

FROM GHETTO TO GOETHE:
GERMAN RAPPERS OF COLOR CLAIMING THEIR SPACE IN THE NATION

By

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines how contemporary German rappers of color offer decolonial critiques of definitions of nation, the cultural canon and German identity. Finding the traditional definitions insufficient for their multiracial, multiethnic and multinational identities, they propose more inclusive definitions of nation, canon and Germanness. Despite being marginalized, these rappers claim aspects of a Germany that resists them, and carve out a place in the national narrative. This movement from marginalization to speaking for the nation is the unique turn the subaltern in German hip-hop makes. The study analyzes songs, music videos and interviews with Samy Deluxe, Eko Fresh and Blumio to show how they use three distinct strategies — contesting constructions of canon and national identity through verse, practicing decolonial and sarcastic love and mapping hyperlocality — to accomplish the aims of critiquing and offering new definitions. With these strategies the rappers demonstrate that hip-hop not only is a poetic force that gives voice to Germans of color, but also has a place as an art form in canonical German culture. Hip-hop in Germany does the singular work of giving voice to Germans of color and elevates these voices to places of cultural authority.

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I. Introduction

Sometime in late 2014 a picture showed up on my Twitter feed of a Bundesliga player with a self-made t-shirt that read "Tugçe - Zivilcourage, Engel, Mut, Respekt ("Tugçe - moral courage, angel, bravery, respect"). The player, Swiss forward Haris Seferović, celebrated a goal he had scored by revealing this t-shirt on air. I had never heard of the Tugçe he was talking about, but the calls of "respect" on Twitter in response suggested something significant to me. Tugçe Albayrak, a 22 year-old Turkish-German woman, had been removed from life support on the 28th of November, two days before Seferović's tribute. Albayrak had intervened to stop the harassment of two young women by a young Serbian man in a McDonald's bathroom in Offenbach, a city just east of Frankfurt. Later in the parking lot she was struck by the man who had harassed these young woman and her head was badly injured when she hit the ground. After 13 days in a coma, on her 23rd birthday, her family decided to end life support. They announced this to a crowd of roughly 1500 who had kept vigil outside the hospital. Germany's president Joachim Gauck said Tugçe had earned the respect and gratefulness of the nation (Augstein 2015). Across Germany she was viewed as a brave role model. In Turkey she was named a Turkish hero who had won over the German people. At Oranienplatz, a square in Berlin's Kreuzberg neighborhood, a group of 300 Turkish-Germans held a wake to honor Tugçe ("Berliner Mahnwache Für Tugçe"). Foreign papers from Italy's *La Stampa* to *The New York Times* reported on Albayrak's death (Kern).

What drew me into exploring the topic more deeply, however, were the responses of individual public figures. Apart from Seferović, several German rappers also honored Tugçe, including Kay One, Kool Savas, Eko Fresh, Haftbefehl and Blumio, all with immigrant parents

of Filipino, Turkish, Kurdish or Japanese background ("Reaktionen Der Stars "). Turkish-German rapper Eko Fresh wore a t-shirt with a picture of Tugçe at one of his concerts and also pushed for her to receive a *Bundesverdienstkreuz* (Federal Cross of Merit) on his Facebook page.¹ Eko Fresh also shared Japanese-German rapper Blumio's Rap Da News web-series segment on Tugçe, in which he praised her courage in a situation when most would have done nothing (Blumio). I was struck by a solidarity that seemed to emerge across racial lines in the online sharing of praise for this young Turkish-German woman by mixed-heritage German rappers. In US hip-hop, black rappers dominate the genre and many non-black performers have to prove their bonafides to be seen as legitimate in the genre. It is a movement in the US where even if multi-ethnic and multi-racial collaboration exists, that collaboration is defined as being part of a black cultural experience (Lee). In the German context, however, Eko Fresh and Blumio, along with the other rappers of color listed before, came together for this common cause. They all have notably different backgrounds, and come from different parts of Germany, yet together they venerated a Turkish-German woman neither of them personally knew. The shared activism of these German rappers of color drew me towards questions of why this cross-racial coming together occurred in the first place. Was there something unique about the event itself? Was there something in the rappers' history that drew them towards acknowledging Tugçe the way they did? Or did something exist unique to German hip-hop that allowed these rappers to come together in this context? Further research showed me that it was not this single event that

