Georg Simmel’s term. Writing at the turn of the 20th century, Simmel’s strangers are defined by the synthesis of “nearness and distance” (2011). The paradigmatic stranger for Simmel was the figure of the European Jew who settled in one place, but nevertheless maintained a kind of mobility through business as well as familial and social connections across space.

Simmel emphasized that strangers are part of society, not truly outsiders.

They share many commonalities with their majority neighbors, but those commonalities are universal and general in nature, as opposed to the particularities that “organic members” share with each other, which distinguish them from the universal. Strangers’ mobility and their relations of commonality are the inverse of the intimate, grounded *Heimat*. Crucially, however, while the stranger and the *Heimat* are incongruous, their relation is not one of insiders versus outsiders. Strangers are not the “barbarians at the gates” but the neighbors “in between,” simultaneously near and distant. Their ambiguity, the complexity of their relations, opposes the imagined simplicity, harmony, and clarity of *Heimat*.

In our universal system of nation-states, strangers become particularly problematic. States operate by abstracting the concepts of friends (insiders) and enemies (outsiders) to the level of national collectives (Bauman 1990; Schmitt 2007). But, as Bauman (1990) observes, strangers are neighbors whose status of friend or enemy is unclear, and therefore unsettling. Whereas oppositions between friend and enemy “enable knowledge and action; undecidables paralyze” (Bauman 1990, 146). Strangers must always be watched, their behavior scrutinized. Bauman writes that assimilation is a “war against ambivalence”¹ (1990, 155). It is the attempt to either turn a stranger into friend or clarify their status as an enemy. However, so long as they are recognized as strangers, the determination can never be settled. When strangers are part of a distinguishable group, the actions of some reflect on the whole class. They carry the “mark of the plural” (Memmi 1991), whereby a negative action by one is attributed to a trait of the group rather than to circumstances or individual choice. The process loops infinitely until—if ever—it is forgotten that they are strange.

As Simmel was writing about the figure of the stranger around the turn of the 20th century, the conservative back-to-nature *Heimat* movement was underway. German unification and increasing urbanization inspired the formation of “clubs” that celebrated mostly invented rural traditions in the search for an “authentic” national community. Philipp Nielsen’s history of conservatism among bourgeois Jewish Germans after unification shows that many viewed the Romantic agrarian *Heimat* movement as a key to leaving behind the status of strangers to become “an equal element of the German people (*Volkselement*)” (2019, 27). Jewish Germans who embraced the *Heimat* movement shared with their non-Jewish compatriots fears about

1. Without discussing the arguments about the differences and similarities between integration and assimilation generally, in relation to the figure of the stranger, the two concepts play the same role.

modernity, urbanization, and the destruction of “traditional” ways of life as well as a desire for a sentimental form of belonging beyond a rights-based community. The rooted, rural belonging of Heimat offered the promise of defeating antisemitic tropes of the feeble-bodied, “wandering,” cosmopolitan Jew. Unfortunately, a stereotype is rarely defeated by promoting its opposite (Hall 1997a). While open antisemitism was legally discouraged in the first decades after unification, Nielsen’s research shows the fragility of the inclusion achieved by conservative Jewish Germans who sought to build the nation through Heimat organizations and military service. Their commitments to shed blood and till soil for Germany failed to protect them from National Socialism.

As much as conservative German Jews invested in Heimat after unification, the term’s appeal to an organic, rooted community helped build a nationalist toolset that was easily repurposed against its Jewish cocreators. During the Nazi period, Heimat was used by the regime as part of a lexicon constructing a highly centralized form of Germanness, minimizing the term’s earlier provincial emphasis. For the Nazis, Heimat was just one more way to talk about nation, race, and *Volk*. Thus, despite its contribution to genocidal discourses, the term was easily rehabilitated after the war by reasserting its local and personal character. Heimat was “pulled out of the rubble of the Nazi Reich as a victim, not a perpetrator” (Applegate 1990, 229). This recovery overlooks perhaps one of the most important lessons about Heimat from this period. While Jewish Germans helped construct the German Heimat before 1933, persistent underlying discourses of antisemitism were easily mobilized to deny them legitimate belonging, citizenship, and ultimately the right to life. Appeasement, negotiation, and proven patriotism provide no defense when latent racism is activated and enacted in policy.

Heimat’s troubling continuity with the past lies not in its replication of the overt racism of the Nazi period, but rather in its status as a conventional discourse that continuously reinscribes difference, even when the intent is integrative. Even at the heart of the term “integration,” the implication of suturing two or more distinct elements reifies the existence of the very difference it seeks to overcome. It denies a transnational person’s full claim to Germanness as one of the primary cultural spheres that make up their lives.

Running through what Peggy Piesche calls the “toxic archive of Heimat” (Kathöfer and Weber 2018, 424) is the subversion of the lives of various Others over time whose memories and experiences complicate mythologies of national innocence. Faced with the unbearable reality of the broad societal participation in enabling Nazi crimes, postwar Germans largely retreated to personal memories of the period (Confino 1998). Heimat’s affective har-

mony and illusory innocence became a refuge in postwar Germany, where the bucolic Heimat film genre took over German cinema, peaking in the 1950s (Kaes 1992; Ludewig 2014). Almost immediately after the German film industry restarted in 1947, the press and audiences demanded filmmakers eschew politics and rubble for more positive, unblemished representations of German life (Ludewig 2014). Consequently, many postwar films looked a lot like Heimat films from Nazi propaganda.

The postwar period also initiated a new period of demographic diversity, as the governments in the East and the West invited workers from across Europe, the Mediterranean, and beyond to help rebuild. In the 1980s and 1990s, new groups of refugees from outside Europe joined others from Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, a new generation of feminist Black German writers and activists asserted their place in the public sphere (Ayim, Oguntoye, and Schultz 1986; Koepsell and Esuruoso 2014; Popoola 1999). If the ideal Germany should be, as one writer in the early postwar period put it, “outwardly as unified as necessary, inwardly as diversified as possible” (Schnath qtd. in Applegate 1990, 244), the concept of Heimat should be well suited to provide a new pluralist form of identification in a changing Germany. However, there are limits on the forms of diversity compatible with unquestioned claims of a German Heimat. These limits lead Mithu Sanyal to compare Heimat to a border: whereas the national border divides outwardly, “Heimat builds a border within” (2019, 104). This boundary divides those who live in the nation of their Heimat from those who are perceived to be displaced from theirs.

So long as a person—a *Migrant*, Muslim, *Ausländer*, a person with a migration background—is caught up in the discourse of integration, they remain undecidable strangers. Even in his pessimistic account, Bauman recognizes that a stranger’s status as strange may be forgotten. The definition of classes of strangers is socially grounded and subject to historical change. While antisemitism persists and shows signs of renewed vigor globally, the Jewish stranger of Simmel’s time is no longer Europe’s paradigmatic stranger. Ruth Mandel’s (2008) ethnographic work in Berlin during the 1980s and 1990s affirms this shift, even though Jewishness continues to evoke discomfort among culturally Christian Germans. Mandel observes parallels between the prewar status of Jewish Germans and the contemporary perception of Turkish-Germans as the primary example of “foreigners inside” (2008, 137). As refugees from Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Iran and other majority Muslim countries continue to arrive, the Turk as paradigmatic stranger is wrapped into the rising category of the Muslim (Yılmaz 2016). When relations change and new strangers are identified, the formerly strange

may recede from notice within normative society. However, some features marking strangers are more durable than others, visible difference chief among them.

In their 2012 book *Wir neuen Deutschen* (We New Germans), Polish-born Alice Bota, Turkish-German Topçu Özlem, and Vietnamese-German Khue Pham analyze how their different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds conditioned their search for belonging in Germany. The authors intertwine narratives from their personal lives as first- and second-generation transnational Germans with a critique of identity and exclusion in contemporary Germany. They use their biographies and their experience as journalists for the prestigious weekly newspaper, *Die Zeit*, to analyze limited notions of Germanness and to explain the benefits of inclusivity for the whole population of Germany. Throughout their work they criticize the hierarchical differentiation of “Germans” from “foreigners,” where Germanness is defined first by the lack of transnational traces in language, religion, appearance, and name. They also observe that conditional Germanness may be extended to those who achieve high levels of social or economic success despite these foreign traces.

Wir neuen Deutschen provides insight into the subtle, continuous ways that Germans of color are reminded of their foreignness. All three authors are highly sensitized to the complexities of crossing lines of difference and to the assumptions about belonging evoked by names and appearance. The third chapter of their book, “Meine Heimat, keine Heimat” (My Heimat, No Heimat), addresses the question of personal origins, delving into the affect of belonging. The authors observe that those who inquire where others “come from” can usually answer easily for themselves but are not satisfied with a simple answer, always probing further to discover the origins of difference and the feelings of transnational lives. For those with plural origins this question is not only invasive but also a trap forcing them to declare loyalty to one at the expense of others. They write that Heimat is an extremely emotional and complicated concept, one that evokes the sacrifices their parents made by emigrating and the desire for the security their majority German friends seem to derive from it. “*Heimat*,” they write, “is the origin of body and soul; it is the middle point of one’s own world” (2012, 50). Uniting them across the many differences in their backgrounds is a desire for the tantalizing normality of an unambiguous Heimat for themselves, and for relief from concerns about disturbing the normative German Heimat. They write, “Our life experience is alienation. It is guided by the fear of disturbing others’ harmony in homogeneity. By the fear of being seen as a foreign body” (2012, 52). The authors’ internalized concep-

tion of Heimat underscores their possession of a German notion of self, even as it marks them as permanently alienated from it.

Although the deceptive naturalism and intimacy of Heimat makes it difficult to analyze, it emerges in everyday forms of exclusion that can sometimes cut deeper than a particular act of racism. Confronting this involves acknowledging that in Germany, “cultural contact today is not an ‘intercultural encounter’ that takes place between German culture and something outside it but something happening *within* German culture between the German past and the German present” (Adelson 2007, 268). Even as citizenship rights were finally expanded in 2000 to include German-born children of long-established immigrants, attaching identity and belonging to Heimat marks those who carry traces of other homelands as strangers or, borrowing from Partridge (2012), as “noncitizens.”

The perception that residents and citizens who do not pass as ethnic Germans live suspended between their homelands and their host lands reinforces the distinction between the German self and the foreign Other. For this reason, when writing about typical portrayals of immigrants and their descendants as internally torn or fragmented, Leslie Adelson argues that “the trope of ‘betweenness’ often functions like a reservation designed to contain, restrain, and impede new knowledge, not enable it” (2007, 266). The imaginary bridge “between two worlds” keeps apart that which it pretends to unify. Rather than a doorway to someplace new, the bridge keeps minority “integrants” suspended in a state of perpetual alterity. In this context, turning a critical eye to the deeply naturalized and ambivalent notion of Heimat reveals how the emotional and affective requirements of modern citizenship cannot be separated from the political. Left unexamined, the ethnic and cultural assumptions behind the term consolidate white German normativity and reinscribe the foreignness of those whose Heimat is presumed to be elsewhere.

While the concept of Heimat renders Germans of color noncitizens, it also confers a special citizen status on a different class of transnational people: ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe. For Alice Bota—or Alicja as she was born—this status meant that although she was born and spent her early formative years in Poland, after immigrating to Germany in the late 1980s and following the prescribed path for ethnic German “returnees,” her “foreignness” was erased along with an integral part of herself. When struggling to maintain the multiplicity of her identity, she writes that it feels like a “luxury problem”: “Most migrants fight to belong here—and I am complaining because I belong too much? Because I am too German?” (Bota, Özlem, and Pham 2012, 28). Indeed, a stark contrast separates how majority Germans see

“nothing foreign about [Bota]” and the experiences of German-born authors Özlem and Pham who are constantly reminded of their foreignness. Yet Bota shows that this comes at the expense of repressing parts of herself and her family history.

The 1949 Basic Law of the German Federal Republic provides the right to “return” and (“re”)claim German citizenship for (*Spät*)*Aussiedler* (returnees or repatriates), originally referred to as *Heimatvertriebene* (expellees from the homeland). Originally, this policy targeted people of ethnic German descent fleeing Eastern Europe after World War II, but there were upticks in demand in the 1980s and 1990s after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. With proof of descent and a cursory demonstration of cultural continuity, “returnees” are welcomed with citizenship and social benefits. This is not simply a policy affirming biological, blood-based belonging; the process of applying for *Aussiedler* status is an active mimetic construction of the nation. Stefan Senders writes that in the process of repatriation,

ethnic Germans are required to bring their life stories into conformation with prototypic plots; they must claim to have had the proper kinds of relationships, to have felt the appropriate pain, and to have experienced their own being in specific and predetermined forms. (2002, 90)

Through “testing” *Aussiedler* to see if they qualify for repatriation, German jurisprudence explicated the norms of national identity, from a very rudimentary grasp of the German language to the maintenance of cultural and religious rituals, such as celebrating Christmas in the German way following the Gregorian calendar. In this process, officials offer the option to exchange “foreign sounding” names for a “German version,” erasing traces of “foreignness” (Wallem 2017). Reflecting on the loss of her birthname, Bota writes, “When I think now about what becoming German cost us, I feel anger. We disowned ourselves. We tried to become monosemus, to become just German, because the alternative would have been to remain forever the Pole, forever foreign” (2012, 26). Nevertheless, Bota recognizes that even this undesirable choice is not available to all.

Updates to the Expellee and Refugee Law in 1992 added the expectation that *Aussiedler* demonstrate discrimination suffered for maintaining their German identity (Bundesverwaltungsamt, n.d.). Regardless of whether this fairly represents the applicant’s lived experience, *Aussiedler* are made German by recounting these prototypic experiences. Meanwhile, emphasizing the suffering endured by applicants to maintain Germanness

outside the ancestral homeland confirms narratives of the incomplete lives of “migrants” in Germany, living far from the place where *they* truly belong. The peak in applications for Aussiedler status in the 1990s codified ethno-cultural German affinity across time and space at a historical moment when the children and grandchildren of the postwar *Gastarbeiter* (guest worker) generation like Topçu Özlem were coming of age as foreigners in the territory of their birth.

Seeking “Healthy Normality” by Reclaiming the Past

Modern uses of Heimat have always been bound up with a discourse of longing for “normality,” which acquired new salience after the Nazi era. This discourse establishes confident and unequivocal national self-identification as a prerequisite for the psychic health of the population. Consequently, people and historical events that introduce complexity, discomfort, or unruly plurality threaten the well-being of the national population. Along with the discourses examined in other chapters of this book, Heimat is one means of reducing social complexity and managing the discomfort of associations with the perpetrators of historical atrocities. This next section compares two examples from film and literature in the 1980s and 1990s that demonstrate this relationship between the trauma of the perpetrators and desires for normality and national “self-confidence.” These cases also stake claims about who has the right to speak about the National Socialist past, centering on Germans with familial ties to the perpetrator generations. The point here is not to weigh the relative validity of different representations of the past per se. What is important here is how these debates about the past are used to construct the national present and its legitimate citizenry. The following examples come from public discussions surrounding two of the most celebrated creative works of the 1980s and 1990s: Edgar Reitz’s epic film series *Heimat* (1981–1984) and Martin Walsler’s award-winning autobiographical novel *Ein springender Brunnen* (*A Gushing Fountain*) published in 1998. From distinct political perspectives, these discussions model a collective national reclaiming of narratives of the Third Reich from outsiders. They also privatize the past in a way that preserves social innocence by separating collectively individualized memories from the history of genocide.

This resistance among majority society against a national “guilt complex” and its prevention of “normal” national sentiments is not new. It began already in the early postwar years. In 1959, Theodor Adorno criticized perva-

sive complaints of a “guilt complex” and the claim that burdening oneself with the past is pathological, “whereas the healthy and realistic person is fully absorbed in the present and its practical goals” (2012, 91). Less than 15 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, biopolitical concepts of health and the productive, future-oriented population were already well-established and constructing national ideals. Indeed, Adorno saw much neurotic behavior in relation to the past, including “defensive postures where one is not attacked, intense affects where they are hardly warranted by the situation, an absence of affect in the face of the gravest matters, not seldom simply a repression of what is known or half-known” (2012, 90). Adorno was skeptical that this neurosis was the result of a collectively felt guilt, but rather suggests it was a defense against it. A key part of this defense is the denial of continuities from the Nazi period to postwar Germany—especially regarding national identity and racism. Establishing a new national normality after the Third Reich depended heavily on the intimacy and innocence of Heimat thinking while denying its political functions of supporting nationalism and developing new categories of internal strangers.

While the question of guilt and responsibility (the *Schuldfrage*) never fully left the collective consciousness, Dan Diner writes that since the war the question has been “paradoxically most present in terms of denial” (2000, 221). Although the crimes of the Nazi past would periodically break onto the scene in the form of high-profile events such as the Eichmann trial and in controversial commemorations and debates, discussions of the Holocaust only gained broad traction in the 1980s (Caplan et al. 2006; Confino 2004; Giesen 2004; Maier 1997). Although the myth of the good and chivalrous German Wehrmacht soldier, as opposed to the vicious Nazi, was undermined in scholarship as early as the 1970s, it survived among the general public until at least the late 1990s (Kansteiner 2006b). The history of public debate about the meaning of the Nazi past, its relevance for the present, and the role of everyday Germans in enabling and perpetrating atrocities is complex and uneven. Nevertheless, the narrative that the past has been constantly used to create an oppressive “guilt complex” (*Schuldkomplex*) among Germans is widely accepted. The public discussions in this section frame this guilt complex as a major stumbling block inhibiting the “normal” development of Germany as a strong, proud, and effective nation today.

In popular culture, Heimat provided a refuge from the collective memory of war and Nazi crimes, starting with the simplistic escapism of the popular postwar Heimat films mentioned above (Kaes 1992). With a few very powerful exceptions, in the first decades after the war, “West Germans emphasized their own suffering and largely ignored the suffering they had inflicted on

others” (Kansteiner 2006b, 111). Even when representations of the Nazi genocide began to appear with more frequency on television in the 1970s, stories were focused on a particular subset of victims—usually successful survivors—and the good Germans who aided them, erasing perpetrators and bystanders or reducing them to elite leaders or to caricature (Kansteiner 2006a). One turning point in media representation and public discussion was the American television mini-series *Holocaust* (1978). The series, which attracted 20 million West German viewers or roughly half of the population, followed two families during the Third Reich, a Jewish German family and an ambitious gentile couple that ascended the ranks of the SS. The entertaining and moving series included both victims and perpetrators as complex subjects and brought the Nazi genocide into the center of the public sphere on both sides of the Atlantic with unprecedented success. However, the success of *Holocaust* frustrated some on the German left, who saw the production as a hypocritical capitalist project, profiting from the pain of Nazi crimes (Herf 1980).

Edgar Reitz explicitly framed his popular television film series, *Heimat* (1984), as a German answer to *Holocaust* (Confino 1998). The 15-hour epic tells the story of a family in a small town near the Rhine from 1919 to 1982. As Confino explains, beginning in the 1970s, the New Left embraced *Heimat* as a symbol of “local roots and authentic German ways of life,” antithetical to nationalism, Americanization, and consumerism (1998, 193). With *Heimat*, Reitz aimed to portray genuine German relationships and experiences, as opposed to the supposedly kitschy and stereotypical Hollywood representations of *Holocaust*. Reitz unequivocally supported the common ahistorical view that *Heimat* cannot be scaled up to the nation or state, claiming in a 1984 article in *Die Zeit*, that “*Heimat* and nation . . . are contradictory terms” (quoted in Confino 1998, 190). The nation is associated with conflict, abstraction, and diversity; *Heimat* is intimate, harmonious, and close-knit. As Confino summarizes, “the local meaning of the *Heimat* idea enables Reitz to disavow the notion of national history, and to fragment the larger processes of German history into numerous histories of local *Heimats*” (1998, 190). However, Reitz’s statements about *Heimat* reveal a slippage between the intimate personal experiences he foregrounds in the film and a national consciousness constructed on collective but private ownership over the past.

Prioritizing the legitimacy of local experiences also has implications for determining who has the right to narrate the past. In reaction to *Holocaust*, Reitz wrote that “the most profound expropriation that exists is the expropriation of people from their own history” (quoted in Confino 1998, 194).

There is an astounding audacity in this statement, since genocide—the expropriation of the lives of an entire ethnic community—is certainly more profound. Furthermore, as Kaes notes, “a history that unleashed a world war in the attempt to subordinate or exterminate other peoples obviously does not belong to a single nation” (1992, 185). Reitz’s film is a reaction against the interference both of foreign storytellers and of historians who attempt, in his words, to “generalize, to order events, to disclose cause and effect” (E. Reitz 1988, 137). Although he positions himself against national history, Reitz proposes a nationalist version of history that equates “German experience” with authenticity. Thus he excludes both postwar immigrants without a genealogical connection to the German past and those who seek to understand the past in social and systemic terms. This view authorizes input based only on the personal, assuming, of course, one belongs to the nation.

This argument was taken further by Martin Walser in his 1998 speech accepting the prestigious *Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels* (Peace Prize of the German Books Trade) for his autobiographical novel, *A Gushing Fountain*. Walser’s novel depicts an idyllic childhood in southern Germany during the Nazi period, followed by the loss of a father and brother during the war. As in Reitz’s film, National Socialism is presented unreflectively, and its crimes are not presented at all. His acceptance speech weighed in on the most salient issues of the decade, underscoring that, like Reitz’s epic film about the past, his book was not simply speaking to the past. Instead, it was an act of reclaiming the past to insulate German national identity from association with racisms of the past and present. The 1990s were defined both by Germany’s reunification and by an outbreak of racist violence against immigrants and refugees. Just as reunification raised the possibility that Germany could once again be a “normal” nation in Europe, fatal firebombings and riots broke out in the early 1990s, raising the specter of the racisms of Germany’s past. The 1990s also brought new revelations regarding the involvement of Wehrmacht soldiers and everyday Germans in the Holocaust (Caplan et al. 2006). At the same time, public resistance was building against memorial culture and official efforts at “coming to terms with the past” (*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*) (Assmann 2003), despite the fact that those efforts have always been halting and highly controversial (Kansteiner 2006b). This frustration forms the core of Walser’s speech.

In Walser’s acceptance speech he spoke out against the “instrumentalization of Auschwitz” and the making of remembrance into a ritual (1998). He framed his critiques to shield him from possible claims that he advocated forgetting the past by claiming to speak only for himself and his own experience. However, the language of the speech vacillated seamlessly between the

personal “I” and the German “we,” belying this claim. Walser shares the blind acceptance of the nation as a natural community with the 19th-century nationalists who constructed the modern notion of *Heimat*. “Germany” as a collective of German individuals is utterly natural, to the extent that it supersedes the political state. Walser demonstrates this by reiterating his longstanding opposition to the division of Germany into East and West, recalling a speech from 1977 in which he declared it “unbearable to let German history—as bad as it was recently—end in a catastrophe” (Walser 1998). Germany’s recent history of war and genocide was bad, but the division of Germany was a catastrophe. Walser “trembles anew with boldness,” as he makes a new salvo against consequences of the past, stating that “Auschwitz is not suited to becoming a routine threat, a means of intimidation or a moral cudgel to be mobilized at any time, or simply an obligatory practice.” Here, the power of Auschwitz is not that it reveals humanity’s latent capacity for unspeakable brutality but rather that it is a tool for the “permanent presentation of our shame.” Walser’s deep identification as a (white Christian) German above all means that he interprets any presentation of German crimes as external shaming imposed by self-hating Germans and various outsiders.

Walser’s rejection of the representation of German crimes is not limited to the crimes of the National Socialist past, however. He expresses the same suspicion in response to discussions of contemporary hate crimes. He presents a quotation from an unnamed “intellectual” (Habermas) about the festive atmosphere during the racist riots of the early 1990s. Framing his question as self-critical, Walser asks why he is “not galvanized by the same outrage” as this intellectual who writes of the “sympathetic population [that] sets up sausage stands in front of burning refugee hostels.” Here, Walser references an article that Habermas wrote for *Die Zeit* in 1992 criticizing the apathetic and even supportive public reaction to proliferating xenophobic violence. Habermas denounced the single-minded concern with the violence’s impact on Germany’s international image. After quoting top politicians who called the harm to Germany’s international image “the actual crime,” Habermas writes, “Neither the victims nor the barbarization of our society rate as the first worries. What matters is the image of Germany, seat-of-industry” (1992). In his speech years later, Walser goes even further, by categorically refusing to believe the worst details of the riots themselves.

Walser sees the injustice of the supposed guilt complex (*Schuldkomplex*) as singular: in the past quarter century, there is “no other people (*Volk*), population, society” that has been treated this way. Although Habermas’s commentary was a factual description of a specific contemporary event, Walser rejects any depiction of racist violence that recalls Germany’s “eternal shame.” He

blames the media's "routine of accusation" for his rejection, stating, "when I am presented every day with this past in the media, I notice that something in me defends itself against the permanent presentation of our shame. . . . I start to look away." But lest the audience think that Walser was troubled by this tendency to close his eyes when faced with racist violence that mirrors the past, he states that he is "almost happy" to realize his reaction was not against remembrance itself but against the "instrumentalization of our shame for present purposes." Walser suspects that the media and self-hating German intellectuals have ulterior motives for representing the past in public. He speculates that it makes German critics feel closer to victims, relieving themselves of their burden by heaping it higher onto their compatriots.

This section of Walser's speech raises several important issues. First, it shows how overdetermined identification with the national category converts all representations of crimes committed by group members into an accusation against the nation and all its members. This identification is so strong that it holds together past and present crimes under the same agenda of shaming. Any use of the past as a tool for analysis is tantamount to "instrumentalization," which, regardless of its purpose, is suspect and a misuse of Auschwitz. Second, it reflects once again the structure of 19th-century Heimat discourse, which defends the sovereignty of the individual and mistrusts politics and abstraction. This disavowal of politics reaffirms the unquestioned natural community of the people (*Volk*). This is a politics of the private nation, which holds personal experience as primary and authentic. This nation is unaffected by the politics and actions of the state. Finally, it draws a strong line between "we" Germans who are the target of hurtful representations and those who marshal those representations.

Walser's binary divides the world into victims and perpetrators, accusers and accused. However, as James Baldwin showed in the American case, characterizing racism in binary terms of guilt and innocence is misleading; these terms are useful for assessing individual misdeeds, not deeply ingrained social problems like white supremacy (Baldwin 1998; see Balfour 2001). Indeed, a focus on guilt interferes with the critical reflection on the past that is necessary to take collective responsibility for dismantling the legacies of white supremacy. The strength of Walser's identification with normative white Germanness blocks a shared practice of remembrance. Those who publicly discuss German crimes are thus outsiders. The experience of being constantly accused unites Germans as victims, while memories of Heimat affirm majority society's individual political innocence. Walser's condemnation of continued public analysis of Germany's past consolidated the idea of the German nation against outsiders—domestic and international.

The award Walser received is one of Germany's most prestigious, and the annual award ceremony is nationally televised and attended by the cultural, political, and intellectual elite. The speech received a near unanimous standing ovation from the eminent audience. One of those who remained seated was Ignaz Bubis, the chair of the Central Council of Jews in Germany who criticized the speech as "intellectual arson" (*geistige Brandstiftung*). Bubis repeated and elaborated his criticism a month later on the 60th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, which unleashed a heated national debate. While several other prominent figures—most of them also Jewish—shared Bubis's reading of Walser's speech, opinions expressed in the media generally sided with Walser and denigrated Bubis for "failing to understand" Walser's literary and artistic style (Assmann 2003; Eshel 2000). Media commentators' dismissal of Bubis was filled with thinly veiled bigotry, like the claim that Jewish German critics were incapable of understanding literary German. Criticism of Bubis was not constrained to the rarified spaces of intellectual debate, however. It appeared in a more menacing form when, at the height of the debate, a pig painted with a Star of David and labeled BUBIS was driven onto Berlin's Alexanderplatz (Roll 1998). Ultimately, the debate reinforced Walser's position and cast doubt on the competence and the motives of "Others" who would contest the privatization of the past and its segregation from the present.

New Germans and the German Past

With *Heimat*'s history of collusion in perpetuating and whitewashing the racial projects of German nationalism, can this concept ever be "recovered" in the service of pluralist social liberation and equity? Should the concept, instead, be abandoned all together? Responses to this problem among immigrants and minoritized Germans vary widely. While some find liberation in rejecting *Heimat* or embracing homelessness (*Heimatlosigkeit*) (Flusser 2002), others advocate engaging with the concept and fighting to claim a place within it—a place that recognizes difference as intrinsic to the national community. As Piesche argues, to have claims of being "at home" recognized is fundamental to human existence (Kathöfer and Weber 2018). Even if it were possible to abandon a concept so deeply ingrained in modern German self-conception, to do so would abdicate responsibility for the term's role in upholding white supremacy. While it is easy to understand the temptation to embrace the anti-essentialist freedom of "rootlessness," as

Piesche explains, “claiming *Heimatlosigkeit* in order to get rid of the toxic archive of Heimat actually still leaves us with a toxic archive of Heimat” (Kathöfer and Weber 2018, 424). Rejecting the concept lets white Christian Germans off the hook, leaving people of color who cannot evade its effects to deal with the messy history of German identity and the racialized notions of citizenship it produces. Interrupting this cycle of harm requires engaging with history and tracing its connections to persistent social hierarchies.

As with the AfD leader’s racist response to the Turkish Community’s critique of the new Heimat Ministry, immigrants and minoritized citizens like Bubis who advocate a broader critical or analytical perspective on social issues can expect backlash. This is particularly true when connecting systemic and everyday forms of racism to lessons and legacies of the past. German “memory culture” (Esmer 2014) stands as both a challenge and an opportunity for new Germans seeking to claim their place within national culture. Two different responses emerge against the exclusion of immigrants and minorities from memory culture. The critical approach actively engages with the German past, including its lessons for other historical and national contexts. In contrast, another common approach uses immigrants’ lack of ancestral connection to the Holocaust as a foundation for a new “unencumbered” German identity in harmony with conservative attempts to leave the past behind to construct a new self-confident nation. These divergent pathways appear in recent German cultural production from hip-hop (Zambon and Uca 2016) to journalism.

The conservative approach to the past echoes through unexpected places, including work that advocates for a pluralist German identity like Bota, Özlem, and Pham’s analysis in *Wir neuen Deutschen*. While they critique fixed German conceptions of identity and the persistent depreciation of foreignness in contrast with positive Germanness, they also echo Walser’s view that Germans are unfairly tormented by shame over the Nazi past. They write that, “being German still means: having to endure Nazi jokes abroad, keeping your head bowed, and only bringing out the flag during the World Cup” (2012, 53). This trope of “soccer patriotism” as both liberation and proof of continued German suffering under the tyranny of guilt is a common theme in discussions of identity since the 2006 World Cup (see chapter 3). Bota et al. argue that the burden of the past has denied Germans a robust national identity. The long persistence of exclusively descent-based citizenship, the primacy of rooted notions of Heimat, and the resistance to accepting people of color as German—all of which they explore in their book—are ignored as indicators

of a strong national identity. This view separates the racist hierarchies woven throughout their narratives from any history of white supremacy.

Bota et al.'s book musters a powerful critique of the cultural politics of contemporary social inequality, but it also reproduces taboos surrounding the concept of racism in Germany. The authors repeatedly and effectively address issues of discrimination based on appearance and religious and cultural difference, but the words "race" and "racism" only appear on two pages in the book. Beyond that, the book follows the even stronger taboo around examining continuities with Germany's National Socialist past. The only sociological relevance of the German past in their book is as a source of shame that inhibits a relaxed and healthy contemporary German identity. Despite the abundant evidence they present of the strong positive associations with white Christian Germanness, the authors still accept the Walse-rian notion that a persistent "guilt complex" makes positive German identity impossible. Bota et al. borrow the axiom that "to love others, one must first love themselves" (2012, 53) to argue that German self-loathing is actually the root of xenophobia. This claim appears to be based on a collective projection of the commonsensical interpersonal idea that bullies—here xenophobes—only lash out at others out of a lack of self-confidence, caused in this case by shame about the Nazi past. Since others do not recognize the German past as belonging to the authors, they feel free from this shame. In this, they find an opportunity: by encouraging Germans to accept their immigrant and minority compatriots as part of the nation, together they can build a new identity unfettered from past nationalist atrocities. In exchange for expanding belonging, the authors offer a return to innocence. In their acceptance of the view that the past has a pathological impact on the German national psyche, they view the incorporation of the transnational in Germany as a route to freedom from the past.

Turkish-German journalist Mustafa Esmer (2014) also argues that the German past contributes to the exclusion of new Germans but for very different reasons. Esmer uses stories from his life to demonstrate how the rebellion against the "burden of the past" delegitimizes criticism of racism by minorities in contemporary Germany. Esmer points to a pattern evident in episodes ranging from memories of his parents' struggles against housing discrimination to contemporary discussions about his experiences of everyday racism with white "bio-German" friends. Whenever he or his parents spoke to white German friends and colleagues about racialized inequality, they were met with the defensive dismissal, "Yeah, yeah, we are all Nazis" (Esmer 2014). Because of the deep identification with normative white Germanness, the racism of one threatens the innocence of all. Esmer then asks,

Why, even though I have lived in Germany since my birth, I grew up here, and I actively follow politics, am I not allowed to criticize the injustices that govern my life? Very simple: I am missing a crucial marker of bio-German identity, namely, the German original sin—the Holocaust. The exclusivity of the German original sin is the problem that leads to the lack of recognition of new Germans by majority society. (Esmer 2014)

Rather than viewing exclusion as a problem only of the German right, Esmer also faults the leftist proponents of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past) for relying too heavily on a genealogical connection to National Socialism to emphasize German responsibility for the Holocaust.

Habermas and other leftist intellectuals proposed critical engagement with the past as a form of patriotism in reaction to conservative historians' efforts to relativize the National Socialist past during the 1980s (see chapter 3). However, by reaffirming the singularity of Nazi crimes, the ethnic-national emphasis of this framework effectively excludes immigrants and new Germans from a key site of national community formation (J.-W. Müller 2008, 37–39; Rothberg and Yildiz 2011, 38). There is no a priori reason that immigrants cannot access the collective memory of their new country. Interestingly, Özlem proved this in school, where in her search for belonging she found that becoming a “World War II Nerd” allowed her to “make German history [her] own. Only without a Wehrmacht Grandpa” (Bota, Özlem, and Pham 2012, 45). Esmer's critique follows Turkish-German author Zafer Şenocak's (Senocak and Tulay 2000) challenge to ask whether immigrating to Germany doesn't also mean immigrating into Germany's recent past.

Esmer recognizes the same “guilt complex” that Bota et al. blame for German self-hatred and, paradoxically, xenophobia but comes to a different conclusion. Instead of seeing the inclusion of minorities as a means of breaking the curse of guilt, Esmer calls for representatives of the German population in all its diversity to devise a new, active, and inclusive approach to German memory culture.² Even Esmer's liberal German friends rejected the past as a tool to understand the logics and the significance of everyday forms of racism. Instead, they demonstrated what Robin DiAngelo (2011) in the United States has called “white fragility,” or the expectation among majority popula-

2. Esra Özyürek (2023) and Damani Partridge (2022) show that racialized German youth are being incorporated into this project, but in ways that reaffirm preexisting notions of Muslims as antisemitic and antidemocratic while emphasizing the redemption of white German society through memory work.

tions of insulation from racial stress, leading to the inability to tolerate challenges to the hegemonic racial equilibrium.

Conclusion

So what is the value of a concept like *Heimat* for collective life? The history of *Heimat* is a story of the irreducible tension between the human need for a socially recognized claim to a home and the reality that *Heimat* thinking reinforces white Christian Germanness. *Heimat*'s link to ancestral, territorial ideas of belonging exclude migration, Blackness, Islam and other categories associated—rightly or not—with historical novelty (Kathöfer and Weber 2018). Judaism is another category with its own complex relationship to history, migration, and *Heimat* (see Czollek 2019). This experience of exclusion connects radically diverse groups, creating commonality that transcends personal experience of migration as well as cultural and physical characteristics like religion or skin color (El-Tayeb 2016). As Fatima El-Tayeb's work shows, the shared experience of being rendered "European Others" can also be a source of political solidarity. What unites the diverse collection of authors in the edited volume *Eure Heimat ist unser Albtraum* (Your Homeland Is Our Nightmare) (Aydemir and Yaghoobifarah 2019), is the shared condition of "never being normal" (*das Nie-Normal-Sein*), which has been thrown into strong relief by the recent revival of *Heimat* enthusiasm. This experience connects people across intersecting lines of difference without reducing their particularity. It is not their actual characteristics that are decisive but rather the way those characteristics render their place and claims of *Heimat* questionable by majority society. Black feminists and other writers and artists of color in Germany have laid strong foundations for recentering on identity as a process central to struggles for social justice (El-Tayeb 2011; Kathöfer and Weber 2018). This requires engaging with the messiness of identification as a dialogic process, claiming the right to be recognized as being at home in Germany without relinquishing Blackness or other religious, transnational, or diasporic affiliations.

By privileging imagined stability, simplicity, and harmony, *Heimat* excludes populations whose experiences of moving across cultures and switching cultural codes heightens their awareness of the ambiguities and complexities of national cultures. As Du Bois (1897) observes of the double-consciousness of African Americans, because immigrants and transnational Germans must learn diverse sets of cultural codes, they can never forget that cultural assumptions are not simply natural but are socially constructed. Hei-

mat crystallizes this desire for continuity between the personal and the social, between local experience and political abstraction. Paradoxically, Heimat speaks of the personal, intimate, and apolitical with the voice of the nation. The ideal is the nation that is frictionless like the remembered, but never lived Heimat. Although visible minorities are excluded from this ideal, their perceived lack of a German past positions them to support another desired form of normality: a present- and future-oriented German nation unburdened by past atrocities. Meanwhile, mobilizing new Germans to draw a boundary against the past makes confronting racism in contemporary society impossible. When those targeted by racism speak out, it is not only a rebuke of current white supremacy. As the stories in this chapter show, it is often taken as an unwelcome reminder of continuities with the German past. As the African American abolitionist Frederick Douglass observed in 1855, people “do not love those who remind them of their sins unless they have a mind to repent” (2012).

2 • Selling the Nation on Itself

Transforming the People through Global Sporting Spectacle

If you were watching television in Germany on the evening of Tuesday, September 26, 2005, you most likely saw, nearly simultaneously with 17 million others, a two-minute commercial featuring a quick succession of more than 30 prominent Germans interspersed with “everyday citizens.” The uncommonly long commercial is a whirlwind of faces, places, and phrases, driven by the slogan, “You Are Germany” (*Du bist Deutschland*). This campaign spoke directly to viewers, inviting them into the collective fold via a soaring narrative of national identification. The campaign juxtaposes the grandiose with the infinitesimal, the obviously significant with the seemingly insignificant, the celebrity with the unnamed denizen, Germany with “you.” This embrace of the national, the campaign claims, will cut through the pessimism that is preventing Germany from reaching its fullest potential as a nation and motivate citizens to “take their foot off the brake” and fuel the nation’s growth. As the keystone of efforts to prepare Germany and Germans to host the men’s 2006 FIFA World Cup, this campaign encapsulates the assemblage of political and economic interests mobilized by global sporting spectacles. It exemplifies the value of sport for nation-making and global marketing. Indeed, it shows the elision of marketing and identity at a crucial moment in the transformation of Germany’s economy and citizenry.

Building on the desire for a new uncomplicated nationalist practice outlined in chapter 1, this chapter investigates the investment of media industries in promoting an affectively charged and uniform nationalism. To do so, it traces the form and function of the unprecedented social marketing and nation branding campaigns leading up to the 2006 World Cup in Germany. The examples in this chapter demonstrate the connections between the affective politics outlined in chapter 1 and the utilitarian metrics of social citizen-

ship that form a foundation of integration discourse (chapters 4 and 6). The social marketing campaigns that began in 2005 demonstrate an approach to nation-building that accommodates and even promotes the membership of immigrants and people of color while constructing a model of citizenship contingent on the individual's contribution to the well-being and life of the national population. However, as other cases in this book demonstrate, the stakes of these demands for productivity and positivity are much higher for minoritized groups than normative nationals. For immigrants and Germans of color, what is framed as a means of gaining membership also provides a framework for its revocation.

The *Du bist Deutschland* (DbD) campaign was the centerpiece of a domestic marketing effort with the stated goal of empowering and lifting the moods of Germans before hosting the World Cup. In this campaign, differences in racial and ethnic background, class, gender, and ability are strategically mobilized to erase the significance of those differences through identification with the nation. This inclusive conception of the national community also served as a defense against public criticism of the campaign's overt nationalism. This campaign demonstrates the value of strategic inclusiveness for sanitizing nationalist messaging. It also supports the idea that renewed nationalism is compatible with—and even necessary for—the integration of immigrants and minorities (see also chapter 5). The investment of media institutions in these marketing campaigns cannot be explained in terms of the usual *quid pro quo* relationship cultivated by the promoter of a product and the consumer. Even in the realm of social marketing campaigns, which focus on raising awareness of and support for issues such as environmental protection and public health, the “mood-boosting” German campaign is unusual. Although the campaign provoked lively discussions in the German press, with a few exceptions, it garnered remarkably little attention from scholars, generally receiving little more than anecdotal treatment.

This chapter examines how political and industrial stakeholders leveraged the liminality of the sport mega-event to normalize nationalism and promote a new form of national identity better suited to a globalized economy. Understanding the purpose and function of the campaign requires an examination of the political, social, and historical framework within which it operates. After outlining the historical context, the second section deconstructs and analyzes the two-minute advertisement that formed the core of the first iteration of the campaign in 2005. I also examined the 12 print advertisements from the 2005 campaign and the two-minute advertisement and eight print advertisements from the second run of *Du bist Deutschland* in 2007 that celebrated child-rearing. Together, the campaign denounces a crit-

ical stance toward public affairs and the nation. Instead, it promotes national membership based on the productivity of citizens and their willingness to support and reproduce the nation. This framework allows for the inclusion of immigrants and Germans of color so long as they are cheerful, productive members of society. At the same time, by making belonging a result of positive attitude and individual engagement, the campaign promotes a color-blind nationalism that suppresses critiques of hierarchies and power relations between different groups, both cultural and socioeconomic.

In addition to the campaign's advertisements, the final section of this chapter analyzes press articles written on the campaign in the top national periodicals.¹ A search for the terms "*Du bist Deutschland*" AND "*Kampagne*" (campaign) returned 124 relevant results. After assessing the results, I selected all articles focused on the campaign's creators and stakeholders for closer analysis. These 30 articles and interviews articulate the campaign's intended purpose and meaning as part of a distinct ethic for German society, while also revealing a range of journalistic interpretations of the campaign's political and social implications. This campaign shows the strategy and motivations that undergird the media industry's investment in national pride and its role in the political economy of global sporting spectacles.

Selling the Public on Austerity

In the fall of 2005, the *Du bist Deutschland* campaign seemed to come out of nowhere; its development and the actors who created it were largely unknown (Speth 2006). The partnership that produced the campaign included nearly all major German media companies, and yet there was little advanced discussion of the campaign in the press. In the larger corpus of 124 articles, only 6 appeared before the campaign's debut. These and subsequent articles deny any material motivations of the campaign's creators and stakeholders. Instead, they cite the affective goal of improving the national "mood" (*Stimmung*). The strategies that motivated the campaign connect to broader political and economic developments in Germany around the turn of this millennium. During a period of economic deregulation and labor market liberalization, social marketing campaigns like *DbD* commu-

1. Periodicals were selected based on their circulation and frequency of citation by other media (PMG Presse-Monitor 2014), including *Bild*, *Der Spiegel*, *Stern*, *Focus*, *Die Zeit*, *Die Welt*, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and *Die Tageszeitung*. The available archives for *Bild* returned no relevant results. Searches were conducted on the publications' websites and in the *Wiso Praxis Presse* database.

nicated a social vision for Germany that values self-reliance and an optimistic and agreeable stance toward the nation-state.

Although the postwar West German economy has traditionally been regarded as a paradigm of socially conscious and constrained capitalism based on the idea of the social market economy (*sozialer Marktwirtschaft*), since reunification in the 1990s the German economy has become increasingly liberal (Menz 2010). The most radical of recent liberal reforms, collectively called Agenda 2010, began under the leadership of Social Democratic Chancellor Gerhard Schröder beginning in 2003. These reforms aimed to address the slow economic growth and rising unemployment that followed German reunification in the 1990s. In the first two years after reunification, the GDP in the Eastern states collapsed by a third (Hunt 2006, 2). Restructuring and incorporating the “new states” from the former GDR involved the largest transfer of wealth in economic history (Streeck 1997). To finance the costs of reunification, the government raised taxes in the 1990s and, even with new tax income, debt increased from 41.8 percent of GDP in 1989 to 64.2 percent in 2003 (Hunt 2006, 9). Even before reunification, the high-wage West German economy had been suffering from growing unemployment and concerns about the capacity of German industry to develop innovation and maintain control in the high-end markets (Streeck 1997). By the early 2000s, Germany’s financial outlook was grim enough that the liberal periodical *The Economist* dubbed it “the sick man of Europe” (Beddoes 2013). Strong protections for workers, high wages, and generous welfare provisions made the German labor market more expensive than in neighboring countries in Eastern Europe. Slow growth and rising unemployment supported arguments by industry leaders to enact reforms to reduce the labor market protections of the social market economy approach.

As part of the effort to convince political leaders to enact reforms to liberalize Germany’s economy, industrial groups began to develop new communicative approaches to influence policy and public discourse. Rudolf Speth (2004; 2006) analyzed the development of these new lobbying strategies during the Schröder government, tying them to a fundamental shift in German political and industrial organization. West German industry had long been characterized by high levels of coordinated “organization, concentration, and centralization,” with the government playing an active role in making sure the markets addressed social imperatives (Zysman 1983, 252). However, in the 1990s, the established means of coordination and communication between government and industry began to shift. As traditional trade unions weakened, businesses became more independent. At the same time, the public relations sector was also becoming more professionalized. Public

relations agencies began working with industry groups to influence public and political communication. They began using modern marketing techniques to establish “discursive sovereignty using economic research expertise in conjunction with the media” (Speth 2006, 9). Campaigns and initiatives developed by industry groups proliferated in the first years of the new millennium, successfully winning political advocates for economic reform. However, the abandonment of the social contract that had long governed German capitalism was not popular among the public.

Halfway through his second term as chancellor, Schröder’s attempts at implementing reforms through consensus between business and labor interests had yielded paltry results (Camerra-Rowe 2004). As unemployment spiked and their electoral advantage began to slip away in 2002, political leaders of the ruling Social Democrats came under increasing pressure to implement reforms to address the long-term economic slump and to sell those reforms to an economically distressed population. In 2003, Schröder announced the Agenda 2010 reforms as well as plans to initiate an “innovation offensive” the following year (*The Economist* 2003). In January 2004, Chancellor Schröder convened an “Innovation Summit,” bringing together leaders of industry and research to forge a plan to promote investment in Germany (*Spiegel Online* 2004). At the meeting, Schröder announced his intention to form a “Partnership for Innovation” between leaders in the private and public sectors (*Manager Magazin* 2004; *Spiegel Online* 2004).

Six months after this initial meeting, the “Partners for Innovation” agreed upon a mission statement committing to “work together for a new culture of innovation in Germany” (“Partner Für Innovation—Mission,” n.d.). The initiative included industrial giants such as BASF, Deutsche Telekom, and Siemens as well as think tanks and lobbying groups such as the German Industry Association (BDI: *Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie*) and the German Trade Union Federation (DGB: *Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund*). At the same time, another government-supported initiative involving many of the same industry partners formed under the campaign that eventually became known by the slogan, “Germany—Land of Ideas.” This first campaign, which debuted under the soccer-club-inspired name “FC Deutschland 2006,” received negative press due to its poor organization (see Eggers 2006). It also provoked the ire of the leading opposition party, the center-right Christian Democratic Union (CDU), for using public money as well as industry donations to fund what they characterized as a campaign for the Social Democrats for the 2006 elections (Hammerstein et al. 2004). The Land of Ideas campaign was plagued by suspicions of political motivations, drawing unwanted attention to the campaign’s founders and eroding trust in its message.

While the Land of Ideas campaign was publicly struggling, a more abstract social marketing campaign was quietly in development to fuse the individual and the nation under the slogan, *Du bist Deutschland*. Media reports on the DbD campaign traced it to the Partners for Innovation initiative, but the campaign emphasized its independence from other groups and, above all, from the government and politics (von Petersdorff 2005). According to one of the initiators of the DbD campaign, Bernd Bauer, the projects of the Partners for Innovation had been successful as a collaboration to create a reform-friendly atmosphere in Germany; however, “the problem with the project was, that [while] we did indeed reach the opinion leaders . . . we had the feeling [that] now is the time to address all Germans. To motivate them to surprise themselves” (Moring 2005). Among the Partners for Innovation was the Bertelsmann AG, Germany’s largest media corporation and one of the top five media corporations in the world. Under Bertelsmann’s leadership, the social marketing campaign developed independently from the Partners initiative and assembled the country’s biggest media players from broadcast, marketing, publishing, and cinemas all participating *pro bono*. The sharp division between the government- and industry-led projects created a bulwark for the DbD campaign against the accusations of political propaganda that plagued the Land of Ideas initiative. Although this safeguard was not impervious to critique, it worked as part of a strategy to diffuse suspicion and enervate criticism, enhancing the plausibility of the claim of purely philanthropic motivation. Altruistic claims aside, an analysis of the mechanisms of this nation branding effort—and particularly the role of the domestically focused component—reveals the strong economic logic driving this instance of corporate philanthropy.