¹Eko Fresh was one of over 307,000 who signed a petition to posthumously award Albayrak the Bundesverdienstkreuz. Despite sympathy for the cause from the federal government, she was said not to meet the requirements. The last posthumous recipient of the award was Dominik Brunner, who died after engaging in a fight with several teens who were trying to mug another group of teens. See Lempert 2016; "Nach Tod" 2016; Keller 2016.

drew German rappers of color together, but rather a shared sense of marginalization and a desire to express their anger, frustrations and depression at not being seen as full members of society. This multi-ethnic solidarity in marginalization is in fact a foundational element of German hip-hop. The death of Tugçe only brought the shared sense of marginalization into focus. During a summer in Berlin I grabbed every book on hip-hop available at the Archiv der Jugendkulturen (*Archive of Youth Cultures*), from Murat Güngör's *Fear of a Kanak Planet: HipHop Zwischen Weltmusik und Nazi-Rap* (Fear of a Kanak Planet: Hip-hop between World Music and Nazi-rap) to Christopher Mager's *HipHop, Musik und die Artikulation von Geographie* (Hip-hop, Music and the Articulation of Geography). Over a month I whittled my way through the stack of books I had pulled and discovered how hip-hop from the US was transmitted to Germany, and how after German reunification German rap gained its political voice. As was the case in the US, German-language rap was birthed from places of marginalization. Seminal multi-racial and multi-national hip-hop trio Advanced Chemistry spoke of rising racial profiling and xenophobia after Germany's reunification in their break-out 1992 single "Fremd im eigenen Land" ("Foreign in my own country"). With this track they set a reference point for German rap, with rappers of color and even white German rappers referring to the song to this day. Rapper Fatoni mentions the song in his late 2015 track, "32 Grad" ("32 Degrees C"), which harshly satirizes those who vacation in Greece and turn their gaze from the refugee crisis there.² In their veneration of Tugçe Albayrak, Eko Fresh and Blumio carry on the tradition of German rap being a force for

² He raps "Ich bin fremd in diesem Land/ Kein' Euro in der Tasche, kein' Cent in meiner Hand / (Hey!) Denn ich habe eine VISA-Karte" ("I am foreign in this land / No Euro in my bag, no cent in my hand / Hey! That's 'cause I have a VISA card").

criticizing and exposing wrongs in society. Implicit in the praise of Albayrak is a condemnation of the society in which her death took place.

Speaking of marginalization and wearing it proudly is of course not foreign to hip-hop, it is seen in venues of the greatest possible visibility. From the early 80s and onwards hip-hop in the US has spoken of the hopelessness in the black American ghetto: from racial profiling to police brutality, to institutional and economic racism. Even Beyoncé, a world superstar, took to the Super Bowl in January 2016 with back-up dancers in outfits paying homage to the Black Panthers Party to perform her song rich in defiant hip-hop swagger, "Formation." An accompanying music video for the single also highlighted government inaction during Hurricane Katrina (Chokshi). German hip-hop shares in the social criticism tradition of its US counterpart as well, but if German hip-hop were merely a platform for social criticism, it would not be notably distinct from its American counterpart in tone. German rappers of color do not, however, merely represent their marginalized space in society, but rather they project themselves into national debates and narratives from that space. They acknowledge their marginalization, while simultaneously engaging in conversations with the country's leaders. This intrusion into national debates and narratives creates a friction between what is traditionally seen as German - racially, epistemologically, historically - and the subaltern status of German rappers of color. From this friction the very racial and epistemological structure that frames and delineates what is included in and excluded from Germanness is revealed, either explicitly through lyrics or through the public response to Germans of color engaging in national conversations. In this study I will argue that this agitation through hip-hop, which reveals the persistently exclusionary definition of Germanness, is a decolonial act, an act that is a confrontation with the racial, gender, and sexual