Global Sporting Spectacle and the Corporate Value of National Identity

The wilting German economy and the unpopular reforms developed to “modernize” it provided one major impetus for the emergence of several new high-profile promotional campaigns. The other push came from hosting the 2006 World Cup, which was seen as both an opportunity and a justification for these new campaigns (Hammerstein et al. 2004). During the World Cup, the eyes of the world would be focused on Germany. The benefits of hosting from the political and industrial perspective spring from their ability to create audiences or publics. Despite the highly visible economic activity spurred by hosting a global sporting spectacle, the direct

economic benefits to nations and cities are minimal at best (Zimbalist 2020). Indeed, events usually result in a legacy of an increased tax burden on citizens and superfluous “white elephant” facilities not suited to local use (Feddersen, Grötzinger, and Maennig 2009; Maennig and Feddersen 2010; Zimbalist and Maennig 2012). In the case of less developed countries, the economic impact can be particularly dismal. The hosts of the 2006 World Cup in Germany were at a significant advantage compared to less developed countries. Germany’s infrastructure and its professional sport installations were already robust.

Even under these favorable conditions, the localized economic benefit from the World Cup to regional hosts was difficult to discern (Feddersen, Grötzinger, and Maennig 2009). Although it is well-known that sport mega-events almost always result in a public deficit, competition to host these events steadily grew in the 1990s and 2000s (Dowse 2011; Zimbalist 2020). Scholars writing on sport economics agree that the motivation of national leadership to host these events cannot be explained by aspirations of direct economic benefit to the country. Instead, motivations are driven by a complex political economy consisting of a range of actors with set agendas, including transnational corporations, domestic sport associations, and politicians and policymakers from different levels of governance. As Scarlett Cornelissen points out, how “the interests of these actors overlap or diverge determines the processes by which tournaments take shape, and the longer-term consequences such events bear for the wider host society” (2007, 248). Each tournament emerges from a different and contextually dependent set of interests.

In the case of the 2006 World Cup, a point of consensus between domestic corporate and political stakeholders was the priority of promoting the nation, the remaking of brand Germany. Connecting sport, nationalism, and political economy, Miller et al. state that “just as sport manages to be a global phenomenon when it stands for the nation, so the nation, as embodied in sovereign politics, continues to be the critical unit of international commerce” (2001, 8). Consistently generating audiences unparalleled by other types of media events, global sporting spectacles offer ideal opportunities to exploit focused attention to shape narratives of the nation for domestic and international purposes—both political and economic. Since the first expos and world fairs of the 19th century, global spectacle has played this role as both a product of and a contributor to modern nationalism (Dyreson 2003; E. Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992; Roche 2000). Maurice Roche observes that from their advent,

international and supranational cultural events helped to create a fragile space, something of an “international public culture,” in which “official” versions of collective identities, particularly but not exclusively national identities, were asserted and recognised in a (usually, at best, hierarchic and exclusionary; at worst hate-filled and warring) international “world of nations.” (2000, 22)

These events created an international consciousness at a global level and gave governments a tool for creating and assigning meaning to collective national consciousness. Although these functions of global spectacle have a long history, they have undergone a subtle but important transformation “from a cultural exchange based on empire . . . into one based on capital” (Miller et al. 2001, 10). This shift is reflected in the rise of the theory and practices of “nation branding.”

Nation branding, or “competitive identity,” as Simon Anholt calls it, essentially refers to approaching the nation as a product. Anholt, an independent policy advisor and proponent of competitive identity, argues that “governments now find themselves competing in ways that they are scarcely prepared to deal with, and inhabiting a world of global competition and mobile consumers where few of their traditional approaches work” (2007, 16). However, managing this type of competition is what businesses have perfected. According to Nadia Kaneva’s review of the literature, nation branding supporters share the assumptions that “nation-states operate in a global competitive context” and that “by managing their reputations strategically, nations can advance their interests in the international arena,” whether political or economic (2011, 125). This blending of economic and market rationalities into political communication distinguishes nation branding from traditional forms of strategic messaging and propaganda. Proponents of nation branding generally see it as the natural development of these earlier forms to respond to the new demands of governance in a globalized economy (Kaneva 2011). The market fundamentalism that underlies much of the work on nation branding sees it as a more peaceful form of collective identity than traditional nationalism. Anholt concisely expresses this perspective, writing that

the market-based view of the world, on which the theory of place branding is largely predicated, is an inherently peaceful and humanistic model for the relationships between nations. It is based on competition, consumer choice and consumer power; and these concepts are intimately linked to the freedom and power of the individual. For this

reason, it seems far more likely to result in lasting world peace than a statecraft based on territory, economic power, ideologies, politics or religion. (Anholt 2006, 2; quoted in Kaneva 2011, 126)

This view is based on a politics and morality that uses market metaphors and extends them beyond the realm of material exchange into all realms of life. In this way, even something as intangible as happiness can be “registered” and “recognized” as “having negotiable value” (Anholt 2006, 2).

The significance of the role of cultural identity in economic competition is only recently starting to become clear. Just a few decades ago, corporations enthusiastically embraced Theodore Levitt’s prediction of the disappearance of cultural difference in the face of the proliferating “global corporation” (1983, 3). However, local cultures were not as easily displaced as Levitt imagined. Levitt’s global corporations faced unexpected resistance in the form of local competition and backlash against the overexposure of global brands (Silk, Andrews, and Cole 2005, 1). Corporations were forced to reformulate global strategies to take local cultural difference into account. Meanwhile, nation branding emerged as a way to exploit the particularity of national communities, “defanging diversity” (Aronczyk 2013, 31) by cultivating only forms suited to global trade.

The value of negotiating identity for corporations seeking to capture broader markets is clear. But as globalization has involved national governments in new, unaccustomed forms of competition, nation-states have taken a new look at the value of the symbolic capital of the “national brand.” The increasing mobility of capital has undermined many of the traditional prerogatives that nation-states were founded to maintain. “The modern nation-state emerged as a cohesive political, economic, and cultural entity designed to consolidate and regulate capital accumulation within the boundaries of a specific geographic location” (Silk, Andrews, and Cole 2005, 2). As the boundaries dividing national and global markets have largely dissolved, the globalized conditions of late capitalism have undermined traditional national sovereignty in crucial ways. The conditions that have unsettled the conventional jurisdiction of the nation-state are the same that have given rise to global corporatism. Silk et al. argue that “while human civilization is being increasingly corporatized, the nation and national culture have become principal accomplices within this process, as global capitalism seeks to—quite literally—capitalize upon the nation as a source of collective identification and differentiation” (2005, 7). Rather than making the nation obsolete, under advanced globalization the nation-state and global corporations have grown together, sharing an inter-

est in the symbolic capital and affective power of “imagined communities” (Anderson 2006) as well as of imagined Others.

In the case of the 2006 World Cup, this opportunity came with political and historical challenges. As chapter 3 explains, although the call for generalized national pride gained strength through reunification, resistance against abstract symbolic national pride persisted among segments of the leftist political and intellectual establishment. However, a comprehensive marketing approach to the nation requires the cultivation of a generalized abstract form of nationalism. According to Anholt, “the first and most important component of any national [Competitive Identity] strategy is creating a spirit of benign nationalism amongst the populace, notwithstanding its cultural, social, ethnic, linguistic, economic, political, territorial and historical divisions” (2007, 16). The perception of the national brand among the internal population, Anholt argues, is the driver of the external perception of the brand.

Media and the Power to Define the Nation

German politicians, industry, and media sought to harness the symbolic potential of the World Cup through a broad-ranging marketing strategy to initiate the German people in their upcoming role as national hosts. These “social marketing” campaigns were facilitated and justified by the upcoming World Cup, but their symbolic utility went beyond this event. While other campaigns, like the Land of Ideas, made soccer a central point of reference, DbD was more general, utilizing sport, and especially national soccer, as one point of reference among many nationally charged symbolic scenes. Under the auspices of benign corporate citizenship, the domestically focused DbD campaign proposed a new relationship between Germans and the nation-state characterized by American-style meritocracy and patriotism. As Judith Williamson writes in her classic book, *Decoding Advertisements*, “advertisements are selling us something else besides consumer goods: in providing us with a structure in which we, and those goods are interchangeable, they are selling us ourselves” (1978, 4:13). In a very literal application, when the nation is the good being sold, advertising is selling the unification of nation and self, and the *you* becomes *Germany*.

The campaign’s print advertisements featured a variety of famous Germans from the past and present. They appropriated the prestige of successful individuals such as Ferdinand Porsche and Albert Einstein and bestowed it on the audience, promising that if they try hard enough, they too can become

as important as these figures. The mode of transference is through the nation. Germany is the connection between the aspirant and the prominent person. This implies that as the national culture cultivated past successes, by your association with it, you too will be successful. However, in their choice of figures, the campaign was again caught up in a historical trap that opened it to critiques of callous opportunism. One critic pointed out that, as a Jewish intellectual who fled the Nazi regime, Albert Einstein was emphatically told, “*Du bist nicht Deutschland!*” (you are *not* Germany) (Böss 2009). Another critic pointed out that the campaign proved Einstein right when he said,

If my theory of relativity is proven successful, Germany will claim me as a German and France will declare that I am a citizen of the world. Should my theory prove untrue, France will say that I am a German and Germany will declare that I am a Jew. (Ratcliffe 2016)

The choice of Ferdinand Porsche similarly inspired criticism regarding his membership in the Nazi party and participation as a decorated officer in the Schutzstaffel (SS) (Diel 2006). The unsuccessful dehistoricization of historical figures in the print ads also made them fodder for satirical internet memes.

The television spot stayed on safer ground by maintaining a mostly present and future orientation. The opening shot, fading in from black, shows the sun peeking through the foliage of trees lining a field. The quality of the light and the misty air suggests the sunrise. The sky deepens toward the edge of the frame to a bright blue. The camera tracks to the left and the sound of birds chirping accompanies opening notes of Alan Silvestri’s theme for the film *Forrest Gump*. In the choice of theme music, the campaign evokes the values promoted in the American film, which—according to Lauren Berlant’s reading—is “one of the most popular vehicles celebrating citizenship’s extraction from public life . . . which uses spectacles of the nation in crisis to express a nostalgic desire for official national culture” (1997, 180). Forrest is incapable of being corrupted by national crisis because of his limited ability to conceptualize. Even being the namesake of the founder of the Ku Klux Klan cannot besmirch his innocence. “He encounters history without becoming historical” (Berlant 1997, 180). In this way, the connection with the film expresses a desire to be liberated from personal association with history, like Forrest. In condemning the political movements of the 1960s, the film also mirrors the attacks by conservative Germans on the protests of the postwar generation that famously impugned their parents’ activities under Nazi rule.

By moving from darkness to the dawn, the viewer is reborn in the opening

shot. The shot divorces what will follow from that which came before. As in Berlant's allegory of infantile citizenship, the nation is conflated with the natural. "The nation's priceless essence is located in what transcends the world of practical citizenship, with its history of nationally sanctioned racial, sexual, and economic exploitation" (Berlant 1997, 40). Although Berlant is writing about the United States, the fact that her theories correspond with many of the key points of the campaign reflects the desire to adopt forms of privatized citizenship like those being promoted in the United States. This form of citizenship is built on the normalization of the national symbolic. In becoming normal, "hardly anyone asks critical questions about its representativeness" (Berlant 1997, 36). Although the symbolic body of the national flag was not yet "normal" enough to be emphasized without raising critical questions, the ad's creators accessed the symbolic national body in the form of nature.

The second shot reveals a beautiful older woman with flaxen hair standing with her back to a tree and the sun illuminating her face. Like a loving grandmother, she smiles into the camera and declares, "You are the miracle of Germany." As she pronounces the final word, the camera pulls back to a medium long shot, emphasizing the move from the particular to the general. Her statement refers to the unexpected 1954 World Cup victory of the West German team, commonly known as "the miracle of Bern" (*Das Wunder von Bern*). The "miracle" also evokes Germany's rapid postwar economic recovery, commonly called the "economic miracle" (*Wirtschaftswunder*). Immediately, the audience is immersed in the system of meaning of the sporting spectacle, and more specifically, the meanings and sensations of victorious competition. The 1954 victory is mythologized as the spiritual rebirth of the nation from the ashes of World War II. As at least one journalist noted (Corinth 2005), reference to this victory also links the campaign slogan to "*Wir sind Weltmeister*" (we are world champions), which is the customary chant celebrating a World Cup victory.

Germans would have made these connections with ease, especially with the debut of the film *The Miracle of Bern* in 2003. The film tells the fictional story of a prisoner of war returning to his family from internment in Siberia. It chronicles the painful reunion of the family shattered by war. Ultimately, the victory of the national team succeeds in reuniting the estranged father and son. The allegory is brought full circle, as the son's special relationship with one of the national players inspires the player to score the winning goal in the final game. Thus the "infantile citizen" delivers the national victory that unites his family and his nation. By reframing the memory of World War II around German suffering in the postwar period and the intimate rela-

tionships intertwined with the symbolic national victory, the traumatic past is contained, and the present is freed from its burdens.

After the ad's symbolically laden first three shots, the next shot is a simple close-up of a woman resting her face on her right hand. The blurred background appears to be a cobbled street lit by the angled light of bright morning sun. Referencing a popular interpretation of the mathematical chaos theory, she informs us that "a butterfly can unleash a typhoon." The next shot presents a young woman, frame left, in a yellow shirt cradling a baby swaddled in blue. The swaddling reflects the color of the sky. On the right side of the frame, the Berlin TV tower stands tall. The woman, who appears to be of East-Asian descent, looks up from her baby and continues that "the gust produced by its wings may uproot trees kilometers away." In the middle of the pronouncement, the shot cuts to a winged stage performer creating a translucent arch with a bubble blown through a wand.

The next shot is a low-angle tracking shot that shows young people peeling off and dropping yellow flyers from a balcony in the atrium of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, a grand public building. The next shot is from the floor below angled directly upwards as fliers flutter down toward the camera. In the next shot, the protestors are visible on the balcony of the rotunda. It becomes clear that the signs are crossed out swastikas. The anti-Nazi association of this scene is driven home by the falling fliers that precisely mirror a scene from the 2005 film *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days*. The film chronicles the interrogation and execution of White Rose activists Sophie and Hans Scholl, who were executed for high treason after distributing antiwar leaflets. The atrium was the location of the Scholl siblings' apprehension in real life and in the film. This scene associates the campaign with heroic activism and thereby positions the campaign's patriotism against past nationalisms. Indeed, this scene suggests that it is through a strong identification with the nation that "bad" nationalism is best resisted.

All of this has been presented in the first 17 seconds of the two-minute spot. In total, the ad includes 66 shots, none of them longer than three seconds, most of them less than two. These shots feature 43 different speakers, over 30 of them celebrities of varying calibers. The themes expressed in the campaign's text—which creators called a "manifesto"—emphasize the power of the seemingly insignificant (the individual citizen) and the obligation of the individual to the collective embodied in the nation. Individuals are not positioned as important in themselves but rather in their relation to the national symbolic. "Why do you wave flags while [Michael] Schumacher makes his rounds?" asks a man standing by the side of a pool as a swim team practices. "You know the answer," suggests a man emerging from between the

concrete slabs of Berlin's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. "Unrealistic, you say? Then why do you cheer on your team if your voice is so unimportant?" The many (each insignificant individually) all contribute to support the national symbolic, embodied in its most successful members.

Another prominent theme is the need for self-sufficiency. In a reformulated version of JFK's famous speech, a male surgeon instructs the audience to "ask not what others can do for you." German national team member Gerald Asamoah picks up this point, saying, "You are the others. You are Germany." To drive this point home, the ad features people in humble positions, including a bathroom attendant, sitting alone in a bathroom with a plate for tips on a table beside her, or an impeccably dressed and coiffed—yet presumably homeless—man selling copies of *BISS*, a nonprofit street magazine designed to "help the homeless help themselves." Two harbor workers in the overalls of manual laborers emphasize that "it doesn't matter where you work, or what position you hold. You keep the store running." A waitress in a Japanese restaurant says in accented German, "You are the store." Tied up with these themes is an injunction against criticizing or demanding anything from the government, as in the line "treat your nation as a good friend. Don't complain about him, offer him your help." The alignment of these values with those of neoliberalism was not lost on critics (Wulf 2005; see for example Jessen 2005).

Although the liberal economic philosophy of the "manifesto" was decoded and soundly critiqued by a handful of journalists and commentators, the politics of its images and characters received less attention. Specifically, what patterns connect the demographic characteristics of the figures and the roles in which they are cast? One fact stands out in this analysis: white men are the norm in public life. The ad carefully includes individuals representing other demographics—a fact that rarely escaped explicit mention in the press. The inclusion of Ghanaian-born German national team member Gerald Asamoah sparked particular interest. Other visible minorities include a man with Down Syndrome, the waitress of East-Asian heritage, as well as R&B singer Xavier Naidoo² and Vietnamese-German television moderator and actress Minh-Khai Phan-Thi. Although commentators rightly laud the inclusion of disabled and transnational individuals in the campaign's construction of the German nation, it is not clear that these representations broaden the expected roles of Germans of color, and particu-

2. In the past decade, Naidoo has provoked numerous scandals for his ultra-nationalist, antisemitic, and xenophobic statements and his association with far-right conspiracy theories and groups like the *Reichsbürger* (Sommer 2021).

larly those recognizable as Turkish- or Muslim Germans. Turkish-Germans are represented by rapper Kool Savas, who is shown with his characteristically urban style and distinctive German vernacular common among transnational youth in German cities. An interior shot of a group of five dark-haired young men riding in a car and flashing hand signals also suggests a typical conception of “urban” Turkish or Arab young men.

The portrayal of gender in the campaign is even more striking. Of the 41 adult speakers, only 13 of them are women. The positioning of more women at the beginning and end of the advertisement masks this disparity. The ratio among prominent figures portrayed is even worse, with three times more famous men than women. Only four of the women appear in the context of a nondomestic profession, and two of those professions are a bathroom attendant and a waitress. Another, fashion designer Gabriele Strehle, is accompanied in her studio by her industrialist husband. Only champion cyclist Judith Arndt is portrayed actively participating in a nontraditional profession. Of the women not portrayed in active roles, three of them are shown inside the home, while not a single man appears in a private setting. The men, on the other hand, participate in a wide variety of settings and professional roles, from academic to symphony conductor to mechanic.

Finally, one of the most salient features of the campaign is the prominence of the media itself. Twelve of the featured celebrities are journalists, hosts, or actors. The content and the structure of the campaign repeatedly reinforce the media’s authority to represent the nation. This impact was bolstered in the press coverage of the campaign. A campaign press release cited a study showing that in its five-month duration, the advertisements reached 98 percent of the population in Germany, with every German over age 16 having been exposed on average 21 times. Despite lively criticism on the web, the campaign’s research found that 54 percent of respondents liked the campaign, and 41 percent felt personally invested in the topic (Diel 2006). According to the same press release, more than 2,500 press articles mentioned the campaign. As will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter, this not only increased exposure for the campaign itself but also provided the opportunity for campaign leadership to build narratives around the creation of the campaign emphasizing the charitable intentions that drove it. Even the criticism of the campaign by some journalists was spun by campaign leaders to prove that the power of media institutions does not undermine the diversity of editorial opinions and the free press. DbD legitimated the media as the framer of national reality by reinforcing the importance of media personalities. The juxtaposition of known and unknown persons suggests that it is

through the media—and the national symbolic as expressed in the media—that unknown citizens become connected to the mythical national center.

Intimacy, Politics, and National Reproduction

Multiple “social marketing” campaigns leading up to the 2006 World Cup targeted ambitious goals of renewing Germany’s image and generating excitement about Germany both domestically and abroad. DbD is distinguished by its primary focus on the abstract idea of “mood” (*Stimmung*). While the concurrent Land of Ideas campaign also targeted sentiments of excitement and fun using enthusiasm for World Cup soccer, it was more pragmatically legible, promoting specific German industries and knowledge sectors and specific actions like international investment. In contrast, the original DbD campaign addressed a general atmosphere of sentiments and values. Even the more specific second incarnation of the campaign in 2007, which focused on encouraging “child-friendliness,” maintained a carefully broad message, skirting clear exhortations while promoting the adoption of a generalized public disposition. In the second campaign “you” refers to children, and the narrator speaks as a parent. The audience watches the children on screen from the position of parents while the soothing female voice claims that “there is no bad time to have you.” The creators’ statements to the press show that *Du bist Deutschland* is not only a project to evoke emotional reactions in audiences; it is a much more ambitious project to cultivate a system of values prioritizing a neoliberal politics of private responsibility and biopolitical values of production and reproduction.

This final section draws on the text and images of the 2005 and 2007 DbD campaigns along with media coverage of their creators to identify three overlapping aspects of this political project. First, the campaigns promote an *intimate and affective form of citizenship* that prioritizes the cultivation of an optimistic disposition and casts it as the precursor to economic well-being. The definition and function of affect is a matter of significant discussion among theorists. One point of tension is its distinction from and connection to emotion. While both affect and emotion relate to aspects of feeling, Lawrence Grossberg proposes that “emotion is the articulation of affect and ideology” (2010, 316). Affect can be understood as feeling before its articulation in a particular instance, as the feelings and associations that circulate in public and “stick”—in Sara Ahmed’s words—to reproduce the associations

between “ideas, values, and objects” (2010, 29). As with the concept of *Heimat* discussed in chapter 1, affect is both a public form of feeling and the basis of apparently intimate lives, giving “circuits and flows the forms of a life” (Stewart 2007, 2). In this case, the emotions expressed connect to the affective politics of the economic vision of life they support.

Instead of seeing happiness as resulting from material security, the first DbD campaign proposes that a positive attitude creates economic growth. The second DbD campaign in 2007 ties happiness to literal—not just symbolic or economic—reproduction. This affective orientation also extends to politics and one’s relation to the nation. The next and closely related aspect of this project is *a new framing of the responsibility of individuals* to the nation. Instead of viewing the nation-state as responsible for creating the conditions enabling citizens to be productive, this framing removes the state and makes the individual responsible for creating the nation with their productive action and positive disposition. Once the first campaign established this relationship, what appears to be a leap to encouraging literal reproduction as a national project in the second DbD campaign is revealed to be a seamless continuation.

Finally, the DbD campaign proposes *a new identitarian schema* for Germany that deemphasizes ethnic and cultural forms of identification in favor of citizenship based on individual, private (re)productivity. This depends on the narrative of a colorblind and classless society, in which the self-conscious placement of a handful of visible minorities among normative white citizens smooths over economic and racial inequalities. DbD promotes an explicitly nationalist framework but does so—and perhaps is only able to do so—by altering the vision of the nation, moving away from the explicitly culturalist and genealogical definitions of the German people. Instead, it offers a new cosmopolitan meritocracy that fiercely promotes the nation even as it alters the qualifications for national citizenship. This alteration is, in one sense, a broadening in that it offers equality to all regardless of race or class. However, as observers of American fantasies of meritocracy well know, by privatizing risk this apparent opening also introduces new forms of precarious citizenship.

These campaigns may be best understood through comparison with another national context: the economic and cultural politics of the United States. Although the social or “coordinated market economy” of postwar Germany and the deregulatory anarcho-capitalism of the United States are often considered as diametrically opposed varieties of capitalism (Crouch and Streeck 1997; Menz 2010), their intellectual origins are the same. Foucault argues that the foundation of this form of government or governmen-

tality is the idea that the only acceptable form of social policy is economic growth. To achieve this growth, government must intervene to create the conditions for the optimal functioning of the market, so that competitive mechanisms can play their proper regulatory role in all areas of life (Foucault 2008, 144). The principal difference between the German “social market economy” and American neoliberalism is the belief among German theorists that the market mechanisms are so fragile that they must be carefully managed through a socially interventionist policy (Foucault 2008, 323). In this sense, the “enterprise society imagined by [German] ordoliberalists is . . . a society for the market and a society against the market” (Foucault 2008, 242). The American version eliminates this ambiguity, generalizing the economic form of the market “throughout the social body and including the whole of the social system not usually conducted through or sanctioned by monetary exchanges” (Foucault 2008, 243). The *Du bist Deutschland* campaign and the concurrent economic reforms passed by the German government suggest the transition to a purer commitment to the generalization of market mechanisms, heralding a fundamental change in the role of the state in mediating between markets and the population.

This shift is also accompanied by a more expansive role for private industry in public affairs. In responding to the question of what constitutes the campaign’s deeper message, advertising executive and DbD creator Fischer-Appelt summarized it as an affirmation “that the industry is ready to take over responsibility for this country” (Ax 2005). In place of state support, industry aspires to assume social responsibility by propagating the personal embrace of market rationalities.

Lauren Berlant’s (1997; 2011) work on American cultural politics demonstrates the consequences of this generalization of market rationality, which reached new levels through what she calls the “Reagan revolution” beginning in the 1980s. Central to this process is the simultaneous expansion of the nation idea and contraction of the idea of the state. The state’s role is to support the generalization of market logic rather than to provide public services. In this increasingly “intimate” public sphere, private values and practices are the basis of citizenship. Here citizenship practice is, above all, oriented toward or emerging from the family sphere. “No longer valuing personhood as something directed toward public life, contemporary nationalist ideology recognizes a public good only in a particularly constricted nation of simultaneously lived private worlds” (Berlant 1997, 5). In this privatized, intimate national sphere, the Habermasian “public” of deliberative democracy ceases to be the central ideal of the body politic. Central aspects of this deliberative public ideal, from the protests of social movements—at least those not con-

cerned with family politics—to the professional practice of politicians have “been made to seem ridiculous and even dangerous to the nation” (Berlant 1997, 5). Instead of looking to the public sphere to formulate political solutions to problems, responsibility is placed on the individual and risk is shifted to the personal sphere.

Berlant’s concept of intimate publics is complex and varied. Intimate publics can function at the small scale of specialized communities of interest on the internet or at the large scale of national or transnational communities. They are both actual people bound by shared experiences or concerns and assemblages of norms that organize, mobilize, and interpret collective sentiments. What makes them so effective is their ability to connect with people through a sense of “authenticity.” The campaigns of the coalition of German industries and politicians in the Partners for Innovation and the Land of Ideas initiatives address the nation as an affective community to support specific political and economic agendas. In doing so, they deny their relationship to politics by claiming “that their own politics is really about realizing a world for affective community, and not about power as such” (Berlant and Prosser 2011, 184). While the American form of intimate publics focuses primarily on social conservatism and rigid norms of reproductive bodies, the German version focuses less on regulating the particulars of sex—although it is at least as concerned with reproduction, as is abundantly clear in the second DbD campaign and in debates around demographic decline and immigrant fertility (see chapter 6). The German form prioritizes economic liberalism and personal responsibility for creating what Berlant calls “the good life” (2011). In both contexts, the abstract sentimental nation takes center stage. The DbD campaign deploys sentimental images and ideas to create the mythology of a better life through affective national bonds, all in the service of the nation as market.

Renewal and the Economy of Affect

“You are Germany. So how about you celebrate yourself again?”
—Du bist Deutschland Manifesto

The most important motivation cited by the campaign’s creators in the press was the desire to change and brighten the national “mood” (*Stimmung*). From the first discussions at Chancellor Schröder’s “Innovation Summit” in January 2004, a link emerged between the “right” disposition and the continuation of the good life in Germany. Schröder criticized cautious and con-

servative approaches in German business and research and exhorted the assembled industrial, political, and academic elite to “speak first about opportunities and only then about risks” (*Stern* 2004; *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* 2004). The chancellor framed this as an existential matter for the nation, arguing that Germany’s prosperity depends on its ability to outcompete its rivals in global markets. To do so, Schröder emphasized the importance of attitude again: “The goal is to strengthen renewal in Germany, to deconstruct barriers and to awaken new confidence in the productive capacity of this country” (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung* 2004). Besides a commitment to increase government funding for research universities, the Innovation Summit had few clear goals beyond uniting important national players to clarify shared interests and underscore the need for attitudinal change. As was outlined above, this meeting led to the Partners for Innovation coalition, some of whom went on to create the DbD campaign. As the story was narrated in the press, leaders of one of the world’s top media conglomerates, Bertelsmann, were inspired to attack the disordered national affect that had developed from the economic malaise:

Germany in autumn. Gray skies, a veil of mist, ill humor. Many people have resigned themselves to unemployment, bankrupt companies, lost prosperity. As trees lose their leaves in the autumn, they lose their courage, cast off responsibility. In Germany in autumn 2004, Bertelsmann CEO Gunther Thielen and his friend Bernd Bauer refused to accept this. Optimism and responsibility were needed, not self-pity. Everyone should know this. The idea: 82 million people identify with Germany again. (Moring 2005)

In this narrative, the campaign came from the spontaneous inspiration of titans of industry who had become frustrated with the passivity of the economically depressed population. The use of the seasonal metaphor sets up a curious relationship between the economy and individuals. Changing seasons usually indicate that which is outside of individual control or social influence. The dropping of leaves in autumn is not something that a tree could be expected to change or take responsibility for. However, even this extreme example of a situation governed by an inexorable structure does not justify complaint or the abdication of individual responsibility. The prospect of economic winter demands “optimism and responsibility, not self-pity.” Yet it is telling that the metaphor for the economy is a force of nature. The message is not that people should mobilize to find political solutions to change economic conditions. It would be foolish to try to pre-

vent seasons from changing. To weather harsh economic conditions, individuals must muster their own reserves and take care of themselves. The source of affective fortitude, stated as if it were self-evident, is the collective identification with the nation.

The primary target of the DbD campaign, in both its 2005 and 2007 iterations, was to alter the sentimental climate of Germany. One of the most common words to appear in the corpus of stakeholder-focused articles is *Stimmung*, which translates to collective mood, sentiment, or morale. In the press corpus for this chapter, coded segments related to emotions outnumbered all other themes. More specifically, the campaign's creators claim that Germany's most pressing problem is a collective bad attitude:

The aspirations that organizers have set out are not exactly modest: they want to fight whiners, defeatists, and self-doubters. No longer should every other German have to report that he is afraid of the future. "We want to reach an awakening in Germany," says campaign leader, Bernd Bauer. (A. Kaiser 2005)

This framing of Germany's problems as primarily attitudinal goes back at least as far as the first campaign proposed by Chancellor Schröder, FC Deutschland, which became the Land of Ideas. This early campaign was described in a *Spiegel* article from 2004:

Enough with despondency, self-doubt, and fear of the future, so speaks a melodious voice to the audience. We can do it. We are somebody. We are, above all, a great community, capable of getting fired up. (Hammerstein et al. 2004, 23)

The authors of this article observe that this kind of emotional politics represents a stark departure from the traditional position of the Social Democratic Party:

Officially, it is about a brightened mood in the country organized by the modern advertising industry. Schröder wants to impart a new we-feeling to Germans tormented by the fear of social decline. Highly emotional PR has thus arrived among those who had always fought against such efforts to smooth over reality. They once wanted to be "the voices of critique" or even to organize a "counter-public"; they no longer recoil from targeted mass influence. (Hammerstein et al. 2004, 22)

These campaign ideas indicate the rightward shift of the center-left Social Democrats, moving from an agonistic politics of deliberation to an emotional, intimate politics more commonly associated with the political right. Although FC Deutschland never took off in the specific form proposed in 2004, the political and economic rationality of the Schröder government was readily adopted in the media industry's DbD campaign. In a reversal of the philosophy of the German social market economy, here the emotional life of the population is not to be supported by the markets guaranteed by the state; instead, the markets are to be supported by the appropriately buoyant emotions of the population. The people must be optimistic because it is what the market/nation requires.

The Productive Citizen

The purpose of cultivating a positive disposition is to improve the individual potential for productivity and to stimulate "courage" to take personal responsibility for national prosperity. You are Germany when you have a positive attitude and you use your energies for entrepreneurial and productive purposes. In interviews and press statements, the campaign's creators emphasize the goal of catalyzing individual action, framing passivity as a core contributor to German economic problems:

"That is the goal: to finally drag Germans out of a standstill, to fire the starting shot so that they want to get moving," says [campaign] initiator Bernd Bauer. (Moring 2005)

The [campaign's] initiators hope that many citizens become active. "Do something," they want to call out: "Make something, you can do it." (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 2005)

The [slogan] fits because we want to tell people: it depends on you, what happens in Germany. It has to do with you! . . . We wanted to seize people. So that every person will do what they can. That is why we have the passage: "Germany has enough hands to reach out to each other and grab hold. We are 82 million." (Oliver Voss quoted in A. Kaiser 2005)

This national inertia is framed as a failure of personal responsibility or, euphemistically, a failure to believe in oneself. As advertising executive Holger Jung stated in an interview,

We concentrated on a characteristic tendency that is currently obvious in this country: to push the responsibility for all the problems of this world away from oneself and to say, “It’s not my fault, it’s theirs.” The intelligentsia finds this [formulation] too simple for a problem that is undoubtedly very complexly interwoven. But a campaign can’t solve that; it has to concentrate on a fundamental problem that lies with every individual. (Grimberg 2006)

Jung’s statement acknowledges the complexity of social and economic problems but absolves his branch from the responsibility to do justice to this complexity, citing the inherent limitations of the format of advertising. It is portrayed merely as a practical matter that they chose to focus on individual responsibility and to ignore complex structural causes.

The creators acknowledge, however, that it would not be effective to show an entirely positive picture. They concede reality by admitting the difficulty of the task they propose, as when the 2005 DbD “manifesto” states, “our times don’t taste like cotton candy. No one wants to claim that they do. It may be that your back is against the wall. . . . Yet, we once tore a wall down together” (*Hamburger Abendblatt* 2005). By including low-wage workers and even a presumably homeless man, the campaign’s creators lend plausibility to their claim of representing a reasonable picture of the contemporary situation in Germany. As the creator of the campaign slogan, Oliver Voss, puts it, “if we had just shown happy people, that would have been a lie. Through the direct address, in which we pointed a finger out through the television, people are almost forced to react” (A. Kaiser 2005). However, the purpose of this concession is not to understand the problems themselves but to acknowledge them so that they can be put aside to make way for the call to action.

The statements of the campaign’s creators include a contradictory stance toward politics, conflating productive activity with civic or political action. When confronted with the question of what authorizes industry to take on “such a massive political initiative” (Ax 2005), Michael Trautmann, one of the advertising executives engaged in the campaign, first affirmed the right of any interested party to engage in building political will and shaping public opinion. At the same time, Trautmann emphatically denied that the campaign has any political content:

This advertisement is not propaganda. . . . it does not aim to convince anyone of a political opinion. It only aims to remind every citizen of his responsibility and to push him to take part in the political debate. There can be no doubt that this goal is legitimate. (Ax 2005)

This statement is a poor fit with the content of the campaign, which directly discourages critical politics through its exhortation to “treat your nation as a friend” and to stop complaining and take responsibility for yourself. In the campaign, responsibility does not refer to political engagement, unless all productive activity is equated with civic or political engagement. Trautmann’s denial of a political agenda cloaks the campaign’s promotion of a politics of the apolitical, a politics of personal productivity and collective identification with the nation.

This statement is even more disingenuous when paired with the acknowledgment by the campaign’s cofounder Bernd Bauer (quoted above) that the motivation for the campaign was to extend support for economic reform policies beyond the political elite to the general population (Moring 2005). As one cultural critic writing in the generally reform- and campaign-friendly *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* summarized,

Economic problems appear in this perspective as psychosomatic suffering, unemployment is seen as a consequence of a nationwide depression and no longer as the result of decisions that have created particular structural conditions. Because they have apparently given up on believing in the ability to change these conditions, they logically seize on a rhetoric of revitalization, which reduces the nebulous realm of struggle to the question of solely personal commitments: “You are Germany. Your will is like fire under your behind. You hold the store together. You are the store. You are Germany.” (Reents 2006)

In short, the campaign seeks to reshape the field of public engagement, locating it in the terrain of the “intimate public” and foreclosing a systemic or structural approach to solving political problems.

The biopolitical logics of productivity underlying these qualifications for fully “being Germany,” which is to say, for being a full citizen, took on an even stronger role in the second part of the DbD campaign that debuted in 2007. The second iteration replicated the format of the first and boasted an even bigger budget, saturating Germany’s media-sphere. In the first campaign, the addressee is the potentially productive person who is exhorted to *be Germany* by taking productive action, through some form of labor or philanthropy. The speaker is the national collectivity embodied in celebrities and media personalities and unknown Germans including people of color. In the second iteration, the addressee is a child, and the speaker is the parent figure. The ad reflects long-standing anxieties about Germany’s aging and insufficiently fertile population (T. Kaiser 2007). In interviews, the cam-

paing's creators frame Germany's demographic decline—its failure to achieve optimal reproduction—once again as an affective problem. They seek to create an atmosphere of child-friendliness, which they distinguish from directly insisting that people have more children (Iken and Gerlach 2008). Again, the campaign's "manifesto" addresses the difficult and unpleasant parts of parenting, providing dramatic tension that is overcome by the full wash of emotions, love, and purpose that children represent. "You make us crazy," the warm female voice says, pausing before adding, "with happiness." The adult, through reproduction, has produced the nation in its ideal, infantile form, still unsullied by history and existing as pure potentiality.

"The Opposite of Nationalism": Integration and the Equal Inequality of Neoliberal Citizenship

For DbD, full German citizens must be productive, optimistic, and independent in the face of adversity. One requirement that the campaign sets aside, however, had until recently been a formal requirement under the law: decent from ethnic German parents. Among the dozens of children pictured in the second DbD television advertisement, a handful of children of color appear. While white children represent the norm, as in the first iteration, this version consciously includes children of color as well as several children with Down Syndrome to show that the nation it invokes is not defined in the ethnic primordialist sense.

The campaign's creators position themselves against old ways of defining Germanness. When a historical photograph surfaced showing the slogan "*Denn Du bist Deutschland*" (Because you are Germany) on a large banner at a Nazi demonstration in the mid-1930s, the campaign's leaders dismissed any connection between the campaign and past nationalism as absurd. According to ad executive Holger Jung, the revelation of the photo caused a serious internal discussion among the creators. But when they determined that it was a call to join a local event, and was "in no way a Nazi slogan at the level of *Arbeit macht frei*,³ or the like, [they] were relieved" (Grimberg 2006). When historians confirmed that the slogan was not a significant part of National Socialist messaging, they felt they could "move forward with the slogan in good conscience." Jung then pointed to the content of the campaign as clear evidence disproving nationalist goals: "Just look at the cam-

3. "Work sets you free" was the infamous slogan displayed over the entrance to Auschwitz and other Nazi concentration camps.

paigned and the advertisement: the very last thing that we want is to slip off into a nationalist direction. That would be practically exactly the opposite of the campaign” (Grimberg 2006). Holger’s statement here, and the relative ease with which the campaign’s creators and historians (see for example Meyer-Gatermann 2005) dismissed any meaningful parallel in the historical example, reveal a very narrow conception of nationalism. Nationalism here is never defined but is understood to be negative, chauvinistic, and archaic. Cultivating a “national feeling” or an identification with the nation is frequently cited by the media and creators as a principal goal of the campaign, yet this is somehow unquestionably distinct from, or even contrary to, nationalism.

The supposedly stark distinction between the desired national feeling and chauvinist nationalism is so self-evident that they do not elaborate on it. Holger’s statement implies that one only need look at the campaign’s inclusion of visible minorities to see the inclusiveness of its vision of Germany. What this narrow conception of nationalism fails to consider, however, is that nationalism’s categories of belonging may change, but it always fundamentally involves decisions about who qualifies as a member and who does not. The parallel in the slogans old and new is defined not by the specific qualifications it makes but rather by the fact that it serves as a system of qualification. Furthermore, nationalist systems of affiliation function at multiple levels, from formal juridical qualifications to cultural, moral, and substantive forms. The value of this parallel then is not to show that DbD shares National Socialism’s brand of exclusion but rather to draw attention to the importance of interrogating every nationalist discursive framework to understand its logics of inclusion and exclusion.

While DbD includes minoritized groups within its schema of Germanness, it does so alongside new qualifications, namely that all may “be Germany” who (1) embrace a positive disposition toward growth and reproduction, (2) do not complain or protest, and (3) contribute to national prosperity. The fairness of these dictates is built on the presumption of equality—of equal opportunity in a fair and unbiased system. The campaign accepts the existence of economic inequality by featuring menial labor and a newspaper-selling homeless person alongside Germany’s wealthy industrialists and celebrities. It argues that these differences do not matter, because, as Michael Trautmann put it, “anyone who takes action is a role model, like Einstein or Ludwig Erhard” (Moring 2005). Trautmann erases the differences between Germany’s most famous and successful citizens and its humblest by elevating productive action to the status of moral virtue.

The campaign’s print ad referencing Ludwig Erhard speaks to this moral-

ization of productivity directly. Erhard served as the first minister of economics after the war and is widely credited for West Germany's postwar "economic miracle." The ad depicts a white-haired woman in a lush green field holding an enormous cabbage and asks, "Do you believe that a miracle is the result of hard work? Then you have something in common with Ludwig Erhard. . . . You too can work for your miracle. You decide whether you reach your goal. Not fate." As Foucault observes, Erhard was instrumental in establishing economic freedom and prosperity as a basis of the legitimacy of the new Federal Republic of Germany, which had lost its legitimacy through the Nazi defeat and foreign occupation. Erhard helped establish a framework in which "economic development and economic growth produce sovereignty . . . the economy produces legitimacy for the state that is its guarantor" (Foucault 2008, 84). The state guarantees free economic activity and, consequently, those who participate in that activity legitimate the state through their participation. This

Produces a permanent consensus of all those who may appear as agents within these economic processes, as investors, workers, employers, and trade unions. All these economic partners produce a consensus, which is a political consensus, inasmuch as they accept this economic game of freedom. (Foucault 2008, 84)

This economic philosophy that legitimizes the state is easily extended to legitimize the citizenship of minoritized people who appear as agents within economic processes. All those who participate in economic activity contribute to the legitimate sovereignty of the state. However, this act of inclusion does not inhibit racialized forms of exclusion. Indeed, when some groups are conceived as congenitally deficient economic actors, it becomes simple to condemn the group while denying racism with the claim that any economically contributing individual, regardless of race, is a valid citizen (see chapter 6). As we will see, anxiety about the purportedly high fertility among stigmatized minority groups shows that not all children or "child-friendly" communities "are Germany." Instead, they may be defined as contributors to Germany's imminent demise.

Conclusion

DbD marks a change in the place of visible minorities in the German identitarian schema. Their inclusion can be seen in pragmatic terms as a means

of diffusing critiques that the campaign represents a “bad” kind of nationalism. Yet this move also signals something more profound. It signals the introduction of postracial norms of citizenship that propose to unite the population under a moral framework of economic “freedom and responsibility.” This is a fundamental aspect of integration discourse, which promises that full citizenship is equally available to all who formally qualify. The campaign proposes that in today’s Germany, all who follow this moral framework belong to the nation. Those who fail, do so of their own choosing. However, the question of visible minorities’ qualifications is never fully settled. Instead, integration discourse holds integrant candidates in a separate space of evaluation, where they may be celebrated as a success and a credit to the nation or classified as threatening to its continued existence.

The social marketing campaigns inspired by hosting the 2006 World Cup attempted to create consensus around increasingly neoliberal economic and political policies. To do so, they mobilized an intimate version of the public, which is tied together as an affective community through affiliation with an abstract, imagined nation. Although the direct appeal to mass emotion used in this campaign was a significant departure from postwar political communication in West Germany, the idea of economic activity as a force constituting national legitimacy, as “a circuit going from the economic institution to the state” (Foucault 2008, 84) goes back to the foundation of the Federal Republic. In Ludwig Erhard’s deceptively simple words, “only a state that establishes both the freedom and responsibility of the citizens can legitimately speak in the name of the people” (quoted in Foucault 2008, 81). As Foucault shows, freedom here refers primarily to economic freedom, to the ability to act as an agent in economic processes. Responsibility refers to the state’s obligation to create the proper conditions for market rationalities, or incentives, to function. In this way, the discourse of DbD is connected to a well-established German political economy. At the same time, its expansion into intimate and affective realms and the reduction of the role of the state signals a move toward more all-encompassing forms of neoliberalism. As the state’s direct social role is diminished, the idea of the nation moves to the fore. The next chapter explores how DbD’s call to embrace new national sentiment was taken up in the media spectacle of hosting the World Cup, when waving the flag became not just normal but almost obligatory.

3 • “Soccer Patriotism”

Rehabilitating Celebratory Nationalism in the 2006 World Cup

Few events in recent German history constitute as significant a touchstone of national memory and identification as hosting the men’s FIFA World Cup in 2006. Nearly two decades later, the narratives that emerged around the 2006 tournament are strongly embedded in the collective memory of Germany’s journey to recover celebratory nationalism from its shameful past. Ingeborg Majer-O’Sickey (2006) captured these narratives in her essay published months after the tournament. She writes that the cosmopolitanism of the tournament made the return of celebratory nationalism irresistible, even to normally critical journalists and intellectuals. Joining the “Miracle of Bern” when West Germany unexpectedly won the 1954 World Cup, the “Summer Fairytale” of the 2006 World Cup became an affective anchor point for collective memory and national identity (Koepnick 2010). This chapter analyzes the foundation of these new narratives in the press. Although “integration” was not yet a central theme of World Cup soccer at the time (Stehle and Weber 2013), the media used the 2006 tournament to tout Germany’s cosmopolitanism, using immigrants and Germans of color to legitimate “soccer patriotism.”

The rehabilitation of celebratory nationalism hinges on a binary opposition of tension and harmony making any critical discussion of it harmful because it creates tension. In 2006, the media prescribed immersion in the national colors to alleviate tension. The international media joined in, with one Portuguese commentator proclaiming the tournament to be “the best group therapy for Germans, who are tormented by identity complexes, even though they are the world leaders in exports and have a generous social welfare system” (*Spiegel Online* 2006b). The *Spiegel* gathered this and similar quotes from six international periodicals to reassure the public of the global

support for Germany's renewed national enthusiasm. As one astute commentator observed regarding the difficulty of taking a logical or critical stance toward the issue of the flag, "the secret of the little flags is: any resistance immediately comes off as uptight, whereas we are in such a super laid-back mood now" (K. Schmidt 2006). The object under scrutiny (the flag and national colors) is defined as fun incarnate, establishing a "chain of equivalence" (Laclau and Mouffe 2001) between national symbolism, the popular "parsed flag" (Marvin and Ingle 1999), and happiness, unity, and relief from identity-based tension. Politics and critique are set in opposition to this and are, thus, framed as a threat to well-being. National symbols star in a narrative of transformation in which the nation, previously alienated from itself, celebrates a glorious reconciliation.

Merely mentioning the "Summer Fairytale" (*Sommermärchen*), as the media dubbed the 2006 World Cup, is enough to evoke images of exuberant, flag-waving crowds of Germans "finally" taking their place among the "normal" nations. The strength of this association continues unabated. It was evident in the angst surrounding the 2015 revelation that Germany won its bid to host the 2006 tournament through bribery and corruption. *Spiegel's* issue breaking the story declares that,

The soccer World Cup in summer 2006 was a turning point in German history. The country of the Holocaust had already made other steps towards rehabilitation; it had matured into a stable democracy; it had peacefully reunited. But then Germany also became likable. (Feldenkirchen 2015)

After succinctly situating the 2006 tournament as the culmination of Germany's postwar history, the author outlines Germany's concurrent rise to become one of the world's most admired countries, for its global leadership in fighting climate change and for its capitalist economy that is both robust and socially responsible. The 2006 World Cup, according to this article, was the point that marked Germany's change in global position from repentant perpetrator to moral exemplar.

However, as the article points out, the revelation of high-level corruption behind the symbolically crucial 2006 tournament threatened to tarnish Germany's reputation and self-conception as a moral beacon. Nevertheless, the *Spiegel* journalist concludes that this has led to a more realistic image of a nation that is no better and no worse than any other: "There is no cause for German arrogance, no reason for feelings of superiority, which in these days are again showing themselves in their most primitive form: hatred of foreign-

ers” (Feldenkirchen 2015). This quote recognizes the link between identitarian forms of self-love and suspicion and hatred of those perceived as exogenous. As this chapter shows, this kind of reflection had no place within press narratives that asserted the unmitigated social and psychological benefits of the flag-draped sporting spectacle of 2006.

To understand the discursive field surrounding the tournament, the first section of this chapter outlines the history of debates over nationalism in Germany (see also chapter 1). This history illuminates the tension that the coverage of “soccer patriotism” in 2006 sought to defuse. The next section discusses the nature of sporting nationalism to clarify the role of sporting spectacles in the formation of the national category. In this regard, organizers of the 2006 World Cup developed a new tool; mass public viewings of the matches nationwide simulated the embodied experience of the stadium—a manufactured spectacle that became a major media story. The main body of this chapter analyzes the media coverage of the 2006 World Cup to examine how the features and expectations of this event were marshaled to legitimate a change in German practices around symbolic nationalism, creating a break from the past. Discourses of soccer patriotism affirm the positive value of the national category, establishing national pride as necessary for the health and well-being of the population and removing it from the realm of political contention.

Contested Memories: Postwar Narratives of the Past

Nationalist zeal formed one of the primary tools used by fascists to attain power and justify escalating human rights abuses and atrocities. The interpretation of nationalism’s role in Nazi atrocities and its connection to forms of nationalism that came before and after impacts whether nationalism can ever be seen as truly “safe.” This security is impossible if we accept that nationalism—whether “banal” or “hot” (Billig 1995)—always entails processes of boundary-making and is thus always creating outsiders along with potential solidarities. This recognition undermines the goal of alleviating social discomfort and tension around celebratory nationalism.

German memory of National Socialist atrocities followed a tortuous path, bifurcating in divided Germany with each nation following its own pattern of remembrance and amnesia. Claudia Koonz traced these paths, arguing that beginning with the postwar “Zero Hour” (*Stunde Null*), “Germans constructed a new identity based on a fresh start or a clean break from the past” (1996, 262). East and West Germans differed, however, in their strategies for creating the break. In the immediate aftermath of the war, West

Germans largely "sealed off [memory] in post-traumatic oblivion." In contrast, East Germans railed against Nazi crimes, using them as an opportunity to celebrate communist resistance to fascism and to proclaim that "German monopoly capital—they gave orders for murder" (Koonz 1996, 265). What was forgotten on both sides, however, was the racial genocide and the complicity of everyday Germans in Nazism.