hierarchies that were put in place or strengthened by European modernity as it colonized and enslaved populations through the planet" (Maldonado-Torres 267).³ It brings to light national hierarchies that put suspicion on non-ethnic Germans striving to participate in the conversations about the nation they live and create in. The conversations the German rappers of color that I will focus on deal with often implicitly and explicitly exclude people of color, ranging from what is in the national literary canon to how to deal with neo-Nazism, to more recent debates about how Germany should handle integration and the refugee crisis. Nonetheless German rappers of color find ways to engage in these national conversations and claim an equal status as artistic and intellectual equals. This movement from marginalization to speaking for the nation is the unique turn the subaltern in German hip-hop makes. From the block to the Bundesrepublik, German rappers of color claim aspects of a Germany that resists them and carve out a place in the national narrative. The three rappers that comprise the focus of my study embody the German hip-hop drive to always challenge the coloniality in post-reunification Germany's definition of itself and its people. Through their art they lyrically and visually contest the shortcomings of the white masculine model of Germanness. In its dismissal of their immigrant backgrounds, in its denial of public space, in its recognition of them as only others and not creative, contributing fellow citizens, in its threatening of their physical well-being, the colonially-rooted definition of Germanness is not good enough for the rappers of color in my study. Through hip-hop they critique, they reveal and present new spaces, places and definitions of Germanness and German culture that includes, recognizes and respects them. With the work of making physical and cultural space for the ever-expanding population of Germans of color, the artistic and intellectual

³ In this study I will primarily deal with racial hierarchies. German hip-hop, unfortunately, has a lot of room to grow in embracing and fostering queer and women rappers of color.

work of rappers of color like Samy Deluxe, Blumio and Eko Fresh is not only worth listening to, but worth taking seriously as the basis for creating a Germany that accepts the presence and contributions of people of color.

Engaging the Nation from the Margins

Das Land ist schon ok, ich glaub ich kann meinen Standpunkt vertreten

Obwohl mich viele hier anschauen, wie von 'nem andren Planeten

This land is alright, I think I can make my case

Even though many here look at me, like I'm from another planet

(Samy Deluxe, "Dis wo ich herkomm")⁴

With these lines Sudanese-German rapper Samy Deluxe illustrates the uncomfortable and contradictory nature of speaking about Germany as a person of color. In "Dis wo ich herkomm," Samy Deluxe takes on the Holocaust, national pride and Germany's present-day increasing ethnic and cultural diversity. While speaking on these topics, he also realizes that many are skeptical of his belonging to the nation at all and would question his right to engage in national dialogues. This strange situation, of being in a nation while often being seen as not belonging, is something many Germans of color have to cope with. All of the rappers of color I will engage with in this study - Samy Deluxe, Eko Fresh and Blumio - occupy this space. Despite being second or third-generation Germans and creating music primarily in German, their place in the nation is seen as suspect by many. That suspect position is reflected in the suspicion and racism addressed in their songs, or the "exotic" character applied to artwork from people of color in Germany by critics

⁴ Unless otherwise noted, all translations of German into English are my own.

(Jankowsky; Lechner). Nonetheless these artists still engage in national conversations. How do they find a place when their German belonging is questioned on the streets and in the press? Does their work in the hip-hop movement facilitate spatial claims and thereby belonging? Can they join in national dialogues, through hip-hop, in a way that might not be possible in other genres and movements? If hip-hop does allow belonging and participation in the nation for Germans of color, is this unique to Germany or does it have resonances with hip-hop in other countries or hip-hop as a global movement? In this study I will address these questions, particularly how, I argue, hip-hop is uniquely capable of allowing marginalized peoples to engage in national conversations.