Not until the late 1960s did memory of mass murder return to public consciousness, albeit in very different ways in the East and West. In this period, East Germany began preserving and memorializing the concentration camps, continuing the state-organized project of focusing on the heroism of "anti-fascist resisters," minimizing or omitting the centrality of racism and the reality that Jews were the primary targets of the genocide. In the West, the flood of commemoration begun by the student movements in the late 1960s—including the push to recognize the Jewish victims of genocide—was less uniform and more loudly contested. This contestation reached a climax in 1985–86 with the bitter "historians' dispute" (*Historikerstreit*) between historians, philosophers, and intellectuals over the appropriate historical interpretation of the genocide.

This debate arose from a quest by conservative intellectuals to distance Germany from the Nazi past and establish "a new, proud, 'normal' national identity" (Nolan 1988, 62). The public battle began with an article by Ernst Nolte published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* titled, "The Past that Won't Go Away" (Nolte 1986). In arguing that many aspects of the Third Reich and the Holocaust were not unique, Nolte and other conservative historians sought to relativize National Socialism. As Mary Nolan (1988) argued, the *Historikerstreit* was one of a series of controversies sparked by Germany's political right throughout the 1980s that reflected the growing desire of conservatives for a "usable past." To accomplish this, the political right needed to "emancipate nationalism from its discrediting by fascism. A reinterpretation of history . . . above all of the Third Reich, is integral to this construction of a conservative national identity" (Nolan 1988, 62). Leftist intellectuals, led by Jürgen Habermas, fought back against this attempt to whitewash the German past and, in particular, the Holocaust. Nolan observed that "whereas the right wants a uniform and emotionally felt national identity, [the left strives] for a calm and reasoned acceptance of constitutional democracy, built on a critical understanding of Germany's recent past" (1988, 65). Although conservatives immediately began chipping away at the "mourning work" (*Trauerarbeit*) that was gaining momentum in the 1980s, they were not entirely successful in overcoming the hold of the past on German identity in West Germany at the time of reunification in 1990.

The gap in Eastern and Western conceptions of the past was a significant stumbling block to the establishment of a shared national identity after unification. As Koonz observes,

Like a common currency and culture, the public memory of historical events structures a sense of civil society across generations, classes, and regions. . . . While tensions and out-right hostility repolarized East and West Germans, the public memory of their shared Nazi past also became a site of dispute. (1996, 269)

While East Germans had constructed narratives around the continuity of German fascism in the capitalist West, West Germany had nurtured an opposing position, likening the authoritarian GDR to the totalitarian Nazi state. Not surprisingly, East Germans balked at accepting the West German brand of mourning work, which included both implicit and explicit disparagement of the GDR and did not reflect East German experiences. In particular, residents of the towns near the concentration camps in the former East resisted the rebranding of the camps from heroic antifascist memorials into monuments of admonishment.

Even in the West where it originated, the mourning work celebrated abroad and among liberal Germans had not caught on among the public at large. The depiction of Nazism in West German popular culture refuted the “mourning work” of political leaders (Confino 1998; Kaes 1992; Koonz 1996). Films, television specials, and novels generally focused on the lives of average Germans during the Nazi time, omitting or sanitizing the atrocities of the period (see also chapter 1). Beginning with the *Historikerstreit*, conservative intellectuals sought to exploit the gap between popular memory and official remembrances of the genocide. After unification, their message also found an attentive audience among East Germans irritated by *Wessie* forms of memory.

Indeed, the desire to cast off the fetters of the past complicating the public expression of national pride was one of the few sentiments that had popular appeal across the newly reunited nation. The process of reunification facilitated this goal on two fronts. First, reunification provided a functional justification for patriotism and the cultivation of a united German identity. Second, it marked the end of a historical period. As Alon Confino put it, “sometime between November 9, 1989, and October 3, 1990, twentieth-century Germany became history” (2004, 389). The dissolution of the post-war divide created a new distance from World War II—a “symbolic rupture”

(Nora 1998, 503)—paving the way for a new German generation even further removed from the troubling past.

Despite the enduring “wall in the mind” (*Mauer im Kopf*) separating former citizens of East and West Germany, citizens of the newly united Germany expressed a shared longing for a “normal” national identity. In the context of the modern nation-state, John Gillis writes that

Individuals, subgroups, and nations all demand identity as if it were a necessity of life itself. Identity has taken on the status of the sacred object, an “ultimate concern,” worth fighting and even dying for. To those who believe they do not have it, identity appears even more scarce and precious. (1994, 4)

Popular German sentiment after unification arose from this sense of identity lost through defeat, occupation, and national division. At the same time, it is important to note that Gillis does not discuss the empirical existence of identity but rather the collective belief in the possession of identity and the ability to ritually celebrate it.

With the contemporary proliferation of identity forms, does the national form still matter and, if so, why? Even as globalization makes borders increasingly porous, the nation-state still stands as the primary arbiter of legitimacy monopolizing the power over what Hannah Arendt calls “the right to have rights” (1973, 296). Transportation technologies make crossing borders easier than ever, but one’s access and basic human rights are still tied to the accident of birth that determines membership in a nation(-state). Rules of citizenship legally establish this membership in a political community, but it also requires social and affective scaffolding to perpetuate its legitimacy. Addressing the affective realm, Carolyn Marvin and David Ingle (1999) argue that the ability to govern is built on the willingness of citizens to sacrifice themselves and their children. Marvin and Ingle argue that only the process of the willing sacrifice of group members is powerful enough to forge the affective bonds holding a group together. Thus they define the nation as “the memory of the last sacrifice” (1999, 5). However, the idea that sacrificial violence is the source of national cohesion is contrary to the values of modern nation-states, which hold violence to be immoral or barbaric, a failure of politics rather than its necessary precursor. “To protect themselves from recognizing the source of group unity, citizens render totem violence and its symbols sacred” (Marvin and Ingle 1999, 12) which is to say taboo, unknowable, and unspeakable.

But what happens when the last great sacrifice revealed the violent totemic secret before the whole world? Germans protested their inability to construct an identity free from a past tainted by the shameful revelation of the bloodthirsty foundations of nationalism during the Nazi period. This internationally infamous revelation inhibited the proper function of the taboo by disclosing that violent sacrifice generates the affective power of national cohesion. The broken taboo materialized in discomfort with the totemic symbols of national identity, including flags, national colors, and anthems. Although reunification might have held the symbolic potential to provide the foundation of a new national narrative, this potential was mired in the conflicting conceptions of that past across ideological and geographic boundaries. It is important to note that, despite these disagreements, official forms of nationalism remained deeply rooted and unquestioned, for example, in blood-based German citizenship laws and the highly restrictive immigration and asylum policies of the 1980s and 1990s (see Göktürk, Gramling, and Kaes 2007). Despite the focus among both public observers and scholars of nationalism on public celebrations of nationalism, Michael Billig (1995) rightly points out that a more profound accomplishment of nationalism is its pervasiveness and durability in everyday life, especially when it disappears from notice. To chip away at this lingering ambivalence, nationalism had to be retrieved from the realm of contention and restored as a norm. Hosting the World Cup provided the perfect opportunity to create a uniform and affectively engaged national identity, while also dismissing critical discourse on Germany's past.

The Embodied Nation of Sporting Spectacle

Global sporting spectacles are uniquely positioned to facilitate the renewal of nationalism under the pretext of a cooperative international event. Since their foundation, the modern Olympics and the FIFA World Cup were steeped in the idealist rhetoric of global peace and harmony. Tomlinson and Young (2006) trace these origins to the statements of the founding fathers of these events. For Olympics founder Pierre de Coubertin, "the Olympic project had philosophical, historical, and educational dimensions and goals," and he insisted that "internationalism was a bulwark against ignorance, chauvinism, and war" (A. Tomlinson and Young 2006, 4). Founding FIFA president Jules Rimet's goals for the World Cup were no less lofty.

Seeing in sports a means of building good character, Christian and patriotic, his love of God and France was combined in his passion for football. He believed in the universality of the church and saw in football the chance to create a worldwide "football family" welded to Christian principles. (A. Tomlinson and Young 2006, 5)

This conception of international sporting events as a healthy source of pleasure and fun and as promoting global friendship across social, racial, and cultural difference has endured as the justification for these events while providing a bulwark against political critique. At the same time, these organizations have always facilitated the ambitions of cultural imperialism, promoting the national interests and cultural norms of their most powerful members.

The idealist rationale for the World Cup inoculates it against concerns about the nationalistic displays it encourages. After all, the logic goes, how can celebrations associated with an event explicitly designed to encourage universal peace be conduits for national chauvinism? However, this is not so contradictory after all. As Gellner demonstrated,

The nationalist principle can be asserted in an ethical, "universalistic" spirit. There could be, and on occasion there have been, nationalists-in-the-abstract, unbiased in favour of any special nationality of their own, and generously preaching the doctrine for all nations alike: let all nations have their own political roofs, and let all of them also refrain from including non-nationals under it. (2006, 2)

In this way, nationalism and universalism are not mutually exclusive. The World Cup celebrates a universalized form of particularism regulated by nation-states. Even as international sporting spectacles unite the people of the world under the banner of universal peace, they provide the opportunity to cement more "united" and fixed conceptions of particular national identities. Meanwhile, the pervasive acceptance of these events as fundamentally benign makes any critique of the activities associated with them difficult to publicly sustain.

The connections between global sport mega-events and nationalism have been well documented (Bairner 2001; A. Tomlinson and Young 2006). As Eric Hobsbawm writes, for the standardization, homogenization, and transfer of popular ideologies, "deliberate propaganda was almost certainly less significant than the ability of the mass media to make what were in effect national symbols part of the life of every individual" (1992, 142). As a mass

media spectacle, sport is a potent force for bridging the gap between private and public spheres. Hobsbawm continues to argue that,

What has made sports so uniquely effective as a medium for inculcating national feelings, is the ease with which even the least political or public individuals can identify with the nation as symbolized by young persons excelling at what practically every man wants, or at one time in life has wanted, to be good at. The imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people. The individual, even the one who only cheers, becomes a symbol of his nation himself. (1992, 143)

Thus sport is a vital locus for the transference of national identity to the individual through the shared pleasure of admiring the physical abilities of the population's most talented (male) athletes. The process of the individual becoming the symbol of the nation is so seamless that it is easily naturalized and thus difficult to interrogate. However, the ability to seamlessly symbolize the nation does not apply equally across the national population. In media commentary (Sterkenburg, Knoppers, and Leeuw 2012) and everyday sports talk (Van Sterkenburg and Spaaij 2015), sport creates spaces for idealizing cultural and ethnic diversity as positive indicators of a cosmopolitan nation while also reinforcing dominant discourses of racial, cultural, and gendered difference that valorize whiteness and hegemonic masculinity in defining European nations.

Hosting the event intensifies the process of symbolizing and embodying the nation. As the nation becomes the host, the burden of hosting is assigned to all those identified as belonging to the nation. Hosting provides an opportunity for national leaders to mobilize citizens for a common cause. Row and Stevenson compare this transformation to the “galvanizing rhetoric of war” since acting as good hosts through enthusiastic support “is presented as a patriotic duty, whereby internal differences need to be set aside, if only for the duration, in the greater national interest” (2006, 199). With the enormous international media attention focused on the event, well-executed global sporting spectacles provide unparalleled opportunities for accruing symbolic capital. The success or failure of the event is seen as a direct reflection of the capabilities of the host nation.

This is true even when unforeseeable events intervene, as was the case in the 1972 Munich Olympics when the militant Palestinian splinter group, Black September, exploited the games to publicize their grievances against Israel to a massive global audience, kidnapping and murdering eleven Israeli

athletes from the Olympic Village. Like the 2006 World Cup, the Munich Olympics were seen as an opportunity for (West) Germany to "showcase its rehabilitation as a peace-loving, democratic state where the past was a foreign country" (Young 2006, 118). Referring to the massacre in his memoirs, then chancellor Willy Brandt wrote:

My disappointment at the time was intense, first because the Olympics on which we had expended so much loving care would not go down in history as a happy occasion—indeed, I was afraid that our international reputation would be blighted for many years—and secondly because our counter-measures had proved so abortive. (qtd. in Young 2006, 118)

As Young notes, this statement is striking due both to the order in which Brandt lists his regrets—the self is placed before others, and the harm to the nation is prioritized over the suffering of the victims—and to the list of keywords he employs: history, international reputation, loving care, and happiness. This emphasis on the nation and positive emotions, affective connections, and historical and international significance endured in Germany's approach to hosting the 2006 World Cup.

Spectatorship as Media Event: The Creation of the "Fan Fest"

The soccer patriotism narratives of 2006 typically begin with descriptions of cities awash in a "sea of flags." These accounts revolve around a new feature of the sporting spectacle; in the 2006 tournament organizers introduced mass public viewings, or Fan Fests, throughout the country. This element has become standard practice for World Cups ever since, taking place not only in the host country but also internationally. These viewings provided places for people to gather and celebrate, and consequently they also provided an excellent opportunity to capture the revelry in the media and broadcast it to the world. Fan Fests offered unprecedented opportunities for multiplying the impact of the celebrations. Not only could citizens across the nation participate in the experience of watching the event as a group regardless of whether they had tickets to the matches or even lived near the stadiums, but their celebration became the object of media attention, conferring greater status on their participation.

The most famous of these viewings was the Berlin "Fan Mile," which stretched between the two significant memorials of German identity and

history: the nearly 70-meter-high Victory Column (*Siegessäule*) and the Brandenburg Gate. An official English-language city website publicizing the revival of the Fan Fest for the 2010 World Cup proclaimed that

With the Fan Fest during the 2006 FIFA World Cup, Berlin created a worldwide acknowledged wave of enthusiasm, furor and friendliness for the German capital and for Germany. The incomparable pictures taken of the Fan Fest 2006 stood and stand for enthusiasm for sport, hospitality and the new found confidence of the Berliners and Germans. (“International FIFA Fan Fest Berlin” 2010)

The website celebrates the “breathtaking atmosphere” created by more than one million people attending every day during the 2006 tournament. Public viewings enable the mass sharing of positive sentiments and the memorialization of the experience by capturing and circulating it in images. It is also significant that this website targeting visitors to Berlin in English emphasized the newfound “confidence” of Berliners and Germans. This event allowed Germans to reclaim their nationalism from the past not only for themselves but to proudly affirm this fact in front of the whole world.

The German organizers of the World Cup recognized the value of the lived experience of the event. Although the media are a crucial component of constructing “imagined communities” (Anderson 2006), there is power in an embodied experience that is absent in the mediated experience of an event. Paul Connerton explains,

There is a world of difference between topography as a rhetoric that is *known about*, and topography as a rhetoric that is *known*. . . . For there is a type of experience recognizable only to those who have walked through a particular building or street or district. Only they have lived it. To “live” an artifact is to appropriate it, to make it one’s own. (2009, 32)

Experiencing the World Cup on television from the comfort of one’s home is thus qualitatively different from the experience of the public viewing, which mimics more closely the scale and collective sensations of viewing the game from the stadium. In their literature publicizing the benefits of hosting a “Fan Fest,” FIFA wrote that the official Fan Fests in 12 cities attracted approximately 18 million viewers in 2006, allowing six times more people to experience the “unique FIFA World Cup feeling” (“FIFA Fan Fest: Frequently Asked Questions” 2010) than were accommodated in the stadiums. Although

the mediated experience of the events provides a sense of simultaneity to viewers, the experience pales in comparison to the power of physically experiencing the events in the same time and space. Together with the media, the public viewings created a feedback loop in which audiences enjoyed the embodied experience of collective emotions of fandom, and the media wrote about those experiences, elevating them and extending their meaning.

Indeed, the World Cup offers this experience of simultaneity on a level unlike any other event, even the Olympics, in which the simultaneous broadcast of different live events divides the attention of spectators. In contrast, the World Cup offers one match at a time, concentrating spectator attention at the global scale. There are reminders of simultaneous spectatorship everywhere soccer is appreciated, from the quiet streets to the outbursts of sound that unite a city in celebration or mourning. The public viewing heightens this phenomenon, allowing spectators to participate bodily in a multisensory experience orchestrated by the action of the sporting event. The media captures and disseminates this experience, multiplying the impact through photos and descriptions of jubilant flag-bedecked crowds. As the FIFA literature affirmed, the public viewings were "very important platforms," providing "80 percent of the non-action related stories" in the media about the World Cup ("FIFA Fan Fest: Frequently Asked Questions" 2010). The 2006 World Cup combined the nationally oriented, mediated experience of watching on television with the massive, embodied experience of the public viewings, all of which was amplified by the media coverage of spectatorship.

Rescuing the Flag from the Past: Young, Safe, Healthy

Scholarship on journalism has challenged the common assumption that journalism's role in presenting current events means it is only involved in writing "the first draft of history" and not the last (Zelizer 2008; Edy 1999; Lang and Lang 1989). Indeed, a great deal of journalism's work consists of looking back, even—and perhaps especially—when reporting on the newest breaking stories. In covering the 2006 World Cup, the German media framed the new soccer patriotism as the end of Germany's long struggle with its identity. Subsequent public reflections, particularly around the World Cup tournaments in 2010 and 2014, demonstrate the success of this narrative. To achieve transformation, media coverage employed a combination of memory and amnesia of the present and the past.

Press articles for this analysis were gathered using the search terms *Fußball* (soccer) AND *Patriotismus* (patriotism) in two different newspaper archives.

Because the volume of coverage related to soccer patriotism is so large, the search was limited to one influential national periodical and one regional periodical. Editorial and commentary articles were selected to better focus on the logical and narrative construction of patriotism and national sentiments in the context of the World Cup. For the national periodical I chose the most frequently cited quality news organization in Germany, the center-left *Der Spiegel* magazine, including its online sibling *Spiegel Online* (PMG Presse-Monitor 2014). A *Spiegel* search for the above terms yielded 46 articles (14 in print and 33 online) written in 2006. To understand the circulation of discourses of soccer patriotism in local public spheres, I examined the archive of the *Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* (MZ), which holds a near monopoly on local coverage in the south of Saxony-Anhalt. The MZ archives returned 26 results for the above search terms in 2006. Of the 72 unique results across these sources, 49 were editorials and commentaries. Combining the regional newspaper *Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*, situated in the former East, with the prestigious national magazine *Der Spiegel* shows the resonances and appeal of the “soccer patriotism” framework across the western-centric national and eastern regional public spheres.

Stories emphasized the bounded and idealistic features of sporting spectacles, creating a safe space for patriotism. Within this safe space, the media rehabilitated national symbols by portraying them in association with the positive and universal experience of the sporting event, reaffirming their interpretations through the expert opinion of cultural elites. These narratives—thus established and remaining uncontested—were then used as symbols to recall and create nostalgia for the event over the following months and years, establishing in collective memory a basis for “soccer patriotism” as a new normal mode of national identity.

One of the methods used to accomplish this was to focus on the exceptional nature of “soccer patriotism,” which, the argument goes, is bound to sport and not to politics and more “dangerous” forms of nationalism. The fact that people are swathing themselves in the national colors is ascribed solely to the desire to support the national team, which happens to be represented by those colors.

There’s no need to worry about soccer enthusiasm playing into the hands of right-wing extremists. On the contrary: carnival-costumed soccer fans send the message to the world: “Look here, we invite you to the international soccer festival.” Tricolored wigs instead of Nazi skinheads. (Biallas 2006)

"Not every flag-waver is directly transformed into a patriot or nationalist," says Klaus Boehnke, Sociologist at the International University of Bremen. The masses do not reflect on the historical meaning of national symbols at all. Above all, they are carried by momentary euphoria. (*Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* 2006a)

We remember: It was the soccer World Cup and Germany transformed itself for a few weeks into a euphoric nation. (Hoch and Main 2006)

Journalists and the experts they cite reassure readers that there is no need to be concerned about the long-term effects of soccer patriotism since it is tied to this singular event in which Germans are the hosts. Germany will not be able to host again for at least 25 years. This perspective ignores how temporary experiences of what Durkheim calls "collective effervescence" (1995) attach these transformative emotions to the symbols that the event revolves around. "The feelings a thing arouses in us are spontaneously transmitted to the symbol that represents it" (É. Durkheim 2003, 112). While the event is temporary, its impact continues in the revitalization of the affective connection to national membership. In this way, the World Cup provides the aura of neutrality even while augmenting political power of the national imaginary.

The central tool of this quasi-religious connection between the individual and national identity is the ubiquitous reference to national symbols, above all "black-red-gold," which achieves the status of a fixed phrase. The media invoked national symbols in conjunction with hyperbolic, quasi-religious ecstasy. Through the experience of participating as a spectator in the World Cup—particularly at mass public viewings—the intense positive emotions of the experience are fused to the symbols representing the national team being supported. The experience of soccer fans temporarily losing themselves in the totality of the nation through interaction with national symbols was described in the German media in hyperbolic terms like "euphoria," "exultation," or "jubilation."

Although black-red-gold was never sullied in history, Germans have had a hard time with national symbols in the past decades. Now the whole country has been baptized in German colors. (*Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* 2006b)

In a civic religious experience, the German people were said to have been restored, made whole again through their embrace of the national colors. The whole nation is portrayed as participating in the ritual of renewal and rebirth into a shared national identity, all the while being reassured that these symbols have nothing to do with the shameful past. The media provided Germans with the shared experience of imagining and reliving the event, solidifying these symbolic associations and erasing any troubling links to the past they might have previously evoked.

The World Cup is delimited in time and space, and its patriotic displays are characterized as temporary. Journalists affirm that “like a holiday,” after it passes the decorations will disappear back into the closet (Bock 2006b). This characterization resonates with the idea that, in established nations, when nationalism “does irrupt in fever pitch, it is often seen as being confined to special occasions, the irruption soon dies down; the temperature passes; the flags are rolled up; and, then, it is business as usual” (Billig 1995, 5). This language is repeatedly mirrored in World Cup coverage to prove that this display of nationalism is contained and is therefore safe.

For the Bielefeld historian Hans-Ulrich Wehler, the newly discovered self-awareness of the German fans is no sign of burgeoning nationalism. Instead, sport calls forth an “*Ersatz* nationalism . . . since it operates with national colors and a national team.” For Wehler, the rediscovery of the German flag is an “extraordinarily ephemeral phenomenon,” a dangerous nationalism will not be called forth by it. (Todt 2006)

Using expert voices, journalists draw stark boundaries around “soccer patriotism,” protecting it from the critique it might attract if taken seriously as an issue of cultural and social politics. However, the same articles that emphasize the temporary nature of soccer patriotism often characterize it as a fundamental social transformation. Just before providing reassurances of its ephemerality, the above article states that “on the streets and in the stadiums, the inhibiting shame in dealing with national symbols has given way to a relaxed relationship” (Todt 2006). The reassurances of boundedness are belied by articles praising and exhorting the spread of the new national sentiments to other areas of life. This spread is repeatedly characterized as evidence of a normal and relaxed relationship with national symbols.

The media underscores the exceptional nature of the event by emphasizing the duty of Germans as hosts, which entails the expectation of creating an

appropriate atmosphere through shows of enthusiasm. Citizens are called upon to participate as a matter of their patriotic duty to represent the hospitality and enthusiasm of the nation (see also chapter 2). Participating in the act of supporting one’s national team provides a site of large-scale solidarity, accentuated by the increased expectations of the role of host country. These host obligations were emphasized repeatedly in the media to legitimate nationalistic displays and eliminate the contentiousness of public symbolic nationalism in Germany.

“All of Germany rejoices black-red-gold—and friends from the whole world celebrate cheerfully along,” writes [Green Party Faction leader Renate] Künast in a guest column for the *Bild am Sonntag*. The soccer World Cup is a “festival of colors, of nations, of people, and black-red-gold is our badge as hosts: come here, we’ll show you how beautiful Germany can be.” (*Spiegel Online* 2006b)

The World Cup hysteria continues unabated. And patriotism appears just as strongly pronounced in these weeks. Above all, the Germans as hosts of the soccer spectacle are showing their flags. (Pfeifer 2006)

[Young Germans] are already globalized party-goers, and now they are the hosts. In this role, they don’t want to be glum. During a World Cup, globalization also means: the battle of merriment cultures. The Germans are participating in force. (Kurbjuweit et al. 2006, 76)

Many journalists enthusiastically declared that the 2006 World Cup finally broke the taboo on nationalist celebration. However, it may be more accurate to say that, borrowing from Marvin and Ingle (1999), hosts used the simulated violence of global sporting spectacle to finally restore the taboo obscuring the real violence that constitutes the totem secret.

The national narrative that developed around the 2006 World Cup began from the premise that Germans have long been suffering under the burdens of the national past. This burden, the narrative goes, has led to collective self-doubt and a tense relationship between citizens and their national identity.

In Germany, there is always a big “but” with anything that has to do with Germany. Isn’t there too much black-red-gold in the seats and on the screens? Is one allowed to sing the German national anthem from the heart? (Kurbjuweit et al. 2006, 70)

Citizens of the Federal Republic have always had a hard time with flag-waving, with painted faces, with singing. (Schnibben 2006, 84)

In the discussions of “soccer patriotism” in 2006, journalists frequently reference a generalized feeling of disconnectedness and discontent that was alleviated by the tournament, suggesting that Germans had been denied something essential to their existence. Most often, the previous lack is indicated by claiming the newness of the “relaxed” mobilization of national symbols. Other examples are more explicit:

International studies confirm that in comparison to other countries, Germans still have a poor sense of self-esteem. . . . A big event like the World Cup, however, stokes up community sentiments and is a chance, particularly for young people, to identify with the country. (*Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* 2006a)

I find the ease new and highly pleasant . . . you notice how tensely you’ve been seeing things for such a long time. (Reif and Drecker 2006)

Patriotism is not a luxury, but rather a necessity for survival. (Matussek 2006)

German identity and German pride are described as being laden with contention and discontinuity. At the same time, the strength of national identity is equated with good self-esteem, and—echoing Arendt’s and Agamben’s observations about the equivalence between affiliation with a political community and one’s right to life—is even construed as vital for existence.

Discussions of the German nation in the corpus are frequently ambivalent, oscillating between the concrete description of national characteristics or patriotic displays and the denial of their coherence or significance. One article exemplifies this simultaneous claim and denial of national coherence. Describing one of the many museum exhibits examining the meaning of German nationhood that appeared around the time of the World Cup, this *Spiegel* feature article lists several national exemplars featured in one exhibit:

There are the German thinkers and poets, the German forest, the German *Gemütlichkeit* [atmosphere of comfort, good cheer], German efficiency, the German longing for Italy, and there is Winnetou. (Kurbjuweit 2006, 24)

Referencing a beloved German character from Karl May's 18th-century Western novels, the imagined "Apache" Winnetou is prototypical of the Noble Savage trope—born of the distant European yearning for a prelapsarian humanity uncorrupted by civilization. The figure of Winnetou appropriates indigeneity as a canvas on which to project national ideals.

Winnetou is hands-down the German hero, a paragon of virtue, a nature freak, a Romantic, a pacifist in his heart but in a bellicose world, the best warrior, agile, trenchantly accurate. Eleven Winnetous and we would be world champions on July 9th. (Kurbjuweit 2006, 24)

This quote also reinforces the connection of sport to war and glorifies battle between nations while proclaiming pacifism as a national characteristic. Conjuring the figure of the Noble Savage as a vessel, the author declares a set of self-evident and unimpeachable German ideals. If each of the eleven team members lived up to the German ideals embodied in the figure of Winnetou, no nation could defeat them. After declaring these identity concepts, the author denies the possibility of a coherent German identity. Citing an irresolvable tension endemic to Germanness, the article asserts the necessity of continuous efforts of self-construction:

Identity and Germany are contradictory terms. After all, what Germanness meant was too long flush with unclear or constantly changing borders and populations. After all, the Holocaust is too unwieldy. With [the Holocaust] one cannot construct an identity, and without it even less . . . in truth, the search is the goal. To search for the self, without being able to find oneself—that is German, that is also a German form of amusement. (Kurbjuweit 2006, 24)

The uncertainty about the nature of German national affiliation is an invitation to perpetual reflection on the meaning of the nation—a practice that occurs throughout the soccer patriotism archive. These examples show how national redefinition discourse proceeds by (1) claiming that there is (and perhaps always has been) a crisis of identification, (2) defining the national/citizen, and (3) denying the boundaries created by the previous redefinition and thus defending against critiques of exclusion. Definition must take place, just as that definition must be denied to prevent the possibility of agonistic politics. Its ambiguity maintains the nation at the center of attention. Departing from the claim of Germany's particularly tense relationship to

national identity, journalists affirm that the soccer patriotism of the World Cup resolves these tensions—at least temporarily. At the same time, they argue that the exceptional nature of the event ensures that this release of tension will not turn into a politically dangerous form of national excess.

Patriotism above Reproach: Critique as a Threat to National Well-being

Although commentators often question the coherence, unity, and authenticity of the patriotism of soccer revelry, they frame the normative value of the World Cup and its nationally oriented performativity as irreproachable. After all, commentators argue, gloomy and serious deliberations have no place in a sporting event, and thus reject critical discussions outright as *knee-jerk*, *pessimistic*, and *generally absurd*:

To reframe the frolic in black, red, and gold as an expression of the return of strengthened national feeling is absurd. (Biallas 2006)

Professionals consider the critique to be knee-jerk and typical German defeatism. “I don’t take it seriously,” says Heinz Grüne, an executive at Reingold (Cologne), an institute for market and media analysis. (Bock 2006a)

There will be no threatening national pride in Germany anymore, said [Bundestag President] Lammert. As such, he rejected criticism of the World Cup Euphoria: “The attempt, to declare such healthy patriotism as objectionable encourages the activities of deranged right-wing extremists.” (*Mitteldeutsche Zeitung* 2006b)

We’ve long asked ourselves: “Are we allowed to do this?” Of course, we are allowed. We have asked ourselves questions that should not be asked since this is all without question normal. It is really good. Furthermore, the external perception is much more relaxed than our own. All this doesn’t mean that Germany is on the march again. Whoever interprets what is happening that way is crazy. (Reif and Drecker 2006)

These last two comments, in particular, reveal the strength of associations of nationalism with normality and critique with political extremism of the

right and the left. The logic of this argument claims that by complicating symbolic nationalism, critics alienate "normal" citizens and drive them into the arms of the extreme right. Instead, it maintains that uncomplicated feelings of national pride should be generated at the center of society.

Nearly half of the selected articles refer to the existence of a "debate" around national identity and soccer patriotism, although they almost never present concrete examples of criticism. After alluding to debates, journalists and their sources condemn "bad" forms of nationalism sometimes referencing the need to remember the Nazi past while arguing for the positive value of soccer patriotism. Some commentators accept the inevitable presence of the national past while arguing against historical connections between sporting spectacle and the symbolic politics of nationalism. In discussing concerns about possible xenophobic violence against World Cup visitors, one commentator reflects that for the potential victims

It may not matter whether their health is threatened by a German or by someone else, but for Germans the shame and disgrace are incomparable. In this, history has—and must have—a lasting effect. It need not ruin your cheerfulness, but in this country, you cannot wholly escape the consciousness of the Nazi years. (Kurbjuweit 2006, 24)

Recalling Brandt's characterization of the tragedy of the Munich Olympics, the harm to the reputation and self-esteem of the national population is more salient than the impact on the individual. This journalist recognizes the injustice of this but cannot quite bring himself to dig into its more problematic implications for the value of life and death. One kind of death has symbolic significance in that it can harm the national reputation, whereas the other would have the same result for the victim but no relevance for the national population. The Nazi years, here, stand as a constant threat to the national population's legitimacy and happiness. They are less important for the lessons they offer than for the shadow they cast on the nationally defined realm of politically significant life.

The one clear example of the active vestiges of the leftist political critique remaining from the era of the *Historikerstreit* emerged when leaders of Germany's largest teachers' union, the *Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft* (GEW), republished an excerpt from Benjamin Ortmeier's 1991 critical analysis of the history of Germany's national anthem. This action was the only specific evidence of public critique mentioned in the corpus, and it was mentioned as evidence of resistance in five different articles. The GEW's stated goal was to emphasize the continued "need for a deep discussion of the

history and present of nationalism in Germany” in order to avoid “white-washing the ever increasing social cleavages in this country and conflating integration with assimilation” (Ortmeyer 2006). According to the only article in the corpus that specifically examined the state of left-wing criticism in the context of the World Cup, the public backlash against the excerpt’s circulation was so harsh that the GEW was forced to apologize. They stated that the “GEW did not want to spoil the World Cup for fans,” and acquiesced that “when young soccer fans sing the national anthem today, they do so out of *joie de vivre* and to support the German team” (Bilger, Langenau, and Stolzenberg 2006). Although the GEW framed their action not as condemnation but simply as a call to keep discussion around nationalist symbolism alive, the threat it posed to fans’ “joy” was cast as egregious. In this schema of biopolitical values, the agonism promoted by leftist critique threatens the pleasure of frictionless unity and must therefore be delegitimized. Contradicting the narrative of the “debate” around soccer patriotism, one journalist observed with bemused approval that, even among the cultural elite, hardly a critic remained to be found:

Suddenly, even latecomers (*Spätheimkehrer*) to patriotism in culture and politics discovered their hearts converted to the nation and fought loudly and with full physical strength against all forms of politically correct German self-hatred. (Mohr 2006c)

The term used for these converted critics, *Spätheimkehrer*, references late returnees from Allied prisoner of war camps after World War II. The use of this term underscores German victimhood, framing critics as prisoners of the past and characterizing their turn to embracing symbolic nationalism as finally “coming home” to a healthy relationship with the nation. The discussion surrounding the World Cup not only excluded critical leftist perspectives on the past and present of nationalism, but it also offered the opportunity to exile them to the political margins.

“The Integrated”: Immigrants in the Sea of Flags

In 2006, the newly established version of the German nation was primarily focused on the unity, health, and happiness of normative Germans, which is to say, those without apparent foreign heritage. In the corpus examined in this chapter, transnational Germans were given little explicit consideration within the schema of this “new German feeling.” While the 2006 national

team already included several first- and second-generation German players, the increasing diversity of the team only became a central focus of attention in 2010 (see chapter 5). Most often in these commentaries, immigrants appear as taxi drivers or merchants who express their approval of the new German pride and claim that they proudly wave the German flag alongside their other national flag. Writing of a conversation about game day preparations with his taxi driver from Ghana, one journalist relays,

His worst fear for this day: that he wouldn't be able to get a hold of a German flag for the big party that evening. He wants to put it up on the roof next to the Ghanaian flag. (Mohr 2006a)

In another article, the journalist talks to an immigrant flag salesman about his feelings regarding the flag-draped celebrations:

Salim Hadij stands before a stall on the Fan Mile and takes a flag out of its holder. He is happy that the relationship of Germans to national symbols is becoming less tense. With his praise, the German-Algerian is not entirely disinterested. He runs a wholesale business in Charlottenburg with fan items and is pleased with torrential sales. "Germans want to be proud of their country too," says Hadij, "as they must be." (Todt 2006)

Immigrant approval of World Cup flag celebrations supports the idea that soccer patriotism is universally acceptable and not exclusionary.

This universal approval removes the nation and its symbolism from the realm of politics and recasts it as a source of happiness and unity—temporarily transforming even integral "strangers" who worship the flag into unambiguous "friends," to use Baumann's terms (1990). Journalists praise the liberation of national symbolism from politics:

It was a festival of youth—without a heavy ideological superstructure. Germany had the world as its guest, and the Germans recognized that they were far more multicultural and international than they and others realized. That's why it was so easy to hang a German flag from the balcony: for the first time in the history of the Federal Republic black, red, and gold did not represent any political claims—as it still did in 1989—rather it was the national symbolic colors of good humor. If there is going to be patriotism, then let it be this kind! And if the German flag is being hung all over the country in Turkish and Arab shops

and businesses, then integration is perhaps not in such bad shape as many politicians wanted us to believe before the World Cup. (Malzahn 2006)

Here Malzahn—a frequent critic of immigration whose work appears in other cases in this book—frames patriotic displays as evidence of integration. Coverage further validates carnivalesque cosmopolitanism as a force for good by framing it as threatening to the far-right. The irritation of the far-right National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD: *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands*) with the soccer patriotism and the participation of non-white players on the national team was proposed as proof that the World Cup nationalism opposes exclusionary and violent nationalism.

The NPD ideologue Gansel, deeply disappointed with his people, concludes in a disgustingly racist but otherwise exactly correct way:

“Soccer patriotism integrates anyone whose knowledge of German is sufficient to get a black-red-gold cloth from some migrant merchant. What the parade of blacks in the white [jerseys] of the national eleven demonstrates, works equally well on the dancing streets. Here even negroes become German patriots.”

This is how far we’ve come. Nazis hate a cheerful, cosmopolitan patriotism like the devil hates holy water. (Mohr 2006b)

German patriotism, which is equated here to a Christian sacrament, is portrayed as acceptable to and accepting of a diverse population, unlike xenophobic right-wing nationalism that despises party patriotism because of its lighthearted inclusivity. Although immigrants and Germans of color play a smaller part in 2006 than they came to play in 2010 and beyond, like in the *Du bist Deutschland* campaign (chapter 2), they begin to appear here at the constitutive margins of celebratory German nationalism.

The precarity of the kinds of belonging granted by soccer patriotism is erased through comparison with the explicit white nationalism of the NPD and the far-right generally. However, the provisional nature of belonging appears amid the multicultural national celebration as well. One *Spiegel* feature article, titled “The Integrated” (*Die Integrierten*), which was published mid-way through the tournament assesses the progress of Muslim Germans toward integration (fig. 2). The appraisal situates itself in the context of immigrant participation in soccer patriotism, observing that—“Berlin Turks in Black-Red-Gold, German flags on migrant cars—after five decades of



Fig. 2. This photo placed above the article's title, "The Integrated," juxtaposes women wearing headscarves—a symbol of Muslim difference fetishized in the public sphere—with the unifying symbolism of the German flag. (Photograph by Jörg Carstensen, courtesy of Picture Alliance/dpa.)

immigration the gaze focuses on those new citizens who have found a *Heimat* in this country and have not remained foreigners" (Supp 2006, 58). Although the article claims to examine those who have "successfully integrated," it focuses heavily on the deficits of immigrant cultures and on those who could have integrated but chose not to. The article also presents the postwar history of migration and the myth, shared by Germans and Turkish immigrant workers alike, that the invited workers would someday return "home."

In "The Integrated," stories of four immigrants from different generations are interwoven with the history of German migration policy. Two of the four made their living by portraying dysfunction in Turkish-German society. The Turkish-born author Saliha Scheinhardt,

Wrote about things that were true; she knew about the tradition of violence, the archaic-patriarchal power structures in parts of immigrant society; she knew about forced marriage, domestic violence, about the oppression of Turkish women. She was one of the first to tell about it. (Supp 2006, 60)

The article portrays Scheinhardt as an example of “integration” through her choice to leave Turkish society behind to embrace, in Scheinhardt’s words, the “freedom” of the “heavenly” German society.

Later in this article, Berlin-born Oktay Özdemir, an actor primarily known for roles as a violent young gangster, including the 2006 film *Knallhart* (“Tough Enough”), affirms that “there is too little integration” among Turkish-German youth. He tells of his difficult childhood on the streets. The article claims that this is not the exception but the norm.

The adolescents experience violence as normality, at home in the gang. The 13-year-old with drugs in his pocket who seeks out role models in the tough scene and, naturally, these role models exist in the neighborhood. Ghetto-German, that is their language. Ghetto-pride—that is the attitude on the street, at school. (Supp 2006, 62)

This article defines Turkishness as violent, patriarchal, and antimodern. This statement casts the values and even the speech of these internal Others as fundamentally different, incomprehensible and antithetical to German social norms (see Zambon 2021). As anthropologist Ghassan Hage (2003) observes, in a post-9/11 world, sociological and structural explanations of problems ranging from criminality to terrorism have been displaced by the demand for unqualified condemnation. This is particularly true when the transgressions are considered endemic to non-Western or minoritized groups. In this “war-mentality,” the ambiguous, humanized subject that emerges from a grounded and rigorous attempt to understand the Other presents a constant threat to order.

Here Turkish-Germans have a choice to either condemn this litany of antimodern traits and “choose the way into German society” or they can choose “another way,” as the final example of (refused) integration shows. The last example in “The Integrated” is Hülya Kandemir, who “was a musician with dreadlocks and a guitar and led a Western life, but [her brother] Mesut admonished her, and she listened” (Supp 2006, 62). She gave up her dreadlocks—which here stand as a sign of her adoption of a Western youth culture that freely appropriates from other global countercultures—and chose the illiberal subservience of the headscarf and marriage to a strictly religious man. This parable illustrates the fear of social disintegration through multiculturalism. It also affirms the impermanence of integration. Integration is not the freedom to choose with full knowledge and experience of one’s options between different ways of life but is, instead, the choice to adopt the correct liberal German values. Although this article is not about

the World Cup or soccer nationalism, it appears in the middle of the tournament and is introduced by the question of what it means when "Turks" wave German flags. It fits within the project of national narration that ran through coverage of the 2006 World Cup, affirming the boundaries of Germanness while entertaining the possibility of transnational difference within it. The role of transnational citizens in legitimating symbolic nationalism is introduced in 2006, as the media campaign examined in chapter 2 shows. By 2010, this role took center stage (see chapter 5).

The (Re-)Productive Flag

Of the articles in the "soccer patriotism" corpus, one short article encapsulates the process of constructing patriotism above reproach by its use of many of the techniques and arguments leveraged throughout the corpus for this chapter. "Man, Woman, and Child Wear Black-Red-Gold" (Bock and Reuther 2006) opens by enumerating some of the many consumer items that have been branded by the national colors: from bratwurst packages to "thong underwear." The German national colors are ubiquitous like never before as "the national hosts display their flags." How, the article implies, could a symbol attached to frivolous consumer goods pose any threat? The article continues by listing examples from the many books being published to "teach Germans somewhat more self-love," suggesting that lack of patriotism is a disorder that calls for an intervention.

In case the reader is wary of national symbols and their connection to the past, the authors cite an expert who affirms that "not every flag waver immediately becomes a patriot or nationalist," followed by a quick history of the national flag. They explain the history of the national colors dating back to the supposed colors of uniforms of the Prussian Free Corps that fought Napoleon in 1813 and then to the failed pan-Germanist revolution of 1848. This story reminds readers of the liberal origins of the colors and of their freedom from implication in the "Nazi reign of terror." This historical account implies that since today's German colors were not involved in Nazi crimes, they should no longer be subject to critical interrogation based on the memory of nationalist excesses. Finally, it evokes the legacy of shared German history reflected in collective virtues, concluding with a tongue-in-cheek reassurance for those who wonder "in the style of Wilhelmic obedience" if it is even permitted to hang a flag from one's balcony, that it is permissible so long as it is not so large as to obstruct the view of others.

The images accompanying the piece drive home the positive impacts of



Fig. 3. Representing the reproductive power of the national flag. The caption reads: “one German flag, two bottles of beer—and then the man comes closer to the woman.” (Photograph by Carsten Rehder, courtesy of Picture Alliance/dpa.)

the public expression of national pride. The photographs are powerfully affective: a heterosexual couple clothed in the national colors kissing beneath a flag unfurling in the breeze (fig. 3), a sleeping baby with a flag on her tiny shirt (fig. 4), and a young man asleep on a bench with a large flag clutched loosely in his hand—he is all tuckered out since, as the caption explains, “national pride can be tiring” (Bock and Reuther 2006). The images represent the paradigm of peaceful normality, all courtesy of the comfort of a “natural” relationship to national pride. This article provides a historical trajectory for the flag that is free from tension while establishing the roots of present-day Germany in a shared past. It also centers the flag in the reproduction of Germany, in this case quite literally. The flag provides cover and the affective spark for the coupling and adorns the white baby that results from its successful completion.

Through repetitive language and imagery, journalists created a collective memory of the World Cup even as they reported on the unfolding events. The World Cup offered the ultimate public plebiscite on a massive level, affirming the desire of the nation to unite as a collective. Two features are essential here: the event created the opportunity to collect a vast public archive—visual, textual, and auditory—of public consent through media



Fig. 4. This image of a sleeping baby dressed in German national garb appeared in multiple articles in this chapter's corpus. (Photograph by Waltraud Grubitzsch, courtesy of Picture Alliance/dpa.)

coverage, photos, and even a documentary film. Also, the commitment to the new practices of national pride is built around a reoccurring event: the World Cup, interspersed with the smaller scale Euro Cup, offering a new opportunity every two years to remember the 2006 tournament and keep the new traditions alive. During the 2006 World Cup, the media rewrote German national identity around the practices of "soccer patriotism," using it to restore the collective amnesia that obscures the brutality at the foundations of national cohesion.

The forms of public nationalism embraced in Germany during the 2006 World Cup are by no means unique to Germany. As was repeatedly noted in the articles I examined, the practices of both banal and celebratory nationalism are widespread and generally unquestioned outside of Germany. Furthermore, the most common mediated interpretations of fandom rarely reflect the range of individual experiences of joining in the collective practice of fandom. This was illustrated by a *Spiegel Online* article published following Germany's 2014 World Cup win. It featured the responses of young people to a perennial question in the German media: "Are you proud to be German?" (*Spiegel Online* 2014). The responses varied widely, from those who strongly identified with the national team and staked a personal claim to the

German win to those who supported the team but disavowed abstract national pride. Skeptical respondents pushed back against external interpretations of the excitement and jubilation of fans. Of the World Cup, one fan responded,

I joined in the fever too, watched every game, sweated, screamed, laughed. But I do that at concerts too. I'm not proud there either, I don't feel responsible there either if a band's album lands at the top of the charts. (*Spiegel Online* 2014)

This analogy uses two events that inspire similar actions and feelings among fans to caution observers who seek to extrapolate the national meaning of World Cup celebrations. This response critiques the nationalist fallacy of extending the successes of exceptional individuals to the entire national population.

Unlike the common media framing suggesting that skepticism or ambivalence around nationalism is a result of oppressive guilt over the past, Germany's national past did not factor into these responses. Instead, responses emerged from distinct political positions on the constitution and symbolism of a national collective, positions that echoed those proposed in the *Historikerstreit*, only without specific reference to the past. Some saw the investment in symbolic nationalism as a meaningful and positive form of collective engagement; others felt that collectivity emerged from specific institutions and forms of engagement. The divergent fan interpretations above suggest that the politics of fandom are far more complicated than the media portrayal generally allows.

Conclusion

In 2006, journalists and public figures argued for the right to establish a public form of patriotism unburdened by reflexivity as is practiced in other established nation-states. As can be seen in the United States, however, in elevating the celebration of national symbols, the work of democracy can fall by the wayside. In the United States, Lauren Berlant argued that “the national knowledge industry has produced a specific modality of paramnesia, an incitement to forgetting that leaves simply the patriotic trace, for real and metaphorically infantilized citizens, that confirms that the nation exists and we are in it” (1997, 50). This substitution of the symbol (national colors) for the thing (democratic processes) inhibits critical processes. During

the 2006 World Cup, the lessons of Hitler's 1936 Berlin Olympics were relegated to a distant past, lessons that show how no patriotism—and certainly not sporting patriotism—should be exempt from scrutiny.

Soccer patriotism and related forms of banal nationalism are a normalized part of contemporary life in countries worldwide. However, to deny the connection between sport and nationalism requires forgetting the symbolic significance of the 1936 Olympics as the international coming out party of National Socialism. Awareness of this memory was sometimes evident in traces of defensive discomfort in the coverage of the 2006 World Cup, but substantive engagement with the traumatizing past was explicitly avoided. This amnesia indicates the demise of the collective memory of the Berlin Olympics, and the event's consignment to the annals of history lived by "Others." As the media emphasized, "our" German patriotism has nothing to do with "their" German nationalism. During the 2006 World Cup, the past "went away," emancipating national symbols and placing patriotism in Germany above reproach.

4 • Sport Integration

The Promise and Peril of “New Germans”

After Germany’s victory during the 2014 men’s FIFA World Cup, *Der Spiegel* published an issue with a cover that asked, *Wir sind wieder . . . wer?* (We are who . . . again?) This title used punctuation to convert the famous idiom *Wir sind wieder wer* (We are somebody again), which emerged from the jubilant collective response to West Germany’s 1954 World Cup victory, commonly known as the Miracle of Bern (*Der Spiegel* 1996). That event has taken on mythological proportions in national narration, with prominent politicians and historians referring to it as “the true birthday of the Federal Republic” (Joel and Schütt 2008, 8). In a spontaneous display of national exuberance—one that provoked anxiety among many international observers so soon after the war—the audience in Bern broke into the original national anthem, complete with the excised section proclaiming “*Deutschland über alles*” (Germany above all). By referencing the return of collective public pride in 1954, *Spiegel* ties the 2014 win back to that postwar moment of leaving the defeat of war behind and “becoming someone again.” At the same time, the ellipses and interrogative transform the statement into its opposite: a statement of doubt and anxiety about the makeup of the population and its meaning for national identity.

The *Spiegel* issue celebrating the 2014 World Cup victory by Germany’s multiethnic team, which will be discussed in more detail below, demonstrates the intertwining of sport with identity discourse and the persistent uncertainty about Germany’s identity amid a more diverse citizenry. In the early 2000s, after the introduction of territorial birthright citizenship (*jus solis*), Germany abandoned “segregationist” approaches to immigration to embrace new “integrationist” approaches (see Süßmuth 2001). The focus of German migration policy shifted from repatriation to management and regulation. In doing so, Germany joined the movement across Europe that proposed civic

integration as a third way between assimilation and multiculturalism (Joppke 2007; Simon and Sala Pala 2010; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010). While this shift signified the admission of immigrants and their descendants into the German population, that membership is perpetually provisional. Integration discussions conflate recent immigrants with the descendants of immigrants in the second or third generations who are deeply rooted in Germany. Integration discourse amplifies the significance of some forms of difference—including physical traits and religious background—while erasing the diversity of lived experience among targeted individuals. This conflation reveals integration's work as a racializing tool by marking all those targeted for celebration or reform through integration as permanent “strangers” (Bauman 1995; Simmel 1950). Sport provides one of the most prominent forums for constructing the national self through and against its “Others.” This chapter explores the place of sport, and particularly soccer, in integration policy and programs. The discourse on sport and integration reveals the biopolitical and disciplinary logics underpinning contemporary techniques for regulating diversity and constructing contemporary German identity.

Among the first national institutions to initiate integration projects were the German Olympic Sports Confederation and the German Football Association (DFB: *Deutscher Fußball Bund*), which fields the national soccer teams. Sport is persistently conceptualized as an ideal model for transcultural social cohesion and international cooperation, overlooking the ways it has been historically mobilized for jingoistic projects and imperialist conquests (Mangan 2004; Pritchard 2009). Sport has contributed to a globalized symbolic language of nation-building, with all of the boundary-making and exclusion that implies (Dyreson 2003; Rowe, McKay, and Miller 2002). The main body of this chapter investigates the conceptualization of the relationship between sport and integration in the *National Integration Plan* of 2007 and in the flagship integration programs of the German Football Association and the German Olympic Sports Confederation based on their promotional materials from 2007 to 2015. Analysis focuses on the social policies and rhetoric around minoritized Germans in elite and amateur soccer, starting with the claim of DFB leaders and politicians that “sport is the primary engine of integration in Germany,” and that elite athletes of color embody “lived integration” (*gelebte Integration*). As this chapter shows, discourses of sport integration promote a biopolitical mode of governance aimed at regulating diversity and cultivating it for the benefit of the national population. In doing so, those discourses strengthen the hegemonic foundations of majority society and justify the socioeconomic inequality of those who fail or choose not to meet those normative standards.

We Are Who . . . Again?

The *Spiegel* issue celebrating the 2014 World Cup win was released with six different cover images of people covered from head to waist by the German flag. According to the editor's introduction, these figures represent six German archetypes including a man in sandals and white socks with a German shepherd, a woman in business attire with a child on her hip, and a man pushing a shopping cart filled with reclaimed bottles and cans. These people represent six possible answers to the question of who represents the national "we." On the cover for the digital edition (fig. 5), Angela Merkel is denoted by her signature dress (black slacks and solid colored blazer) and stance: straight-backed with feet placed close together, arms bent with her hands meeting in front of her torso, fingers lightly touching. To each side, two other figures are partially visible, suggesting that together the covers form a circle. These two figures are identifiable as a male national soccer team member and a woman wearing a black niqab. Paradoxically, to show that the woman is veiled, she is the only figure whose face is not entirely covered by the German flag.

The cover image suggests that the nation, embodied by its top politician, stands between two possibilities competing to define its future. With the World Cup victory, the soccer player represents national unity and the glory of success on a global stage. This is the Germany of lightness and positive national sentiment. The figure of the woman, on the other hand, represents the threat of integration failure and the creation of a "parallel society" within Germany, defined by "traditional" Muslim values and gender norms. The veiled woman is a figure of both pity and anxiety, symbolizing the supposed repression of women among a segment of the "we" in Germany that does not wish to adopt "Western" norms (Weber 2004). Beyond the many empirical and normative problems with these associations, this form of dress can hardly be considered "archetypal" among German Muslims. One study suggests that 72 percent of women of Muslim background in Germany do not cover their hair (Haug, Müssig, and Sticks 2009). More conservative forms of modest dress like the niqab pictured on the *Spiegel* cover are vanishingly rare. This fits with Joan Scott's (2007) observation that, in Western Europe, the veil or the headscarf has disproportionate meaning, symbolizing a "clash of cultures" between Islam and the West. This cover image is Orientalist in Said's (1979) most basic sense: it juxtaposes Western Europe's quintessential symbol of Oriental difference against the figure representing the liberal democratic state and asks the loaded question of whether these things are reconcilable.



NAHAUFNAHME EINER NATION

Wir sind wieder...wer?



Spionageaffäre
**Jagd auf
Amerikas Agenten**

Putins Vordenker Dugin
**„Jeder Westler ist
ein Rassist“**

Kinderwunsch
**Wie Hightech-Medizin
Frauen mehr Zeit verschafft**

Fig. 5. The cover of *Der Spiegel* published after Germany's 2014 World Cup win. The central figure signifies Chancellor Angela Merkel, flanked on the one side by a national hero in the form of a German soccer team member and on the other by a figure of national anxiety: a presumably Muslim woman in modest dress. (© DER SPIEGEL 29/2014.)

This symbol of illiberal traditionalism stands in contrast to, and as such defines, the liberal democratic values symbolized by Chancellor Merkel. But this image also includes a third figure: the national soccer team player. The unprecedented diversity of the German national teams beginning in the 2010s contributed to a new national imaginary that uses minoritized players and fans to authorize and “teach” the German public to be proud of their country (see chapter 5). In public discussions about the changing German population, sport and sporting celebrity repeatedly emerge as a means of managing cultural difference and reasserting hegemonic German values under the banner of integration. Sport not only provides a forum for national self-reflection but is also framed as a technology for transforming immigrants and their descendants into valuable citizens.

The issue’s title article uses the World Cup victory to embark on a wide-ranging rumination on who “we” are, defining the components of a national population and constructing a national narrative of redemption from the Nazi past to Germany’s emergence as a global economic powerhouse and moral authority. The theme of the article is the trajectory away from “self-imposed gloominess” (*Selbstverdüsterung*) and shame over the past toward attaining “lightness” interpreted as the primary component of a new “Germany feeling” (*Deutschlandgefühl*). The article claims that “it is also German virtues that have led to the German lightness, since prosperity makes life light and elevates mood. As a consequence of diligence, discipline, and obedience this prosperity is currently growing” (Kurbjuweit et al. 2014, 61). The authors attribute Germany’s economic growth—a “small economic miracle” amidst the European economic crisis—to national cultural traits. They assert that these “German virtues” paved the way for the austerity-oriented economic reforms made in the early 2000s to “bring society and the economy into conformity” (see also chapter 2). This framing omits external factors that buoyed Germany’s economy, such as the demand for specialized German goods created by China’s economic boom. Instead, the narrative in this article provides a moral basis for Germany’s economic gains at a time when its southern European neighbors were mired in economic turmoil—a situation that further boosted the German economy (Beddoes 2013). The virtues claimed as culturally German are used to explain Germany’s success on the playing field as well as in the global economy.

The national values defined in these discussions are imbued with the kind of universalism that Wallerstein (1990) identifies in his analysis of the critical relationship between universalism and racism-sexism. This symbiotic pair contains the contradictions of the world system under capitalism, explaining away the contradiction posed by the reality of growing inequalities despite

capitalism's promise of rising prosperity for all. This involves a constant process of self-definition and association of traits of universal value with the hegemonic or normative population. Wallerstein defines this process as "European universalism," which holds that Western civilizations are superior because of their foundations on universal values and truths. As El-Tayeb argues (2011), this depends on definition against a "migrant" other, typically imagined as Muslim. In this framework, the "good migrant" achieves success by conforming to European universalist norms, while the "bad migrant's" rejection of these norms causes socioeconomic disparities affecting minoritized populations.

In the *Spiegel* cover image, the archetype of German liberal democracy stands flanked by two figures representing a binary conception of diversity's potential. On the right, the veiled woman stands as a projection of illiberal traditionalism, and on the left, a national soccer player embodies the potential benefits of a diverse society. This forked pathway of "benefits" and "challenges" drives the underlying narrative in the battle for Germany's future, encapsulated in integration discourse and its projects. It should not be surprising, then, that sport emerged as a major focus of the earliest national projects for integration. One of the first institutions to take up the project of integration was the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB: *Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund*). The DOSB introduced a program called "Sport for everyone—Sport with *Aussiedlern*" in 1989 that allocated federal funding to provide recreational sports activities to newly arrived ethnic German immigrants (*Aussiedler*) from the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries (see chapter 1 for a discussion of *Aussiedler*). Its first iteration only included immigrants with German citizenship, i.e., "ethnic Germans." Some politicians harshly critiqued the decision not to include refugees, but it was justified by arguments that ethnic German *Aussiedler* were permanent immigrants with a "greater willingness for integration" than other groups (Giebenhain 1995, 172). In 2002, as part of a national shift sparked by the liberalization of German citizenship law, "Sport with *Aussiedlern*" was renamed "Integration through Sport." The title reflects a new, broader recognition of immigrants and their children as part of German society. It also shifts the emphasis from the inviting, collaborative prepositions "for" and "with" to the more active, instrumental title promoting reform "through" sport. This move toward inclusiveness also accommodated increasing majority anxieties about some groups' "cultural compatibility" and "willingness to integrate," or lack thereof.

The National Integration Plan of 2007 and the integration programs of Germany's two premier sporting organizations reflect attempts by the state,

in Gramsci's capacious sense of the term (1971, 244), to manage cultural and social difference by cultivating "docile bodies" (Foucault 1978) at the individual level. At the level of the population, these programs normalize values portrayed as both inherent in German culture and universal in their utility for cultivating an economically independent and rational citizenry under global capitalism.

National Identity through Economic Growth

The neoliberal concepts of citizenship at the heart of integration discourse are not unique to Germany, but they have particular symbolic significance in the Federal Republic since its establishment in 1949. Foucault uses the example of Germany's reconstruction in his lectures from 1978–79, collectively titled *The Birth of Biopolitics* (2008), to trace the emergence of one of the most influential strains of neoliberal politics globally. In the aftermath of Germany's defeat in World War II and its subsequent occupation by Allied powers, German politicians faced an existential crisis of national legitimacy and sovereignty. Under the guidance of prominent neoliberal economist, Ludwig Erhard, they framed the state's role as the establishment of "economic freedom" and "responsibility" of its citizens (Foucault 2008, 81). The purpose of this framing was not simply to establish good economic management for universal prosperity; more importantly, "the economy produces legitimacy for the state that is its guarantor . . . this economic institution . . . produces a permanent consensus of all those who may appear as agents within these economic processes" (Foucault 2008, 84). As Foucault puts it, "history had said no to the German state, but now the economy will allow it to assert itself" (2008, 86). This reconceptualization allowed Germany to establish "a new dimension of temporality" based not on the memory of a "malfunctioning history" but instead on continuous economic growth. While this form of political economy subsequently spread across the globe, it played a foundational role in mitigating the memory of the past to reestablish a self-confident West German state.

In establishing the tenets of this new political-economic regime, German politicians drew from the German and Austrian "Ordoliberal" school of economics established in the 1930s, whose theories would also become the basis of American neoliberalism. The ordoliberals and their neoliberal ideological offspring challenged welfare economic theories, arguing that social policy should not aim to equalize economic differences that restrict access to goods. Instead, inequality plays a vital role in maintaining the "price mechanism"

that is the basis of economic rationality; the market can only produce regulatory effects if the fluctuations of competition are allowed to function (Foucault 2008, 142). Ultimately, economic growth is the only true and acceptable form of social policy; growth should not be followed by wealth redistribution, which, according to neoliberal theory, would hinder further growth. As a liberal regime, the neoliberal government cannot intervene in the effects of the market or correct its harmful impacts on society. Instead, government should intervene in society itself.

The architects of the social and economic policy in the first decades of the Federal Republic called for a politics of society (*Gesellschaftspolitik*) that saw “society as the target and objective of governmental practice” (Foucault 2008, 148), or what one key policymaker called “a politics of life” (*Vitalpolitik*). This approach involved generalizing economic rationality and the ideal of the citizen as entrepreneur and producer throughout the social body. However, West German policymakers in the postwar period recognized that the economization of the entire social field, which prioritized competition as a principal order of life, would stress the social fabric of society. *Vitalpolitik* and what was also called the “social market economy” (*Soziale Marktwirtschaft*) maintained strong welfare provisions and other measures to protect the population from the harshest impacts of a generalized economic approach to politics and life. To compensate for the “cold” features of competition in society, the state must maintain a political and moral framework that would ensure “a community which is not fragmented,” and foster cooperation among people who are “naturally rooted and socially integrated” (Foucault 2008, 243). Thus West German policy included social protections to compensate for the ethical problems of neoliberalism, while also depending on a homogeneous conception of society to justify this protection. This framing also foreshadows the reactionary response to migration and cultural diversity as a threat to the safety net under the social market economy. Furthermore, this provision of support for a “naturally rooted” population divided German neoliberal policy against itself by maintaining protections that contradicted the conditions it held as necessary for the full functioning of the regulatory mechanisms of the market.

While Germany was liberalizing its citizenship policy around the turn of the millennium, the government and private sectors also implemented changes to liberalize Germany’s economy and reduce its social safety net (see chapter 2). As the *Spiegel* article cited above proudly stated, Germans made changes aiming to “bring society and the economy into conformity,” including massive cuts to its welfare provisions. These changes moved to do away with the contradictions of German neoliberalism as it had been imple-

mented, bringing it closer to the pure form imagined by the ordoliberals in the 1930s, a form which the United States had implemented more fully.

Citizenship law changes also created the imperative to include immigrants and minoritized Germans in this political and economic regime. The creative potential of a more diverse citizenry promises opportunities entirely in line with the economic ideals of neoliberalism. Critical Marxist theorists traditionally characterized the logic of global capitalism as one of standardization, from Horkheimer and Adorno's (1944) work on cultural industries through Herb Schiller's (1976) theory of cultural imperialism and critics of globalization in the 1990s. However, Foucault argues that these theories have little to do with neoliberal governmentality. On the contrary, the current art of government involves "obtaining a society that is not oriented towards the commodity and the uniformity of the commodity, but towards the multiplicity and differentiation of enterprises" (2008, 149). This explains why integration discourse so easily praises social and cultural difference as enriching, as sources of potential growth for the population at large.

On the other hand, when candidates for integration reject or challenge this order, it stands as a threat to the population. In his lectures from 1977–1978, titled *Security, Territory, and Population*, Foucault clarifies the distinction between the politically relevant population and its Others, "those who, refusing to be the population, disrupt the system" (2009, 4:44). Agamben also observes this division in Western politics, arguing that

It is as if what we call "people" were in reality not a unitary subject but a dialectical oscillation between two opposite poles: on the one hand, the set of the People as a whole political body, and on the other, the subset of the people as a fragmentary multiplicity of needy and excluded bodies. (1998, 178)

For both Agamben and Foucault, this fracturing is only possible within a group that can be conceived in some way as a people or a population. Thus when "foreigners" become a part of the citizenry in Germany—when they are finally included within the population—they also become subject in a new way to processes of biopolitical fracture. It must always remain to be seen whether they will join the population as entrepreneurial members whose youthful bodies and "cultural difference" can benefit the social body or whether they will refuse or fail to meet the terms of engagement and threaten the system. This permanent ambiguity is heightened around immigrants and apparent minorities, representing in the starkest terms the biopolitical fracture in the population: "it is what cannot be included in the whole

of which it is a part and what cannot belong to the set in which it is already included” (Agamben 1998, 179). Inclusion in the politically relevant population turned immigrants and their descendants into sustained targets of integration.

To Support and Demand: The 2007 National Integration Plan

In 2007, the German government released the National Integration Plan, in cooperation with representatives from the sectors of research, business, civil society, and the media. At the same time, the German Football Association and the German Olympic Sports Confederation were developing and expanding their own integration programs targeting immigrants and minorities. In the following sections, I used descriptive coding (Glaser and Strauss 2006) to identify the themes and discursive patterns in the documents from these national sporting integration programs. The following analysis begins with the introduction to the federal government’s 2007 National Integration Plan and the section of the plan dedicated to sport. I examine the booklets celebrating the winners of the annual “Integration Prize” first awarded in 2007 by the German Football Association (DFB) and its corporate sponsor, Mercedes Benz. Until the dissolution of Mercedes Benz’s sponsorship of the DFB in 2018, it was the most highly remunerated social prize in Germany. Winners earned money as well as vehicles from Mercedes Benz. The prize honored amateur sport programs in a variety of different institutions, including soccer teams, schools, and sports clubs. Soccer was their primary focus, although they also honored other sport programs. From the DFB, this chapter also examines the 2013 “Practical Handbook” for developing integration programs in amateur sport. These programs will be compared with the approaches in the German Olympic Sports Confederation’s 2014 white paper on the program “Integration through Sport.”

The DOSB is the umbrella organization for local German sport clubs (*Sportvereine*) and describes itself as the “largest citizens’ movement in Germany,” with more than 27 million members in about 90,000 sport clubs across the country (Der Deutsche Olympische Sportbund, n.d.). Sport clubs in Germany are primarily financed through membership fees and depend heavily on volunteers for management and programming (Hovemann, Horch, and Schubert 2006). In terms of membership numbers and cultural influence, the DOSB and its member organization DFB are among the most important civic institutions in Germany. The materials examined here depict

approaches to integration as a concept and a social agenda by key organizations from government, business, and civic sectors.

In the introduction to the 2007 National Integration Plan, then secretary of the Federal Ministry for Migration, Refugees, and Integration, Maria Böhmer, narrates Germany's postwar migration history in a few short paragraphs. Starting in the 1950s, foreign "guest workers" were invited to work rebuilding Germany; "they only wanted to stay—and should have only stayed—temporarily; then many of them chose a life in Germany" ("Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen" 2007b, 9). Then "people came for other reasons to Germany and were often also allowed to stay," she writes, referring obliquely to the rise in asylum seekers fleeing war and political persecution in Germany in the late 1970s and 1980s. Finally, with the fall of the Iron Curtain in the 1990s, "many Germans returned to the land of their ancestors." Böhmer's statement creates a stark legitimacy gap between the refugees who must be tolerated and guest workers who overstayed their welcome and the ethnic "Germans returning to the homeland." Böhmer addresses the long-delayed acceptance of "foreign" migration (as opposed to the "returned German" *Aussiedler*) as: "a reality, that opens up many opportunities but also contains the danger of social tension." Thus only an active and comprehensive policy to pursue integration of "people with a migration background" can contain the risk they pose and convert them into a benefit for the nation.

The first of the two primary guidelines the plan proposes to optimize this risk-to-benefit ratio is that "Integration must be lived. It cannot be prescribed." Secondly, it requires the practical and concrete engagement of institutions and individuals at all levels of the state and society. It is a universal social project within the nation that reinforces and protects national norms by managing potential dangers posed by immigrant difference. In setting the foundations for integration, the National Integration Plan emphasizes the importance of a strong conception of the particularity of German culture and normative values as well European universalist norms that form the basis of German constitutional law:

Integration is a task with national significance. The foundation is, besides our values and our cultural self-conception, the free and democratic order as it has developed from German and European history and which is expressed legally in the Basic Law. ("Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen" 2007a)

This statement sets the conditions for the discussion on integration: it is a discussion that will be framed in terms of national interests. It also

explicitly binds together the establishment of the German constitution with the presumably monolithic values and cultural self-conception of the hegemonic German “we.” To further emphasize the primordial underpinnings of the community claiming to set the foundations, the statement highlights the organic and historical development of the community and its norms. Throughout the National Integration Plan, the possessive language of the first-person plural “we” and “our” underscore the stability of the normative German national category into which immigrants are to be integrated.

The Integration Plan and its accompanying brochures and press releases frequently reiterate that integration is a project and requires “effort” (*Anstrengung*) from everyone: state, society, and immigrants. It is generally listed in this order, in an apparent attempt to dispel the concern that demands are being made on the immigrant alone. The directionality of these efforts, however, is not equal. As the statement above confirms, the process is built on the normative foundations of a historically defined culture and nation. The state and society must attempt to educate and employ immigrants, while immigrants must make themselves employable, culturally acceptable, and intelligible by majority society through the standardized German language. Change may be demanded of all, but the immigrant is required to change themselves whereas majority society is only required to enable the immigrants’ transformation. Under the rubric of “support and demand” (*fördern und fordern*), the plan sets out the obligations to be placed on those I call integrants or candidates for integration:

Integration . . . requires effort from everyone—from the state and society. . . . To begin with, the immigrant must be open to a life within our society, to accept unconditionally our Basic Law and our whole legal system and, especially, to make a visible sign of their belonging to Germany by learning the German language. This requires individual initiative, hard work, and personal responsibility. On the side of the receiving society we need acceptance, tolerance, civil society engagement, and the willingness to honestly welcome people who live with us legitimately. (“Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen” 2007a, 13)

The receiving society here—once again hailed in the plan using the first-person plural—is required to be tolerant and accepting, at least of those whose residence is deemed legitimate. However, since the plan stipulates from the outset that “Germany is an open-minded country” (“Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen” 2007a, 7), this does not

require majority society to make any fundamental changes, only act according to its tolerant and open nature.

In contrast, very concrete demands are made of immigrants. The immigrant is asked to be open to life within “our” society and to follow “our” rules. They are expected to accept these laws and the whole legal order “unconditionally,” which is to say, they may not challenge or question existing laws and norms. It is difficult to understand how a democratic system can also proscribe its people from challenging existing legal norms unless those people are considered “noncitizens” (Partridge 2012). Indeed, Korteweg and Yurdakul (2014) even situate the ability to articulate complaints without being told to leave as a core defining feature of belonging. This condition forecloses the possibility that candidates for integration may ever be allowed to belong. Finally, immigrants must prove their dedication to Germany by speaking the standardized form of the German language. As this is something that must be proven, normative German society does not have to presume belonging until it is “visibly signified.” The use of the modifier “visible” (*sichtbar*), which figuratively translates here to obvious or apparent, is curious for an ability (language) that is auditory, not visible. However, the most powerful mode of determining whether a person is a candidate for integration who must demonstrate their belonging, or whether they are presumed already to belong to “society,” is visible, phenotypical difference. White Germans—including those with a migration background—are not asked to earn their place in society in the same way.

The expectations placed on German institutions and normative society generally focus on encouraging them to include, educate, and build the capacity of immigrants and their descendants more effectively. They are encouraged to see “diversity as an occupational resource” (*Beschäftigungsresource*). Concerning fighting discrimination against immigrants and minorities, the plan does not go into detail. An analysis of the terms *hate*, *racism*, *prejudice*, *xenophobia*, *stereotypes*, and *discrimination*¹ in the plan shows that these issues arise only rarely. Where they do appear, they often refer to concerns about interethnic tension among immigrant groups rather than white (Christian) nationalism.

The plan also raises concerns about discrimination in relation to Germany’s image, and thus its international competitiveness. For example, in a section dedicated to increasing Germany’s attractiveness to highly qualified

1. Hass, Rassismus, Vorurteile, Ausländerfeindlichkeit, Fremdenfeindlichkeit, Stereotypen, Diskriminierung.

international researchers and workers, the plan states that “stereotypes about ‘xenophobia’ in Germany can give international researchers the impression that they will not be welcome” (“Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen” 2007a, 190). To be clear, the stereotyping at issue in this statement is not actual bias against foreigners but rather the preconception held by outsiders that xenophobia is a problem in Germany. It then affirms that studies show that very few foreign researchers experience xenophobia during their stay, which combines with the use of scare quotes above to dismiss it as a real concern. Only the stereotypes *about* xenophobia are a concern, not its actual existence.

Throughout the plan, racism in majority society is addressed only in the vaguest terms and is often paired with a renewed declaration of the responsibilities of immigrants to be open to normative Germans. For example, “among the native population prejudices and xenophobia must be dismantled. At the same time, immigrants must also be willing to be open to society” (2007b, 140). Although the plan claims that integration is “a two-way process,” majority society’s role is to educate and train immigrants in majority norms while the immigrant’s role is to accept established norms and to contribute to optimizing the life of the social body.

Sport as “Lived Integration”: Cultivating Responsible Citizens and Managing Risk

The 2007 Integration Plan pays special attention to sporting institutions. The plan argues that as a “motor of integration,” sport provides a wide range of possibilities for integration, from cultural and social exchange to involving immigrants in the “everyday politics” of running and supporting sporting clubs and teams. The “positive effects of sports involvement” are accepted as common knowledge:

Sport provides very diverse offerings and stands open to all people, regardless of their personalities or their cultural or financial situations. Fair play and equal opportunity are supported in every form of sports through worldwide standards of rules. Sport satisfies the human need for comparison and enables the development of a movement- and body-oriented personality. In particular, the practice of team sports leads to a team spirit that does not emerge on its own in daily life. (“Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen” 2007b, 139)

Despite these common-sense claims of the open, egalitarian, and socially constructive nature of sport, scholars contest the underlying claim that amateur sports inevitably lead to the kind of cooperative, intercultural solidarities described above (Agergaard 2018; Giebenhain 1995) as well as the claim that sports participation is equally available to all (Breuer, Hallmann, and Wicker 2011). Halm (2006) even provides evidence indicating that amateur sports in Germany often contribute to social divisions between majority society and Turkish-German youth. Still, Smith and colleagues' (2019) research review finds that sport provides an important field for negotiating new forms of social capital for culturally and linguistically diverse immigrants, who nonetheless frequently face discrimination and barriers to participation. However, this chapter is not concerned with the effectiveness of sport integration in achieving its stated goals but rather what sport integration discourse reveals about the cultural politics of nationalism and migration in Germany. The critical analysis here focuses on how major sporting institutions, the government, and business sponsors discuss and frame their integration projects.

The National Integration Plan and the integration programs of the DOSB and the DFB represent an ambitious project to use the symbolism of elite national sport and the practical framework of amateur sport to discipline young “integrant” bodies and to normalize values that are portrayed both as universal and as already typically German. These values mirror ideals of economic citizenship and the imperative to cultivate human capital. While the programs all play lip service to the idea of integration as a two-way process, the stated targets of integration programs show this process to be highly uneven. The role of sport in communication and language learning is a clear example of the enforcement of German norms within a practice that is lauded as universal and egalitarian, presuming that one has the physical capacity to participate.

Language is one of the most salient themes in the corpus, wherein sports are upheld as being ideally suited to bridge communication gaps because of their universal rules and the prioritization of physical communication over verbal forms. At the same time, sports are an opportunity to enforce norms of monolingual communication in the national language.² Among their six fundamental rules, the DFB's handbook for sport integration lists the need to establish German as the sole “field language” (*Platzsprache*). Enforcing

2. See David Gramling's (2009; 2016) excellent work on how “cosmopolitan monolingualism” has emerged as a central discourse in managing and marginalizing transnational difference in Germany and Europe.

monolingualism is justified based on ideas of fairness and equality. They write that “communication only functions in the language that all participants understand. It is disrespectful and unfair to speak to someone in a language that he does not obviously understand. This leads to rejection and aggression” (Hink 2011, 28). This contradicts the many statements lauding the value of sports for the transcendence of language. This statement goes so far as to legitimate German speakers who reject and react aggressively toward those who speak anything but the universal language.

Interestingly, while at some points candidates for integration are said to benefit from the language transcending or language learning opportunities of the field, this statement acknowledges the reality that many—if not most—targets of integration programs are already fluent in German, hence the claim that it is the language “everyone understands.” The conflation of immigrants and German-born minorities is evident in this slippage. Despite celebrations of diversity in the universalist framework of sports, sports are a point of entry to organize diversity and subordinate it to hegemonic norms.

The unequal flow of expectations regarding norm acquisition is even clearer in this statement advocating sports in the National Integration Plan:

Cultural integration is accomplished by the transmission of cultural techniques like, for example, language acquisition as well as the acquisition of culturally coded social “normative models” like behavioral models for everyday situations. Sports clubs offer not only places to play sports; they are also spaces of everyday communication that open access to two-way intercultural learning. (2007a, 140)

The final nod to two-way processes of learning is belied by the fact that the norms and techniques to be acquired in the first part of the statement are German, starting with language. It speaks of “transmission” and “acquisition” rather than using terms like “exchange” or “build” that imply co-construction. Encouraging bilingualism or the majority acquisition of minority languages is not promoted anywhere in the corpus. Programs are oriented toward attracting, accommodating, and reforming people “with a migration background.” Majority Germans are involved as planners or, incidentally, as teammates and peers but are not framed as targets. Majority norms are the foundation of the process tying together the social body. As the National Integration Plan puts it, the goal is “to tie more people with a migration background into established structures and thereby improve understanding between people of different cultures” (“Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen” 2007a, 142). The guidelines and

narratives presented in the corpus call for changes at the institutional level to more effectively reach and reform minorities at the individual level.

If sport is—as is repeatedly claimed in the corpus—the ideal tool for integration, it is because sport serves the dual imperatives underlying biopolitics: discipline and regulation. As I argue throughout this book, biopolitics are the logical and technical *modus operandi* of integration. Integration fits with Foucault's (1977; 1978; 2009) observation that the modern era is characterized by a turn away from negative, repressive forms of constraint and toward a generalized system of discipline and surveillance that operates through desire. Sport integration depends on the broad appeal of sports to attract minoritized youth and, once physically and affectively engaged, to recruit them into a system of liberal political and economic values. The stories of successful integration selected for the DFB and Mercedes Benz Integration Prize frame soccer as a technology for transforming dysfunctional multiethnic communities and spaces into optimized cosmopolitan communities. They affirm the legitimacy of values and norms that are framed as German, and more broadly Western, as optimal for collective life while simultaneously celebrating productive and consumable forms of difference.

The Integration Prize highlights two kinds of contexts for this community transformation. One type of transformation exemplifies the disciplinary side of sport integration through the conversion of dangerous multiethnic neighborhoods into safe spaces by attracting and educating unruly young men. The second commonly featured narrative illustrates the regulatory side of sport integration by successfully harnessing demographic change for growth. The award honors soccer clubs that lost membership due to the strong localized growth of immigrant communities, but which managed to turn this threat of demise into a productive new opportunity by attracting new immigrant members. They also promote the accommodation of a selection of divergent norms around consumption and modesty by encouraging respect for alcohol and food restrictions and affirming different practices around showering and nudity.

The disciplinary side of sport integration projects uses the playful nature of sport to attract and teach minoritized youth values and norms such as punctuality, discipline, responsibility, and hard work. Throughout the corpus, coaches, educators, and program coordinators explain that soccer motivates young people, spurring them to discipline themselves:

It is obvious to Heinz Bunzer that soccer plays a primary role in integration: “We have it so much easier since we are a playful community.” (2010 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2011, 9)

In our opinion, endless prohibitions and reprimands don't go anywhere. We set ourselves the goal to do things from the inside out in a positive way and, through that, to reach different cultures. (Hink 2011, 8)

I think that the boys and girls on a team notice quite quickly how much fun it is to pursue goals and to celebrate victories together—and everyone happily pitches in for that. (Hink 2011, 48)

Engagement in sport primes young people inclined to incorporate other forms of behavior that elevate their human capital. Their performance in sport is secondary to other pedagogical goals. The body is a medium, a conduit for socialization:

Social capacity, a self-confident performance, team spirit—that is more important than lactic acid values and shooting techniques. “With soccer young people are intrinsically motivated, so they learn with greater motivation and in a playful way, to stick to the rules,” says Konermann. “The goal is to get as many of them a foothold in the job market as quickly as possible.” (2013 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2014, 19)

“Soccer is a good means to achieve positive developments, both for individual students, as a class and, also, for our entire school,” says Jürgen Kuhlmann. Because the ball can do a lot—playing soccer teaches the Gelsenkirchen youth important values and strengthens their character. “Not to give up so easily when facing difficulties, to address conflicts but not to allow them to escalate, soccer facilitates this,” reports the physical education teacher from his experiences in past years. (2010 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2011, 10)

In this schema, sport provides a point of entry to engage the individual in self-improvement for the good of the class, school, and beyond to the population at large. The logic of sport integration tracks closely with the techniques and aims of discipline, turning “confused, useless multitudes of bodies and forces into a multiplicity of individual elements” (Foucault 1977, 170) whose forces are coordinated and made productive.

The chaos of untrained bodies emerges particularly clearly in one prize narrative. Businessman Thomas Stoll decided to start a soccer program after attending “a seminar on the transmission of values in Austria.”

Then I came home and picked up my son from school. The children were out of control; they were just running across the street and were hurling around the wildest profanity. That was my crucial moment. It was clear that I had to do something. (2010 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2011, 14)

The narrative of the program does not specify the ethnic background of the children, but its categorization as an “integration” program communicates the minority status of its targets. Soccer, with its requirements of order, cellular dispersion, and control of bodies also includes processes of “hierarchical observation” and “normalizing judgment” (Foucault 1977, 170). Integration as a system of managing difference aims to normalize immigrants and their descendants and render them useful. At the same time, as it operates in service of liberalism, it must avoid the appearance of illiberal coercion. Sport is hailed as a “motor of integration” because it attracts young, nondisabled people, enlisting them in their own normalization.

Gendered Subjects of Discipline and Normalization

Sport integration programs overwhelmingly focus on young people and their families. Following sport integration’s investment in sports as a pedagogical tool, programs target families as the first locus of social reproduction within a highly gendered framework. While the pedagogy applied to girls and boys share some of the same goals—foremost among them, the cultivation of individual empowerment, confidence, and “good values”—they diverge on crucial points. Remedies proposed by sport integration programs emphasize supposed deficits in immigrant communities. In the corpus, boys are singled out for reform of deviant behaviors like violence and criminality, whereas women and girls are targeted for liberation from the traditional patriarchal culture that is presumed to dominate minority communities. In both cases, integration projects frame problems as endemic to immigrant communities. This deficit-orientation is particularly prominent in the narratives of the DFB and Mercedes Benz Integration Prize.

In the stories publicized by the Integration Prize, young men are often normalized by neglecting to mention gender explicitly when discussing boys’ teams or stigmatized by making them the focus of programs targeting social deviance and neighborhoods classified as “social combustion points.” The celebrated Midnight Sports program in Berlin is a paradigmatic example of this type of gendering. As the 2013 Integration Prize brochure states, Mid-

night Sports organizers were invited to confer with Chancellor Merkel on the topic of integration and were awarded the Bambi—Germany’s oldest and most important media prize (see chapter 7)—for the category of Integration. Midnight Sports mobilized the celebrity and symbolic power of its sponsor, the Ghanaian-German national soccer team member Jérôme Boateng, in a narrative of reforming urban minority youth through sports to “defend a Berlin neighborhood teetering on the brink.” The program’s founder Ismail Öner, a trained social worker of Turkish heritage, described his motivation for starting the project:

The police designated the Heer Street in North Spandau a “criminally burdened place.” A group of about 30 young people, mostly with a migration background, had practically crippled the neighborhood. For me, it was clear: something had to change now. Midnight Sports was the result of a discussion I organized between the police and the young people. On December 8, 2007, we opened the gym for the first time. The effect was stupendous. The categorization of “criminally burdened place” could soon be lifted. (2013 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2014, 22)

This story epitomizes the transformative narrative of sport, which by transforming dangerous young people defends and restores the social body to health. The category of a “criminally burdened place” is a local legal classification of space that the police may assign, which lowers the requirement of reasonable suspicion to justify police intervention. Cities and states across Germany have similar policies placing “dangerous zones” under a “state of exception” (Agamben 1998), justifying increased surveillance and police intervention. Local police have broad authority to designate these spaces of exception, and the limited research available on these policies suggests that designation is based as much or more on a space’s demographic features than on actual risk of violence (Belina and Wehrheim 2011; Ullrich and Tullney 2012). Öner draws on this category to justify the claim that these mostly minority youths represented a threat to life in the neighborhood and to link his intervention to the neutralization of that threat.

Midnight Sports uses the attraction of organized sports to transform threatening young men into useful individuals through a variety of disciplinary techniques that coincide with the requirements of sport. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) outlines this modern technology aimed at increasing the usefulness of individuals in the most efficient possible manner. Discipline seeks to produce “subjected and practiced” bodies, increasing the

forces of the body in terms of utility while decreasing the political force of the body through obedience (1977, 138). This process involves enclosure and partitioning, which in this case is the removal of young men from the public spaces of the streets to the controlled space of the gym and the indoor soccer field where each player knows his place and his function within that space.

By its very definition as a practice, sport produces “docile bodies,” which is Foucault’s term for the disciplined body that represents maximal utility and minimal cost. Beyond the direct practices of the game, however, sports open the possibility for further interventions, as the leader of Midnight Sports explains.

DFB INTERVIEWER: And the baseball bats had to be left outside the gym?

ISMAIL ÖNER: Let’s not exaggerate, it wasn’t so bad. We created encounters. At our first tournament, the police played against the youth. They had previously only encountered each other during incidents. The young people come to the gym, and they bring all their works and needs along. Then the social pedagogy work begins. We create networks with schools, families, soccer clubs, child welfare offices, and other people and institutions around the youth. There is often trouble. They are in danger of failing; they are under threat of expulsion, one young man can’t find an internship, another has a court order. Sometimes it’s just lovesickness. (2013 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2014, 22)

Here, the DFB interviewer picks up on the description of delinquency that Öner introduced in his previous statement by suggesting, half in jest, that these young men needed to be disarmed before participating. Öner initially pushes back against what he classifies as an overstatement of their deviance. He then continues to outline the depth and breadth of interventions necessary to reform these young men and make them productive. Foucault writes that disciplinary space aims to “establish presences and absences, to know where and how to locate individuals, to set up useful communications, to interrupt others, to be able at each moment to supervise the conduct of each individual, to assess it, to judge it, to calculate its qualities or merits” (2009, 4:143). The practice of soccer itself fulfills these aims, but Öner’s statement shows that, above all, it generates the enticement to enter the nexus in a network of other disciplinary spaces. The statement above concludes with an inventory of transgressions against the standards and norms of schools, the job market, and the legal system. Öner mitigates this description of deviance

by adding an example of the “normal” travails of youth learning to navigate amorous relationships.

There is a tension in the DFB literature between the masculine normativity of soccer and the gendered imperatives of integration discourse demanding the inclusion and empowerment of women. While the above interview emphasizes that Midnight Sports welcomes all national backgrounds, “including Germans,” Öner expresses discomfort with female participants, explaining that he is unable to relate to the problems of girls:

If they come into the gym, they are permitted to play. But I know what I can do and what I can't. Pedagogy plays a major role. I can't empathize to understand the problems of 14-year-old girls. Other female colleagues (*Kolleginnen*) will have to take that on. (2013 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2014, 23)

Before this question, the last of the interview, the neutral term “youths” (*Jugendliche*) is generally used for the participants. Once Öner refers to “our boys” (*unsere Jungs*), but until the last question gender remains otherwise unspecified and, consequently, is presumed to be male.

Soccer in Germany and most of Europe is deeply associated with masculinity (Pfister 2003; Pfister et al. 2002). While men's soccer became a keystone of postwar national mythology (Emonds 2022), German women were barred from organized soccer by the German Football Association until 1970. In the development of recreational and professional soccer across most of Europe during the twentieth century, soccer was an exclusively masculine domain.³ Although women's soccer programs in Europe are increasingly competitive at the elite level, amateur participation rates skew heavily in favor of men. In 2016, women's teams made up only 7.7 percent of soccer teams in Germany (“Mitglieder-Statistik 2016” 2016). Until recently, the extreme gender disparity in soccer participation nationwide did not warrant concern on the DFB website. In the mid-2010s, the lack of female players was described as a technical problem solvable by, for example, an online team exchange where female teams could post openings for players, accommodations for playing matches with fewer players, or with sample sessions (*Schnuppertraining*) where girls could “sniff out” the game. In 2022, the DFB shifted its approach to women's

3. In contrast, in the United States participation rates across genders are approximately equal, and soccer has traditionally been considered a sport that is equally appropriate for males and females (Knoppers and Anthonissen 2003; Markovits and Hellerman 2003).

and girls' soccer, unveiling a new initiative to address the long-standing gender inequalities at every level of the sport, from amateur participation to representation in DFB leadership. This concern is long overdue, since between 2010 and 2022, the number of amateur girls' teams dropped by nearly half ("Frauen Im Fußball FF27" 2022). In contrast, in the context of sport integration, girls' participation was framed from the outset as a central problem with broader social implications, both as a reflection of and as a means to change the presumed patriarchal norms of immigrant communities.

Girls and women receive special attention in the DFB Integration Prize, although their interest in soccer is sometimes observed with surprise and incredulity. As one prize winner stated, "we noticed—with total astonishment—that the girls also liked to play soccer during recess, and were good at it" (2009 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2010, 8). This statement underscores the masculine coding of soccer in majority German society. However, this realization of girls' interest in soccer in the context of integration programs does not lead to reflection on the problematic gendered assumptions about soccer held by majority society. Instead, participation is viewed within the framework of assumptions about gender inequalities in minority communities. As program organizer Hans-Jürgen Daum stated,

I was very skeptical at the beginning. Girls from Moroccan or Turkish families playing soccer? I couldn't really imagine that. Today I see the enthusiasm of fathers cheering on their daughters. Soccer has contributed to a convergence of cultures. (2009 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2010, 19)

The failure of imagination described in this statement relates to the intersection of gendered and religio-culturally coded national categories. While there is much left unsaid in this statement, it only makes sense in relation to two spurious underlying presumptions of, on the one hand, homogeneous patriarchal traditionalism among Muslim minority families and, on the other, a normative German culture that universally supports gender equality. Daum's inability to imagine Muslim girls playing soccer was tied to the assumption that their fathers—who turned out to be enthusiastic fans—would prohibit their daughters' participation. When he was proven wrong, however, he does not question his initial assumptions about these (Muslim) families. Instead, he credits soccer with transforming their culture, causing them to converge with egalitarian German norms—ignoring the overwhelmingly patriarchal norms in German soccer culture.

This presumed effect of soccer in transforming patriarchal norms is even clearer in another statement by the founder of the nationally replicated project, Social Integration of Girls through Soccer. Founder Dr. Ulf Gebken claimed that “soccer can be a lever of emancipation. The older brother or father see the sister or daughter in a completely different milieu. It changes the role behavior” (2011 *Integrationspreis Des Deutschen Fussball-Bundes Und von Mercedes-Benz* 2012, 18). In hegemonic sports culture, soccer is seen as a fundamentally masculine pastime, while in the context of sport integration it is as a means of empowering (Muslim) girls and combatting gender inequalities in immigrant families. The concern with gender in integration discourse segregates the actual and perceived gender inequalities in immigrant communities from those of the majority society.

Along with sports’ ability to teach rules and norms, targeting women and girls is one of the most common themes across the corpus. Following the gendered focus of the National Integration Plan, sport integration programs define minority women as a special target for integration. They use the female body as a site of literal and figurative reproduction by encouraging women to transmit the values and norms of integration in their role as mothers. As the National Integration Plan states,

In their role as mothers, female migrants have a key place in the integration of the next generation. Many girls with migration backgrounds achieve good results in school and master the German language. Nevertheless, they often lack the opportunity to put their potential to profitable use. (“Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen” 2007b, 18)

The Integration Plan and sport integration programs portray women as a crucial source of untapped human capital. This focus on women as mothers also reflects the drive of biopolitics to push into every domain of human life. Integration programs focus heavily on empowering girls, in part to recover female productivity lost to traditional family structures and in part to prepare them to pass integrationist values down to their future children. The reason for this loss of female human capital, implicit in the statement above, is sketched out in more detail through the examples of the problems to be solved, including the need to protect immigrant women from domestic violence, forced marriage, and the infringement of their human rights. By framing these problems as particular to immigrant communities, this discourse characterizes immigrant communities as illiberal. Their purported illiberalism poses a threat to the ability of immigrant women to contribute to Ger-

many's future prosperity. In this way, the presumption of patriarchal dominance calls for disciplinary solutions to change the behavior of men and boys and regulatory solutions to change the norms that prevent women and girls from reaching their full economic capacity.

Immigrants and the Nation's Future

The sport integration programs in this chapter operate at the level of localized disciplinary practice, but they also draw on the national level symbolism of elite athletics. They display images of national team members of color alongside quotes explaining how their sports careers have allowed them to integrate into normative society and convinced them of the equality of opportunity for immigrants and their descendants in Germany. A quote from German-born women's national soccer team member Cecilia Okoyino da Mbabi encapsulates the sport integration-meritocracy narrative. She states, "Soccer helped me to easily integrate myself into German society so that today I can study and play for the national soccer team. I learned through sports that there are opportunities in Germany, even for children with a migration background" (Hink 2011, 12). Programs proclaim sports' ability to create community through the shared experience of self-actualization around a common task with universal rules. These values and behaviors are framed as a steppingstone to success in the job market. Sport integration programs also share a lack of concern with structural inequality, racism, and social exclusion. Although sport can just as easily exacerbate stereotypes and racism (see Hall 1997b; Hoberman 1997), the idea of sport—both at the level of individual practice and the level of mediated representation—as a natural mechanism for positive transcultural exchange drives the discussions of sport integration.

Although they share key foundations, the discourses of the DFB and DOSB can be distinguished by their emphasis and tone. The DFB literature has a more disciplinary and remedial emphasis, whereas the DOSB places a greater emphasis on creating interventions to achieve equal participation. In their 2014 paper, the DOSB writes that "whereas before remedial integration was consistently the focus, today it is primarily about the equal participation of people with and without a migration background in all areas of life" (DOSB 2014, 4). While both the DFB-Mercedes Benz and the DOSB programs use disciplinary and regulatory mechanisms, DOSB discourse emphasizes the regulatory elements by conceptualizing integration primarily in terms of the population rather than the individual. The regulatory elements

of sport integration center on the “social body,” which is to say, on the population as an aggregate. As opposed to the deficit-orientation of disciplinary discourse, regulatory discourse is oriented toward the potential benefits of immigration and cultural diversity for the future.

Regulatory aspects of projects identify key target populations and optimize interventions for the greatest possible benefit to the broader population. This targeting focuses on families and the young based on their importance for sustaining national growth in the future. Integration projects all begin with the division of the population into normative nationals and candidates for integration, defined by the possession of a “migration background.” The DOSB project is no exception, but while it accepts this basic premise of division, it seeks to mitigate the harm caused by this division by promoting an anti-essentialist definition of the category of “people with a migration background” and challenging those who equate it with “foreigners.” Instead, they argue that this diverse category is an increasingly important part of the nation’s future:

The total number of new immigrants grew last year by 43,000 or 0.1%. According to projections, this tendency will continue at least until 2030, not because that many new people will immigrate, but primarily because people of non-German heritage are younger on average than the majority population and are therefore more often at an age to establish families. (“Integration Durch Sport: Ein Programm Stellt Sich Vor” 2012, 6)

Using statistical projections, the DOSB justifies the importance of interventions to increase the productivity of those with a migration background, who, they note in the following paragraph, are twice as likely to be unemployed as their normative German peers. This comment opens the door to discussions about structural inequality, but instead the solutions offered by sport integration programs invariably return to interventions targeting individual behavior and interpersonal contact.

Although the framing and top-level conceptualization of the DOSB program emphasizes the benefits of diverse populations, the programs featured often involve the same pedagogical and disciplinary approaches as those honored by the DFB and Mercedes Benz Integration Prize. Like the DFB, the DOSB uses sport as a gateway to other pedagogical interventions, including language programs, social counseling, and school or job search assistance, an approach they call “Sports plus X” (“Integration Durch Sport: Ein Programm Stellt Sich Vor” 2012, 30). The DOSB shares the commitment of the

National Integration Plan and the DFB framework to mobilizing sport in a comprehensive and interventionist program to impart idealized normative values and behaviors.

While the disciplinary mode includes threats posed by individual immigrants and immigrant communities, the regulatory mode focuses on the potential benefits of managing the present population for future gains. The emphasis on the benefits represented by diversity fits into an economic system of value that sees difference as a potential source of innovation. In the words of Mercedes Benz's director of global diversity,

Diversity, whether in sports or business, always broadens one's perspective . . . diversity enriches our culture and thereby our lives. It is, therefore, the foundation for the future of enterprise and the future of society. (2013 *Integrationspreis des Deutschen Fußball-Bundes und von Mercedes-Benz* 2014, 3)

To achieve this benefit, however, integration must be carefully managed and "drilled" (*geübt*) through coordinated interventions from top-level policies down to individual communities. In the 2009 Integration Prize brochure, the same Mercedes Benz representative underscores the importance of active interventions to make diversity beneficial, emphasizing that "integration must be fostered and supported in order to be really effective and lasting, and so that the diversity of people and cultures will be an enrichment for everyone" (2009 *Integrationspreis des Deutschen Fußball-Bundes und von Mercedes-Benz* 2010, 3).

Ideally, programs should form a network. As the DOSB puts it, "integration work can start on islands. But sooner or later these islands must be connected, so that each one can reach its full effectiveness" ("Integration durch Sport: Ein Programm stellt sich vor" 2012, 32). To illustrate effective networking, they present the example of a "colorful Berlin network" that organizes "prevention weeks" for school children. This program involves schools, police, the judiciary, and sports clubs to teach children the difference between "fighting and competition" (*Kampf und Wettkampf*). After lessons on drug abuse and weapon laws from German authorities, students can try a variety of new sports. In this combination of fun activities and stern lessons, sports are not merely a reward for disciplined attention; it demonstrates the continuity of these elements. The program perfectly blends the disciplinary imperatives to impart bodily control and the certainty of punishment for potential transgressions. This fits with a the biopolitical imperatives to preemptively manage risk and increase the stability, health, and economic via-

bility of the population. Even with the attempts at progressive reframing by the DOSB, their highlighted integration projects target immigrant and minority children as a suite of risks in need of management.

Although the regulatory mode enthusiastically proclaims the benefits of diversity, the implicit threat does not disappear but rather shifts to a higher scale: to the level of the population. The potential benefits are contingent on the successful management of difference through “integration work.” In a typical articulation of the task, Maria Böhmer states,

The integration of people from immigrant families is an enormous challenge. Let’s make it into an opportunity for our country! Because here we are deciding, above all, the question of the future viability of our society—both on the national and the European level. (“Der Nationale Integrationsplan: Neue Wege—Neue Chancen” 2007a)

Here, “our society” is both national and European, implicating all European nations in the project of integrating non-European populations. This quote emphasizes the integration of minorities as a path to a better national and European future. However, by framing the stakes of integration projects as nothing less than “the future viability of our society,” the threat posed by the supposed refusal to integrate operates at a greater order of magnitude. The threat of failure is framed as existential, making each unruly body symbolize the death of German and European society.