When it comes to engaging with notions of national identity and national narratives, and the intertwining thereof, German rappers of color realize that engagement in three ways: contesting constructions of canon and national identity through verse, practicing decolonial and satirical love and finally mapping hyperlocality. These three strategies, employed in aesthetic and political ways, will structure my analysis. With these strategies the rappers I engage with show that hip-hop is an artistic force that not only gives voice to Germans of color but also that hip-hop has a place as an art form in canonical German culture. Hip-hop in Germany singularly does the work of giving voice to Germans of color and in addition elevates their voices to places of authority. As my study will show, rappers of color in Germany not only critique the nation, but also provide models for how the nation can do more to include the voices and knowledges of Germans of color.

Through a close reading of song lyrics, music videos and interviews I will analyze how German rappers of color create distinct artistic and intellectual profiles in their confrontation

with colonial hierarchies. In order to frame my analysis, I will first situate their work in the context of the decolonial theories and histories of contemporary scholars, Nelson Maldonado-Torres and Chela Sandoval. Their decolonial theories will be augmented by the work of Germanists Maria Stehle and her definitions of the ghetto and ghetto authenticity in Germany, and Katrin Sieg and her concept of ethnic drag, or the performance of ethnicity, throughout German history.

In order to establish the context of a colonial discourse in Germany, I will draw upon the work of Susanne Zantop on German colonial fantasies in her formative 1997 monograph *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870*. The colonial fantasies of late 18th century she examines ultimately established a hierarchy in which the White European Male was "predestined by biology to a position of physical and cultural dominance" (5). This colonial hierarchy formed through fantasy still fundamentally affects the dynamics at play in contemporary German society.

This section focused on historical and theoretical contextualization will conclude with a comparative overview of US and German hip-hop histories. I will present the historical, geographical, racial and ideological roots of the hip-hop movement. I will trace how it was birthed in the economic decay and political abandonment that existed in the late 1970s Bronx. That tumultuous place of origin established a genre fundamentally rooted in the artistic expressions of marginalized black Americans. I will then chronicle how Heidelberg-based group Advanced Chemistry translated the US movement to post-reunification Germany. Their breakthrough hit "Fremd im eigenen Land" ("Foreign in my own country") established German language rap as also rooted articulations of marginalization.

Moving forward from the early days of German rap, or Deutsch Rap (D-Rap) as it is often called, the main part of this study will focus on three figures in contemporary German hip-hop who carry on the socially conscious tradition of Advanced Chemistry. Veteran Sudanese-German rapper Samy Deluxe challenges the canon and makes incursions into national debates to increase the visibility of marginalized knowledge and expression. Eko Fresh is a Turkish-German rapper who in his portrayals of a hyperlocal belonging in Cologne - geographically, linguistically and culturally - projects himself into a national dialogue through an extremely locally rooted identity. Furthermore in his performance of a Turkish-German naively in love with an anti-immigrant politician he reveals the hegemonic, colonial ideology behind her anti-immigrant stance. Finally Japanese-German rapper Blumio injects his knowledge into national debates in two ways. His break out single "Hey Mr. Nazi" embodies Chela Sandoval's concept of decolonial love in its call for dialogue between Neo-Nazis and Germans of color. In another song, "Guter Ausländer," with Eko Fresh, Blumio proposes including embracing ones multicultural roots, as an alternative to integration as assimilation. In a concluding section I will look at how these German rappers of color are addressing the ever evolving refugee crisis in Germany and how their decolonial approaches are relevant to Germany's present and future.

Race, Nation and (De)colonial Discourse

To claim decoloniality one must have a colonial context. Germany, a country that had colonies for a far more limited time than other European countries like France, Spain or Great Britain, is not as easily seen as colonial or for that matter post-colonial. Unlike French and English, German is not spoken in Africa to any notable extent, for example. Germany lost all of

its colonies by the end of WWI and never regained them despite the Nazis' ambitions. The history of Germany also does not involve colonialism on its own shores, such as is the case for the Caribbean, North, South and Central America, Africa, the Middle East, Australia and Asia. How then does one view Germany itself in terms of colonality and subsequently decoloniality? Nelson Maldonado-Torres defines colonality as "refer[ing] to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations" (243). Despite a short-lived administrative colonialism, an intellectual colonialism has existed in the German-speaking world for centuries.