Precarious Belonging: The False Promises of Sport Integration

Integration as a conceptual framework guides interventions to bring immigrants and their children into the biopolitical order that Foucault calls the “normalizing society.” These interventions reflect the transition to recognizing transnational people as a permanent part of the population, a change that began with the implementation of a limited form of *jus soli* citizenship rights in 2000. This increased inclusion has been accompanied by new interventions from the state level reaching down to local communities and even into the family sphere, seeking to discipline and regulate new Germans through their status as permanent candidates for integration. Power under a regime of biopolitics operates through the cultivation of life. Yet biopolitics also involves a constant process of distinguishing between life that must be cultivated and life that poses a threat to the (true) people and must be controlled or weeded out. The discourses and programs of integra-

tion do not categorize all immigrant and minority people as unworthy life. Instead, they categorize these groups as carriers of both risks and benefits. The extraction of benefits calls for coordinated and comprehensive interventions and surveillance to assess progress. This process includes celebration, cultivation, and scrutiny with the goal of developing candidates for integration into enthusiastic supporters of the German national project. In this regard, sports are seen as an ideal and natural nexus connecting individual bodies to the life of the normative population.

However, this process of assessment of integration successes and failures is open-ended. Candidates for integration may be celebrated as exemplars of success one day, only to have their integration status questioned at the next opportunity. Elite celebrity athletes are repeatedly caught up in this process. As embodiments of the nation, the minority athletes of the men's German national soccer team are a key focal point of this process of evaluation, celebration, and criticism. This process is by no means confined to Germany. When the French men's soccer team won its first World Cup title in 1998, the ethnic composition of its team reflected France's history of empire. The diversity of the French team was hailed as a source of its success and as a sign of a new postcolonial era of racial equality and harmony (Dubois 2010). Despite the team's successes, including another World Cup Championship in 2018, any lackluster performance consistently raises complaints from the right that the team might be "too black." In the Netherlands, there has been a similar development as the number of national team players of color increased in the 1990s. Even when players of color achieve the status of national heroes, audience studies and studies of media coverage of the Dutch national team demonstrate familiar racialized patterns that distinguish (autochthonous) white players from their (foreign) teammates of color (Hermes 2005; Floris Müller, Zoonen, and Roode 2007; Sterkenburg 2013). Historical legacies of colonialism and increasingly mobile transnational populations affect the demographics of national sports teams, and media coverage frequently draws on difference as an explanatory tool for the successes and failures of national teams.

International competition turns athletes into embodied national symbols, and the carefully choreographed cameras and running commentary of mediated international sports reproduce familiar tropes and narratives of differentiation (Wenner 2002). In the German case, the vaunted "Multi-kulti" team of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa came to symbolize the strength of a new, inclusive Germany (Gehring 2016; Stehle and Weber 2013; Zambon 2014) (see chapters 5 and 7). In 2010, Turkish-German midfielder Mesut Özil became a breakout national star. Özil and his German-born

national teammates Jerome Boateng and Sami Khedira were widely lauded as “examples of successful integration.” The white Polish-born players, Miroslav Klose and Lukas Podolski, are less frequently added to the list of the “successfully integrated,” underscoring integration’s status as a racialized category. However, while Germany celebrated the national team for its unprecedented diversity in 2010, commentators noticed that the team’s visible minority stars did not sing along during the national anthem. This observation kicked off a heated recurring debate about the obligation to sing the anthem, which reflects the surveillance and perpetual evaluation that accompanies minorities’ entrance into the symbolic national core (Zambon 2023). Just as Özil, Boateng, and Khedira were rising to the status of national heroes, they were simultaneously set up in the media as potential villains, recalling Stuart Hall’s (1997b) classic analysis of the representation of Black athletes in the American and British press. Özil referenced these patterns of suspicion and double standards in his 2018 statement resigning from the national team in protest of racist treatment by the media and the German Football Association.

Conclusion

Elite sports, particularly at the national level, reflect and reconstruct national politics of culture, race, and citizenship. They both symbolize the optimism of national communities and reveal the fragility of support for celebrated figures of integration. This chapter examines the politics of sport integration as it is conceptualized by stakeholders in the government, business, and civic sectors and implemented at the community level. These programs demonstrate how the idea of integration operates through intertwined processes of discipline and biopolitical reason, seeking to improve the life of the population by disciplining bodies that represent a particular risk to that population. The celebratory and optimistic tone of sport integration discourse and practice, which emphasizes the benefits of properly disciplined diversity for the national future, implies the existential threat represented by the “failure” of integration. Here, immigrants and their children will either be the source of Germany’s future growth or the cause of its demise. While one sounds optimistic, both possibilities are dehumanizing.

Discourses of sport integration conceptualize immigrants and minorities as unruly bodies in need of discipline and transformation into valuable citizens. Sport integration programs frame the minority affiliations of these athletes as contributing to their abilities and the abilities of the German national team or the population at large—so long as they are properly managed and

optimized. The role of sports in integration programs echoes theories of national life and political legitimacy developed in Germany after World War II. Both historically and in the more recent spread of integration discourse across Europe, economic logics have gained ascendancy in the definition of deserving citizens (Lentin and Titley 2011). Later chapters, and particularly chapter 6, include cases where the repressive side of integration discourse is more obvious. This chapter shows how policy and award programs targeting immigrant and minoritized youth through sports entail both the oppressive and the attractive facets of the biopolitical mechanisms embodied in sporting integration.

The rise of integration discourse cannot be separated from the rise of renewed forms of symbolic nationalism. This is the case not only in Germany but throughout Europe as the unity of the European Union falters in the face of nationalist commitments to regulating the population through controls on migration. Germany provides a particularly valuable case, however, because its history of atrocities committed in the name of the nation makes symbolic nationalism a contentious topic that is subject to considerable public debate. The next chapter examines the case of an immigrant family whose defense of an oversized German flag against antinationalist attacks during the 2010 World Cup attracted the attention of the media and the praise of experts and politicians. The patriotism of these “new Germans” serves as a pedagogical example for white Christian Germans, authorizing and even demanding the generalized practice of public patriotism.

5 • Immigrant Patriotism

The Redemption of National Pride

After the 2006 FIFA men's World Cup hosted by Germany normalized the practice of public celebrations of national pride, flag-waving became an almost obligatory national sports tradition. As commentators in the media enthused, the multiethnic German national team of the 2010 World Cup inspired Germans of color and immigrants to join in the patriotic displays in greater numbers. Among the many celebratory stories of flag-waving immigrants in 2010, one story came to epitomize the power of new immigrant patriotism to overcome reminders of past nationalist atrocities. The Lebanese-German Bassal family in the Berlin neighborhood of Neukölln gained fame for defending a custom made 22-meter-tall German flag against the mischief of leftist antinationalists. As Youssef Bassal proclaimed, "we belong here, no matter if the leftists or extreme right does not like us. In the end we're even going to teach the Germans how to cheer for Germany again" (Grieshaber 2010). In this story, marking space in an immigrant neighborhood with the national flag of the adopted nation allows immigrants and Germans of color to claim full rights to national space through civic national displays. Meanwhile, unsullied by associations with nationalist crimes of the past, immigrant patriotism authorizes and invites ethnic Germans to participate in quotidian forms of nationalist expression. The harmless depictions of the Bassals and their neighbors celebrating in over-the-top costumes bearing the national colors infantilizes the immigrant patriots and attests to the benign nature of symbolic celebration (fig. 6). It simultaneously serves as a pedagogical performance aimed at teaching the diverse constituencies of the German nation-state to perform civic nationalism.

The coverage of the case examined here demonstrates once again how global sporting spectacles provide a purportedly apolitical space of mediated national self-reflection, this time with immigrants taking the central role as



Fig. 6. Ibrahim Bassal poses with his giant German flag and World Cup novelty items. (Photograph by Jens Meyer/AP.)

protagonists. These popular events focus national attention and frequently provide the stage on which debates of national significance play out. At the same time, sports mega-events reveal connections between cultural, political, and economic realms in modern societies and the contemporary world order (Roche 2000, xi). The (trans)national appeal of these events invokes a powerful articulation of popular communication: it embodies at once the structural forces of transnational capital, cultural globalization, and the political dynamics at the juncture of local histories, representations, and nationalisms in globalized contexts. Studying these dynamics, as occasioned by the incidents and discourses under discussion in this chapter, reveals the powerful structural, affective, and textual articulations of mediated sports.

This case illustrates the attempt by some immigrants to contest their exclusion from the German citizenry while based in the peripheral space of a frequently maligned immigrant neighborhood. Through the case we can also see glimpses of how the broadening of Germany's legal definition of citizenship a decade earlier began to impact the inclusion of immigrants and new Germans in German national life and in the abstract space of national identity. At the same time, the case shows how the opening of national identification on civic lines may coexist with the continued privileging of ethnic

norms. Furthermore, the discourse of civic nationalism in the flag battle also posits the necessity of normalized displays of nationalism, discrediting critiques of casual forms of nationalism.

The tension between the boundaries of the state and the ethnic categories of the people included and excluded by those boundaries is a hallmark of the modern nation-state. Under Gellner's famous definition, "nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (2006, 1). To legitimate the claim of sovereignty, the liberal democratic state must foster the belief in and dedication to a common culture defined in some combination of ethnic, religious, linguistic, philosophical, or juridical terms. This form of common identification is essential in liberal democracy since, as Carolyn Marvin and David Ingle write, "only nationalism motivates the sacrificial devotion of citizens without which there can be no effective governance" (1996, 10). The affective requirements of modern nationalism are thus a far more important part of the function of the modern state than the rational Enlightenment values of liberal democracy acknowledge.

George de Vos offers three basic temporal orientations for group identification: "past-oriented (*familial-cultural*), present-oriented (*functional*), and future-oriented (*ideological*)" (1995, 27). The first category correlates with *ethnic nationalism* and is rooted in the perceived common territorial origins of a social group. The second category, which correlates with *civic nationalism*, focuses on the space of experience and emphasizes present participation. The final future orientation emerges out of dissatisfaction with past- and present-oriented forms of national identification. I will refer to this movement- or cause-orientated identity as *postnationalist*. In reaction to the nationalist atrocities of the past, postnationalism in Germany can be seen in the traditional—though currently faltering—support for the supranational political project of the European Union as well as in the far-left politics of antifascist groups. As de Vos notes, these categories are by no means mutually exclusive. Still they provide a useful framework for analyzing the priorities and strategies of a nation-state in defining the requisites for belonging to the dominant social category. They can also be used to understand the struggles of the members of subordinated groups to access a more favorable standing in society.

These struggles can be observed in neighborhoods of multicultural cities that exemplify the dynamism and complexity of spaces of identity not easily accounted for by the homogenizing category of national citizenship. Immigrant neighborhoods represent the permeable boundaries between the hegemonic identities of the majority and the competing and complementing

identities of immigrant minorities. In nations that impose civic nationalism as the norm, de Vos writes that “some members of subordinate groups may seek to change their assigned or ascribed lower-status positions to more congenial past or future designations of self and group” (1995, 28). This form of resistance can be seen among some transnational Americans who use the flag of the ancestral homeland to protest American structural inequality, which often hides behind the symbolic equality of universal national allegiance to the stars and stripes (Flores-Gonzalez 2001, 14). In other cases, groups marginalized by ethnonationalist norms may seek to claim access to national identity through civic nationalism.

Media Sport: A Civic Alliance for New Nationalism

In Germany, where the connection of ethnic nationalism to the crimes of the Nazi period lingers despite efforts to relativize and historicize it, the persistence of ethnic conceptions of Germanness have made celebrating national pride contentious. Leftist antifascist (*Antifa*) and anarchist groups draw attention to this connection through attacks on all nationalist discourse and symbolism, whether openly exclusionary, celebratory, or banal. However, in the battle between critical and celebratory approaches to national symbolism, the latter have made significant gains. As discussed in previous chapters, the “soccer patriotism” of men’s World Cup soccer provides mechanisms for consolidating nationalism while suppressing negative associations with ethnic nationalism, particularly in Germany. The symbolic power of these events is amplified by the fact that more than any other popular genre, mediated sports have demonstrated the capacity to assemble publics that approach the totality of *the* public. Hosting an international sporting event in 2006 gave the German public license—and even the obligation—to worship national symbols while still maintaining that the celebration had nothing to do with the nation but was merely an expression of enthusiasm for the game.

The relatively small scale of this case required a broader search methodology than was used in other chapters. I used the surname of the family, *Bassal*, in an expanded Google Custom search set to search 234 German periodicals. I also searched international coverage of the incident using LexisNexis and the terms *Bassal AND Germany*. These searches returned 66 unique articles (table 1). Sources included regional papers from across Germany but mostly concentrated in Berlin, national prestige publications, as well as several international sources including the *Wall Street Journal* (US) and *The Independent* (UK). To contextualize this case, this chapter builds on the discourses ana-

Table 1. Combined Search Results for *Bassal* (German Periodicals) and *Bassal AND Germany* (LexisNexis)

Periodical Type	Total
International	12
National	27
Local/Regional	27
<i>Total</i>	66

lyzed within the press coverage of the 2006 World Cup in chapter 3. These sources represent a broad cross-section of the German mediascape in terms of geographical scale and political orientation. The national and international reach of the coverage indicates the broad scope of the story's media appeal.

As we saw in chapter 3, during the 2006 World Cup, the German press heralded the birth of a new civic religion. The language in the press characterized new patriotism in quasi-religious terms. The experience of thus losing the individual self in the totality of the whole, through communication with the national symbolic, is described in the media as a hyperbolic experience of "euphoria," "exultation" or "jubilation." To use the terminology of Marvin and Ingle, through devotion to the "totem god" made tangible in the vernacular flag (1996), the German people are said to have been restored, made whole again. In 2010, immigrants and transnational Germans joined white majority Germans in civic nationalist displays in unprecedented numbers, according to the domestic and international media. Cheering for the national team was made more attractive by the team's unprecedented diversity. In 2010, 11 of the 23 national players had transnational heritage. A significant proportion of the team would not have legally qualified to wear the German jersey just 10 years prior. The black, red, and gold-draped celebrations of soccer fans including many immigrants, and the backlash these celebrations provoked among left-wing postnationalists, provided an opportunity to establish a new nationalist pedagogy designed to reorient German national identity. In the Neukölln flag fight, the media used the immigrant example to "teach the Germans how to cheer for Germany again."

Integration and Redemption: Broadcasting New Nationalism

In the immigrant neighborhood of Neukölln, which, as journalists emphasized, is home to 300,000 inhabitants from more than 160 nations, owners of a small family-run electronics shop on the Sonnenallee gained national

attention for the struggle surrounding their enormous German flag. The family—alternately described as “Arab,” “Lebanese,” “Lebanese living in Germany,” “German-Lebanese,” “Lebanese-German,” “German of Lebanese descent,” “German of Lebanese background,” “German,” “shopkeepers with Arab roots”—ordered a German flag measuring 22 meters tall and 5 meters wide specially made to cover the façade of their five-story building at a cost of 500 EU. They had hung small German flags outside for years without incident. The cousins, Youssef and Ibrahim Bassal and Badr Mohammed, told journalists that immediately upon hanging their flag they were approached by leftist individuals who criticized them, demanded they take the flag down, and accused them of nationalism. The encounters escalated and the flag was attacked, set on fire, and cut down by an unidentified party that accessed it by climbing onto the roof. Despite organizing a neighborhood watch, the flag was successfully damaged or stolen on three occasions (*DerWesten* 2010). But, as the coverage asserts, the attacks only steeled the family’s resolve to display their national devotion to Germany, leading them to purchase identical replacement flags.

Their explanations for their devotion to German symbols emphasize their right, based on their affective devotion and their lived experience, to identify with their adopted nation. The Bassals shared their migration narratives to illustrate their process of becoming German.

“When I came to Berlin in the middle of the 1980s, I couldn’t speak a word of German. It annoyed me so much that I couldn’t understand anything, that I wanted to learn the language quickly. Today Berlin is my home; I am German, have a German passport, my kids were born here. I live and work here, pay taxes. Why shouldn’t I also support the German soccer team,” asks Ibrahim. (Nachtsheim 2010)

This narrative begins with learning the German language as the first point of entry into German society. Language learning, and the supposed inability and unwillingness of immigrants and their children to learn German, is one of the primary objects of scrutiny in German debates on integration (Ersanilli and Koopmans 2010; Gramling 2016; Wiese 2015; Zambon 2021). Ibrahim Bassal starts with his journey to linguistic competence and then lists a series of other qualifications, from the official state sanction (his passport) and his contributions to government coffers, to the lived experiences of working and raising German-born children. Bassal shows that he is a fully active and competent citizen. In other articles the cousins mention their relatives in the police and the army, emphasizing the ultimate sacrifice they, as a community, are willing to make for the nation.

[I. Bassal] has spent most of his life here. His family has truly arrived in Germany. His nephews serve in the military, and one is now even training with the Berlin police, in the “higher levels of the civil service,” as Ibrahim stresses. (Klatt 2010)

Ibrahim Bassal: “I say: We feel like Germans. I was born here. My two children were born here, and one of my friends fights with the army in Afghanistan. We identify with Germany and, naturally, with the German flag.” (Schupelius 2010)

This last statement, which was repeated in several articles, claims territorial birthright to citizenship, whereas in most of the statements the Bassal cousins state that they immigrated decades earlier. In other articles, the cousins’ claim to German belonging—and to self-determination generally—is framed almost as a provocation.

“We won’t let anyone tell us that we can’t hang the flag.” And furthermore: “We live here, we have our existence here, and also our roots—little by little.” (Grabitz 2010)

“I am a German,” he declared in between customers, many of whom he spoke with in Arabic. “It’s that simple.” (Angelos 2010)

Moving between German and Arabic while claiming the legitimacy of his citizenship affirms that pluralism and transnationalism should now be considered part of what defines the German population. Other quotes from transnational Neuköllners echoed these sentiments (see “Trommeln für Deutschland” 2006). The family’s claims to legitimate citizenship using the evidence of their devotion to national symbols were celebrated in the press, presented as a model for minorities and immigrants as well as for white Christian nationals.

Normalizing Nationalism: The Arab versus Antifa Sideshow

This case reveals a persistent tension in the German relationship to the flag and nationalist celebration. While there is a belief that Germans are prevented from celebrating freely because of past nationalist atrocities, press discourse consistently affirms that nationalist celebration is normal, natural, and healthy. To alleviate the tension and situate national celebration as normal and good, moral reservations about it need to be discredited and

inhibitions dismissed as illegitimate or abnormal. In this case, the first assumption of normality is that citizens should venerate their national symbols. As Butler writes about the instantiation of the gendered position, through the assumption of the national position and its appropriate performances in this instance, the media creates the fiction of the preexisting positions and behaviors it assumes (2011, 71). This case, described as “bizarre” and “grotesque,” is framed as an uncanny inversion of normality: while white German leftists perform unnatural attacks on their rightful national symbols, it is “foreigners” who properly venerate them.

So [Badr Mohammed] fights against Germans and for the German flag. Sonnenallee 36 stands for the contradictory relationship of many Germans to their country. (Stawski 2010)

The leftist scene in Berlin has started a campaign against German flags. The juicy part: most German flags hang from the apartments of foreigners—they don’t understand the world anymore. (*Augsburger Allgemeine* 2010)

In Neukölln, the world stands on its head. Turks and Arabs hoist the German flag—on their cars, their shops, their houses, and apartments. They rejoice over our national eleven. At night radical German leftists come [and] tear the flags down or light them on fire. (Schupelius 2010)

The coverage assumes that white Germans should celebrate the flag. Meanwhile, the articles frequently frame it as counterintuitive that immigrants would venerate the flag of their adopted nation, assuming, at the very least, that they should be less ardent devotees than autochthonous Germans.

In the flag fight, the sacrifices of the immigrant protagonists defy these expectations of nationalist devotion, to the delight of media observers. In one article, their flag devotion was described as “a minor miracle” (Scalli 2010). The press frequently quotes the flag-defending cousins as they stress this inversion of normality.

The two [cousins] cannot comprehend that Neuköllners of Arab heritage [have to] defend the German flag against those of German heritage. (*Welt Online* 2010a)

Almost bemused, they state that the Neuköllners of Arab heritage from the Sonnenallee are defending the German flag against those of German heritage. Upside-down world, they find. (Anker 2010a)

[Bassal] simply cannot understand that the protest is coming from the German side. (Hagen 2010a)

Bassal is baffled. He finds it strange—and also irritating—that Germans want to forbid a Lebanese from hanging up a black-red-gold flag. (*Berliner Zeitung* 2010)

Why are Germans tearing down their flag, while people of all nations celebrate the black-red-gold? (Nachtsheim 2010)

The cousins' statements are used to affirm both that it is natural for normative citizens to celebrate the flag and to show that immigrants and transnational Germans doing so proves it cannot involve "bad" forms of German nationalism. Here, immigrant patriotism reconciles nationalist norms with liberal democratic expectations of tolerance and thus secures the foundations of contemporary German nationalism. The last question posed above, by a German commentator, characterizes flag antagonism of leftists as a transgression of the benign order of a German patriotism in the naturalized world of nations. This rhetorical question set the grounds for the reaffirmation of patriotic practice as distinct from—and opposed to—chauvinism in order to invalidate the postnationalist critique of symbolic nationalism.

Invalidating Antinationalist Critique

"Flag fighters mistake patriotism for nationalism"

The corollary of the immigrant's unexpected German patriotism is the aberrant antinationalism of the white German activists. Their rejection of the flag is characterized as unnatural but expected, shocking but not surprising. It is framed as evidence of a pathology in German identity that equates all national symbolism and sentiment to Nazism. Journalists simplify flag thieves' critique of nationalism as a political system to the point of absurdity, then characterize it as illogical and incoherent.

A question posed by the flag protagonists across the body of articles is, “Why shouldn’t we cheer for Germany?” The articles identify and invalidate two possible answers to this question. The first possible answer is that the brutality of past crimes of German nationalism is so exceptional as to make German national celebration immoral in perpetuity. Exemplifying this, one 58-year-old woman is quoted as saying, “Germany did too many horrible things during the Third Reich to be able to cheer out loud for this country” (Grieshaber 2010). The press coverage of this case shows almost universal rejection of this view. To this point, Youssef Bassal is quoted as saying, “It’s not like there is still a swastika on Germany’s flag” (Grieshaber 2010). Because immigrants are not implicated in the Nazi atrocities, they assume the authority to absolve the present generation for past German crimes. This portrayal characterizes antifascist flag fighters as foolish and their critique as preposterous.

The flag is not hanging there “because of the Second World War, but rather for the German team: because the German team is no longer really German; it’s *multi-kulti* and we belong to that” explains Bassal. (*Junge Freiheit* 2010)

Here they have made a point of destroying and removing Germany flags hanging outside shops and vehicles because they believe the proud patriotism hearkens back to the ugly nationalism of the Third Reich. (*The Local* 2010)

As soon as [Bassal hung the flag], young people aggressively came into his store and accused him of supporting nationalism and waking Nazi feelings in the German population once again. (T. Reitz 2010)

In Berlin-Neukölln, the *multi-kulti* neighborhood *par excellence* . . . above all German-Turks and German-Arabs adorn their shops in black-red-gold. The “Autonomous” scene from the black block—“Never again Germany!”—naturally cannot tolerate this. The antifascist fight knows no mercy, and even the shopkeeper from Lebanon can be a menacing flag-Nazi.” (Mohr 2010)

To associate immigrants waving the German flag with National Socialism is intuitively ludicrous. Pointing this out invalidates all critiques of “soccer patriotism” and places it above accusations of chauvinism. It also invalidates any argument comparing present and past forms of nationalism, freezing the

Nazi past as exceptional. As one article puts it, “the Bassal cousins say their patriotism has nothing to do with the evils that transpired long before they immigrated to Germany. Rather, they say, the flag is an expression of the good life they’ve built here” (Angelos 2010). This narrative emphasizes a present- and future-oriented nationalism—or “patriotism” as it is invariably called—based on the economic prosperity of postwar Germany, while delegitimizing arguments referencing historical nationalism.

Today’s German flag is characterized as anathema to nationalism, which is associated with despotism. As one editorial put it, “Not for nothing was the flag of German Democracy forbidden during the Third Reich” (*Usinger Anzeiger* 2010). It is as if the democratic pedigree of the national colors excludes them from the realm of nationalism, which is presumed to be chauvinistic and antidemocratic unlike healthy patriotism. However, popular and scholarly claims of an obvious distinction between aggressive nationalism and positive patriotism fall apart under examination. As Michael Billig’s work on banal nationalism shows, even on the far-right nationalists rarely characterize themselves in the overtly belligerent and exclusionary terms of “bad” nationalism. Instead, in-groups always describe their motivations as patriotic (Billig 1995, 57). To illustrate, Billig references writings on nationalism from the Nazi period observing that “fascists will protest that they are defenders, not attackers, only taking against foreigners when the latter are a danger to the beloved homeland” (1995, 57). Even the most ardent nationalists conceptualize their actions as domestically oriented, defensive, and motivated by the love of the homeland and its people.

Nationalist frameworks can facilitate projects of both solidarity and violent exclusion. Separating negative and positive forms as distinct psychological phenomena does not hold up to scrutiny. Billig’s goal is not to demonize patriotism; instead, he strips away the normative distinction that uses the nationalism of “others” to place “our” patriotism above reproach. This naturalizes the world of nations with its “universal code of particularity” (1995, 72–73). Billig argues for critically examining the construction of the globalized “habitus” (Bourdieu 1994) of nationalism, a phenomenon that has been so successful that it is rarely noticed and very difficult to imagine otherwise. Billig examines the relationship between the waved and the unwaved, forgettable flag. In the stable nation-state, the unnoticed form overtakes the actively symbolic and communicative form of flagging that accompanies disputes over territory and national identity. In the German case, the desire to erase contention around the flag played out most strongly in the 2006 World Cup (see chapter 3). While the 2010 flag fight was a contentious episode, the press used it to discredit the flag antagonists and establish the propriety of banal

nationalism, which includes both unnoticed everyday flagging and organized, sanctioned episodes of exuberant flag waving.

The media's characterization of normality in the flag fight suggests that despite remaining friction around nationalism in Germany, assumptions that majority nationals should celebrate and defend the national flag were deeply embedded in the mediated public sphere at the time. The flag's defense by immigrant patriots makes any association with "bad" nationalism laughable, as with Y. Bassal's rhetorical question, "What, pray tell, have I got to do with the Nazis?" (Lau 2010). Both traditional skeptics (such as the woman quoted above) and enthusiasts of national celebrations share the assumption that the Nazi past is exceptional, and therefore incomparable. For the skeptics of nationalism, this means that Germans have an exceptional moral obligation to abstain from the nationalist celebration that is a global norm. For national celebrants, the exceptionalism of the Nazi past means that any reference to it as a comparative tool is illegitimate (see chapter 1). Furthermore, national celebrants consider the moral obligations advocated by the skeptics to be unfair and discriminatory.

However, if we do not accept the exceptionalism of the discourses of nationalism from the Nazi period, both positions are destabilized. This is not to deny the importance of empirical, ethical, and normative examinations of the extent and particularities of the evils of the period. Instead, it clears the ground for discussions about the how practices of banal nationalism provide continuity for the idea of a coherent, homogenous nation over time. It also enables consideration of the continuities in definitions of "the people" and threats to the population. After all, the most valuable understandings to be gained from the Nazi period are not simply the recognition of the human capacity for brutality but rather how, as Agamben puts it, a nation can transition so easily from modern parliamentary democracy to totalitarianism and back to democracy (1998, 122). Agamben argues that the ease of this transition shows the extent to which politics has become biopolitics. The banality of nationalism—with its assumptions about citizenship and about which life has political value—is deeply implicated in this process. This question has relevance far beyond German borders. Events like the flag fight provide opportunities to modify and affirm consensus around these assumptions and to discuss nationalist norms in order to forget them (Billig 1995).

The postnationalist position of the flag antagonists goes beyond the traditional past-oriented skepticism discussed above. While they may find German nationalism especially abhorrent, they critique all forms of nationalism across time and space. In fighting what the antifascist representatives on the internet called "event-dependent nationalism," flag antagonists highlighted the repres-

sive and racist authority of the nation-state, past and present. In a statement made on the internet calling for a national World Cup flag battle, a person identified as Ines Müller wrote, “It seems as though the Germans are yearning for a basis for their identity that would allow them to push the German state and its past in the background, but neither the present nor the past can be repressed” (Angelos 2010). Postnationalists raised reasoned arguments linking soccer nationalism to everyday discourses delineating and excluding “those who do not fit the image of the ‘good German’” (Autonome Neuköllner Antifa 2010). More fundamentally, they objected to the hegemony of nationalism as a mode of governmentality. In a statement considering media interpretations of the flag fight, one Neukölln-based antifascist group that did not claim participation in flag-stealing activities characterized the nation as “an obligatory collective in which societal contradictions—such as the permanent competitive relationship between individuals—must be obscured and individual happiness must defer to the supposedly superior interests of the national collective” (Autonome Neuköllner Antifa 2010). In choosing to wage their battle against the private property of individuals, however, the broader postnationalist political agenda was ignored or villainized in the press. Instead, the illegal antifascist actions are used to portray postnationalists as deviants and the flag-wavers as courageous heroes (*Berliner Zeitung* 2010). The immorality of the attack on personal property bestows moral authority on the victim who resists the attackers and justifies the dismissal of the ethical and political motives of the thieves.

“Flag fighters are anti-immigrant”

Once the activist critique of nationalism is ruled unreasonable, the remaining answer proposed to why the Bassal’s flag was targeted is that activists must believe immigrants do not have the right to affiliate themselves with the German nation. The cousins recognize at times the distinction between the xenophobic motivations of right-wing extremists and the motivations of the leftists. A typical example of this reads, “For the fascists we are foreigners, and for the anarchists . . . actually, I have no idea what we are to them” (Hagen 2010a; 2010b). They may not understand antifascist motivations, but they acknowledge a distinction from the racist far-right. However, statements in most of the coverage directly conflate leftist positions with xenophobia and hatred.

From their perspective, we are migrants. They don’t understand Germans who defend Germany who are not of German descent. (I. Bassal quoted in Anker 2010a)

Youssef Bassal doesn't understand the world anymore: "We have relatives who serve in the military and with the police. Germany took us in when we had to flee war in Lebanon. We know how much we owe to our new *Heimat*. And this hatred. . . (Langenbach 2010)

This attributes leftists' actions to ethnonationalist rather than postnationalist ideologies. It is true that left-wing groups often practice their own forms of ethnic essentialization (see chapters 1 and 3). The statement quoted above about flag-critics' fear of waking "Nazi feelings" among white Germans is an example of this. If this secondhand repetition is accurate, the statement implies that white Germans are particularly susceptible to dangerous forms of nationalism. While this form of essentialism merits critical deconstruction, the articles in the archive tended to skirt this more complex question, simply characterizing the flag thieves as anti-immigrant and their antinationalist politics as facile and absurd.

For German postnationalists, the cultivation of a national identity at the state level is necessarily dependent on the exclusion of Others, which leads to racism and group-based hatred. In a photograph taken during the flag fight, the masked members of the group Anti-Racist Alliance Neukölln (*Antirassistische Bündnis Neukölln*) stand over a mound of flags with a banner that reads, "German flags can't help against racism! Attack nationalism! Stop deportations!" The picture, which was posted on the website Indymedia linksunten, was accompanied by a letter claiming responsibility for the theft of 5,000 flags, including "one of the internationally known giant Sonnenallee flags" (*AntiraBündnis44* 2010). Postnationalists do not believe in a benign, egalitarian form of nationalism. The flag thieves position themselves against all forms of flag celebration, whether by immigrants or by established Germans, stating, "We oppose the media discourse that accuses us of making our neighbors into 'foreigners.' The debate around the 'Neukölln flag fight' only serves one thing: the image of a 'cosmopolitan' German nation!" This goal of promoting Germany as cosmopolitan, or open to the world (*weltoffen*), using national symbolism violates the postnationalist conviction that flags are necessarily tools that divide populations. This kind of cosmopolitanism, in this view, simply whitewashes the violence of the normal nationalist world order.

The flag thieves argue that integration dictates that immigrants undertake one-sided adaptation even while they are denied full societal participation (*AntiraBündnis44* 2010). However, as they protested in their statement, the narrative that developed in the press framed the antiflag campaign as an anti-immigrant action, falsely suggesting that they took particular issue with

immigrant patriotism. In all the articles examined for this chapter, only one, from the progressive independent *Die Tageszeitung*, challenged this narrative, pointing out that it makes more sense to see the attacks on immigrants' German flags as evidence that the leftists see anyone waving a (German) flag as an equal antagonist: "They do not pay attention to origins, for them every flag waver is a nationalist and, therefore, the enemy" (Alke 2010). Without necessarily agreeing with their politics, this journalist was the only one to question the logic of framing the flag vandals' actions as anti-immigrant.

Preaching the Civic Religion of the Nation

Then a small boy enters the store. He reaches for one of the small flags meant for mounting on cars.

"What sort of flag do you have there?" Bassal asks the child.

"Germany," the child, who also appears to be of immigrant descent, replies quickly.

"And what do you love?" Bassal asks.

"Germany," the child calls out.

Bassal smiles, satisfied. (Hagen 2010b)

After emphasizing the legitimacy of German patriotic displays by minoritized Germans and immigrants, the media turn to the Bassal cousins' lessons on civic nationalist comportment. Journalists portray immigrant patriots as natural teachers, "leading the way in teaching Germans how to feel good about themselves" (Grieshaber 2010). Journalists observed that in 2010 the immigrant neighborhoods of Kreuzberg and Neukölln seemed to be even more heavily bedecked with the German flags than the "traditionally German" neighborhoods in Berlin (Stollowsky 2010b). "Former immigrants" are showing "bio-Germans," with their inhibited relationship with the flag, how to be more relaxed showing the flag (Anker 2010b). The term "bio-German" here reinforces the normativity of ethnic or blood-based citizenship. Using "former" as a qualifier for immigrants suggests that, although the family members had undertaken immigration, in this context they have overcome their immigrant status.

Journalists describe the Bassals' electronics shop as the center of World Cup activity in Neukölln. The oversized flag outside the store calls to wayward patriots and invites them to enter the church of civic religion. "Now the little shop is almost full of people," states one article, "all curious to hear the story of the giant flag" (Hagen 2010b). The flag even draws pilgrims, as

another article shows: “an older woman enters the store. She isn’t interested in a cell phone card or a TV cable, instead she says, ‘I’ve come all the way from Wilmersdorf. I absolutely had to see the flag’” (*DerWesten* 2010). Ibrahim Bassal, who jokes that his mouth is dry from so much storytelling, is always willing to tell the story one more time and so are journalists.

According to Bassal family statements, what started as an idea to do “a little something extra” in celebrating the World Cup that year became something more. The conflict and the public attention it generated solidified their defense of the flag into a mission to promote patriotic performance. Articles show that hanging the flag was carefully orchestrated to make a statement and teach a lesson to fellow immigrants and white Germans alike, breaking through the boundaries of the “parallel society” (*Parallelgesellschaft*) supposedly exemplified by the neighborhood.

It is often said of the Germans, that their relationship to their own flag is sometimes tense. But as during the Summer Fairytale four years ago or the European Championship two years ago, former immigrants showed the “bio-Germans,” according to [Green Party politician Özcan] Mutlut [*sic*], how to be more relaxed with showing the flag. (Anker 2010b)

The flag represented a conscious effort to demonstrate and claim belonging and to reach out to white Germans. Ibrahim Bassal went so far as to say that the five-story flag was “a small gift to this country.” In explaining their decision to order the flag, Badr Mohammed was quoted as saying, “we considered amongst ourselves what we could do to show everyone: ‘we belong together’” (*Berliner Zeitung* 2010).

Mohammed is a politician in the center-right Christian Democratic Party, and is consequently well versed in the perceptions and interpretations of immigrant actions (*Frankfurter Rundschau* 2010). After 18 years with the center-left Social Democrats, Mohammed switched to the Christian Democrats in 2009 after dissatisfaction with the social democratic approach to the politics of integration. In a statement made at the time of his decision, Mohammed emphasized the need to “build the unity of Germans of diverse backgrounds and religions” (Schulz 2009). Mohammed emphasized the need for immigrants to be productive and loyal German citizens, demands which he said was not sufficiently supported by the Social Democrats. The statements of the flag-defending family self-consciously wield their special patriotic authority to position themselves at the center of the new diverse Germany they are seeking to promote. Aware of the political implications of

the flag spectacle, the cousins' enactment of multicultural patriotism must be read as a self-conscious political and pedagogical act directed at both white Germans and new transnational Germans.

The news stories show that the lesson was enthusiastically received by German politicians across the political spectrum and by the wo/man on the street. "Integration expert" Burkard Dregger of the Christian Democratic Party is quoted opining that the flag was exemplary in showing that those who hung it were ready to "identify with our nation. Many long-time Berliners could take a lesson from them" (*Berliner Zeitung* 2010). White Germans quoted on the scene all approve of the flag and its owners' fight to defend it. Still the divisions separating the categories of native and migrant run deep. Although the white Germans quoted are enthusiastic about the family's message of unity, their statements maintain the normative nativist conception of Germanness, constructing "integration" as a unidirectional process. "We have to get away from calling these people foreigners," 19-year-old customer Manuel Hornauer is quoted as saying. "It is super when they are so integrated" (Hagen 2010b). Similarly, an elderly woman in the company of two friends who made the pilgrimage to see the flag commented, "When the Turks feel like Germans, I find that beautiful," wrongly assuming the cousins to be Turks. "It's good that they feel like us" (Angelos 2010). Others have even more trouble internalizing the pluralist identifications possible under civic nationalism. On another occasion a woman stopped by the store to ask why the Bassals didn't put up a Palestinian flag (Angelos 2010). The flag fight revealed the normative ethnic nationalist assumptions of majority Germans, while providing an opportunity to supplement them through the affirmation of a broader form of civic nationalism.

Rehabilitating the "Muslim Parallel Society" with German National Pride

In the flag fight narrative, the neighborhood of Neukölln was a symbolically significant stage, encapsulating the fear and excitement surrounding Germany's transnational diversity. Germany's religious and cultural Others are perceived as being at their most dangerous when they are organized into a "Muslim parallel society" (*muslimische Parallelgesellschaft*) (Schmitz 2011). These imagined parallel societies are epitomized by the Berlin neighborhoods of Kreuzberg and Neukölln. The availability of low-cost housing in these formerly marginal, neglected West Berlin neighborhoods made them essentially obligatory destinations for immigrant workers in the post-

war reconstruction period. Workers' hostels offered substandard housing for migrant workers who were eventually able to afford lodgings of their own in these inexpensive neighborhoods nestled against the Berlin wall. These communities grew in the following decades and remain well established today.

Portrayals of Kreuzberg and Neukölln are characterized by the “ambivalent interplay between celebrating and stigmatizing cultural difference” (Schmitz 2011, 269). These neighborhoods are alternately characterized as dangerous, poor, and culturally desolate or as edgy, hip, and shabby chic. Drawing on the work of Edward Said (1979), Schmitz writes that the idea of the parallel society functions as a spatial reference for the Muslim's refusal to integrate; “at the same time, it represents all that is not compatible with Germany's imagined cultural homogeneity” (2011, 269). In the context of supposedly parallel societies, the display of allegiance to German national symbols (not the least of which is the national soccer team) by minority Germans and immigrants defied the expectations of the majority population.

The patriotic performance of the Bassal family from the heart of one of Germany's most stigmatized neighborhoods is so powerful and unexpected that many journalists claim it has made them reconsider the bad reputation of the neighborhood. Neukölln is described as a foreign space and its enthusiasm for German national symbols is, therefore, portrayed as unexpected.

This alone is remarkable: an Arab family has rolled out one of the biggest German flags in the country here of all places, in Neukölln where every fifth person is a foreigner. (Stawski 2010)

Even in this celebratory coverage, deficit narratives predominate in descriptions of Neukölln as a “social problem area” (Bein 2010), “problem neighborhood” (Grabitz 2010; Zehrt 2010), and “social combustion point” (Anker 2010b). Journalists and commentators describe it as being “like an Oriental bazar” (Stollowsky 2010a) boasting “the busiest police station,” “the largest unemployment office in Germany,” and “at least one suspicious mosque” (Keseling 2006).¹ The “Sonnenallee is a man's street” (Keseling 2006) in a neighborhood that is plagued by “language deficits,” “criminality and poverty” (Anker 2010a) that also “brings many children into the world” (Kesel-

1. This article, which appeared four years before the flag fight, was a feature piece on Neukölln that included a short portrait of Youssef Bassal. Although it predates the flag fight, it sheds light on long-standing perceptions of the neighborhood. Since it also includes one of the central flag fight protagonists, I decided to include it in the corpus.

ing 2006). Journalists exoticize the neighborhood, emphasizing its difference in classically Orientalist terms and associating that difference with highly gendered social deficits. It is masculine, dangerous, and highly fertile.

One article lists a litany of common critiques of the neighborhood, claiming that the flag fight belies this picture.

Neukölln has for years earned a rather ignominious fame as a social combustion point. Unemployment, low levels of education, a high percentage of foreigners—criminality, and poverty are more pronounced here than in other neighborhoods. More than 300,000 inhabitants from more than 160 nations live in Neukölln. . . . The flag fight does not fit with this image of Neukölln. (Anker 2010a)

More neutral characterizations of the neighborhood refer to it as “*multi-kulti*,” but its diversity is most often associated with other social deficits. English language articles describe the neighborhood in less negative terms, such as “working-class district” (Hagen 2010b) and “multicultural neighborhood” (Scally 2010). Commentators repeat familiar tropes of the neighborhood’s marginality, foreignness, and deficiency, and then propose that the patriotic performance of the flag fight could be cause to reconsider this image.

Throughout the corpus, the patriotic performance of the Bassal family is directly equated with integration. The term “integration” is one of the most common keywords in the corpus, appearing along with its adjective and verb forms 93 times in the corpus in 40 different articles. The fierceness of their loyalty to Germany was emphasized through descriptions of the financial and even physical sacrifices made to the flag. The willingness to sacrifice to the national totem (Marvin and Ingle 1999) provides proof of their integration. As discussed above, the Bassals provide other arguments and evidence supporting the legitimacy of their claim to German citizenship, but, in the end, the flag and its defense provide the key evidence.

A few streets away is the notorious Rollberg quarter, where gangs of youth, mostly Lebanese repeat offenders, make trouble. . . . Failed integration? The Bassal cousins have their own perspective on things. They defend the German flag. (Grabitz 2010)

With three plush soccer balls atop his oversized Germany hat, Ibrahim Bassal does not exactly look fearsome, but he is very serious. “We will defend our flag even with our blood. No one will tear it down again,” says the 39-year-old [Bassal] full of passion, pointing with his

index finger to the giant black-red-golden flag above his electronics shop. . . . “From now on we will keep watch around the clock.” (*Der Westen* 2010)

Youssef Bassal’s face color has turned somewhat grey-green. He has not slept much in the recent days—since “these strange Germans” turned up at his shop wanting to tear down his flag. He smiles, tired but satisfied like someone who is fighting the good fight. Bassal is fighting for the honor of the German flag: “I will defend this flag—[even] if I don’t get to sleep at all!” (Lau 2010)

“We sit here every night with two or three men and keep night watch,” [I.] Bassal explains. “The flag will be defended until the last breath.” (Zehrt 2010)

Kahled Hossen, who fastened the flag to the roof, risked his life to do so. Even if autonomists keep tearing and igniting it: “We will keep on repairing it.” (*Frankfurter Rundschau* 2010)

The militaristic language and sacrificial zeal of these statements contradict the apolitical harmlessness projected by the plush soccer ball hat. The coverage glorifies the sacrificial offerings for the “honor” of the flag. Offering their blood, breath, and lives for the protection of the symbol points to the transformation of bodies into worthy lives through their association with the national (Agamben 1998).

If integration is equated here with displays of loyalty to national symbols, then to criticize or question the legitimacy of national symbols is to actively block integration. In this vein, Dregger was quoted as saying, “Burning and tearing our flag is abhorrent enough. But to reproach well-integrated immigrants for their integration is downright perfidious” (*Berliner Zeitung* 2010). The flag fight narrative lets ethnonationalists off the hook and blames postnationalists for the inability of visible minorities to achieve equal status in German society. After sharing quotes from international newspapers praising Germany’s diverse national team as evidence of Germany’s success in embracing its multiethnic society, one article uses the flag fight as evidence that there are still “problems with the co-existence of demographic groups in Germany” (*Financial Times Deutschland* 2010). The flag vandals are cast as antagonists against immigrants themselves rather than against the hegemony of nationalism in Germany and beyond. Here, postnationalist politics, rather than structural and everyday forms of social exclusion, are identified as the

cause of social conflicts. Statements by politicians go even further in situating postnationalist ideology as a threat to an inclusive Germany:

For Green [Party politician] Özcan Mutlu, the bizarre fight represents an “upside-down world.” “It is expected that immigrants integrate, but when they identify with the colors of democracy, they are attacked,” said Mutlu. (Anker 2010b)

In this statement, the Turkish-born German politician supports the normality of nationalist celebration and conflates national symbolism with democracy itself. By protecting the flag, integrants prove their commitment to democracy. In attacking the flag, the activist vandals are not merely transgressing the law, they are attacking democracy itself. Mutlu’s statement creates a complex “chain of equivalence” (Laclau and Mouffe 2001), equating nationalist and democratic performance and using nationalist celebration as the anchoring point to define integration.

The dependence on self-contemplation through examination of the margin is demonstrated by some articles that even suggest that the lack of German national pride has contributed to Germany’s inability to integrate immigrants. An article quoting sociologist Klaus Bade, the head of Germany’s Expert Council of Foundations for Integration and Migration (SVR), suggests that the causes of two of the key problems Germany faces, low standards of education in immigrant communities and the growth of an ethnically defined underclass, stem from Germany’s difficult history and a resulting lack of national pride after the atrocities of two world wars. Unlike France or the United States, Bade said, Germany lacked a sense of confidence and greatness for immigrants to identify with and aspire to. In contrast, he pointed out that Germany’s large Turkish population respected and honoured the “great country and tradition” of their homeland. Bade paraphrased their attitude as “We’re proud of being Turkish, are you proud of being German? No, you’re somehow embarrassed to be German” (Maguire 2010).

Although Bade’s concerns with the impact of persistent discrimination are briefly mentioned later, this quote promotes the trope that a lack of civic national pride among white Christian Germans discourages immigrants from claiming German identity as their own. This argument assumes that German identity is freely available for the taking by naturalized and minoritized Germans. On the contrary, the history of German debates on citizenship and immigration as well as the stories of immigrants and Germans of color (see Ataman 2019; Aydemir and Yaghoobifarah 2019; Ayim, Oguntoye, and Schultz 1986; Bota, Özlem, and Pham 2012) all show that the norms of

Germanness still exclude nonwhite and Muslim Germans. Even with citizenship liberalization, those who claim belonging but who do not meet the ethnic criteria can still expect to be met with incredulity.

Still the protagonists of the Neukölln flag fight frame their actions in part as a model of empowerment for fellow immigrants and minority Germans. In this arena, at least, it is the immigrants who have access to a lesson that Germans desire to learn: how to openly demonstrate pride in one's country. The Bassal family sees this knowledge as a gift they can bestow—demonstrating an uninhibited and unburdened relationship to national symbols, free from the past. As Youssef Bassal stated, “we can teach the Germans a little national pride, regardless of history” (*Financial Times Deutschland* 2010). Unfortunately, however, although the lesson of the moral authority of civic religion was easily assimilated, their effort to dismantle the boundaries reproducing the idea of a “parallel society” of dangerous internal Others did not have such an enduring impact.

Understanding the importance of boundary maintenance for the stability of dominant identities reveals the precariousness of societal integration through soccer patriotism: while immigrant patriotism offers a potent tool for strengthened nationalist discourses, truly acknowledging the permeability of boundaries separating the national majority from the foreign subaltern would require relinquishing a fundamental tool for majority self-conception. The Bassal cousins were seeking to open the abstract space of German identity to include those with experiential and affective ties to German national space. In doing so, they aligned themselves with the symbolic nationalist politics of the German center-right.

While this might theoretically pose a threat to conservative ideology, the centrist conservative politics of the Merkel era recognized the pedagogical value of this parable of civic nationalism. Furthermore, enshrining the example of the Bassal family's loyalty to Germany does not necessarily preclude politicians from reverting to the condemnation of the supposed “parallel societies” as soon as the Bassals' lesson has served its purpose. Thus diversity can be acknowledged, and even celebrated, in the context of the unifying force of civic nationalism. This can even serve to underscore the power of the totem: the greater the diversity of its worshipers, the greater its unifying power must be. Chancellor Angela Merkel, also a Christian Democrat, is cited numerous times in the articles championing Germany's “international team” (Maguire 2010) and celebrating displays of patriotic enthusiasm in immigrant neighborhoods “as a sign of long-awaited positive integration” (Paterson 2010). The precariousness of this support for pluralism was demonstrated only three months later when Merkel again declared “the absolute

failure” (*Welt Online* 2010b) of multiculturalism in the wake of the runaway success of Thilo Sarrazin’s book lambasting “undesirable” immigrants for the supposed demographic destruction of Germany (see chapter 6).

As the debates and legislation on immigration suggest, despite the opening of ethnic citizenship laws in Germany since 2000, the ethnic idea of national belonging in Germany continues as the norm. This has been most evident in the backlash against multiculturalism and in the efforts of conservative politicians to legally enshrine the hegemony of the German *Leitkultur*. As a proposal released by the ruling Christian Democratic leadership several months after the flag fight states, “our cultural values, formed through a Judeo-Christian tradition to which the Christian Democratic Party feels particularly bound, and historical experiences are the basis for the societal cohesion that constitutes our *Leitkultur*. We expect those who come to us to respect this” (Wittrock 2010). This proposal assumes a clear delineation of German (Judeo-Christian) culture from the culture of unassimilated (Muslim) Others. Leaving aside the brazenness of appropriating “Judeo” culture here, it also establishes the hierarchy of this binary within German territory.