Zantop argues that long before having physical colonies German thinkers fantasized about undertaking colonial conquests similar to those of their imperial neighbors. Concurrently a collection of German-language thinkers established and engaged in heated dialogues on what constitutes the races of humans. Kant himself introduced the concept of human races into the German language (Zantop 68) and Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, along with Christian Wünsch, were among the first figures to use pseudoscientific cranial measurements to classify race (77). Despite different approaches "all 'anthropologists' in the 1790s seem to share the conviction that the white male is primeval 'man', who possesses the most harmonious countenance and has therefore rightfully achieved cultural superiority" and the German race was the most beautiful and culturally advanced of the white races (78). Cultural superiority also justified colonial domination. Zantop summarizes the argument for European domination of the era: "The supremacy of the white European variety, evident in its advanced civilization...resides in physiology and anatomy, that is in biology. In other words, biology explains 'why a single

continent, and certain peoples have almost always been the rulers, whereas all others have been servants" (79).

Herder, one of Germany's leading race theorists, also connected race with a national project. Germany, not a nation at the time, but rather a fragmented group of small territories only connected by their shared language and previous history as the Holy Roman Empire, was also occupied by Napoleon's imperial France. First the national project was based on what Bernd Fischer has called "the myth of anti-colonial self-liberation and self-determination" (Zantop 94), that is, the Germans freeing themselves from the French "colonizers." Beyond that, Herder believed Germans could be more just colonizers than other Europeans, since contemporary colonial powers - France, Britain, Spain and the Dutch - were notorious for their crimes against the native populations in the New World. This characterization, of Germans as both conquered and as the best morally equipped to conquer, created what Zantop called "a dangerous mix of self-pity and self-aggrandizement" (96). With the thinkers of the late 18th and early 19th century German-speaking world, we see an identity morally and racially birthed in relation to colonialism. Germany and Germans were defined by Herder and Christoph Meiner both as being colonized and as potentially superior colonizers. One sees in these fantasies a close intermingling of constructions of race and nation, whereby the German nation is composed of a single, superior race. For Zantop these fantasies necessitated actual colonies, but even without those colonies there is a legacy of colonial thinking, which relied on ethnic hierarchies to define a nation and its people, and to claim superiority over other nations.

In a history of actual colonialism, ethnic zoos and the Holocaust, Germany has a haunting legacy of using ethnic distinctions to subjugate, humiliate and annihilate those who did not fit

into its conceptions, and/or its leaders' conceptions, of belonging to the nation. The dynamics established by colonialism and sustained in coloniality are also evident in epistemic annihilation. In his article "On the Coloniality of Being," Nelson Maldonado-Torres presents a fruitful model for viewing how the knowledge and ontology of colonial subjects is viewed by the dominant culture: "I'd like to suggest that what was born in the sixteenth century was something more pervasive and subtle than what at first transpires in the concept of race: it was an attitude characterized by a permanent suspicion...The barbarian was a racialized self, and what characterized this racialization was a radical questioning or permanent suspicion regarding the humanity of the self in question" (Maldonado-Torres 245). This skepticism also sustains the identity of the marginalizing figure: "Skepticism becomes the means to reach certainty and provide a solid foundation to the self" (Maldonado-Torres 245). It is not merely a corporeal mode of existence which is being referred to, but also an intellectual one. He characterizes the link between corporeal and ontological existence in a play on Descartes' cogito: "'I think (others do not think, or do not think properly), therefore I am (others are not, lack being, should not exist or are dispensable)'" (Maldonado-Torres 252). Existence and the acceptance of thinking and knowledge are linked. The *damnés*, marginalized people, cannot exist unless their thinking is acknowledged. There is not merely a marginalization according to Maldonado-Torres but an erasing that occurs in the ontological framework of the coloniality he describes. Not recognizing the intellectual production of marginalized peoples means not recognizing their being.