Conclusion: Persistent Hierarchy

The compelling characters of the Neukölln flag fight were mobilized by the German media (1) to sever the link with the past using the dehistoricized, present-focused nationalism of the immigrant and to discredit those who would maintain the link between nationalism and racism; (2) to spread the gospel of nationalism as civic religion using the example of devout immigrants who demonstrate the proper relationship between worshippers and its most powerful symbol: the national flag; and (3) to secure the morality of the new nationalism by emphasizing its egalitarianism and tolerance of difference. This serves to allay fears of the bloodthirsty, violent nature of the new nationalism (Marvin and Ingle 1999) by substituting purportedly peaceful international sporting competitions for war. This benefits the media and the political elite by restoring nationalism to the toolkit for governance and national narration. The desire of immigrants to wave the flag is a powerful ally in the battle to bolster and legitimate the power of the totem. Because the immigrant chooses their new flag rather than simply accepting its assignation by birth, immigrant patriotism demonstrates the desirability of identification with Germany. Furthermore, the immigrant’s love of their host nation is present-based and untainted by the stain of past abuses of national power. At the same time, the immigrant and new Ger-

man protagonists of the Neukölln flag fight used the event to claim their place in the nation and to challenge their exclusion from the privileged space of national belonging.

In the flag fight, the Bassal cousins used civic nationalist norms to attack the cultural differentialism that closes German citizenship to Muslim immigrants, in particular. In doing so, however, the Bassals and the German media strengthened the hegemony of nationalism in Germany, bringing it closer to achieving unnoticed banality. In contrast, in their fight against nationalist symbols, German antifascists proclaimed the inevitable racializing functions of nationalism as a system for managing difference. However, their attacks on the flag in Neukölln ended up providing a compelling narrative on which to base a powerful civic nationalist pedagogy affirming the moral superiority of civic nationalism. Antifascist forms of postnationalism, then, became the nationalist's straw man. The coverage of the flag fight was a useful space for the renegotiation of national identity, but a surface reading of that coverage and of the event can miss persistent, underlying problems of nationalism as the basis of identity. The celebration of immigrant patriotism shores up the universalist and egalitarian credentials of the nation (see also chapter 2), but, as the following chapter shows, their contribution to the legitimacy of civic nationalist celebration does not solidify the place of immigrants and minorities as part of the national category.

The next chapter examines the consequences of this persistent divide in an event that occurred several months after the flag fight: the debate that followed the publication of a book that predicted the destruction of the German people through the dual threat of proliferating Muslim immigrants and declining birthrates among educated white Christian Germans. This case also demonstrates the difficulties of discussing race and racism in the German context. Intolerance stoked by cultural, religious, and linguistic difference is more easily portrayed as rational and justifiable than racial intolerance (see Chin 2007). Perhaps this is because, as Stuart Hall (2000) notes, the biological referent of ethnic differentiation is less direct. In conceptions of ethnicity, the biological articulation of difference is present but is indirect, operating through kinship. As civic nationalism establishes itself as a new norm in Germany, its relative inclusivity should not be allowed to render new divisions invisible and, thus, above critique. As the next chapter shows, civic nationalism does not prevent pseudo-scientific models of social and cultural deficiency from plaguing representations of immigrants and Germans of color. Although civic nationalism opens new possibilities for legitimating minority identification with the nation, it also supports a binary of the "successfully integrated" versus the "unassimilable and intractable" immigrant.

6 • Destructive Productivity

The Sarrazin Debate and the Threat of Proliferating Noncitizens

Just weeks after the national celebration of Germany's immigrant patriots and multiethnic national team formed the driving national narrative of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, politician and Bundesbank board member Thilo Sarrazin published a book positing the demographic demise of Germany. In the mode of the white nationalist great replacement theories that have since gained traction on both sides of the North Atlantic, this mythology decries the declining fertility among native, presumably white and Christian Germans combined with the immigration and abundant fertility of "less intelligent" populations, mostly from Muslim-majority backgrounds. This book triggered a nationwide debate on the supposed unassimilability of particular groups and the effectiveness of German social policy. The rise of the new far-right in Germany is now commonly framed as a reaction against the growing demand for asylum from Syria and other war-torn countries over the course of the 2010s. However, when Sarrazin's book dominated the charts, net migration in Germany had been stagnant for nearly a decade, with negative net migration during the previous two years ("Migration," n.d.). Indeed, the emigration of educated young Germans of Turkish descent—who were called "returnees" (*Rückkehrer*) based on the spurious idea that the emigration to Turkey by these German-raised young people constituted a "returning home"—even became a topic of public concern (see Karasu 2010). The runaway success of Sarrazin's book after a period of negative net migration shows that the success of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim discourse is not dependent on the actual reality of migration.

Although Sarrazin's ideas were far from new, they attracted unprecedented attention and sparked calls for Sarrazin to lead a new political party to challenge the elite establishment. While Sarrazin demurred, this call was

answered just three years later with the foundation of the far-right *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) party. The AfD's platform draws on the same mix of economic and cultural nationalism that drove Sarrazin's theories in this first bestseller and the many that followed. This chapter analyzes that discourse, which provided the blueprints for the rise of new far-right political movements in Germany over the following decade. Sarrazin's book was so popular and the debate around it so intensive that it remains a touchstone of public memory—a shorthand for German anti-Muslim racism and a framework for the new German right's crusade against the “wrong kind” of immigration and the “political correctness” that enables it.

In the media sphere, Sarrazin's polemical book incited impassioned denunciations, cautious interest, and the heralding of a brave harbinger of inconvenient truths even before its publication. The firestorm of public responses piqued national interest and contributed to the book selling out on the first day of its public release (Stein 2012). Over the following six weeks of intensive public discussion, the “Sarrazin debate” quickly morphed into an “integration debate.” What began as a discussion about the racist theories driving Sarrazin's arguments rapidly became a debate about “political correctness,” migration policy, and the supposed integration status of Muslims in Germany. This debate reflects how what Alana Lentin calls, “not-racism,” or “the denial and redefinition of racism . . . has become a central formulation for the expression and legitimation of racism” (2018, 2), here reinscribed in the socially acceptable concept of “integration.” The focus here is not the question of whether Sarrazin's theories qualify as racist (they do),¹ but instead how the debate about racism ultimately consolidated a consensus about immigration as a problem and integration as a social good. This consensus reaffirmed white Christian German sovereignty and cast Black and Brown people as permanent foreigners subject to celebration or—more often—condemnation under the rubric of integration. This advanced the substance of Sarrazin's arguments while sanitizing their “crude” and “unhelpful” framing. What putatively began as a debate on racism neglected any serious interrogation of the effects or experiences of racism in Germany.

While the Sarrazin affair inspired renewed attention among some German scholars to the form and appeal of contemporary racism in Germany

1. The book heavily cites notorious eugenicists, past and present, from the 19th-century pioneer of scientific racism and eugenics, Francis Galton, to the late Richard Lynn, recent president of the U.S.-based Pioneer Fund, an organization founded in 1937 for the “improvement of the white race” (Slobodian 2018), whose founders engaged in mutual exchange with Hitler and the Nazi regime (Lombardo 2002). Sarrazin also cites the thoroughly discredited work of scientific racism, *The Bell Curve* (1994), which also cites Lynn.

(see Friedrich 2011), the concerns about racism it briefly raised in the mediated public were quickly overwhelmed by public support for Sarrazin's perspectives. Other than a few early critiques, questions about racism in the book and in the public response were largely silenced (Meng 2015). The book and ensuing media spectacle constituted a contentious public event through which the boundaries and values of the nation were discussed and consolidated. Whereas previous chapters focus on the racializing discourses in celebrations of immigrants and "new Germans" in social marketing campaigns, sport integration programs, and sporting nationalism, this chapter examines one of the most visible public debates in Germany since the turn of the new millennium to analyze the explicitly exclusionary side of integration discourse. But while the emphasis in this chapter's case shifts from celebration to condemnation, both modes of integration discourse depend on the same theories defining the ideal political and economic conditions to secure the future of the normatively white Christian German national population.

This chapter critically examines patterns and themes of public discourse on culture and integration and its role in constructing the normative national core and managing difference. In particular, it analyzes the construction and fortification of divisions between normative citizens and racialized groups including Muslim and Black Germans and immigrants.² The Sarrazin debate demonstrates how divisions made using biopolitical logics fracture the population so that the power to "make live" (Foucault 2003) is theoretically optimized by confining social ills to particular segments of the population. The conclusions of this analysis focus on controlling and eliminating populations deemed congenitally unwilling or unfit for integration, confirming Mbembe's (2019) observation that necropolitics—or the selective exposure of certain racialized populations to death—are at the heart of biopolitics' overt drive to cultivate modern national life. This form of politics perceives "the existence of the Other as an attempt on my life, as a mortal threat or absolute danger whose biophysical elimination would strengthen my life potential and security" (Mbembe 2019, 72). Sarrazin used the language and logics of economic rationality to characterize the lives of Muslim and Black immigrants and their descendants as a threat to the survival of the (white Christian) German people.

To determine which logics resonated most strongly with his readership, I analyzed the reader reviews posted in response to the book on Amazon.de. In addition, I examined articles discussing the book and the surrounding

2. For an analysis of how discourses of emotional attribution in the mediated debate contributed to this binary, see Eunike Piwoni (2020).

debate published in the center-left quality magazine *Der Spiegel*³ and the popular right-wing tabloid *Bild*. Excerpts from Sarrazin's book were pre-circulated in these two periodicals, placing them at the center of the debate. I conducted searches in the online archives of *Spiegel* and *Bild* for the term "Sarrazin" from August 23, 2010, when book excerpts were published in *Spiegel* and *Bild*, to October 31, 2010, two weeks after Angela Merkel's declaration of the failure of multiculturalism. From the total corpus of 434 articles, news stories were set aside to focus on features, commentaries, interviews, and letters-to-the-editor analyzing and debating Sarrazin's book and the subsequent fallout from its publication. This resulted in a collection of 46 items from *Bild* and 36 items from *Der Spiegel*.⁴ These articles were studied to determine the overall development of the mediated debate.

Sarrazin's Germany: Muslim "Migrants" and Population Decline

The book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab: wie wir unser Land aufs Spiel setzen* (Germany Does Away with Itself: How We Are Putting Our Country on the Line), opens with a laudatory statement on Germany's success in rebuilding from the ashes of World War II and the "pride and faith in the solidity of its economic and social models" that carried Germany through four global economic crises (Sarrazin 2010b, 7). Not surprisingly, Sarrazin omits the crucial role played by millions of immigrants (the so-called *Gastarbeiter*) in rebuilding postwar Germany (see Chin 2007; Miller 2018).⁵ According to Sarrazin, the strong values and optimism of the German people have allowed the nation to prosper and withstand the pressures of globalization. Unfortunately, he claims, this optimism and success has "clouded the vision of Germans," preventing them from seeing the "hazards and putrefaction in the core of society" (2010b, 7). He attributes this rot to the "quantitative and qualitative" decline of the German population. The "quantitative decline" is due to the low birthrates among Germans, coded as white Christian citizens. The "qualitative decline" is related to the "ongo-

3. Including the print *Der Spiegel* and *Spiegel Online*.

4. For a quantitative content analysis of a broader selection of press coverage of the debate, see the article by Abadi and colleagues (2016) in *International Communication Gazette*.

5. When Sarrazin discusses the "guest worker" programs of the postwar period, he uses it as an opportunity to denigrate Turkish immigrants in comparison to those from "Southern and Eastern Europe." He claims that immigrant laborers only contributed to doomed industries, preventing the structural transformation of the German economy and obscuring the problem of Germany's declining birthrate (2010b, 258).

ing proliferation of the less stable, the less intelligent, and the less competent” (2010b, 11). This latter problem is related, first, to the supposed failure of the state to properly incentivize hard work and, second, to the “quality, structure, and cultural background of the migrants in Germany” (Sarrazin 2010b, 17). The greatest focus of his disdain is “Arabs and Turks,” but he frequently lumps in African immigrants as “problematic,” underscoring his perspective’s roots in postcolonial racism (see Ha, Samarai, and Mysorekar 2016; Hesse 2004). These trends, argues Sarrazin, have led to the overall decline in the values and abilities, or “human capital,” that a society needs to be successful.

This argument illustrates the link between life and death in biopolitical governmentality. Sarrazin posits that the excessive success in producing life, in the form of economic, political, and social rebirth after World War II, has led Germans to become complacent and to allow death to enter in the form of proliferating social undesirables. For Sarrazin, the flourishing of some forms of national life (economic) has led to a neglect of other forms (reproductive). In the introduction to his book, Sarrazin ventriloquizes an imagined “good German,” who protests that quantitative decline of a national population need not be fatal. A small nation can have advantages, this person might say. Sarrazin counters his imaginary “good German” interlocutor, arguing that reproductive decline would not be fatal *per se* if not for the simultaneous proliferation of the “wrong sort” of people—especially Muslim minorities and immigrants. Sarrazin’s position exemplifies Foucault’s argument that the focus of biopower on cultivating life does not eliminate the function of sovereign power to wield death. Instead killing—encompassing “the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection”—“is acceptable only if it results not in a victory over political adversaries, but in the elimination of the biological threat to and the improvement of the species or race” (2003, 256). In this sense, for Sarrazin, the failure to properly exercise this power to kill is where the German state has failed: by establishing the wrong types of incentives through immigration and welfare, the German state threatens the life of the nation by enabling unfit populations to thrive.

While making this argument, Sarrazin takes pains to deny its racist foundations. Indeed, he rejects that racism can play any role in the inequalities he identifies. Through strategic aggregation and individuation of minority populations, Sarrazin constructs and condemns congenitally degenerate demographics under the banner of individual responsibility. Using a universal definition of racism (see Lentin 2018), Sarrazin reasons that if racism or

xenophobia were a real problem, then all “foreign-seeming” immigrants and people of color would be affected equally.

Indians and Vietnamese seem at least as foreign as Turks and Arabs and yet demonstrate far greater success in our society. Thus, causes for difficulties in school, the job market, and in society generally must be sought out within the groups themselves; it must have something to do with their own behavior. (Sarrazin 2010b, 60)

This falsely presumes that all difference from the white Christian “norm” is viewed equally by majority society. Here, the success and relatively positive stereotypes associated with model minority groups disprove the existence of racism rather than representing racism’s other face.

Sarrazin develops this thread in another section of his book that praises European Jews for their outstanding intelligence and socioeconomic success.⁶ Sarrazin also emphasizes the involvement of Jewish academics in the development of intelligence research and the National Socialists’ dismay at the superior average results of Jews as compared to German gentiles. Sarrazin explains that he has “gone into detail on the Jewish-German origins of intelligence research because the discussion of the genetic components of intelligence often runs into strong ‘emotional resistance’” (Sarrazin 2010b, 97). Raising the involvement of Jewish researchers in answer to this “emotional resistance” only makes sense if that resistance is a euphemism for antiracist criticism. Sarrazin argues that the participation of Jews in this research, as well as Nazi frustration with it, validates this research as nonracist. He bases this on the spurious assumptions that minoritized people are incapable of supporting racism and that anything that (neo-)Nazis dislike must be antiracist (logics that also appear in the normalization of nationalist celebrations through World Cup soccer explored in chapters 3 and 5). Sarrazin allays the discomfort of white German readers whose exposure to liberal ideals of tolerance may have sensitized them to react against his claims. By the same stroke, he characterizes any criticism of his work as emotional and antirational.

Sarrazin intends to prove that his work cannot be racist because it favors Jews based on their supposedly heightened intelligence. These references strategically narrow racism as cover for its propagation. In the German context, the antisemitic past is taboo to the extent that even the word Jew (*Jude*)

6. For a critique and historical grounding of these claims see Sander L. Gilman’s article in *New German Critique* (2012).

often arouses discomfort (Mandel 2008). Putting aside for the moment the fact that Sarrazin's essentialist philosemitism is not the opposite of antisemitism but its twin, as Anne Norton (2013) argues, the history of the Jewish Question in Europe was never simply a matter of the superiority or inferiority of Jews per se. It was always a question of the nature and future of Europe and its nations. From Spinoza to Marx, the Jewish question was "the axis on which" modern struggles over politics, progress, secularism, and faith turned (Norton 2013, 2). Beginning with the Enlightenment, Jews became a means of defining Europe, either as a tolerant place where even non-Christians might flourish or as a place under siege and threatened by outsiders within.

Norton observes that contemporary clash of civilizations narratives follow much the same course with the figure of the Muslim. Today, Norton writes, "Islam is marked as the preeminent danger to politics; to Christians, Jews, and secular humanists; to women, sex, and sexuality; to the values and institutions of the Enlightenment" (2013, 2–3). This mirrors Mehdi Semati's definition of Islamophobia as "a cultural-ideological outlook that seeks to explain ills of the (global) social order by attributing them to Islam" (2010, 266). For conservatives, they are a potentially disloyal and incompatible threat, and for liberals they are an object of tolerance—to be endured or saved—that reinforces the superiority of "Judeo-Christian" liberalism. Sarrazin's book does not mince words in singling out Muslims as his primary target. Stating directly what typically remains implicit in integration discourse, he writes,

When I speak here about migrants, I am referring exclusively to migrants from Muslim countries (Turkey, Africa, the Near- and Middle East). They are the only ones who, in large part, have language problems. At the same time, they make up a considerable portion of the lower classes and welfare population of Germany, and their children have the biggest problems in the German education system. (2010b, 235)

Sarrazin equates Muslims—whether born in Germany or abroad—with "migrants," and migrants here are synonymous with social deficiency and the threat of the decline of Germany. Indeed, one need not be Muslim—religious or secular—but need only have heritage in a Black or majority Muslim region. African descendants are also wrapped into the category of "Muslim migrant," a point which Sarrazin reaffirms later when he clarifies that he will refer to all people with heritage from "Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, the Near- and Middle East, and Africa" as "Muslim migrants" (Sarrazin 2010b,

261). Here, Sarrazin is preparing to break down statistics related to “people with a migration background,” which technically includes all immigrants and people with at least one immigrant parent. As though it were self-explanatory, Sarrazin excludes all “citizens of the EU” as applicable to the category of “people with a migration background.” To be an EU citizen is to be excluded from the categories of “Muslim” and “migrant,” in contrast with Arabs, Turks, or those with African heritage who are categorized as “Muslim migrants” regardless of their religion or personal migration experience.

This creates not only a hierarchy among immigrants and their descendants, to borrow Alyosxa Tudor’s formulation, but it constitutes a permanent “ascription of migration to certain [Black and Brown] bodies that are constructed as ‘never at home in Europe’” (2017, 26). In doing so, it reaffirms that to be European—and certainly to be German—is to be white and Christian or, more selectively and strategically, Jewish. Sarrazin’s use of Jews as a shield against antiracist critique only underscores the parallel with the past. As the figure of the Jew defined the existential questions of Europe’s past, so the category of the Muslim or the migrant—scribed indiscriminately to Black and Brown people but not to white Christian immigrants—is mobilized today. The past shows, however, that this type of categorization has potentially lethal consequences.

Sarrazin’s book draws on the legitimating discourse of scientific objectivity to present a picture of reality, which he claims is kept secret by the soft-hearted liberals of the political establishment in Germany. Sarrazin’s Germany is too generous and kind for its own good; its guilt over the fascist past renders the country unwilling to save itself from falling white Christian birthrates and Muslim invaders (Sarrazin 2010b, 397). Mirroring Sara Ahmed’s observations in the United Kingdom, this nationalist rhetoric claims shame has made Germany a “soft nation . . . too emotional, too easily moved by the demands of others” (2013, 2), a feminized nation open to exploitation by outsiders seeking to penetrate and breed it out of existence. Against these emotional vulnerabilities, Sarrazin claims to provide “hard” facts and logic to spur the nation into defensive action.

By focusing on the level of the population, Sarrazin defines aggregate threats to the nation, while maintaining that, since he is not speaking about the individual, his hierarchical claims about the intelligence and productivity of different demographic groups do not constitute a racist project. This logic depends on a narrow notion of racism in moralistic and volitional terms as a matter of individual ill will or hatred toward other racially defined groups (Lentin 2018). Sarrazin maintains his innocence, first, based on the denial of race as a factor (after all, he praises racialized model minority

groups). Second, he claims that he is motivated not by animus against minoritized individuals but rather by his devotion to preserving the implicitly white and explicitly Christian German nation and its vaunted ethics and culture. The runaway success of Sarrazin's book derives from its self-presentation of an "objectively verified" account of reality that resonates with the intuitive theories of a large part of the public. This is combined with a defensive scaffolding built on post-World War II colorblindness and resentment toward processes of reparations and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*⁷ that became part of official politics in West Germany during the late 1970s and 1980s (see chapters 1 and 3).

Although Sarrazin's book was by no means the first bestseller to focus on the threat posed by the "failed integration" of Muslim immigrants and their children (see Ates 2008; Heisig 2010; Hug 2010; Kelek 2006; Ulfkotte 2003; 2010), the relatively quiet reception of other such works fueled the perception of the book as groundbreaking. Even though previous books from a similar perspective achieved considerable commercial success, none received the kind of advanced circulation afforded Sarrazin. The high-visibility pre-circulation of book segments in Germany's two most popular and influential periodicals unleashed a heated debate that developed into a full-scale media hype and took over the German media sphere in the last months of 2010. Years later, Sarrazin's book and the subsequent debate continue to symbolize struggles in Germany over integration and the future of Germany as a multi-ethnic nation.

The next section of this chapter outlines the role of contentious public debate in constructing and reconstructing social norms and regimes of knowledge. Using print sources, it outlines the trajectory of the debate in the mediated public sphere. The following section analyzes the reader responses to the book and the debate on Amazon.de. Responses to the book demonstrate the appeal of Sarrazin's claims of rationality and empiricism in criticizing Muslims in Germany. They also reveal the strength of economic logics of social value, which hold that government interventions must prioritize free market mechanisms for the regulation and optimization of the population. This reflects a biopolitical approach to politics and governance, wherein neoliberal logics and technologies selectively cultivate the life of the population (Lemke 2011, 60). The Sarrazin debate revealed biopolitical social logics that divide the population according to their supposed potential for integration, which is to say, their potential for productivity within German society. According to this discourse, productivity is a universal social good, and thus,

7. Lit. "coming to terms with the past."

apolitical. Meanwhile, antiracist critiques of Sarrazin are characterized as politically motivated, irrational attempts to subvert hard facts by exploiting German guilt about the past.

Racism as Debatable, Integration as Consensus

What exactly constituted the fundamental transgression of the Sarrazin debate was contested. In the first wave of public reaction, the overtly derogatory and racist nature of Sarrazin's claims inspired a handful of articles critiquing their dependence on debunked junk science and biological racism (Blech 2010) and connecting them to global national populist movements (Bidder et al. 2010; Musharbash 2010). Several politicians published harsh criticisms in *Der Spiegel* (Al-Wazir 2010; Stegner 2010) and *Bild* published a selection of supportive and critical opinions from public figures (*Bild* 2010a). Chancellor Angela Merkel made a statement two days after the first excerpts were published, calling them "highly offensive, defamatory, and polemical" (*Spiegel Online* 2010b). This initial scandal soon inspired a backlash, which held that the true transgression was characterizing Sarrazin's arguments as defamatory and racist. In short, in the backlash created by Sarrazin supporters, the initial antiracist criticism of Sarrazin was the true scandal.

This set the stage for a classic "free speech event" (Peters 2010; Titley 2020) wherein a provocateur, supported by liberal proponents of the marketplace of ideas, stages claims or actions targeting a second group as a "problem." When this provokes a third group to respond with a refusal to engage or calls for censure, the provocateur and their supporters claim this response as proof of the truth value of the claims. The rebukes validate claims of silencing and victimization that fuel majoritarian grievance. Despite commanding the attention of the nation, the provocateur claims to speak "under erasure" (Titley 2020, 112). As subtler forms of everyday racism have been joined by a new, bold "entitlement racism" (Essed and Muhr 2018), expressions of racist and sexist ideas become a means of declaring one's freedom. Giving offense is reinscribed as bravely standing up for free speech.

The Sarrazin affair began with the pre-circulation of book excerpts in Germany's most popular newspaper and magazine, the national populist tabloid *Bild* and Germany's premiere investigative periodical, *Der Spiegel*. The ability of Sarrazin's agents to arrange this high-profile debut was likely predicated on his demonstrated ability to generate "media-hype" (Vasterman 2005). A polemicist who draws validation from causing offence, Sarrazin caused a smaller scale scandal in a 2009 interview that previewed arguments

he would make in his book. In an interview with the magazine *Lettre Internationale*, Sarrazin stated, “I do not have to recognize anyone who lives off the state, rejects that state, does not properly provide for the education of their children, and constantly produces new little headscarf girls” (Berberich and Sarrazin 2009, 197). This statement deftly humiliates and dehumanizes Muslims on multiple levels. While not as explicit as the demeaning descriptors of Muslim families, Sarrazin’s refusal “to recognize” (*anerkennen*) is equally pointed. As Charles Taylor argues, withholding recognition “can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being” (2005, 465). The interview was filled with the kinds of Malthusian anxieties that permeate his book. He rails against disparities in fertility between the “economically productive” and the “economically useless”—particularly Arabs and Turks—along with the desire for policy to make the latter “disappear in time” (*sich auswachsen*). This interview garnered substantial criticism, demonstrating Sarrazin’s value in the attention economy.

As with the smaller scale response to his 2009 interview, the initial reaction from politicians and public figures to the pre-published book segments was mostly critical. Criticism of Sarrazin grew stronger after an interview with *Berliner Morgenpost* in which he responded to a question about the existence of a “genetic identity” that, “all Jews share a particular gene, Basques have particular genes, that distinguish them from others” (*Berliner Morgenpost* 2010). The claim of the existence of a “Jewish gene” sparked immediate condemnation across the political spectrum (Friedrich 2011, 11). It is important to note, however, that from the outset and almost without exception even Sarrazin’s harshest critics ignored the broader issue of anti-Muslim racism and affirmed the value of debating “problems of integration.”

The “Jewish gene” comment, although relatively mild compared to Sarrazin’s statements about the inherited intelligence deficits of Muslims, ignited a new controversy that ensured Sarrazin’s dominance of the news cycle. Although the plausible deniability of the racist theories informing Sarrazin’s work was maintained by his supporters, Sarrazin’s remark about a “Jewish gene” entered the purview of overt biological racism, and thus crossed the line of deniability for a German public particularly sensitive to antisemitism after what one journalist euphemistically called “those murderous twelve years” (Baum 2010). While holding firm to the claims of his book, Sarrazin expressed regret for broaching the topic of the Jewish gene and the comment was considered a mere gaffe by his supporters (see Broder 2010). Reacting to the controversy, the Bundesbank board member and president of Germany Christian Wulff asked for and received Sarrazin’s resignation from his seat on the board of the Bundesbank.

With the initial backlash keeping the story at the top of the news agenda, Sarrazin's book sold faster than it could be printed for the first several weeks after its publication. Just as importantly, the initial wave of public condemnation affirmed Sarrazin's self-positioning as a teller of "uncomfortable truths," since, intuitively, if his arguments were already part of public discussions, they would not have raised such a strong backlash. Since they confirmed this assertion, critics' arguments debunking Sarrazin's theories gained little purchase. The terms of the debate were set as those he had proposed. Furthermore, this feedback loop provided the counter-opinion necessary to create uncertainty as to the meaning of Sarrazin's statements. This uncertainty is necessary for a story to sustain interest and instigate a public conversation. As Bird writes, "the scandal story . . . is not clear and closed, but 'open' allowing for many competing versions and interpretations" (1997, 109). Without the initial condemnation from public figures, Sarrazin's statements might have faded from public attention.

Initial criticism inspired a backlash supporting Sarrazin's arguments and "freedom of opinion" (*Meinungsfreiheit*) more broadly. This development began in the first days of outrage, as media outlets reported on the unprecedented responses from their audiences, mostly in support of Sarrazin (Friedrich 2011, 12). As the reports of public support for Sarrazin's work piled up and the book sold out even before it could hit the shelves, opinions shifted among commentators and politicians, and discourse refocused on the need to respect the feelings of "the people"—referring to the white German public. Merkel softened her criticism less than two weeks after the initial pre-circulation. While she maintained that Sarrazin's work was not helpful for the integration debate, Merkel argued that acknowledging the supposedly statistically proven tendency of devout Muslim youths toward violence should not be taboo: "It is a big problem, and we can talk openly about it without raising the suspicion of xenophobia" (*Spiegel Online* 2010a). In this interview in *Bild's* Sunday edition, Merkel confirmed the existence of a "taboo" against the discussion of the social deficiencies of stigmatized groups. She also warned against the association of violence with any specific religion, saying,

Violence by young people is often a sign that they don't see any prospects for themselves. Only education, education, education can help with that. Our government is making a lot of offerings in that regard, but the first responsibility lies with the parents, and school and society can't relieve them of that. (Merkel 2010)

Although Merkel attempted to reframe *Bild*'s repeated attempts to link criminality, unemployment, and people with Turkish or Arab heritage in their questions, Merkel's reframing did not challenge *Bild*'s conclusions, including claims that young "migrants" threaten and intimidate the police. She supported an interventionist approach by the government to regulate immigrant and minority compliance with integration demands, while denying the existence of social and structural inequality as causes of the poor prospects for many minoritized youth. While affirming that the state must and does provide appropriate education, Merkel located ultimate responsibility in the private sphere of the family.

Merkel denied the value of Sarrazin's contribution while adopting his framing and assumptions, implicitly sanctioning the validity of his claims about the dangers of failed integration and political correctness. Without explicitly singling out any group, Merkel mirrored the deficit narratives proposed in *Bild*'s questions.

We can expect from those who come here that they integrate into our society, that they learn our language. That men make it possible for their wives to take part in societal life, that girls be allowed to go on class trips and take part in physical education classes. Violence in schools and other deplorable situations must be openly discussed. Concealment only strengthens prejudice. (Merkel 2010)

Merkel's comments frame integration as a problem of minority cultures and behaviors clashing with German norms of gender equality, female empowerment, and adherence to the law. Merkel reproduces Orientalist tropes of the despotic and patriarchal Muslim (Said 1979), strengthening the distinction between "our" peaceful and egalitarian Western norms and "their" archaic Oriental culture. By condemning the most obviously egregious parts of Sarrazin's discourse, the racialized assumptions underlying Merkel's framing of the enforcement of integration are normalized. Although she resists naming any particular group, the centuries-old familiarity of white European publics with Orientalist tropes upholding the fundamental cultural incompatibility of East and West means that no group need be explicitly named. Merkel went a step further in October, attracting international attention with her claim that "multiculturalism is a failure" (*Spiegel Online* 2010d; *Spiegel Online* 2010e), a claim she and her fellow party leaders have made repeatedly over the years. The speed of this rhetorical shift, from clear condemnation to implicit validation, shows the power of the public backlash against the initial

public criticism of Sarrazin's work. This rapid convergence also suggests that the forms of knowledge held by Sarrazin's supporters and his critics were not as distinct as a polarized understanding of the debate suggests.

One premise shared by both critics and supporters of Sarrazin in the media coverage was the idea that "integration problems" were a serious concern in Germany that needed to be openly and aggressively addressed in policy. In the articles examined, only one person dismissed the fundamental premise of "integration" as a social issue. In an interview with *Spiegel Online*, white German actor Peter Lohmeyer was interviewed about the role of soccer in individual and national identity. When asked about the meaning of the upcoming German-Turkish men's Euro-Cup qualifying match for the "integration debate," Lohmeyer responded, "Integration discussions really get on my nerves. You don't have to talk about it; integration just happens. Period" (*Spiegel Online* 2010c). With this exception, "integration" was broadly accepted as an issue demanding serious scrutiny, debate, and intervention.

In the corpus of articles, integration is never directly defined, but is outlined through associations and indicators; educational achievement, employment status, and language proficiency are chief among them. Commentators prioritize "speaking German" as the most important means and indicator of integration. This reflects the shift after citizenship law reforms at the turn of this millennium from ethnic birthright citizenship to "*ius linguarum*," or citizenship based on German as the new pan-ethnic lingua franca (Gramling 2009; 2016). It also draws on the myth of the permanent migrant who grew up in Germany but is unable to speak German. This widely held false narrative is based largely on the denigration of German vernaculars created by young people with transnational heritage (Wiese 2011; 2014; Zambon 2021). The notion of the perpetual migrant incapable of mastering a European language is rooted in the historical "co-naturalization of language and race" that remains essential to the construction of white Europeaness against racialized colonial subjects (Rosa and Flores 2017). In addition to adopting a "proper" German dialect, integration is conceptualized as a personal choice to value education and take responsibility for economic productivity. In other words, integration is the individual choice to dedicate one's scarce resources to the development of one's human capital, to be an effective "entrepreneur of the self" (Foucault 2008, 226).

Like the concept of integration, the target of integration is poorly defined but implicitly understood. The figure of the integrant is referenced by terms such as migrant, immigrant, Muslim, Turk, Arab, foreigner, and foreign co-citizen. Commentators make little or no distinction between the immigrant

generations and their German-born descendants or between foreign nationals and German citizens. As in Sarrazin's book, not all immigrants and their descendants are considered a "problem"—only Black and Brown populations grouped under the spurious categorization as Muslim or "migrant." Sarrazin's supporters and detractors proposed different reasons for the presumed failure of Muslim populations in general to achieve integration. While all agreed that the state should invest in special educational measures for "migrants," Sarrazin's detractors focused almost entirely on education while supporters demanded that the government intervene to end immigration and enforce integration.

The difference between detractors and supporters can be interpreted in terms of two approaches to neoliberal social politics that Foucault identifies in his 1978 lectures entitled *The Birth of Biopolitics* (2008). Sarrazin's critics emphasize the need for maintaining the social protections present in notions of *Vitalpolitik* (vital politics) that originated in the German and Austrian "ordoliberal" school of economics.⁸ Developed starting in the 1930s, ordoliberal economists developed a new theory of liberalism which was later implemented as the basis of the postwar political and economic system in West Germany. Like other forms of neoliberalism, *Vitalpolitik* accepts and promotes the extension of the economy to the entire social field, but in addition it aims to compensate for what is cold, calculating, and mechanical in the economic field of competition. Philosopher and public intellectual Richard David Precht (2010) most clearly encapsulates this approach in his commentary in *Der Spiegel* identifying a "social war"—not in terms of a Huntington-style "clash of civilizations" but in terms of either a "social" or "dissocial" approach to the economy. Precht calls for a morally sensitive "new idea of growth" centered on measures of happiness. This view resonates with the German neoliberal version of enterprise society that is "a society for the market and a society against the market" (Foucault 2008, 242) in that it is oriented toward the market while compensating for the market's effects on social values. Sarrazin's critics maintain ordoliberalism's concern for the socially corrosive effects of market rationality without questioning the economic premises underlying Sarrazin's work.

In contrast, Sarrazin's supporters rejected the ambivalence toward market rationality inherent in German ordoliberal social politics. As I examine in more detail below, they saw the social protections it proposes as a hindrance to the proper function of economic rationality at all levels of the social body.

8. The concept of neoliberalism was coined by the German Ordoliberal school (Foucault 2008).

Yet the call among Sarrazin supporters was not merely against political intervention in migration and integration but rather for interventions that support economic rationality in every aspect of social life, and most intimately and most urgently in choices about reproduction. Across the spectrum of opinion in *Der Spiegel* and *Bild*, the question was not whether the state should intervene to compel the “integration” of transnational populations but how it should do so.

Beleaguered Truth-Tellers Fighting the Multiculturalist Elite

In addition to direct communication with traditional media in the form of letters to the editor, calls, and comments on online versions of stories, members of the public registered their reactions on the internet on book review forums.⁹ The book review forums of the internet provided an open platform for public response. The first reviews of the book were posted on Amazon.de within 24 hours of the publication of the first book excerpts. Amazon provides a public space for rejoinder moderated primarily by readers themselves. Book review sites allow readers and members of the public broad latitude in the focus and length of their responses. Amazon.de also includes mechanisms for the public to weigh in on whether the reviews are “helpful” and to respond directly to reviews. Indeed, while the reams of opinion articles published at the time of the affair have long receded into the online archives of the legacy media, the reviews that were voted most helpful in 2010 remain at the top of the Amazon page for Sarrazin’s book over a decade later.

Internet-based communication allows individual users to achieve a level of visibility that approaches and sometimes exceeds that of the professional media. Castells argues that politics is primarily media politics and that, although “the media are not the holders of power . . . they constitute by and large the space where power is decided” (2007, 242). As such, mediated communication plays a fundamental role in the formation of “the public mind.” For this reason, Castells sees the establishment of internet-based communication, or what he calls “mass self-communication,” as the basis of a historical change in the terrain of politics and “counter-power” (2007). Sarrazin supporters embraced this “counter-power” discourse, but in service of returning to an imagined homogeneous status quo ante, before

9. See also Carolin Dorothee Lange’s (2011; 2012) analysis of romantic nationalism in reader reviews of the book.

German policy acknowledged the reality that Turkish-Germans and other transnational and multiracial communities had long been part of the German people. Echoing the framing in the book, the overwhelming majority of the reviewers of Sarrazin's book on Amazon.de situate themselves as speaking from an oppressed minority position fighting against the German political establishment and the presumed hegemony of antiracism and multiculturalism (see Ahmed 2008).

The Sarrazin debate was so successful because, for supportive reviewers, it replayed a narrative of beleaguered truth-teller, risking condemnation to speak truth to power. Sarrazin prepared the ground for this narrative, and his credibility was thus increased by his critics. Sarrazin's critics undermined his theories and analysis but failed to provide an equally compelling narrative. As Tomlinson (1997) observes, media scandals are "middle-order moral events" that function to regulate the unspoken moral foundations of a community, providing "contexts for 'communal' moral reflection and debate in modern secular societies" (1997, 68). Large-scale moral issues, from starvation and genocide to climate change, are difficult to personalize. They are not easily connected to or instantiated in the behavior of symbolic individuals. Instead, these high-order events are so unwieldy that they tend to produce a retreat from moral engagement. In contrast, scandal attracts and requires the active engagement of people to materialize as an event. The success of scandal as a middle-order moral event depends in part on the narratability of scandal, that is, the potential of scandal to be converted into a story with symbolically significant characters.

In the case at hand, the most significant character was Sarrazin himself. In a framing that has become increasingly emblematic of national populists worldwide, Sarrazin strategically placed himself as a champion of truth beginning with the epigraph of his book, which also opened the first excerpt published in *Bild*. The epigraph is a quote from one of the founders of the German Social Democratic Party, Ferdinand Lassalle, that states, "all political small-mindedness consists of the silencing and concealment of that which is."¹⁰ This quote sets up the antagonism that Sarrazin expands in the following text between the champions of truth and reality and the well-intentioned but cowardly apologists for the true causes of social denigration. Sarrazin's acquiescence to calls for his resignation from the Bundesbank completed his transformation into a "martyr" of political correctness (*Bild* 2010c) or what we would now call "cancel culture."

10. "Alle politische Kleingeisterei besteht in dem Verschweigen und Bemänteln dessen, was ist."

If scandal's enduring appeal as a narrative form lies in its ability to help "people structure their view of what the world is and how it should be" (Bird 1997, 102), the next question is what view of the world each scandal produces. One of the most salient features of the Sarrazin affair evident in the Amazon.de reviews is the personal investment of reviewers in defending the core arguments raised by Sarrazin's work. As Tomlinson writes, "what claims priority in our selective attention . . . is those experiences that speak most directly to the way in which we continuously narrate our 'selves' to ourselves" (1997, 73). The Sarrazin debate reveals a clash between political discourses of tolerance and multiculturalism and the self-narration of many Germans, which, as reader responses indicated, found its expression in Sarrazin's portrayal of Germany's problems. The magnitude and content of the response suggests that the backlash against Sarrazin's perspective stoked grievances over perceived taboos around race and nationalism that are seen as a lingering punishment for the crimes of the Nazi period.

Biopolitical Truth in Reader Responses

Of the 2,682 reviews published on Amazon.de as of July 25, 2024, nearly 10 percent were written within the first two months following the initial pre-circulation of book excerpts. As of this writing, new reviews and discussions continue to be added regularly, and the book remains in the top ten books on Amazon.de's bestseller lists in the categories "Multiculturalism" and "Integration and Intercultural Education." This analysis focuses on reviews published during the critical first two months. Of the 227 reviews posted in the period August 23–October 18, 2010, the highest impact reviews (those with over 100 votes registered in response to the question, "Was this review helpful to you?") were selected for close textual analysis assisted by descriptive coding. The great majority of all reviews posted as of mid-2024 gave the book the maximum possible score of five stars; 87 percent of reviews assigned the book four or five stars. Mirroring the opinions expressed in the review scores, positive reviews were much more likely to earn positive user feedback in terms of the votes for the review's helpfulness. Most voters rated negative reviews as unhelpful.¹¹ Many of the reviews are highly detailed; the most popular—then and still today—is nearly 1,500 words long. Because negative reviews were more likely to attract high num-

11. Since the original data collection, Amazon has changed their feedback mechanisms to eliminate the possibility to rate a review as "unhelpful."

Table 2. Reviews on Amazon.de that Received over 100 Votes (Aug. 23–Oct. 18, 2010)

Rating	Number of Reviews	“Helpful” Votes	“Unhelpful” Votes	Voted “Helpful” (%)
5 Stars	27	11,021	2,332	83
4 Stars	2	472	96	83
3 Stars	2	819	188	81
2 Stars	1	84	295	28
1 Star	13	1,368	2,766	33
<i>Total</i>	45			

bers of (negative) votes, one-star reviews were heavily overrepresented in the selected corpus (table 2). A representative sample of 45 reviews would have included 31 five-star reviews, 7 four-star reviews, 3 three-star reviews, 1.5 two-star reviews, and 3 one-star reviews. The overrepresentation of negative reviews in my sample amplified critical opinions that would have been lost in a representative sample.

While the sample includes diverse opinions, several themes predominate. These themes relate to the politics of truth, economics and the dysfunction of the state’s welfare policies, and the need to ensure the democratic values and continued existence of German society. Although reviewers frequently minimized the importance of Sarrazin’s most overtly racist claims, they often defended the validity of such claims using economic and statistical facts. The reviews, as a corpus, represent an impassioned defense of society based on the purportedly dispassionate rationality of facts and figures. The threat to society, as it is constructed here, is not just “integration-refusing” immigrants and minorities but, more fundamentally, the welfare state that enables this failure to integrate. Reviewers assert the democratic sovereignty of the implicitly white Christian majority, as represented by the outpouring of public support for Sarrazin, to check government overreach.

One of the most common themes repeated in reviews was the strength of the book’s truth-value, which reviewers claimed was based on logic and statistical truth. Reviewers frequently stated that these statistics and facts are widely known and accepted, yet they also claimed that they are “swept under the rug” (CyberCynic 2010) by the liberal elite.

The data presented in the book shows a sad truth that is well supported by statistics. Namely, the rejection by some immigrants of the simplest basic rules: the learning of a foreign language as well as the observance of the laws and rules of the host society. (Olli R. 2010)

In his book, Sarrazin draws on broadly recognized investigations, studies, scientists and, without exception, on serious sources. He collects statistics, evaluates them, and draws his conclusions in a dispassionate, objective way. As such, it has less to do with “opinions,” but rather with conclusions about things that are already known. (Cyber-Cynic 2010)

People accuse Sarrazin that his numerical data are all wrong. As a board member of the Bundesbank, Sarrazin has access to the best available statistical material. He would hardly leave himself open [to criticism] with false data on the birthrates of Turkish migrant women in relation to German academics. (Chartleser 2010)

Sarrazin was described as a disinterested and rational professional, characteristics that lend legitimacy to his interpretation of the data. In fact, reviewers used the abundance of data to marginalize Sarrazin’s interpretive role. As one reviewer assessed, “the author has brought together many facts, that speak a clear language” (Naoko 2010). These purportedly colorblind technologies of knowledge racialize the targets of integration discourse, whose life poses a risk to the national population. The primary goal of biopower is to achieve equilibrium, regularity, and homeostasis across the social body. It involves a set of processes such as the ratio of birth to death, the rate of reproduction, the fertility of the population, and it introduces new mechanisms including forecasts, statistical estimates, and overall measures (Foucault 2003, 246). The goal of these mechanisms is to cultivate “the power to make live” (Foucault 2003, 247)—to optimize the state of life for the normative nation.

Truth, in this framework, is determined by the strategic logics of the market and political economy. “The market determines that a good government is no longer quite simply one that is just . . . The market must tell the truth (*dire le vrai*); it must tell the truth in relation to governmental practice” (Foucault 2008, 32). For Sarrazin’s supporters, this form of truth should stand as the ultimate arbiter of government policy regulating the targets of integration. Foucault calls this the *empirical and utilitarian* mode of political economy, “which defines the sphere of independence of the governed on the basis of the necessary limitation of government” (2008, 43). It follows that government should restrain public support and expose Muslim targets of integration to the regulating effects of the market.

This ascendant utilitarian framework of political economy has decentered but not vanquished the older justice-based *revolutionary axiomatic* framework that operates according to public law and the rights of man.

Although these regimes of truth are different, between them exists “a ceaseless connection and a whole series of bridges, transits, and joints” (Foucault 2008, 43). They often work together to maintain hegemonic norms. Both systems of truth with their moral frameworks are present in the tensions of the Sarrazin debate. The axiomatic approach appears in the defense of white Christian German democratic values that are supposedly under threat from Muslim despotism. The appeal to democratic values is simultaneously used to distance Sarrazin from the far right. In explaining why Sarrazin should not be compared to the extreme right, one reviewer referred to a German neo-Nazi party, writing:

The NPD [German National Party] is an undemocratic party; Sarrazin, however, speaks precisely to the point that with migrants from Turkish and Arab countries undemocratic and anti-human-rights tides are infiltrating Germany. Sarrazin has absolutely nothing against a Turkish migrant who respects German laws, learns the German language, and feeds his own family. (Müller-Güldemeister 2010)

Here, the threat of the far-right parties springs not from their racism and white nationalism but from their undemocratic nature, a characteristic that reviewers equate with Turkish and Arab “infiltration” of Germany. When the axiomatic paradigm appears in these reviews, it is often in the context of defending German moral and democratic values from violent “incompatible” cultures, which are epitomized by Turks, Arabs, and Muslims generally. This mode of governance and social distinction aligns with what Wallerstein (2006) calls “European universalism,” which, building on a clash of civilizations narrative, holds that Western civilizations are superior because they are the only ones based on universal values of equality and human rights. The racist hierarchy here is denied by maintaining that an individual “Turkish migrant” may adhere to the legal, cultural-linguistic, and economic norms of German society to demonstrate their worth.

Sarrazin supporters also frame antiracism as an existential threat to German society. This connects with transnational views of antiracism as “a censorious political reflex” that is part of a “new intolerance . . . a ‘fragile’ refusal to engage in democratic debate” (Tittley 2020, 7–8).

Leaving aside Thilo Sarrazin’s sometimes rather coarse articulations, the book delivers above all verifiable facts that should serve as the basis for a discussion on necessary changes in our integration politics. . . . In no way do I see his writing as an inflammatory smear that could

serve to threaten the social peace in Germany. On the contrary: a man writes here, who talks not of assimilation but of integration, who is primarily driven by worries about the future of our country and who wants to dissolve the unspeakability of the clash of cultures by clearly naming the existing conflicts. (Ulrich Groh 2010)

Topics that are of true existential significance for our society—and let's not forget—for our children are suppressed with thought and speech bans. Transgressions are very effectively punished by the racism cudgel or by banishment to the dirty brown corner. (W. F. Schmidt 2010)

There have been many attempts to reduce Sarrazin's very thoroughly presented self-evident [arguments] to xenophobia. Whoever argues this has not read the book. Whoever gets drawn into such an argument is squandering our historical last chance to turn things around and prevent irreparable changes that mean an uncertain future for us and our children. (P. Schmitz 2010)

Antiracist critique here poses a threat to life and democracy by silencing the truth necessary to protect German society into the future. A throughline here is the implicit fear about the future of Germany as a white Christian nation. This is coded in the urgent, repeated references to *us*, *our* country, and especially *our* children—who face extermination through “irreparable changes” and cultural conflict created by Muslim immigrants and their descendants.

This framing connects to tropes of white German victimhood prevalent in the *Bild* commentaries. This victimization takes two main forms: the supposed anti-German racism of “foreigners” and the unfair shame heaped on contemporary Germans because of the Nazi past. One *Bild* commentator laments the roving “criminal Arab gangs” that menace “the little people” calling them “fucking Germans” (*Scheiß Deutscher*) (Elitz 2010). Another article claims, “It's a fact: ‘potatoes,’ ‘fucking Germans,’ ‘pig-flesh-eaters’—this is how Germans are being cursed out in Germany, in schools, on the metros, and in the streets” (*Bild* 2010b). Meanwhile, another *Bild* commentator laments that “because Hitler screamed ‘Doitschland’ and 60 million people had to die for it,” now Germans are only allowed to be “proud to live in Germany during the World Cup” (Seegers 2010). This writer mocks and trivializes fascist nationalism and erases even the universally recognized “frozen racism” (Lentin 2016) of the Nazi era. Citing 60 million deaths lumps

together the systematic, industrialized murder of the Jews, Roma and Sinti, the disabled, LGBTQ people, and other minoritized groups with all deaths directly caused by the war, including those of the German military. In complementary ways, these reviews and press commentaries deny the racial project of work like Sarrazin's. Here, it is not white Christian nationalism that threatens German democracy but rather violent anti-German "migrants" and progressive antiracist discourses that prevent the acknowledgment of the real threats to the future of German culture and life.