With this legacy of colonial thinking, how is one to take on coloniality, to undo "long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism" that Maldonado-Torres speaks of? He clarifies just as much in his definition of what decoloniality is:

With decolonization I do not have in mind simply the end of formal colonial relations, as it happened throughout the Americas in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. I am instead referring to a confrontation with the racial, gender, and sexual hierarchies that were put in place or strengthened by European modernity as it colonized and enslaved populations through the planet. In short, with decolonization I am thinking of oppositions to the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being (261).

Decolonization here involves a challenge to modes of thinking that linger in the wake of colonization, in other words coloniality. It is not about political change, but intellectual change, in which hierarchies are questioned as well as the knowledge which upholds them. This questioning of still present epistemologies is termed by Maldonado-Torres as the decolonial turn: "The Decolonial Turn is about making visible the invisible and about analyzing the mechanisms that produce such invisibility or distorted visibility in light of a large stock of ideas that must necessarily include the critical reflections of the 'invisible' people themselves" (262). While the decolonial turn makes visible those structures of knowledge that silence the *damnés*, it also does something else, namely giving presence to their voices: "The decolonial turn marks the definitive entry of enslaved and colonized subjectivities into the realm of thought at before unknown institutional levels" (262). The critique of existing knowledge is not enough for decolonization; the entrance of new, formerly invisible knowledge is also essential. Bringing the marginalized into existence means recognizing their knowledges. Hip-hop is a genre and movement born from the very epistemological and physical marginalization that Maldonado-Torres speaks of. Furthermore the genre has from its inception given voice to and embodied the experience of

marginalized peoples. If "enslaved and colonized subjectivities" are to be introduced "into the realm of thought at before unknown institutional levels," then hip-hop is an ideal place to find and give shape to those very subjectivities.

It is important to note that the terms integration, race and nation are very present in German society and beyond that have been sources of a wealth of global scholarship (Fassmann, Bommes, Esser, Anderson, Zantop, Bhabha). Integration, in particular, is a hotly contested term, which, while often utilized in German debate, often has its definition changed for political aims (Adam). While my study focuses on integration, race and nation, it does not draw its model or definitions of those terms from a theoretical or top-down source, but rather from the bottom up, from the artists themselves. I will use their descriptions, in their music and interviews, of their struggles with those terms, particularly discrimination and exclusion, and presentations of what they believe to be better models for nation and integration. This study is concentrated on the intellectual work of the artists and that includes the definitions they utilize.

Hip-hop Histories: From the Bronx to Grembranx

In the incendiary 1982 single "The Message" from Grand Master Flash & the Furious Five, rapper Melle Mel described the grim reality of life in the South Bronx, the birthplace of hip-hop:

A child is born with no state of mind

Blind to the ways of mankind

God is smiling on you but he's frowning too

Because only God knows what you'll go through

You'll grow in the ghetto living second-rate
And your eyes will sing a song called deep hate
The places you play and where you stay
Looks like one great big alleyway

Melle Mel then goes on to tell the life of a child who grows up to admire the hustlers of his neighborhood, drops out of school to begin a life of crime, gets arrested and raped in prison, and ultimately hangs himself in his jail cell. Hip-hop as a genre and movement have since become mainstream, institutional forces in music and culture these days, with the aforementioned Beyoncé performance at the Super Bowl, or Jay-Z performing with Marina Abramović at MOMA.⁵ But, as Melle Mel described, it was not always this way. In fact hip-hop was born on the cultural margins, far away from the attention, care or interest of mainstream American society. It emerged in the South Bronx in the early to mid-1970s in an era after the decline of the civil rights movement and disinvestment in cities, in particular communities of color. The South Bronx, in a visual resonance with today's depictions of Detroit, had blocks of empty or abandoned buildings gutted by fire. Police had also deserted the Bronx as a community seen as beyond salvaging. In these politically and architecturally empty spaces, impromptu powers and spaces filled the void: in the case of the South Bronx those powers were gangs. As ever in the long history of gangs, from late 19th century Manhattan to Weimar-era Germany, the fight for control of street space and public territories was ever present. Each space claimed by gangs also

⁵ A video of Jay-Z performance art event, which was inspired by Abramović's piece "The Artist is Present": *JAY Z - Picasso Baby: A Performance Art Film*. Dir. Mark Romanek. Perf. Jay Z. *Vimeo*. DERTV, 2 Aug. 2013. vimeo.com/80930630

had block parties, often on basketball courts, where diverse groups of young black and LatinX⁶ artists performed and entertained the crowds (Lamotte 687; Chang). It was in these gatherings that hip-hop was born.