In Sarrazin's book and in reviewers' responses, the misdirected interventions of the state are the fundamental social and economic barrier preventing democracy—in the form of the sovereign will of the majority (white Christian) population—and market rationality from working to solve the nation's problems. Reviewers do not denounce government intervention at large, but only intervention that inhibits the regulatory effects of the market. They call instead for more active interventions to enforce market rationality, which, in this view, forces integration. One reviewer praised *Germany Does Away with Itself* as

A long-overdue, rousing book that underpins with numbers where our government's *laissez-faire* [policies] and especially the one-sided media reporting with its multicultural glorification and prescribed bleeding-heart idealism (*Gutmenschentum*) has gotten Germany. (Franziska G., 2010)

The unwillingness of government to make active interventions to ensure the future life of the German population has resulted from German guilt over the Nazi past. Not only are comparisons of Sarrazin's theories with the eugenics of the Nazi period dismissed as invalid, but guilt about the Nazi period also actually threatens the German population:

We live here in an absolute suck-up society. We stand in the middle of absolute chaos and our dear politicians silence to death what is going on here. Why? Because they want to play the nice Germans, the perfect Germans for the whole world, but don't have things under control in any way. And why should we and our children still held responsible for things that someone hatched decades ago. (S. Staufen-Breisach "Halleluja" 2010)

Genocide—which cannot be named but only intimated—is something that some individual person "hatched" in a distant past. It is an isolated plot with

no broader social or structural relevance beyond its role in encouraging “nice Germans” to debase themselves to curry favor with the international community. The government’s excess is evident in both antiracist political correctness that limits the free speech of citizens who speak out to defend their children’s future and in the welfare state’s meddling with the proper functioning of the market system.

In this regard, several reviewers invoke United States as a more appropriate model. In the United States, social benefits are more limited and unavailable to newly arrived immigrants. “Therefore,” writes another reviewer, “integration there is enforced through the necessity of participation in the labor process” (Falk Müller 2010). Focusing on the state’s responsibility for this social dysfunction allows reviewers to dismiss concerns about Sarrazin’s bigotry:

Contrary to what is claimed over and over, Sarrazin does not blame either Hartz-IV (welfare) recipients or migrants across-the-board, nor does he attack them. On the contrary, he determines that they behave, like any entrepreneur or employee, and in fact any economic person, according to the rules of economics, in that they optimize the relationship between input and output. Whoever can get something for free would be stupid to pay for it, and whoever earns more without working in Germany than they would with hard work in their homeland would be badly advised not to come here if he could. (Müller-Guldemeister 2010)

By inhibiting the salutary inequality of the market, this quote argues that the state incentivizes less industrious people to leave their homelands in search of the easy life provided by Germany’s welfare system. The reviewer argues that, not only does Sarrazin not condemn immigrants who exploit the system, he respects their rational decision to pursue a place on the German dole. Thus the only logical conclusion is to change the incentives driving that decision. In this view, “social policy cannot have equality as its objective. On the contrary, it must let inequality function” (Foucault 2008, 143). This vision of equality is that inequality is the same for all.

Along the same lines, reviewers condemn state interventions that support low-income families with children for encouraging the “wrong sorts” of populations to proliferate. Incentives governing reproduction are among the most frequently mentioned concerns in reviews. As another reviewer writes,

[The welfare system] encourages families from the social stratum that cannot or will not survive through their own impetus to have large

numbers of children. Thus, the taxpayer finances the intellectual thinning [of society], ever more welfare recipients are coming with ever fewer gainful workers. (P. Schmitz 2010)

This line of argumentation underscores the death that is always implicit in biopower. It conflates poverty with intellectual and social unfitness. Muslim “migrants” are the primary target here, but the framing in many reviews is broad enough to also include the white German poor. Here, the life of the supposedly intellectually inferior represents the weakening and death of the population. The implication is that for the German population to live, power must be exercised to curb the growth of subpopulations that pose a threat to that life. This illustrates the connection that Mbembe observes between “the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations” (2003, 14). In biopolitics, the destruction of human bodies and populations is ideally carried out through the optimization of policies aimed at controlling life and death at the aggregate level. The interventionist state—or, more precisely, the improperly intervening state—is singled out as the primary enabler of undesirable immigrants. Political intervention, here, needs to follow and support the logics of the market, creating the proper incentives to discourage the reproduction of undesirable populations. Reviewers support the extension of economic rationality into the most intimate private spheres of life. The market, properly supported by state institutions, would act as a guide and educator, rooting out the indolent and cultivating the entrepreneurial.

Although the imagined immigrant underclasses are portrayed here as being all but helpless in the face of the poorly managed incentive system, the moral critique of Muslim immigrant indolence returns when the discussion turns to individual responsibility. As the above reviewer continues,

58% of people with Turkish roots do not feel welcome in Germany. But what better way to achieve recognition in a country than through successful self-integration of which one can be proud? And those who only want social support, without integration or without rendering any service at all in return—to them one has to say: you are really not welcome! (Falk Müller 2010)

In this remark, the right to exist in Germany is contingent on submission to the majority demands for integration. In the first case integration connotes entrepreneurship, whether social or economic. Integration is also framed as a form of reciprocation or appreciation due to the German majority from

those receiving public benefits. Christian Social Union politician Edmund Stoiber stated this obligation starkly in his commentary for *Bild*, demanding “better integration, which is a debt owed by all foreign co-citizens who live here” (Stoiber 2010). Integration, here, serves as shorthand for the always-provisional achievement of social worth through subordination to majority cultural and economic demands.

With the focus on fertility and the political economy of the welfare state, Sarrazin and his supporters advocate unleashing the salutary function of markets to regulate “migrant” populations. In biopolitics, “the multiplicity of individuals is no longer pertinent, the population is” (Foucault 2009, 4:42). The discourses and mechanisms of security in biopolitics function “without prohibiting or prescribing, but possibly making use of some instruments of prescription and prohibition, to respond to a reality in such a way that this response cancels out the reality to which it responds—nullifies it, or limits, checks, or regulates it” (Foucault 2009, 4:47). By eliminating the welfare state, the market would be permitted to operate freely and would correct the problems of “undesirable” immigration and procreation. At the same time, public resources could be spent modifying conditions to encourage the procreation of “the more competent” (*die Tüchtigeren*) (Sarrazin 2010b, 174). The overt racialized eugenics driving these arguments are debated away using empirical utilitarian logics coupled with a conception of racism as a historical phenomenon whose primary contemporary function as a concept is to shame “normal” Germans and constrain their freedom to act in their collective self-interest.

Conclusion: Roadmap for the Rise of the New German Right

The book excerpt published in *Der Spiegel* opened with the sovereign claim that “it is the right of every society to determine for itself who it will admit. Every country has the right, thereby, to protect its culture and its traditions” (Sarrazin 2010a). The social, political, and economic converge in Sarrazin’s statistically legitimated portrayal of the decline of white Christian Germany. Sarrazin invokes the sovereign right of the majoritarian nation to define its borders and decide who within them has the right to have rights. As Agamben shows, modern biopolitics is characterized by the constant need to redefine the boundaries of life that define and separate the inside from the outside, which is to say, to perpetually distinguish between politically relevant and bare life (1998, 131). Given the central role of biopolitics in the eugenicist projects of the Nazi regime, it is surprising that Sarrazin

largely overcame the antiracist critiques of his work. This may be related to the fact that Sarrazin's underlying political-economic framework is taken directly from the postwar ordoliberal economic philosophy, which is associated with Germany's return to democracy and economic prosperity.

However, the ease of transformation of modern parliamentary democracies to totalitarian states and then back again is only made possible because of the extent to which politics has become biopolitics. The trajectories of Italy and Germany show that their political transformations were primarily a matter of determining a new form of organization suited to the task of the "care, control, and use of bare life" (Agamben 1998, 122). As the troubling binary dividing the capable and the incapable in the Sarrazin debate showed, the shadow of biopower's imperative to "make live" represents a continuity between modern totalitarian and democratic states. In a system that operates under the impetus to make live, racism "is primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die" (Foucault 2003, 254). These implications of the cultural binaries drawn in the debate were not lost on all reviewers. One critical reviewer summarized the central point of Sarrazin's book as follows: "there is worthy and there is unworthy life" (Steuber 2010).

Despite the initial outrage over the elements of overt biological and scientific racism in Sarrazin's arguments, the framing of integration as a cultural, economic, and political problem was generally accepted on the terms he set forth. This is demonstrated by the fact that the *Sarrazin debate* quickly became an *integration debate*. Even Sarrazin's critics tended to accept his assertions about "failures of integration" while seeking to condemn his most overtly racist theories. This debate developed into calls by the leading center-right Christian Democrats for policies to reform and restrict immigration. Following similar statements from the party's leader, Horst Seehofer, chairman of the Christian Social Union, argued that "no additional immigration should be allowed in the future from cultural groups that reject our German *Leitkultur* (leading culture). Integration refusal and the rejection of our German *Leitkultur* are two sides of the same coin" (Weiland 2010). Commentators who argued against the characterization of certain groups as "integration refusers" (*Integrationsverweigerer*) tended to base their arguments on individual examples of model immigrants (see El-Sharif 2010). As the comments posted below these articles confirm, these individualized accounts were easily rejected as irrelevant to broader social trends that—in their view—confirmed the existence of problem groups. This view holds that through their supposed rejection of German values, problem immigrants are condemned to—and deserving of—persistent social inequality. Thus, if they

would only choose to integrate, the success that results from the superiority of the German canon of values (*Wertekanon*)¹² could also be theirs.

The Sarrazin debate also opened new space for right-wing politics in the German mainstream (Friedrich 2011), sparking speculation about the foundation of a new right-wing political party lead by Sarrazin. Although Sarrazin had no interest in founding a party, or even in leaving the center-left Social Democratic Party, the call for a right-wing alternative was answered with the establishment of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party in 2013. The party platform closely follows many of the ideas promoted by Sarrazin, from a purist approach to neoliberal economics to hostility toward Muslim Germans and immigrants. While the party was founded with a primary focus on economics, the anti-immigration and ethnic nationalist elements of their platform became increasingly dominant. The AfD has grown quickly since their founding, becoming the first or second leading party in several state parliaments. The Sarrazin debate set the objectives and galvanized the public for a new political movement on the right in Germany.

The previous chapters have examined distinct occurrences of celebration and condemnation of immigrants and their descendants, while also drawing them into relation through their common foundation in biopolitical discourses that seek to manage difference in the government of life. The next chapter examines where these two modes of integration discourse overlap and collide in cases where minority celebrities serve as models of integration or its failure. Prizes honoring “examples of successful integration” celebrate an ideal of diversity that supports normative German values. Successful individuals prove the cosmopolitan and meritocratic character of German society and, at the same time, gloss over the myriad differences that distinguish the experiences of first-generation immigrants from those of their children and grandchildren. The cases in the next chapter underscore the never-resolved status of the candidate for integration by tracing examples that cross back and forth between celebrating success and reifying failure.

12. For a typical example of the formulation of the role of these canonic values, see Sarrazin 2010b, 19.

7 • Models and Miscreants

The Integration Bambi Awards

When global soccer star Mesut Özil quit the German national team in 2018 to protest racist treatment by team officials and the media, Özil emphasized his status as a German taxpayer, philanthropist, and World Cup champion. He stated that although he was born and raised in Germany, this had not been enough to guarantee his status as “fully German.” Using comparisons to the easy acceptance of his Polish-born German teammates, he asked whether his Turkish heritage and Muslim faith barred him from full belonging. To bolster his citizenship credentials, Özil also pointed to his many national awards, including a 2010 Bambi Award in a new category recognizing “successful integration” in German society. The Bambi, Germany’s oldest media award program, was frequently mentioned in the flurry of media coverage following Özil’s resignation as commentators asked how the nation’s “model of successful integration” was pushed beyond the limits. Although the Bambi Award was evoked as evidence of acceptance and social recognition, the Integration Bambi exemplifies the racialization processes that ultimately pushed Özil to resign.

This chapter examines the first three years of the Integration Bambi, exploring how the prize category honoring “integration” reinforced notions of Muslim Germans as permanent foreigners. It reproduced common tropes of the social deficits of immigrants and minority Germans—groups that are conflated under the umbrella term “migrant.” The category of the “migrant” is not defined by immigration but by traces of non-European ancestry—particularly from majority Muslim regions (see El-Tayeb 2011). While those celebrated by the award have used it to stake a claim to full citizenship as “new Germans” (see also chapter 5), the award supports the same discourses of integration that perpetuate the divide between normative citizens and those who must perpetually prove their value. While the Bambi for Integra-

tion ostensibly celebrates minority identities as part of Germany, it ultimately circumscribes those identities and affirms the superiority of white Christian traditions. Successful integration is associated with the acquisition of cultural traits and traditions associated with white Christian Germany, while maintaining an essentialized connection to what is described as one's "roots" in other cultures. The integration success trope appropriates the achievements of the minoritized Germans and converts them into an achievement of majority German systems of acculturation. It is also inextricable from its binary pair: the integration failure who refuses the lessons and values of German culture, leading to dangerous antisocial behavior like unemployment, crime, or intolerance of liberal values.

This chapter analyzes press coverage and speeches from the award ceremonies to explore how the first three years of the Integration Bambi Award illustrate the ideals of integration and the imagined threats posed by "integration refusal." The first three recipients and the discourses surrounding them illustrate pervasive tropes targeting young Muslim men. The first year's award exemplified the trope of the "good Muslim" who is acceptable so long as they are productive and politically docile subjects. Mesut Özil, at age 22, was known for his phlegmatic, shy demeanor and his outstanding ability to deliver game-making plays on the national team. The controversial selection of the Tunisian-German rapper, Bushido, for the second Integration Bambi set the stage to rehearse the trope of the "bad Muslim"—a defiant, illiberal outlaw. Critics across the political spectrum cast the "thug" themes reproduced in Bushido's commercial hip-hop as antithetical to integration and liberal democratic national values. Finally, the third Integration Bambi shifted away from traditional celebrities to focus on a man who became famous for being attacked by young men who were presumed to be Arab. The award celebrated German rabbi Daniel Alter, whose call for religious tolerance after an antisemitic attack made him a national hero. The discourses and context of Alter's award frame religious intolerance as an "imported" Muslim problem. The Integration Bambi celebrates successful minorities as avatars of a new cosmopolitan Germany while transposing antidemocratic, intolerant, and racist trends onto young Muslim men who are portrayed as refusing enlightened white Christian German norms. The Bambi represents the media's attempts to define an acceptable place in the nation for transnational German identities, while still maintaining a normative core concept of German culture independent of and distinct from that of minority cultures.

This case illuminates the media's investment in defining national identity. Popular culture prizes mobilize the symbolic value of celebrity for political, social, and economic purposes. Although this is also true of cultural prizes in

general, pop culture prizes such as the Bambi are built explicitly on the logic of celebrity, which consists of a self-reinforcing cycle in which media presence creates celebrity and celebrity cooperation, in turn, legitimates the media's role as arbiter of cultural value. The Bambi Awards mobilized Özil's celebrity to conceptualize and celebrate a framework for multiethnic social cohesion that maintains white Christian citizenship as its normative core. Recipients in the following two years progressively shifted focus from the value of the well-integrated for the nation to the threat posed by "bad Muslims" and "integration refusers." In the stories told by the Integration Bambi, the greatest threat to good minorities are "migrants" who refuse to embrace Germany's tolerance and cosmopolitanism.

The Bambi and the Social Logics of Cultural Prizes

The Bambi claims the status of the most important adjudicator of what matters in the German media sphere. What started as a film prize in 1948 morphed over the years into an increasingly broad media spectacle with rambling and shifting categories, particularly after it was acquired by German media magnate Franz Burda in 1962. Although it prioritizes popular appeal like most commercial media offerings, the Bambi also weighs in on serious public issues. The primary unifying concept for the award is media prominence. Bambi's mission statement has remained consistent for at least the past decade:

BAMBI is a spectacular acknowledgement of the heroes of our time, a symbol of recognition: whoever has accomplished extraordinary things that touched hearts, selflessly helped, or perfectly entertained in the course of the year is worthy of recognition with Germany's most important media prize. ("Über BAMBI: Die Jury," n.d.)

The Bambi selects from and amplifies images, events, and discourses in its aspiration to be an authority in defining the national public. The Bambi prides itself on being at the center of whatever issues capture public interest each year, exemplified by the creation of a new category in 2010: the Bambi for "Integration." The introduction of this award category reflects the preoccupation with identity and the evolving ethnic makeup of Germany that reached a new peak in 2010, first with the self-congratulatory cosmopolitanism of the World Cup (see chapters 2, 3, and 5) followed by the deep Islamophobia stirred up by Thilo Sarrazin's best-selling book (see chapter 6).

The Bambi has long been mocked in the press for its self-importance and overreaching ambitions, particularly when it wades into serious topics. Yet the derisive irony of prize commentators is an essential element of the function of cultural prizes. According to James English (2008), not only are cultural prizes resistant to critique, it is their “lifeblood.” “It is the charge of fundamental, irremediable illegitimacy that keeps the prize a focus of attention, increasing its journalistic capital, and speeds its accumulation of symbolic capital, or cultural prestige” (English 2008, 208). Thus, although the Bambi has often been lampooned for its presumption to comment on social and political fields, this critique ends up raising the prize’s profile in the media sphere. When recognition is the prime currency, critique cannot help but legitimize the object of its derision.

The cultural prize functions socially as a rallying point around which ambitious cultural events and networks organize. Institutionally it provides a means of establishing authority. This authority is cultivated by a constrained selection process—in particular regarding jury selection. The Bambi jury consists of editors and executives from Burda’s portfolio of media properties along with a rotating selection of prominent personalities selected by the Burda conglomerate. The prize is as much a mechanism for the extension of the authority of the selecting institution, setting its hierarchy of value as the gold standard, as it is about the award itself (English 2008, 38). Ideologically, English writes that the prize serves to affirm the notion of art as a distinct domain of rare and transcendental cultural value. The Bambi, however, is fully committed to pop culture, affirming the value of the attention economy and the representational power of the media industry.

The Bambi is a significant manifestation of the symbolic power of celebrity, which, according to P. David Marshall, is the power “to represent the active construction of identity in the social world” (1997, xi). The prize is not an aberration or a contamination of legitimate cultural practice; “the prize is cultural practice in its quintessential contemporary form” (English 2008, 26). Although the impact of Bambi’s forays into cultural politics cannot be assumed, it is instructive in showing how celebrity can be mobilized to structure meaning, crystallize ideological positions, and provide a sense of coherence to a culture (Marshall 1997, x). While entertainment prizes may be little more than a blip on the media calendar, their structure as simultaneously “thoughtless” (English 2008, 110) and critically impervious makes them a symbolically potent locus of cultural representation. These media spectacles and the publics they generate encapsulate the cultural norms and preoccupations of the moment.

The Good Muslim: Mesut Özil

When Mesut Özil was chosen as the inaugural winner of the Integration Bambi in 2010, his selection appeared natural and even obvious. Since the international soccer spectacle was a major focus of media attention in 2010, the Bambi organizers relived the World Cup enthusiasm with a performance by Shakira of the official World Cup song, “Waka Waka (This Time for Africa).” In a long tradition of abundant Bambi Awards for the national soccer establishment, the men’s national team coach and training team received a jury’s choice Bambi. The prominence of national soccer in the Bambi Awards reflects and reinforces the sport’s symbolic and social significance. Its overrepresentation at the awards even led one commentator to lament the obsession with soccer at the expense of other sports in one of the few critical articles about Özil’s award. Composed of players from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, 2010 national team was celebrated in the press as a representation of, in Özil’s words, “a colorful new Germany” (*Mesut Özil & Nazan Eckes @ Bambi Integration 2010* 2010). Özil, whose talent and Turkish heritage made him the subject of intense interest in the press, emerged as one of the team’s strongest players.

Even in the highly symbolic field of celebrity, national athletes have particular appeal as floating signifiers and canvases for mediated national imaginaries (Billig 1995; E. J. Hobsbawm 1992). The work of the athlete is physical; the intellectual work of the athlete is bound within the rules of the game. Thus it is easy to divorce athletic work from the broader conditions and constraints of society and politics. Of course, sports are and have always been deeply suffused with politics, more so because of their imagined status as apolitical. Athletes who actively engage in politics disrupt this process. The enormous and disproportionate backlash against athletes who engage in activism shows the strength of hegemonic norms that seek to keep athletes “in their place,” which is to say, as objects of politics rather than political subjects. At the time of this award, Özil had yet to find his political voice. His youth and quiet demeanor allowed the Bambi Awards and the media at large to project their ideals and expectations onto Özil.

The Bambi Awards mobilized Özil’s celebrity to promote a notion of social cohesion in which minorities “hold onto their roots” without publicly challenging or changing the norms of German society. As Marshall argues, celebrity is a powerful and malleable sign at the media’s disposal with its “capacity to house conceptions of individuality and simultaneously to employ or help embody ‘collective configurations of the social world’” (1997,

xi). To understand what it means to be a celebrity, or *Prominente*, in Germany, we can look to the highest-circulating German periodical, the daily tabloid *Bild*. The *Bild* website includes a “theme page” dedicated to “*Deutsche Promis*” (German Celebs) that outlines a political economy of attention, in which individuals give up their privacy and submit to public scrutiny because “they live from regularly being in the media, since it increases their fame and with it their market value” (*Die Bild*, n.d.). In answer to the question of “why we need celebs,” *Bild* theorizes that “most people need role models. Not only to imitate them, but also from which to distance themselves, following the motto, ‘That is totally not okay!’” (*Die Bild*, n.d.). Mediations of celebrity lives thus create a symbolic space for drawing connections and boundaries in the public adjudication of norms governing the body politic. Particularly for socially oriented prizes, that which is being honored is often as much about defining that which is unacceptable.

The discourses of the award, as exemplified by television moderator Nazan Eckes’s introductory speech for the Integration Bambi in 2010, are constructed to soothe majority German anxieties around Muslim minorities. The daughter of Turkish immigrants, Eckes presents herself as a model of nonthreatening diversity through her dress as much as her words. In her dress, which was the object of great interest in the press for having the “lowest cut décolleté of the evening,” she literally revealed herself to the German public. Her dress stands in opposition to the tropes of veiled femininity that populate white European imaginaries of the Muslim “parallel society,” assuring the audience that she does not represent the disturbing closure of Muslim modesty. In another conciliatory gesture to the presumed values of her audience, Eckes opens with a story of transformation from her childhood:

I was born in Cologne, or *Köln*, as they say in Turkey. My parents are Turks. When I was six years old, I asked my mother about Saint Nicholas. She said to me, Nazan, *kisim*—my daughter—there is no Saint Nicholas. And I was the only one in my class who didn’t have sweets in their boots on the sixth of December. And today, almost thirty years later, Saint Nicholas comes to my house too. That is proof. I have arrived, arrived in my homeland (*Heimat*), Germany. (*Mesut Özil & Nazan Eckes @ Bambi Integration 2010 2010*)

Eckes’s inclusion of Turkish words reinforces her cultural authority to speak as a Turkish-German minority. The story of her disappointment at being excluded from the Christian German tradition of Saint Nicolas Day ended with the redemptive claim of her choice as an adult to partake in religiously

inflected German cultural traditions. Her anecdote acknowledges and accepts the Christian core of German traditions, modeling a form of integration that leaves the majoritarian foundations of the nation unchanged. Like the statement Eckes makes with her dress, her story is a counterexample to prevailing discourses of Muslim fundamentalism. She communicates that her religious beliefs—whatever they may be—are not a hindrance to her participation in Germany’s supposed “Judeo-Christian *Leitkultur*” (Wittrock 2010). The presentation celebrates Özil’s universal popularity across bright lines of cultural difference. *Both* Germans *and* Turks celebrate Özil, and, in Eckes’s words, “his relaxed association with both his Turkish roots and the German national jersey is an example to us all” (*Mesut Özil & Nazan Eckes @ Bambi Integration 2010* 2010). This framing denies that Özil might also represent Germanness without qualification.

Although Özil’s acceptance speech fit within the standard discourse of integration, it spotlighted the responsibility of majority German society toward transnational populations. While his framing was broad enough to avoid making specific demands on majority Germans, it also insisted that majority communities respect the rights of others, including the right to difference.

Integration means becoming part of a whole, in which one plays a part without losing one’s identity. Integration means mutual appreciation and above all respect. Through integration something new is created, a colorful German Republic.

Özil’s brief acceptance speech emphasized the importance of dignity and mutual respect across lines of difference, while also highlighting the cosmopolitan dividend accrued to Germany through this process. Özil’s words attracted little notice from commentators. Eckes’s presentation stole the show.

The 2010 Integration award congratulates majority Germans for their meritocratic and cosmopolitan country, which, as Eckes claims, “opened opportunities that [she] would never have had elsewhere.” As one journalist swooned, the Eckes’s words on integration were powerful enough to make you forget the Sarrazin debate (Albers 2010). The Bambi allows the ugliness and discomfort of Sarrazin’s racism to fade away, while maintaining the same normative framework of integration: a framework that fragments the population between normative nationals and “migrant” candidates for integration. Why should the German-born and raised Özil be seen as a candidate for integration? The lack of commentary on this point suggests that the rea-

son is too obvious to require explication: as a Muslim with a Turkish name, Özil's belonging in Germany cannot be assumed. It must be permanently judged. With sweeping emotions and attention-grabbing celebrities, the problematics inherent in creating a categorical award judging "successful integration" was never seriously engaged in the press coverage of the award.

There were only two articles in the Bambi news corpus that critiqued the new Integration award. One commentary in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Hahn 2010) lamented the overexposure of national football as well as the "trendiness" of integration as a topic. This commentator has no specific quarrel with Özil, whom he dismissively describes as a "doe-eyed anti-Sarrazin," connecting Özil the ingenu to the fawn-shaped Bambi statuette. Without providing details, the author suggests that "many other athletes could have been chosen" for the award. This kind of criticism fits with standard prize punditry identified by English (2008), which reinforces the importance of the award even while criticizing the award decisions as flawed.

The other critical article in *Die Zeit* is a biting commentary assessing the stresses of a year spent with "Uncle Sarrazin" for Germany's Turkish community. The Turkish-German author, Deniz Başpınar (2010), assembles a humorous retrospective of the year's insults against Muslim Germans. She begins the "German year 2010" with the September 2009 publication of Sarrazin's anti-Muslim interview in *Lettre Internationale*, which paved the way for the pseudoscientific eugenicist tome that consumed the German public in 2010 (see chapter 6). Başpınar deconstructs white German public figures' hypocritical and erratic responses to Muslim Germans and to Germany's diversity generally. Başpınar skewers Sarrazin's outrageous racism and the "debate" as it played out in the media. She also targets German politicians who exploit Özil as the "useful Moor" to score goals and show how tolerant and modern Germans are, only to turn around without warning and put Muslims in their place. Başpınar uses the Bambi as the article's punchline by expressing her ironic sympathy for Mesut Özil's "punishment with a Bambi for integration." In conclusion, she asks, "Could there be any greater humiliation?"

The first of these two rare critical responses to the new Bambi Award fits within the conservative framework of prize criticism, which questions the value and judgment of awarding bodies while casting aspersions on popular "fads." In contrast, Başpınar's sardonic response spends no time discussing the prize, using it solely as the final blow in an assault on the racialized norms of German society, laid bare in "the German year 2010." This response successfully targets the prize by pointing to its absurdity. She shows that it is not the anti-Sarrazin gesture that it claims to be but is part of the corrosive

ambivalence of the mediated German public. The otherwise uncritical acceptance of the new prize category and its inaugural recipient support Başpınar's analysis. The discourse around Özil's selection demonstrates the model for being a "useful Moor" or a "good Muslim." "Muslim 'citizens' are only 'good' if they are [a] depoliticized docile subject" (Topolski 2018, 2193).¹ While the inaugural Bambi outlined the model of the "good Muslim," Özil's status as such was precarious. In his 2018 resignation from the national team to protest racist treatment by the German Football Association and the media, Özil pointed to his Bambi honor to show his willingness to play according to majority rules. His anger flowed from the realization that his compliance and his contribution to winning the World Cup for Germany in 2014 earned him no protection from accusations of divided loyalties (Zambon 2022). In 2010, however, Özil had yet to find his political footing, making him a nearly frictionless symbol of the depoliticized, docile "good Muslim."

The Bad Muslim: Bushido

The flipside of this binary was thrown into sharp relief by the debate around the 2011 Integration Bambi recipient, Tunisian-German rapper Anis Mohamed Youssef Ferchichi, known professionally as Bushido. As Özil represented the qualities of the "good Muslim"—defined by his success, contributions to national pride, and his agreeable and heretofore uncontroversial personality—Bushido functioned as a counterexample. Bushido has long been one of Germany's most popular rappers. His lyrics fit within the conventions of classic American gangsta rap, including hypermasculine posturing and violent, consumerist, sexist, and homophobic imagery. German gangsta rap follows a similar mix of commercial incentives, resistance and agency, and exploitation as its US-based progenitor (see Quinn 2004). Gangsta rap mixes posturing and performative fantasy with the commercially valuable "authenticity" of a hard-knock life. The central question here is not to judge Bushido's personal life or creative production but to deconstruct the discourses and social logics articulated in the scandal around his selection for the Integration Bambi.

Since his first albums appeared in the early 2000s, Bushido has been a controversial figure on the German cultural scene. He has strongly rejected interpreting his work as political (Rühle and Peitz 2005), while also making

1. See also Mahmood Mamdani's seminal book *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim* (2004) for an analysis of how this binary was forged in the global imperialist struggles of the Cold War.

assertive stands for the belonging of immigrants and minoritized groups, as with his 2013 book, *Auch wir sind Deutschland* (We, too, Are Germany) (Ferschichi 2013). The title appears to be a play on the slogan of the World Cup-inspired social marketing campaign, *Du bist Deutschland* (You are Germany) (see chapter 2). Appearing two years after the Bambi scandal, the book argues that minoritized people are not a foreign element and that the problems projected onto stigmatized groups—including sexism and homophobia—are problems across German society. His selection for the Integration Bambi was based, according to the jury, on his success despite his difficult upbringing and on his transformation into an interlocutor for politicians and the media on behalf of minoritized Germans. They also honored him for his charity work in recent years supporting the “integration” of young people from “migration backgrounds.” Successful integration is defined here as material success and philanthropic contributions to reforming minoritized urban youth.

Bushido’s Bambi had two main consequences of significance for this analysis: first, it caused a national scandal, drawing enormous attention to the integration award; and second, it further ingrained well-worn stereotypes of the criminal and illiberal Muslim Other. Because of the format of the award and the debate, left-wing and progressive commentators joined in the promulgation of this bad Muslim trope. Whereas most of the other years’ coverage of the Bambis consisted largely of boilerplate wire service stories and press releases, Bushido’s Bambi inspired heated commentary across the mediated public sphere. Following the intensified discourse around Bushido’s award, the Bambi’s ratings spiked in 2011 drawing six million viewers, or more than 20 percent of the television audience. The uncontroversial 2012 awards only managed 2.6 million viewers (*Spiegel Online* 2012). A handful of journalists remarked on this spike in attention, speculating that the controversial selection of Bushido might have been a calculated move to generate publicity and increase the perception of the Bambi’s cultural relevance (Buß 2011; Frank 2011). Most of the coverage, however, centered on the critiques of Bushido as unworthy of the award.

The debate brought Bambi coverage into prominent spaces in the German media sphere, with prestige publications like the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* devoting attention to the award and the protest it unleashed among activist groups. Most critics emphasized that their outrage was not about Bushido being honored per se but because that honor was being bestowed in a social category of which he was unworthy.

Bushido can win all the prizes in the world—from Kreuzberg to Hollywood, just NOT ONE for “integration.” (Gensing and Varro 2011)

Bushido calls for violence against gays and lesbians in his texts and statements. My understanding of “successful integration” is something different. (Green Party state representative Claudia Stamm quoted in Gottschild 2011)

Whoever propagates contempt for women and gay people has not earned a prize for successful integration. (Green Party politician Völker Beck quoted in Gottschild 2011)

In the opinion of [Green Party Leader Claudia Roth], he is certainly not an example of successful integration, but “rather an extremely successful cultural figure who makes big bucks off the backs of minorities.” (*Bild* 2011a)

Far from harming the institution of the Bambi, the critics generally accepted the category of integration proposed by the institution and merely critiqued the jury’s judgment in this choice. This follows James English’s assertion that scandal is the lifeblood of the prize. He writes that prize scandals function to “clarify and disseminate, as well as at times to assist in modifying, the contemporary rules governing the behaviors and dispositions of ‘artists’ or other authorities in matters of art” (2008, 196). In this case, however, the prize claims authority to characterize the behavior of immigrants and minorities as represented by celebrities. The criticism of unworthy recipients reinforces the value hierarchies of the prize. By criticizing Bushido as undeserving of the honor, even observers on the left—such as the Green Party politicians quoted above—who might otherwise be skeptical of integration discourse, supported the legitimacy of the integration prize.

The second consequence of the award was the reification of the idea of the unassimilable Muslim Other. The discussion around the prize left little room for reflexivity around the notion of an integration prize. It focused almost exclusively on the question whether the winner was worthy of the prize, whether he lived up to the values it is designed to reward. The arguments in favor of the selection—which were primarily voiced by Bambi affiliates—were based on the idea of the prize symbolizing a “second chance.”

It is clear to [Hessian Minister for Integration Jörg-Uwe] Hahn: “He now has the duty to distinguish himself as a bridge builder.” (*Frankfurter Rundschau* 2011)

Bushido was not honored with the Bambi for his earlier texts, said Peter Maffay. “On the contrary: Bushido has very clearly distanced

himself from his statements of ten years ago. He has long admitted his mistakes openly. My intention was, with all due respect for those [Bushido] discriminated against, to build a bridge.” (*Bild* 2011b)

The gift the prize conferred was the possibility of Bushido turning over a new leaf and leaving behind undesirable behavior of the past, behavior that—everyone agreed—was contrary to the ideals of the prize. It was framed as a pedagogical tool, an incentive for the winner to follow the “right path.”

This pedagogical intent was woven through rock artist Peter Maffay’s speech presenting Bushido with the prize. Although the then 62-year-old Maffay was collaborating with Bushido on a project entitled “Growing Up,” his speech was ambivalent. He distanced himself, saying that he knew Bushido “too little” but felt that what they had in common was their willingness to “row toward unknown shores.” Interestingly, Maffay also evokes a fundamental problem with the award itself when he remarks on an event that he attended celebrating “50 years of German-Turkish friendship” where the participants agreed that “integration” was no longer an appropriate term. Younger generations were already integrated; cultural pluralism was becoming normal. Maffay continued, “If, nevertheless, the jury elevates someone by awarding this prize, then this is of course an important social signal.” But a signal of what? Maffay’s awkward transition underscores that awarding an integration prize obscures the reality that pluralism is already a multigenerational lived experience and that the descendants of immigrants are legitimately German. This moment of instability and friction is brief but revealing in comparison to the smooth internal coherence of Integration Bambi speeches in other years. Maffay concluded by expressing his confidence that Bushido “would live up to” the ideals of the prize. When Maffay announced weeks later that he was dissolving his partnership with Bushido, critics interpreted it as confirmation of what they knew all along: Bushido was irredeemable—a veritable antithesis of “integration.”

Most of the criticism of Bushido’s receipt of the award came from the political left and from activists for social justice. Bushido’s critics accused him of exploiting inflammatory texts for financial gain, as when Green Party leader Claudia Roth condemned Bushido for making “big bucks off the backs of minorities” (quoted above). This progressive critique was met by a reaction from several conservative commentators who reveled in what they saw as liberal hypocrisy and celebrated Bushido’s bold “political incorrectness” and his material success.

Bushido is a perfect example of successful integration. The scandal around his award shows the phoniness of the self-proposed heralds of

migrants. . . . The friends and devotees of migrants are outraged that, of all people, a rapper who is successful under capitalism and incorrect in his political discourse is awarded an Integration prize. (Poschardt 2011)

To me, this whole do-gooder fuss stinks. What happened, after all? Bushido is a superstar. He's no pantywaist, but rappers never are. Not everyone can sing about love and tra-la-la. (Gensing and Varro 2011)

The conservative disdain for identity-conscious political activism emerges here—wrapped in gleefully homophobic, misogynist language—as support for Bushido's "taboo-breaking rap style" (Miklis 2011). Debate about Bushido's award fractures minoritarian identity politics by pitting gender- and sexuality-based minorities and their supporters against integrants, typically imagined as young Muslim men. For conservatives, this reveals the hypocrisy of all identity-based social justice projects. The conservative commentators quoted above double down on a definition of integration based on meritocratic economic success (see also chapter 6). Bushido's self-presentation as a hypermasculine outlaw appeals to right-wing sensibilities, while also playing into conservative discourses of immigrants and minorities as a potential security threat. This allows right-wing critics to revel in hypermasculinity and "owning the libs" while also honing narratives of the violent Muslim Other to be deployed in other contexts as desired. Crucially, both conservative and liberal partisans in this debate tended to validate the categorization of minorities as either exceptional integration successes or socially dangerous failures.

Even if Bushido had made good on his "second chance," this story is a quintessential example of the binaries dividing Muslim immigrant cultures from white Christian German culture. The Integration Bambi demonstrates how easily strong multiculturalist conceptions of culture can shift to nativist ones; when a strong conception of essential difference remains, it is a simple matter to switch focus from celebrating the "color" and "diversity" of immigrant cultures to condemning those same cultures as reactionary and illiberal. In the end, Bushido was turned into a villain or at best an antihero, a counterexample that further ingrained discourses of the intractable immigrant who stands against the enlightened values of liberal German society. One journalist in the liberal prestige newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* articulated this trope in stark terms, writing that "Bushido embodies *the young man with a migration background and thug-attitude, who acts out violently against minorities* and won't be confined by the rules of society" (Grill 2011, emphasis added). This construction draws a distinction between the aggres-

sive young (Muslim) men of the undesirable immigrant class and vulnerable minorities that must be protected from their violence.

Bad Muslims Menace Good Minorities

The 2012 Bambi Awards embraced the narrative of masculine Muslim violence against valued minority populations. Rabbi Daniel Alter was awarded the Integration Bambi after being assaulted by several young men who were “presumed to be Arab.” In addition, during the 2012 Bambis, the sister of a young Thai-German man who was fatally attacked by Turkish-German youths in Berlin’s Alexanderplatz was honored in a special category, “Courage.” The choice to honor victims in two cases that were framed as acts of Muslim hate against other minorities reinforces the idea that Arab and Turkish “migrants” are dangerous and pose a threat to the purportedly liberal-cosmopolitan ideals of the new Germany. Prosecuting identity-based violence is crucial regardless of the backgrounds of the perpetrator. However, the choice of which perpetrators and victims to emblemize and which to ignore in the mediated public sphere has enormous symbolic significance. The Bambi Awards emphasized Muslim perpetrators in a year when it was discovered that an organized neo-Nazi group—likely with police and secret service involvement—was behind a decade-long spree of anti-Turkish murders, bombings, and bank robberies (described below).

In 2012, the Integration category of the Bambis was once again received with little critical reflection. The recipient was not a celebrity first but rather a man who became famous for being the victim of an antisemitic attack and responding with a plea for interfaith dialog. As with Özil, Alter’s selection was received without significant comment or contestation, suggesting consensus about the Bambi’s framing of integration. The speeches of 2012 said almost nothing about the concept of integration directly. As is common in integration discourse, the characters and events that occasioned the award were presented as though their relevance for the topic was self-evident. The three speeches for the 2012 Integration Bambi varied in their emphasis, but ultimately presented a picture of racism in contemporary Germany that centers on the figure of the violent and intolerant Muslim male. The role of white (Christian) nationalism is blurred, if not completely erased. Instead, majority Germans appear as the keepers of enlightened democratic values, acting in solidarity with victims and promoting tolerance. Indeed, overzealous white German tolerance is framed as a potential impediment to addressing racism.

The first to speak in the presentation of Daniel Alter's award was journalist Tom Buhrow, then host of Germany's second-highest rated daily television news program, *Tagesthemen*. Buhrow began his introduction by praising the awards for their glamour and significance, before shifting abruptly to a serious tone.

Next, we will hear about two events that have to do with hate, with violence, and above all with overcoming them. In both cases, I'm going to get a bit ahead of things here, the alleged perpetrators are not German Neo-Nazis, but rather—at least according to the latest reports—they have a Muslim background.

Here amid the welcoming tolerance of Germany, something like an imported intolerance has emerged.

What can we do, so that as a host country we don't only remember that *we* must be tolerant of *all* minorities in this country, but rather that we ensure that all minorities are tolerant of each other?

There is very little subtext in Buhrow's commentary. For Buhrow, the most striking problem of "integration" is not white supremacy but what might be called indiscriminate white benevolence. Buhrow's final question crystallizes a clear delineation of identities and roles. The category of "we" Germans is constructed against minority Others and is defined by "welcoming tolerance." The category of minority is divided between those who "import" intolerance and the "good minorities" they threaten, thereby also threatening German liberalism. These minority categories are exemplified here by the "bad Muslim" perpetrators and their Jewish- and Thai-German victims. The Bambi represents majority Germans in their role as norm-setters and disciplinarians "[ensuring] that all minorities are tolerant of each other."

The 2012 awards reinforced a relatively new narrative of racism in Germany that Esra Özyürek (2016, 2023) calls the "export-import theory" of antisemitism, which holds that antisemitism was invented in Europe, exported to the Middle East first by Christians in the Ottoman Empire and then by Nazis seeking collaborators in Palestine. Then, as postwar Europe eliminated antisemitism through denazification, immigrants preserved and brought it back to a reformed Europe "in their suitcases." Although, as Özyürek shows, the logical and empirical flaws in this theory are myriad, it has gained broad support among researchers and the public.

This new theory emerged after the turn of the new millennium alongside two other trends. The first was the establishment of Holocaust remembrance and the fight against antisemitism as cornerstones of European and, espe-

cially, German identity. This identity narrative is built on pride in reform and redemption and the belief that this has led to an enlightened postracial society. The second development was the increasing racialization of Muslim Europeans, particularly after 9/11. Part of this racialization was the deployment of old Orientalist tropes (Said 1979), including pathologizing diverse Muslim communities as misogynist, homophobic, authoritarian, and generally illiberal. As the fight against antisemitism became part of European identity, researchers and opinion leaders began to see Muslim “migrant” Others as the primary source of contemporary antisemitism. In contrast, antisemitism attached to right-wing white nationalism was classified as “historical,” an anachronistic leftover rather than a present and future threat (Özyürek 2016). Meanwhile, police reports revealing record levels of antisemitic and Islamophobic crimes in 2019 show that more than 93 percent of antisemitic crimes are associated with right-wing perpetrators (“Politisch Motivierte Kriminalität Im Jahr 2019: Bundesweite Fallzahlen” 2020), more specifically, white nationalists.

This export-import theory has become firmly entrenched over the past decade. In spring 2021, the ruling Christian Democratic Union railed against “imported antisemitism” (*Der Spiegel* 2021) following protests of the Israeli bombardment of occupied Palestinian territories. Although data show that white nationalism motivates nearly all anti-Jewish hate crimes nationally, party leaders claimed that anti-Jewish hate is driven by Muslims, whether immigrants or German-born. While blaming antisemitism on young men who become “inflamed” by Muslim extremists, Christian Democrats constructed German identity and values around “the protection of Jewish life” and the conviction that “the Holocaust . . . must never be repeated.” Like Burhow’s lament of indiscriminate white benevolence, CDU faction leader Ralph Brinkhaus stated that “perhaps in some ways we have been too tolerant,” advocating “energetic opposition” to antisemitism in Muslim communities (*Der Spiegel* 2021). Although one party member acknowledged that German citizenship cannot be stripped from naturalized citizens, Brinkhaus suggested deportation of Muslim offenders, stating that “whoever fails to heed this has forfeited their right to hospitality here.” These discourses have intensified since Israel’s war on Gaza following Hamas’s attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. Christian Democrats have called outright for German citizenship to be stripped from dual citizens who commit an antisemitic offense, while also proposing new crimes related to protest and “questioning Israel’s right to exist” (Sedlmayr 2023). Instead of motivating antiracist action, the reformulation of white German identity around redemption from the racist

past facilitates the denial of growing white nationalism while fomenting new racist narratives blaming racism and intolerance on Muslims.

The 2012 Integration Bambi speeches largely conformed to the theory of “imported antisemitism.” Daniel Alter’s acceptance speech tacitly supported this framework by putting the majority white public at ease and singling out the “heroic” Muslim youth fighting intolerance and antidemocratic values presumably endemic in Muslim German communities (see Partridge 2022). Alter began by downplaying the seriousness of the attack on him, declaring that he was certain that “many in our country and here in this room have struggled far more under antisemitism, racism, and mindless hatred.” This is a strange claim in a gala celebration consisting overwhelmingly of white German celebrities and media elites. Alter encouraged the audience to think of themselves as the wronged party. Alter proceeded to dedicate his award to a group of young Muslim Berliners “who have recognized that one cannot live well in a society with violence, hate, and oppression.” The purpose of this organization is to “convince members of their community—young Muslims, Arabs, Palestinians, and also Turks—of the values of freedom . . . and democracy.” Alter concludes that their work against Muslim antisemitism is not simply in the interests of the Jewish community but benefits everyone in the room and Germany as a whole. Muslim Germans play a binary role as heroes or villains, while majority society is construed as a potential victim alongside the Jewish community. Alter shields the white German audience from discomfort. With the Integration Bambi of 2012, antidemocratic and racist behavior was ascribed to Muslim Germans who might redeem themselves by fighting those tendencies endemic in their own communities.

In a brief but significant exception to this pattern, Hubert Burda’s speech presenting Daniel Alter’s award acknowledged that antisemitism is not confined to Muslim Germans or the neo-Nazi fringe. Burda referenced studies showing that a substantial minority of Germans hold far-right viewpoints. More significantly, he pointed out that “even people who see themselves as free from prejudice are inhibited in their encounters with Jews.” Burda recognized antisemitism in the insidious instinct to lower one’s voice when speaking of Jewishness, “as if it were a profanity or a contagious illness.” The unspeakability of the word “Jew” in Germany points both to the mystification and repression of the painful history of genocide and to the enduring negativity attached to Jewishness among white Christian Germans (Mandel 2007, 369). This recognition stands out in a program that otherwise erases everyday racism in German society. What is missing even here is the recognition that Islamophobia has joined and, in some ways, eclipsed antisemitism

as the predominant form of racialized religious intolerance in Germany (Pickel 2019). This omission is particularly egregious considering that arguably the most important media story of 2012 revealed a very different set of threats to minoritized lives and German liberal democracy.

Blind in the Right Eye: Overlooking White Nationalism

The 2012 Bambi Awards highlighted two cases of Muslim intolerance, the same year as the discovery that a right-wing extremist group, the National Socialist Underground (NSU), committed a notorious series of previously unsolved murders, revealing deep systemic biases devaluing Muslim lives. After two of the NSU's leaders were found dead in a burning trailer home in November 2011, authorities discovered that they had been responsible for 10 murders, including nine small business owners of Turkish and Greek descent from 2000 to 2007. The group had also carried out three nail bomb attacks targeting Turkish immigrant communities from 1999 to 2004, wounding more than two dozen people.

The murder series, committed across Germany with the same weapon and modus operandi, was a long-standing subject of erroneous and discriminatory media speculation. Police investigations and media conjecture blamed the victims, who were assumed to have been killed by Turkish perpetrators as part of a transnational organized crime ring. Media and police accused victims' families of hindering the investigation by keeping a "code of silence," following—as one journalist put it—the "characteristic hierarchical Turkish family structure" (Denso 2006). As late as August 2011, the case was described in *Der Spiegel* as demonstrating the threat of Turkish organized crime:

Since [the murder series from 2000 to 2007], dozens of police officers and state attorneys have hunted perpetrators and weapons; officers from the domestic security and intelligence service are attempting to penetrate the mafia-style organization of Turkish nationalists in Germany, responsible for the bloodletting. The murders, this much investigators know, are the reckoning for debts from criminal businesses or revenge on deserters. (Neumann and Ulrich 2011)

These journalists unequivocally state the ethnic identity and motives of the perpetrators as established facts rather than a spurious and disputed theory. Racist stereotypes of violent, clannish Turks drove the false conclusions of

journalists and law enforcement alike. Investigators in the so-called “Bosphorus special commission”—named after the waterway dividing Istanbul—ignored clues assembled by profilers in 2006 pointing to right-wing perpetrators, in part because the commission’s preference for a theory linking victims to Turkish organized crime (*Welt Online* 2013). Likewise, they ignored victims’ community appeals for authorities to investigate racism as the motive, a conclusion that the FBI supported when invited to consult on the case (Von Der Behrens 2018). After more than a decade of maligning the victims of anti-Muslim hate, the revelations in late 2011 and 2012 revealed the deadly consequences of stereotypes criminalizing Turkish- and Arab-Germans and immigrants. Throughout the investigation, the media stripped victims of their humanity through the racist moniker, the “kebab murders” (*Döner-Morde*). The media uncritically accepted and amplified investigators’ characterization of the victims as criminals deserving of their fate.

In discourses reminiscent of American stereotypes of racialized criminality, from the tropes of the Italian Mafia to discussions of “black-on-black” crime, the victims symbolized Others who introduce organized crime into Germany. Even in their deaths, the victims represented a danger to the normative population. When it was discovered that the murders were hate crimes committed by German neo-Nazis, the case raised profound questions about the unwillingness of authorities and the media to see and take seriously the threat of racist violence by the German right. Further investigations have revealed the complicity and even the direct involvement of German security forces in enabling the NSU’s crimes (Von Der Behrens 2018). Evidence is also accumulating of right-wing extremism in the military and up and down the ranks of the police (Hemicker 2021; Orde 2022; Schmalz 2021). While pressure is growing to address this issue in recent years, conservative political leaders have denied structural racism and blocked or weakened investigations of extremism in the police force (“Seehofer: ‘Keine Rassismus-Studie in der Polizei’” 2020). This came to a head most recently when followers of the antisemitic *Reichsbürger* (Citizens of the Reich) movement—including soldiers, police officers, and a former member of parliament with the AfD—were arrested in December 2022 for planning to overthrow the government. This story has quickly faded from public attention (Hermsmeier 2023), and the far-right AfD gained support in the following months (*Tagesschau* 2023).

In 2012, one of the most important stories in the German media showed the influence of racism at both the margins and in the core institutions of German society. Nevertheless, this story was absent from consideration during the Bambi prizes that year. This absence would not be so significant had

the Bambi not chosen to highlight the victims of violence committed by presumed Muslim youth in two separate awards that year, including the Integration Bambi.

Conclusion

After 2012, the Integration Bambi category fell into a predictable pattern. The 2013 and 2015 awards honored two nonprofit organizations using sports to target youth delinquency in Berlin. The 2014 award honored the founder of a special school for refugee youth. The last integration award in 2016 closed the circle begun with Mesut Özil's Bambi by honoring his national team coach, Joachim Löw, who implored in his speech, "let us all become a one German integration team" (*Die Welt* 2017). This pattern reflects the limited conception of integration in the German media, in which the role of majority German society is to exemplify liberal democratic values and manage threats posed by potentially dangerous Muslim youth. Concern for the alienating and dangerous effects of white Christian supremacy in both everyday and hyperviolent forms has no place in this conception of integration.

The celebrity and prize logics that support cultural awards have normative consequences, particularly when applied to social categories of identity and belonging. The prize imposes evaluative criteria to define valuable examples of diversity, thereby also defining normative German identity. The celebrity in Burda's Bambi Awards is rendered significant according to the categories of the prize, which is to say, as candidates for integration. By awarding a cultural prize for integration to individuals born and raised in Germany, the prize maintains a division between those who qualify categorically as Germans and those who must strive to be considered integrated in German society. It does so under the guise of liberal cosmopolitanism.

Even with the problem posed by the subjectification between normative national and "migrant" candidates for integration inherent in the Integration Bambi, social critics in the media sphere failed to analyze the underlying problem with the award category. The logic of the prize undercuts the function of a critically reflexive public media sphere. Critics of the prize cannot help but participate in the discourses constructed by it; critique of cultural prizes, no matter how appropriate, tends to bolster their circulation in the public sphere. Since representation and circulation is tantamount to importance, heated debate and criticism only raise the profile of cultural prizes. After all, "the direction of our glance can constitute our social world" (War-

ner 2002, 62). The Bambi demonstrates the resilience of the cultural prize format, which, when wedded to the celebrity power of the popular entertainment media, forms a unique stage for the articulation of identities.

The celebration of minority role models in the Bambi for Integration was accompanied in equal or greater measure by condemnations of minority strawmen and tropes of young Muslim men's antagonism toward white Germany's liberal democratic national project. In popular public narratives, diversity is valuable when it is well-managed and contributes to national political and economic projects. Diversity is proof that "Western values" are tolerant and permit "the freedom to think differently." Difference is valuable when it adds "color" and inspires innovation, spurring growth. However, diversity that overflows or challenges hegemonic projects, that puts spaces and populations beyond the reach of the state, threatens the power of the nation-state to make live. In the conclusion, I will consider how these narratives of celebration and of the threat of uncontrolled diversity played out in German reactions to increased demand for asylum peaking in 2015.

Conclusion

Separating Fact from Fairy Tales in Germany's *Willkommenskultur*

This book investigates how discourses of integration have emerged in journalism and popular culture as a tool for constructing and regulating Germany's internal Others, maintaining the normativity of the white Christian national in the process. The cases in this book show how nativist logics form the foundation of integration, helping to explain the ease with which the xenophobic far-right is entering mainstream politics in Germany and across Europe. Conceptions of integration are not monolithic; in fact, they are most often decidedly vague and malleable. However, media spectacles around sports, celebrities, and migration in recent history demonstrate how integration discourse facilitates the racialized division of society under the promise of improving the life of the German population, conditionally including willing candidates for integration. The perceived propensity of some groups to integrate has come to distinguish the deserving from the undeserving, the beneficial from the threatening; these processes have become increasingly important and fraught as global refugee reception crisis (Rea et al. 2019) reached Europe in the past decade.

The discourse of integration has become a norm across Europe; in Germany it guided the first attempts to implement policy addressing the long-term inclusion of transnational populations starting at the turn of the new millennium. Integration discourse must be understood in relation to broader conceptions of culture and national belonging. The first two chapters in this book outlined the contemporary development of two major foundations of German national ideas: the romantic sentimental nation represented by the idea of *Heimat* (homeland) and the utilitarian, economic powerhouse Germany founded on pride through productivity. These schemas of identity each impose a set of conditions on the belonging of “new Germans,” extend-

ing membership contingent on the provision of affective or economic labor for the benefit of the nation.

The rise of “soccer patriotism” and the celebration of immigrant patriots in the first decade of the new millennium draw on both the sentimental and utilitarian frameworks of identity to construct the latest “new Germany.” The celebrity-endorsed cosmopolitan nationalism of the *Du bist Deutschland* campaign (chapter 2) called for an embrace of national pride, proposing a framework of citizenship through economic productivity. The campaign set the stage for the normalization of celebratory nationalism in the 2006 World Cup (chapter 3), when the frivolous fun of “soccer patriotism” finally provided an uncomplicated “usable” collective memory of national communion. The symbolic and practical utility of sports for nation-building also extended to new approaches to incorporating and regulating immigrants and “new Germans” through sport integration programs (chapter 4). Abandoning fully ethnic forms of nationalism for civic nationalism created new opportunities for expanded—yet still conditional—belonging, but also new opportunities to promote nationalism through the symbolism of immigrant patriots (chapter 5).

The final two chapters investigated the idea of integration failures as a threat to Germany’s future in the contentious debate around a eugenics-laden book by politician and Bundesbank board member Thilo Sarrazin, and the cheerful pop culture politics of the Bambi Awards. Candidates for integration are framed as both a valuable resource for the renewal of the German population and a potentially mortal threat to the fabric of German society. These cases each entail a process of dividing the valuable from the unproductive and threatening, showing the interrelationship between celebration and condemnation.

In Germany, sport has emerged as a prime mechanism and narrative tool in integration policy and media discourse, wherein elite national sport and amateur youth sport play different but complementary roles. At the amateur level, sport integration supports the practical goals of providing regulated spaces of contact, as well as symbolic goals of reinforcing the superiority of normative German values. As chapter 4 discussed, the embodied practice of sport is conceived as a means of instilling discipline among multiethnic youth to render them as docile bodies. It is an attractive form of governmentality that paves the way for other lessons on becoming an entrepreneurial and productive subject. Literature produced by youth sports institutions invested in sports integration praise the potential for contact between “Germans” and “migrants,” while providing normative guidelines to manage difference by prioritizing universal rules and German monolingualism. Con-

trary to mythologies of sport integration, Spaaij and colleagues find that “the gender, racial and national hierarchies that sport is embedded within interact to largely prevent sport from being a site for social mobility” (2015, 400). In line with these findings, sport integration discourses reinforce associations of positive values with white Christian Germanness and tendencies toward violence and misogyny with Muslim immigrant communities.

At the elite national level, athletes of color have become conditional symbols of the German nation. Since the turn of the millennium, the selective presentation of the athletes of color as national symbols has allowed the nation to celebrate its own conversion into a cosmopolitan space. Including Germans of color as national symbols ostensibly proves that the national category is capacious and tolerant. However, broadcast sports also function as a panopticon (Foucault 1977), in which the audience and announcers frame, zoom in, scrutinize and interpret the meaning of players’ gestures as artifacts of integration. While players know that they are being viewed, they cannot know or control the lens’s movement, focus, or length. Others—the media and audiences—frame, interpret, and semantically fix the meaning of their bodily expression, often in ways that reinforce dominant cultural, racial, and gendered hierarches (see Sterkenburg, Knoppers, and Leeuw 2012; Van Sterkenburg and Spaaij 2015). Of course, this power to fix meaning is not complete, and players may recover agency by breaking the script, speaking out of place, or refusing to follow the norms and expectations of the field. Nevertheless, the athlete is first and foremost a physical performer, which shifts the balance of interpretive power toward the media. Athletes may turn to social media to provide counternarratives, as when Mesut Özil published his resignation from the national team in protest of racist treatment for a global audience in English on Twitter in 2018. But even in that exceptional case, press discourse reasserted interpretive authority in the German public, performing “hegemonic repair” (Zambon 2022) by shifting attention away from his substantive arguments and toward claims of Özil’s personal, political, and athletic shortcomings. In the context of integration discourse, athletes of color provide a performance waiting to be captured by cameras and interpreted by the media.

The men’s FIFA World Cup has provided touchstones of collective memory and identity formation since West Germany’s upset win at Bern in 1954 (Kaelberer 2017). As World Cup hosts in 2006, German media, government, and business institutions collaborated to define national pride through sporting spectacle as a salutary practice that is open to the whole population (chapters 3 and 5). With the 2010 World Cup, the media highlighted the participation of immigrants and Germans of color as fans and athletes to

demonstrate the constructive nature of “soccer patriotism,” distinguishing it from harmful, exclusionary forms of nationalism (chapter 5). Meanwhile, just weeks after the media celebrated Germany’s *Multi-kulti* team and immigrant superfans, the record-breaking popularity of Sarrazin’s book demonizing Muslims demonstrated the fragility of this commitment to cosmopolitan Germanness.

The “Sarrazin debate” exemplified the flip side of integration discourse. While sport integration mobilizes mythologies of national renewal, the Sarrazin debate mainstreamed the eugenicist fear of white Christian national collapse under pressure from fertile, “low intelligence” Muslims who ostensibly refuse to integrate. The Sarrazin debate made the racial hierarchy within the category of the integrant explicit. Integration discourse may attach itself to any identifiable traces of the transnational or the foreign, but the Sarrazin debate revealed the racialized category of the Muslim as the paradigmatic figure of problematic difference at the center of integration discourse. Meanwhile, Sarrazin praises East and South Asians, Jews, and other “model minorities” to deny the racializing aims of his project. The etic category of the Muslim organizes the large population of Arab, Turkish, and even African immigrants and their descendants into an essentialized religio-cultural group, in much the same way as antisemitism has across history (Mandel 2008; Norton 2013). This “negative essentialism” converts Islam into an explanatory framework for all manner of social ills, without the need or even the possibility of empirical evidence connecting it to an actual group of people (Semati 2011). The actual variety of religious practices and identifications among Muslims in Germany mirrors the diversity of the many ethnoreligious communities that constitute the German population. Instead, representations of Muslim peril in integration debates reproduce traditional Orientalist discourses (Said 1979) situating Islam as the “constitutive outside” that stabilizes the self-definition of Europe as white and (Judeo-)Christian.

The Sarrazin debate shows how the biopolitical logics of integration divide the population into categories of the worthy and the unworthy, those who must live and those who pose a threat to worthy life. Still, no strong distinction between the constructive and destructive modes of integration discourse is tenable. As the cases in this book show, integration discourse moves easily between celebration and condemnation, supported by the neoliberal strategic logics at the core of biopolitics. Biopolitics refers to a historical process by which “life” emerged as the center of political strategies (Lemke 2011, 33). As it was developed by Foucault, biopolitics refers to an assemblage of strategies of governance, forms of political legitimacy, and technologies of securitization and population management. Underlying values of social well-

being through productivity bind Sarrazin's anti-Muslim arguments and celebrations of sporting patriotism and integration.

In too many of the cases covered in this book, media coverage presents immigrants and Germans of color as imagined figures or characters in stories shaped by white Christian norms and expectations. This reflects the mediated public sphere that shaped these events and serves as the basis for an exhortation to change European media spheres to include a more representative variety of perspectives and lived experiences. I have foregrounded the voices of people of color where they appear—either in support of hegemonic German (civic) nationalism or as critics of the presumptions of integration, but those voices were too often marginalized when they challenged the status quo. The Bassals of the World Cup flag fight, the cadre of young athletes of color donning the German jersey for the first time in 2010, and the multiethnic faces of the *Du Bist Deutschland* campaign all became evidence for an idealized cosmopolitan Germany during subsequent debates about the supposed failures of integration and threats posed by immigration from the Global South.

More recently, however, more critical and assertive voices are gaining momentum in the public sphere. These new Germans, immigrants, and Germans of color are not content to wait on the judgment of the majority, nor do they accept the shabby terms of belonging offered by integration discourse. This conclusion extends the findings of this book to the reactions to the ongoing global refugee reception crisis. The cases in this book elucidate the continuities between the outpouring of enthusiastic public support for refugees in the summer of 2015 and the subsequent implementation of new policies further restricting asylum laws. The development of integration discourse in the mediated public sets up a logical framework for the selective and always provisional inclusion of immigrant and minority populations as part of the new “colorful” Germany.

Asylum and the Future of Integration

The mediated public discourse in Germany around the peak in demand for asylum during 2015 dramatically exemplified how integration discourse strengthens national norms. As I outline below, the responses to the growing demand for asylum in 2015 followed many of the patterns established in other cases examined in this book. As during the World Cups in 2006 and 2010, Germans were praised for their welcoming and open culture, showing that they had learned from the lessons of the genocidal past to become a

global moral leader. Domestically, journalists and commentators marveled at “how deeply our country has changed since those macro-crimes, that one could only slowly begin to speak of decades after the war” (Liebsch 2015). Unfortunately, the celebratory discourse and action in this case was accompanied from the beginning by the other tools of securitization and responsabilization that characterize integration discourse and policy. Finally, I turn to critical voices outside the mainstream public sphere, who critique the triumphalism of the response to the “refugee crisis” during “the long summer of migration” (Hess et al. 2017). They relate these responses to Germany’s recent history of self-congratulatory national spectacle, which denies structural and institutional racism in mainstream Germany. Against dualistic conceptions of Germany (as voluntary-helpers or the racist fringe) and of immigrants and minorities (as productive and colorful or threatening and strange) these writers advocate an agonistic and critical transcultural approach to politics and representation in Germany that insists on human dignity.

Good Germany, Bad Germany

During a visit to Berlin in June 2014, I was waiting for the S-Bahn when I noticed a sticker on the sign indicating the name of the stop (fig. 7). The sticker showed a colorful cartoon of a panicked eagle in a boat, scrambling to retract a life preserver ring labeled “right to asylum” from a sea of grasping zombie hands. At the bow of the boat, behind the eagle, the German flag waves. The boat’s rudder is painted with the German national colors and topped with the European Union flag. The top of the sticker proclaims that “the boat is full.” The bottom portion of the sticker was partially ripped up, obscuring the logo of the far-right National Democratic Party (recently renamed *Die Heimat*). The sticker showed weathering, suggesting it had been there for some time.

This sticker and its partial removal symbolize several significant discourses and political tensions explored in this book around nationalism and the control of difference in Germany. The slogan at the top of the sticker is a well-established nativist metaphor, which proposes that immigration threatens to “swamp” the nation that is at capacity. This resembles the “wave” metaphor for migration, which is common across languages and national contexts. This depiction takes the metaphor to its logical extreme, making explicit the biopolitical logics suggested by the boat. In this image, refugees are completely stripped of their humanity. They are rendered as the living



Fig. 7. Photos of neo-Nazi NPD sticker on a train platform proclaiming, “the boat is full.” (Photographs by the author.)

dead. The shred of life they possess, in the form of the reanimated hands grasping toward safety in the Europe-boat, is only relevant as a threat to the national population represented by the terrified eagle. The asylum life preserver cannot possibly aid the figures in the water—they have no lives to save. Instead, it functions as a lure that pulls the undead toward the boat.

The sticker clearly demonstrates the position of its neo-Nazi authors. In short, the valuable life of the national population is under threat from refugees, whose lives represent the death of the national population. As this book demonstrates, this discourse also operates in the center of the popular mediated public sphere, most obviously in the Sarrazin debate but also in positively framed discussions about the value of properly managed diversity. The removal of the letters indicating the sticker’s authorship while leaving the message fully intact represents the acceptability of the discourses of the right, while denying their connections to racism in German society.

Reactions to 2015’s long summer of migration in Germany involved both the kinds of euphoric celebration that characterized the 2006 World Cup and new regulations restricting asylum rights under the imperatives of integration. The policy changes reflected anxieties about failed candidates for integration from “incompatible” cultures. These associations are supported

by well-meaning programs, such as the sport integration programs explored in chapter 4, as well by the anti-Muslim polemics of Thilo Sarrazin (chapter 6) and the good Muslim, bad Muslim binary of the Integration Bambi Award (chapter 7). Although these discourses circulate freely in the mainstream public sphere, their mobilization and intensification as part of growing xenophobic populist politics has raised alarm among many politicians and public figures. However, like the alteration of the NPD sticker, public responses to rising antirefugee violence frequently sought to marginalize overt racism without attacking the roots of racist discourse in the mainstream. As the critics at the end of this conclusion argue, the “refugee crisis” became another mediatised spectacle, offering the opportunity to show the world the welcoming and tolerant new Germany while characterizing racism as a marginal phenomenon.

World Champions of the Heart

As the international press observed with great approval (Kämper 2015), Germany sent a message of support for refugees at a time when many other European countries were building fences. However, even as Germany gave the world the neologism *Willkommenskultur* (welcome culture) (Akrap 2015), the domestic reality was much more complicated. In 2015 and 2016, lawmakers aggressively passed laws reducing asylum rights while the “concerned citizens” movement (*besorgte Bürger*) coalesced behind the new far-right party, Alternative for Germany (AfD). Indeed, a similar electoral shift to the right was building across Europe, gaining strength by exploiting political and economic instability in the Euro Zone and stoking anxieties about a peak in asylum claims from people forcibly displaced by war and material desolation, primarily from Syria, Somalia, and Afghanistan. While the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2016c) determined that the overwhelming majority of refugees and displaced people were living in low- and middle-income countries, in the late summer of 2015 stories of a “European migrant crisis” dominated international news cycles. Images of crowds moving along train tracks and overloaded boats on the Mediterranean flooded the media. However, of the 65.3 million people forcibly displaced in 2015, only 6 percent of them were hosted in Europe (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2016a). Both in raw numbers and as a percentage of their populations, European and other high-income countries had provided refuge for relatively few forcibly displaced people.

Whereas only months before Germany had played the role of cold hard-

liners by proposing harsh austerity measures for Greece as its economy collapsed, in the late summer of 2015, Germans enjoyed international admiration for publicly welcoming refugees on train platforms and for Merkel's statement that, "We can do it" (*wir schaffen das*) regarding accommodating refugees. International media praised Germany, while explaining that Germans' welcoming response to refugees was due to their rational recognition that, with their rapidly aging population, Germany needed to welcome newcomers. The *Washington Post* published an article proclaiming that a demographic map of fertility rates shows "why some European countries reject refugees and others love them" (Noack 2015), confirming that Germany's embrace was solidly based in the statistically supported recognition of national interests in a time of population decline. A *Globe and Mail* headline from earlier that year dubbed Germany as "the place where the refugee flood is a solution, not a problem" (Saunders 2015). Along with pragmatic self-interest, an article in the *Washington Post* also draws on the popular story of the "good-hearted German," doing penance for the crimes of the Nazi period:

Empathy and the country's Nazi-past—which turned Europe into a battlefield and later forced many Germans themselves to flee the war—might explain the country's enthusiasm for helping today's refugees. But there is another factor that few would openly acknowledge right away: Germany really needs them. (Noack 2015)

This narrative combining rational self-interest and moral fortitude made Germans the European heroes of the refugee reception crisis. Although this account served internationally as an important counterpoint to the outright hostility against refugees by many European leaders, it does not hold up under closer scrutiny of domestic politics. Without diminishing the crucial aid work of legions of activists and citizens in Germany, it is misleading to characterize the official German response to the increased demand for asylum as enthusiastic in a durable sense or as responding to a rational desire to counteract demographic decline.

The narratives of good Germans among duty-shirking European neighbors were partly based on valid foundations, but it is an oversimplification of Germany's complicated and ambivalent stance toward asylum seekers (see fig. 8).¹ On the one hand, in August 2015 Germany made the excep-

1. Timeline sources: Abé et al. (2015), Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (2016), Bundesregierung (2016), Connor (2016), Fraktionen der CDU/CSU und SPD (2015), Fraktionen der CDU/CSU und SPD (2016), *Deutsche Welle* (2015b), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2016b).

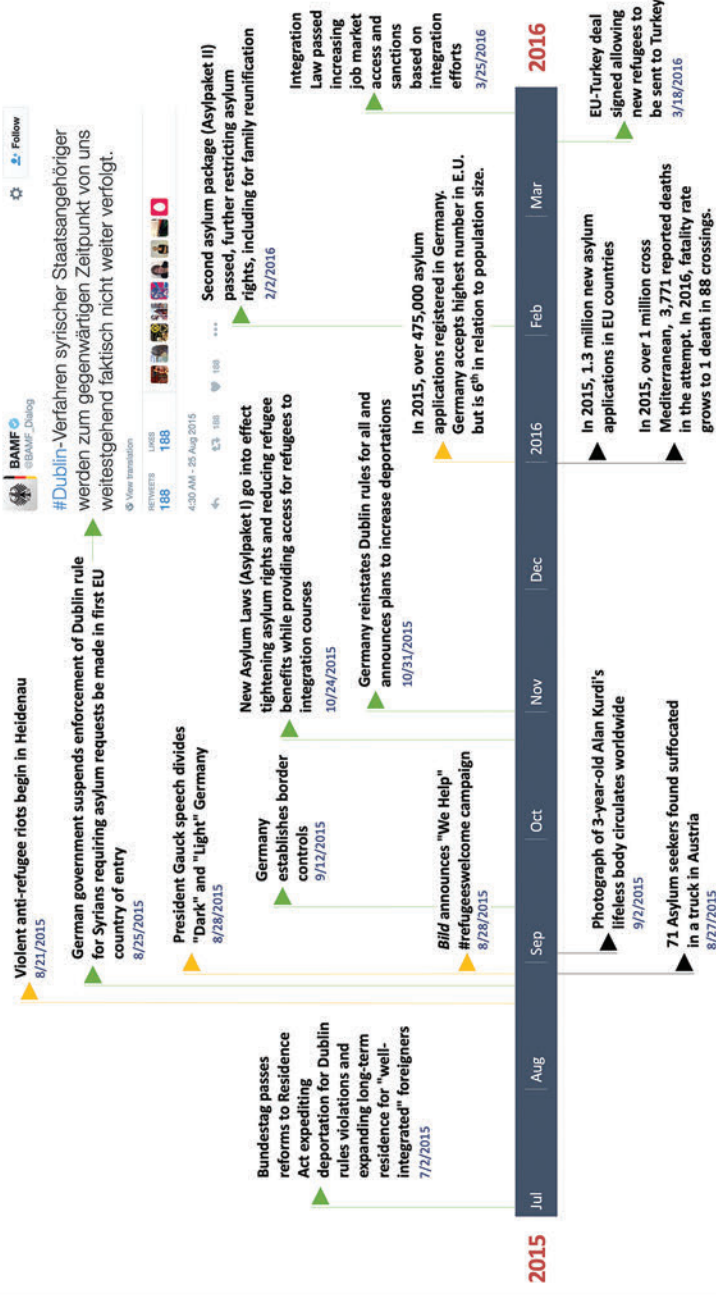
tional move to temporarily suspend enforcement of the Dublin rules requiring refugees to apply for asylum in the EU country of first arrival (Holehouse 2015). Furthermore, despite pressure from within her party, Merkel expressed her commitment to upholding the German constitution and the obligations of the Geneva Convention by refusing to put a hard limit on the number of asylum cases Germany would consider (*Deutsche Welle* 2015a). On the other hand, the very next month the federal government approved new restrictions reducing benefits and making asylum less accessible in Germany (*Migazin* 2015). Still, in the second half of 2015, images of refugees holding up pictures of Angela Merkel or handmade signs expressing their love and appreciation of Germany contrasted sharply with images of crowds of people caged or fleeing armed guards in Hungary. Although Germany's exceptionally hospitable position was short-lived, it made a strong international impression.

While international stories focused on the felicitous confluence of German pragmatism and moral commitments to human rights, domestically Germany saw a surge in arson attacks on refugee hostels. As stories about "waves" of migrants "flooding" into Europe multiplied in the public sphere, so did the violence against refugees and the hostels that housed them. An investigation by *Die Zeit* (Paul Blicke et al. 2015) determined that 222 serious violent attacks against refugee hostels had taken place in the first 11 months of 2015. In 169 of those cases no suspects were identified and only four cases resulted in convictions. In August, a multiday antirefugee riot rocked the small town of Heidenau near Dresden. Groups of people greeted newly arrived refugees with flying bottles, rocks, and racist slurs. A video posted on YouTube by one of the rioters shows smoke-filled streets and people aiming fireworks at police in riot gear (Hannes Kling 2015). Dozens of people stand in the streets, pulling down police barriers, smashing concrete blocks, and throwing the resulting rubble at the police. At several points, they chant "*Wir sind das Volk*" (we are the people). None of the rioters were arrested. Although the minister of the interior, Thomas de Maizière, promised that the rioters would feel "the full force of the rule of law" (*Die Zeit* 2015), it took three months for investigations of suspects to begin and only three people were convicted for their actions (*Der Spiegel* 2016).

As shocking as the events in Heidenau were, for the purposes of this book the most interesting part about them is not the actions of the rioters but the way their actions and statements were taken up in public discourse. The violent riots of Heidenau provided an undeniable and unambiguous incidence of racist hate against which mainstream society could unite in condemnation. Against the acts of Heidenau, President Joachim Gauck made a state-

Responses to Refugee Reception Crisis

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ment praising the actions of ad hoc volunteer networks that had gathered to support the incoming asylum seekers. Gauck framed these actions, in Manichean terms, as the helper-citizens against the malicious extremist minority, claiming that volunteers “show that there is a light Germany, that is represented here shining against the dark Germany that we sense when we hear about attacks against asylum seekers housing or any xenophobic actions against people” (*Die Welt* 2015). Gauck goes on to say,

These lovely examples, that is the Germany we are building and on which we depend. And that this is a crystal-clear answer to the agitators and arsonists who mar the face of our country. We will tell them, “You don’t represent us.” And we will absolutely not tolerate that, either abroad or at home, lawbreakers stand for this Germany that has shown itself to be open and willing to help. (*Die Welt* 2015)

Gauck’s statement came as part of a wave of enthusiasm for volunteering and demonstrating German “*Willkommenskultur*.” The day after Gauck’s speech, Germany’s most popular periodical, the national populist tabloid *Bild*, rolled out a new public campaign under the slogan “We Help #refugeeswelcome.” The campaign was introduced by *Bild* with the statement,

With the campaign, WE HELP, *BILD* wants to set an example of humanitarianism. We want to show that the noisy troublemakers and foreigner-haters do NOT bellow in our name! That Germany has a heart for people who need help! (*Bild* 2015)

The *Bild* campaign gathered stories of companies, celebrities, and professional soccer teams who signed on to wear and proclaim the slogan “We help” soliciting stories from their readers of their actions to help refugees. Gauck’s statement and the framing of the *Bild* campaign share a preoccupation with demonstrating to Germans and to the international community that Germany is a good and ethical nation. Asylum seekers, many of whom were photographed with signs thanking Germans and idolizing Merkel, provided the opportunity to showcase this goodness, framed as a national trait.

Meanwhile, as with soccer patriotism, the celebration of the helper nation is portrayed as incompatible with—and even antithetical to—nationalism.

Fig. 8. (*facing page*) Responses to the refugee reception crisis (July 2015–March 2016)

Professor of philosophy Burkhard Liebsch made this argument three weeks after Gauck's speech in an article in *Die Zeit* titled, "Our Country Surprises Itself" (2015). Liebsch points to the growth of volunteer movements in Germany to help refugees and argues that "hospitality does not lend itself to national pride and narcissism." Liebsch observes that the domestic and international press "surprised us with the discovery that we are a hospitable people. Apparently, no one had predicted this. And yet, the truly lovely pictures from train stations in Munich, Frankfurt, and Dortmund appear to unambiguously confirm this image." According to Liebsch, these images of people holding signs welcoming the refugees who had been subjected to brutal treatment on their way to Germany are a sign of the establishment of a post-ethnic conception of collective identity.

Liebsch centers the enthusiastic reaction to refugees within a new national identity, while denying the political utility of this move. First, he sketches a new German historiography of an original Germanic hospitality that was lost during the rise of nationalism, culminating in the ultimate transgression of hospitality: the Holocaust. In its zeal for eliminating difference, Liebsch proposes that the National Socialist mission would have eventually turned against all people including, presumably, white Christian Germans. After all, "don't we all arrive as foreigners in this world?" Having learned from the Nazi era that the community of ethnicity (*Volksgemeinschaft*) "can only be a totalitarian fiction," Liebsch claims that now only the extremist fringe wants "to belong unconditionally, to lose oneself in a political community." Second, Liebsch proposes that the "refugee crisis" offers the opportunity to recover the soul of the country, which since the end of the war, has been on the road to "freedom, not to pursue shameless and antisocial wealth papered over with a positive self-image, but in the sense of the freedom to answer others worldwide who need a place to dwell." Here, Liebsch advocates moving beyond the economic rationality that provided a primary foundation of the Federal Republic (see chapters 2 and 4).

Liebsch sees refugee arrivals as a "historically singular opportunity" to freely choose hospitality in the Derridean sense (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000)—unbound from the unitary norms, customs, and religious dictates requiring hospitality in "supposedly backward countries and cultures" (2015). This ideal form of hospitality belongs to no one, "least of all those who would write it on their flag" in order "to show who they are or what they would like to be." In this, Liebsch contrasts true "hospitality" with the "welcome culture" that "was propagated during that special sporting mega-event," referring to the 2006 men's soccer World Cup. The latter was predicated on the limited stay of the foreign guests "after leaving their money here." Self-

interest, calculation, and conditionality is the antithesis of Liebsch's ideal of hospitality.

Liebsch's laudable ideal lives in the ranks of volunteers dedicating their time and resources to answer the call for shelter.² Unfortunately, the claim that public statements and images of hospitality resist symbolic nationalism is overly optimistic. So long as national borders and citizenship regimes determine "the right to have rights," the kind of hospitality desired by Liebsch is bound to law and the government's willingness to follow through on commitments to universal human rights. Citizens may mobilize to offer shelter and care, but the law determines who may enjoy the sanction and protection of legal residency and who will be cast out and exposed to death. The progression of increasing restrictions on the right to asylum during 2015 and 2016 undermines the hope that Germany's response to refugees in the long summer of migration opened a new era of disinterested hospitality (fig. 8). While Merkel's decisions in summer 2015 made a "grand" stand for humanitarianism and human rights, according to refugee advocacy organization Pro Asyl's Günter Burkhardt, the subsequent series of rights restrictions demonstrated that "the government has flipped" (*Migazin* 2016b). Without a legal commitment to relinquish some sovereignty as part of the pledge to asylum rights (Bosswick 2000), the heavily mediatized welcome provided by helper citizens risks becoming a primarily symbolic narrative of national virtue.

Liebsch was not alone in making the connection to the enthusiasm for playing host to the world during 2006 World Cup. For Liebsch, however, the economic motivations of the 2006 World Cup distinguish it from the welcoming images from train stations in 2015. However, as the discussions of soccer patriotism and the World Cup throughout this book show, whatever marginal economic benefits there may be to the country hosting a sporting mega-event, the symbolic and affective significance of hosting is paramount. Indeed, despite substantial research showing the likelihood of public debt and economic harm to host countries and cities (Zimbalist 2020), the symbolic political value of these events still draws countries to compete for the opportunity to host. The media coverage of sporting mega-events also shows that the desire to lose oneself in a national community is not limited to the extremist fringe. In Liebsch's account, the asylum seekers themselves disappear except as a call that "our country" might answer, making itself whole again as a community of individuals constituted through moral action rather than ethnicity. As is so common in discussions of integration and national

2. See Nour Halabi's book *Radical Hospitality* (2022) for a deep analysis of regulatory and mediated hospitality and moral obligations to universal human dignity.

sporting spectacle, this discourse denies nationalism while taking for granted the nation as the primary definition of the collective.

Beyond the Binary: Voices for a Critical Transnational German Public

The delight of discovering Germany's hospitable national character was observed with skepticism by a handful of commentators writing outside the mainstream press, most of them self-identified as the children of guest workers, refugees, or immigrants. This book analyzes the mediated public discourse of the mainstream press, the government, and private sector foundations. With notable exceptions, these cases demonstrate the frequently limited and utilitarian inclusion of minority voices; athletes and celebrities are invited to speak as role models of integration or immigrant patriots whose promotion of inclusive civic nationalism matches journalistic interest in surprising stories that validate national values and create distance from shameful pasts. I will conclude with some of the critical voices that have been too rare in the archives examined in this book. In their analysis of reactions to the refugee reception crisis, they raise concerns about the individualization of the problem of racism, the depoliticization of inequality, and the ephemerality of solidarity built on self-congratulatory national spectacles—issues that reverberate throughout cases assembled here.

This book argues that, in a political, economic, and social system governed by biopolitical norms and logics, integration discourse performs the function of racism in Foucault's sense (2003); it fractures the population into normative nationals—whose lives inherently matter—and candidates for integration—whose worth depends on their service to the nation. The cases in this book have dealt primarily with the elevation and legitimation of the national category, in part through the process of adjudicating integration success or failure. Reactions to increased demand for asylum include politics and discourses of integration and spectacles of national identity construction, but they also protect the category of the national on another front, by assigning blame for racism to the antisocial (*asoziale*) fringe.

As critical commentators point out, the public enthusiasm for volunteering and the reaction to right-wing violence create a "simplified binary dividing society into 'good white Germans' and 'bad white Germans'" (Küçük and Varatharajah 2015). This is exemplified by Gauck's division of society into "light" and "dark," fragmenting and isolating undesirable elements by categorizing them as social pathology. The problematic association of light with

good and dark with bad in a discussion of white nationalist violence went largely unnoticed in the mainstream public sphere. The kinds of pathologies typically associated with “integration refusers” are associated here with “dark Germany.” Bloggers Ellen Kollender and Janne Grote write critical commentary from the self-reflexive position as Germans “without an apparent migration background.” In an article for the alternative online periodical *Migazin*, Kollender and Grote assemble many examples of prominent citizens who have attempted to marginalize racism through ridicule and by characterizing those who express right-wing views as useless and intellectually deficient people.³ As a key example, they point to a celebrated quote by the popular musician Farin Urlaub, stating,

As long as there are people who can't do anything, who don't know anything, and have never achieved anything, there will also be racism. Because these people want to feel good about themselves and to be proud of something. So, they look for someone who is different from them, and they consider themselves superior. Or they are foolishly proud to be “German,” something for which no effort was necessary on their part. (Kollender and Grote 2015)

Kollender and Grote observe that this formulation projects racism onto the “losers” of society, those who have failed because of their “self-imposed lack of work and prospects” (2015). Likewise, in an article posted on the platform Medium, graduate students and former asylum seekers Elif Küçük and Sinthujan Varatharajah see in this binarism a familiar discriminatory schema in which “low secondary school qualifications, lacking intelligence, poor spelling or welfare (Hartz IV) are shortsightedly and arrogantly declared as reasons for racism” (2015).⁴ The useless human described in the Farin Urlaub quote above bears a striking resemblance to descriptions of “problem migrants.” Theirs is characterized as a worthless form of life, a form that is harmful to the growth of a healthy population.

As part of this process of drawing divisions, the “helper nation” joined in public displays of generosity and kindness toward refugees. Critical commentators expressed discomfort and skepticism about this sudden outpouring of enthusiasm, even as they admitted feeling a spark of hope that this time the support would be more durable than the antiracism concerts and

3. See, for example, the satirical version of a popular Sarah Conner song by comedian Carolin Kebekus “*Wie Blöd Du Bist*” (How Stupid You Are).

4. See also the discussion of the category of the *asozialen* in the Introduction.

demonstrations of “upstanding citizens” following the antirefugee violence of the 1990s. In the 1990s, symbolic public acts against racism did nothing to stop new laws undoing strong protections for refugee rights in the constitution.

Critical commentators observe a continuity in the public self-awareness of participating in a nation-building narrative between the response to refugees and the spectacle of heroism and hospitality celebrated during the men’s soccer World Cup. As Doris Akrap writes in the *Guardian*, “it’s as if a year after the World Cup triumph in Rio, Germans desperately want to be world champions again—this time as the globe’s most welcoming country for refugees” (2015). Bahareh Sharifi echoes this sentiment in an article written for *Migazin*, writing that it is not the political protests of refugee activists over the past several years that brought people onto the streets but instead—referring to the 2006 World Cup, known as the Summer Fairytale—the “spreading drive to have been part of Germany’s Summer Fairytale Part 2” in which everyone seeks to outdo each other in the “mediated presentation as world champions of *Willkommenskultur*” (2015). Sharifi’s verb tense use here emphasizes the self-consciousness of participants imagining their future selves looking back on the historical narrative they are creating. Writing in late September 2015, Küçük and Varatharajah elaborate this idea, imagining how “the past several months will remain in memory as the ‘summer of refugees and great solidarity.’ A supposedly well-earned nostalgia” (2015). Following the script of the World Cup mobilizations, these commentators observe in the mediated outpouring of support for refugees the preparation of narratives in the present as the basis of future collective memory.

The pattern is so familiar that nostalgia is already present while events are in progress. Writing in mid-August, blogger Nadia Shehadeh observed the live formation of this narrative.

About a week and a half ago the German Summer Fairytale took off, a wonderful story of solidarity, harmony, and Western diligence that unfolded through volunteer action and the generosity on the part of all kinds of ascetics. Selfies in front of masses of donations were shot and uploaded onto the networks, because do good and talk about it! The talk was of the civil society’s triumph, of evil, and of “goosebump moments.” (2015)

In this description, the “refugee crisis” provided a moment of collective self-affirmation that continued and even exceeded the power of the World Cup due to the righteousness of the task of saving lives and the “evil” of violent

right-wing antagonists. Shehadeh goes on to vent her frustration as she watches her Facebook feed fill up with archetypal images of the white savior complex. Shehadeh wryly notes that “this is the summer of the heroes, this summer 2015, above all the German heroes, and it didn’t even require a soccer team” (2015). Shehadeh also shows how social media created an echo chamber amplifying the spectacle of the good.

In an even more pointed commentary in the weekly business news magazine, *Wirtschaftswoche*, famous Turkish-German comedian and cabaret artist, Serdar Somuncu, expressed his frustration with the social-mediatized helper-ism in unambiguous terms: “The sympathy with refugees is degenerating into a spectacle of self-representation. . . . the common sense of welcome culture is starting to make me sick. . . . last year it was the Ice Bucket Challenge, now it’s refugees” (2015). Somuncu sees a competitive spectacle in the social media virality of refugee boosterism and predicts that the *cause célèbre*—and, with it, empathy for the mortal plight of refugees—will evaporate from public concern once the rash of excitement has passed. What will remain is the security of the conviction that your community is on the side of the good.

Beyond simple frustration with the self-congratulation of majority Germans, commentators argue that the “spectacle of the good” poses several problems for addressing the needs and rights of refugees—problems that are intertwined with broader struggles to validate the political claims of immigrants and Germans of color. As in integration discourse aimed at immigrants and migrantized Germans, the process of division separating the bad nationals from the good personalizes and, thus, depoliticizes issues of racism, inequity, and the place of diversity in German society. Both the condemnation of the bad and the celebration of the good draw attention away from cultural, structural, and institutional politics that materially impact the lives of refugees and minorities. Volunteerism risks setting up a paternalistic relationship between majority society and refugee supplicants (Kollender and Grote 2015), rather than a relationship based on political commitments to human rights in which refugees themselves are recognized as legitimate political actors (Sharifi 2015).

Volunteerism as mediated spectacle also risks setting up a relationship based on the “symbolic violence” (Bourdieu 1994) of the gift that must be met with appreciation and comes with the expectation of reciprocation. This prepares the way for the kinds of economic rationalities that have come to govern integration discourse since the beginning of the millennium. Küçük and Varatharajah see a desire to bind asylum policy and economic utility in Angela Merkel’s asylum policy. This can be seen in the approving discussions

of Germany's pragmatic approach to admitting refugees as a solution for German labor shortages mentioned above. They write that "refugees are welcome then, so long as they are useful, not least of all as apprentices, skilled workers, and taxpayers. But what about the illiterate, the aged, and the psychologically and physically ill? Are they then less 'worthy of saving,' less welcome?" (Küçük and Varatharajah 2015). Here, through the question of economic utility, the biopolitical line dividing worthy from unworthy life emerges again.

As Agamben argues, the refugee, who has lost all other claims but that of humanity, should be the ultimate embodiment of human rights but "signals instead the concept's radical crisis" (1998, 126). Even in the heady days of "welcome fever," Küçük and Varatharajah observe the continuation of economic utilitarian discourse in assessments of those with nothing left but the claim to human rights. The poverty of those claims concerns Akrap, who in listening to "good Germans" often asks herself,

What is going to happen, when the new refugees demand more than a tent, a bottle of water and a slice of bread? How will German society deal with this next turning point? What if it turns out that not every refugee has the skills to equip them for the "made in Germany" brand? (2015)

When the asylum is considered a gift, the political demands a refugee might make appear as an affront to the host-guest relationship. The limitations of this arrangement materialize the moment refugee political claims condemn the inhumane conditions of detention, the "camp as a form of violence" (Küçük and Varatharajah 2015). These limits emerged at the end of the "summer of heroes," with two new revisions of asylum law that further restricted rights to asylum (Grubmüller 2015; *Migazin* 2016a). These laws added six additional countries to the "safe country of origin" list⁵—five of which are majority Muslim—and established new limitations on family reunification, freedom of movement, and the forms of resources available to asylum seekers.

In addition to new restrictions on constitutional asylum guarantees, the state responded to the increased need for asylum with the first federal "Integration Law" (*Integrationsgesetz*) in July 2016. Picking up on the well-

5. These countries are presumed to be free from the systemic, identity-based and political oppression and violence that are primary justifications for asylum claims. This makes the burden to prove asylum claims extraordinarily high.

developed theme of integration discourse, the motivation for the law was summarized as “demand and support” (*fördern und fordern*). Responding to majoritarian fears that immigrants will congregate and form “parallel societies” (see chapter 5), the law allows authorities to mandate place of residence for asylees. It also makes residency permits and benefits dependent on participation in “integration courses” and occupational training or employment, allowing wages as low as 80 cents per hour (Buschow 2016). While the law committed to increasing resources for critical programs, including language classes, the emphasis on requirements and sanctions suggests that the problem with “integration” lies with the refusal on the part of asylum seekers to participate. As Pro Asyl’s (2016) position paper on the law points out, the true problem is that the demand for language courses far outpaces the supply. Left Party politician Sevim Dağdelen argues that the progression of laws filled with sanctions and limitations only serves to appease racist fears and reinforce anti-immigrant stereotypes. Government leaders “cannot demonstrate a real need for such tightening because of the ‘refusal to integrate.’ It’s all about vibes” (2016a). Despite repeated requests by the opposition for proof of the need for increased sanctions, Dağdelen claims that her colleagues failed to produce any such data, leading her to argue that the legislation “promotes the lie of integration refusal” (2016b). The emphasis on penalties supports the prejudicial and counterfactual position that problems with “integration” stem primarily from the refusal of refugees and immigrants to participate.

In the actions of public volunteerism and legal restriction in recent years, critical commentators point to a crucial missing piece: the voices of those impacted—both contemporary and former refugees as well as “guest workers,” their descendants, and all those whose transnational heritage is apparent, making them perpetual candidates for integration. Sharifi argues that “legal protection and political participation” are necessary but must also be accompanied by the possibility of “active co-determination of societal and cultural self-conception” (2015). Reactions to the refugee situation underscore the importance of this kind of interpretational enfranchisement. In Serdar Somuncu’s words, “The most important task that we in this thankfully ever more diverse nation have, is not to unthinkingly allocate affection and rejection, but rather to learn to weigh things and to allow argumentation in” (2015). To achieve this, minoritized voices must be part of mediated public discourse even when they contest majority norms and point to uncomfortable issues of the structural racism and inequality.

The division of the society into the “helper nation” and “dark Germany” obscures the intertwining of the celebration and condemnation in main-

stream integration discourse. Narratives of integration facilitate the easy swing from one stance to the other, maintaining the positive self-conception of the normative national as tolerant and pragmatic while cordoning off the non-normative into the ambivalent category of the integrant. The conception of Germany as a paragon of *Willkommenskultur* was cemented by images of white Germans celebrating refugees. The narrative that German support emerged from individual moral and empathetic commitments (based on having learned from the Nazi past) and out of pragmatic and thus durable economic self-interest established this welcoming reputation domestically and abroad. At the same time, the policy changes implemented in 2015 and 2016 represent a continuation of the restrictions of the 1990s, when the “asylum compromise” abolished the sacrifice of a portion of national sovereignty contained in the constitution’s original commitment to asylum rights. The voices of refugees, along with their political organizing and their contestation of disappearing rights and inhumane conditions, remain marginalized.

As we move further from the citizenship expansion of the turn of the millennium, we are witnessing a bifurcated trend in public discourse. White nationalism is growing bolder at the margins while also becoming more firmly ensconced in the political mainstream.⁶ Meanwhile, a new generation of immigrants and Germans of color are gaining greater purchase in the public sphere, publishing books and building movements connecting to Germany’s history of Black feminist and queer critique (see Florvil 2020) and to transnational antiracist, antifascist, and decolonial movements critical of integrationist hegemony.⁷ There are also signs of a willingness among the general public to acknowledge the existence of racism in Germany. A recent representative survey of the German population shows that most adults rec-

6. The arrests of dozens of far-right “*Reichsbürger*” coup plotters in December 2022 revealed a network including judges, public officials, a former member of parliament for the AfD, and other middle-class professionals (Oltermann 2022). This pattern was renewed with the 2024 revelations of secret meetings planning mass deportations of refugees, immigrants, and “unassimilated citizens” involving Christian Democratic and AfD politicians, neo-Nazis, professionals, and members of respected civil society organizations (“Geheimplan gegen Deutschland” 2024). Meanwhile, concern has grown in recent years about serious problems with right-wing extremism among police and the Germany army. An intelligence agency report documented 1,400 suspected cases of right-wing extremism in the police and armed forces from 2017 to the beginning of 2020 (Jansen 2020).

7. Ferda Ataman’s 2019 book, *Ich bin von hier. Hört auf zu fragen!* (I Am from Here. Stop asking!) includes as an index “a small selection of new German opinions.” This list of books and essays begins with a trickle of already classic works from the 1990s and early 2000s. The proliferation of titles in the 2010s points to a counter-hegemonic sea change led by a new generation of writers with transnational heritage and otherwise non-normative backgrounds.

ognize that racism is a problem in Germany (Sonnenberg 2022). Women, in particular, recognize the problem, with 66 percent agreeing that racism is a serious problem and 51 percent saying that not enough is currently being done to counter racism. Among foreign nationals, nearly half of respondents (46 percent) report having personally faced racist discrimination. The survey breaks the population down into German citizens and foreign nationals, but not along racial or ethnic lines, which obscures distinctions among the experiences of Germans and immigrants of color as opposed to white Germans and immigrants. Nevertheless, this survey shows widespread recognition of racism as a problem, which is a prerequisite for the solidarity necessary to fight white Christian supremacy.

Integration and the Citizen

Just over two decades after the introduction of *jus solis* citizenship, integration discourse is a cultural and a juridical norm, deepening political and cultural commitments to biopolitical rationalities for the cultivation of valued forms of life. The two major revisions of asylum law since 2015 were followed by the implementation of Germany's first Integration Law in 2016, expanding the integration mandates of Germany's first Immigration Law from a decade before. This book argues against accepting the positive and apolitical claims of concepts and mandates associated with integration at face value. Instead, we need to carefully consider what function the idea of integration plays wherever it is mobilized to define the rules for belonging and citizenship. Integration discourse depends on an evaluative framework that classifies the population, first by their status as national or integrant, and second according to the threats and benefits they represent for the population at large. The category of the integrant must constantly be evaluated and managed to determine, both at the individual level and at the level of the group, whether integrants fall into the subcategory of successes or failures of integration. This evaluation determines whether non-nationals are "beneficial or threatening" to the national population. Crucially, it is a perpetual evaluation that can never be definitively settled. As several of the cases studied in this book show, an integrant who is celebrated as a "successful example" in one situation may later be judged a failure or traitor to the cause of integration based on another situation.

The topic of integration emerges where difference is seen as most insurmountable, and the paradigmatic Other is now the figure of the Muslim, a figure that also connects to aspects of anti-Blackness and antisemitism (Man-

del 2008; Partridge 2022). While new generations of European-born Muslims are increasingly visible as national sports heroes, celebrities, public intellectuals, and politicians, their success is too often mobilized to support the conviction that success is equally accessible to all through integration. This meritocratic myth perpetuates cultural deficiency models for explaining achievement and economic gaps and erases the history of structural and interpersonal discrimination faced by immigrants of color and, especially, Turkish and Black Germans and refugees from predominantly Muslim countries. The cases in this book focus on high-profile mobilizations of integration since it arose as a major national concern at the turn of the new millennium. These cases also all involve the definition of Germanness, the proper performance of national affiliation, and the projection of Germany's future. Putting these cases in conversation with each other reveals the development of more inclusive social imaginaries as well as the entrenchment of white Christian supremacist narratives in a cultural or economic guise. Across Europe, the rejection of multiculturalism and its associated deliberative approaches in favor of integration shifted the focus of public discussions on difference from a paradigm based on negotiation, contestation, and self-narration to a paradigm based on the management of life itself.

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