In a talk at Cornell University, pioneering hip-hop artist and intellectual Afrika Bambaataa described the early days in the Bronx: "We had people who would do b-boy and b-girl someplace, and others who would do graffiti art in another area... We had people who would DJ and MC in another area, so I decided to tell them, 'Let's come together under this banner,' and this became the birth of the hip-hop movement and the hip-hop culture" ("Afrika Bambaataa Raps on Early Hip-hop").⁷ Hip-hop itself was birthed by the combination of many disparate art forms. It did not exist until art forms came together to create one movement, one culture. In a video interview with DJ Vlad, Afrika Bambaataa further breaks down the elements of hip-hop as consisting of five components "B-Boys, B-Girls, the DJs, the aerosol writers[...]and the fifth element that holds it all together which we call knowledge" (DJVLAD). The first is dance, "B-Boys and B-Girls", the second is music, "the DJs", the third is graffiti, "the aerosol writers", and the fourth is emceeing or rapping and the fifth is knowledge, that is, knowing the movement and its marginalized roots.⁸ From the depiction of Melle Mel and the history of Afrika Bambaataa,

⁶ Scholars on Latin-American issues use constructions such as this to be more inclusive than Latino/Latina labels permit.

⁷ The early days of hip-hop, punk and avant-garde electronic pop were rich in transatlantic and trans-genre collaboration and cross-pollination. Afrika Bambaataa's most famous song, "Planet Rock" from 1982, prominently samples Kraftwerk's song "Trans Europe Express" and "Numbers." Bambaataa's track helped establish the electro genre, which was a major influence on the techno and house genres. Techno went on to become the de facto genre of post-reunification Berlin. This goes to show that both US hip-hop and German electronic music have strong aesthetic debts to one another.

⁸ Bambaataa does not mention verse or rapping in this interview. He skips from three to five in his listing on the five elements of hip-hop. Emceeing is, however, a known element of hip-hop and Bambaataa mentions it in a Forbes profile (Greenburg).

we have the foundational elements of hip-hop as an artistic, social and political movement. It came into being in a space of hopelessness and abandonment, but also in a place where creativity and collaboration flourished.

The translation of hip-hop into the German-speaking world was a longer, more geographically dispersed process. Distribution of the hip-hop-centric films *Wild Style*, 1983, and *Beat Street*, 1984, were the first exposure young Germans had to the Bronx-born movement. That exposure spurred breakdance and graffiti movements on both sides of the Wall (Schmieding). Apart from one notable exception, Vienna-based musician Falco's 1982 single "Der Kommissar," rap music in German gained little traction until the early 90s. It was not until Haitian-German rapper Torch began freestyling, improvising rhymes, in German in the late 80s that hip-hop culture in Germany was in anything but English (Verlan & Loh). Torch would go on to found the group Advanced Chemistry with Toni L, an Italian-German, and Linguist, a Ghanian-German. Their breakthrough 1994 single "Fremd im eigenen Land" ("Foreign in my own country"), focused on xenophobia and racism after German reunification. A wave of nationalism arose after reunification, during which Germans of color were excluded in definitions of who comprised "Das Volk" ("the people"). Xenophobic race riots also struck Rostock in 1992 and arson attacks killed a Turkish family in Solingen in 1993. In this atmosphere Advanced Chemistry shone a light on how Germans of color constantly had their linguistic and racial belonging to Germany questioned. Trading lines **Torch** and Linguist rap⁹:

⁹ The bold text indicates the lines of Torch and the standard font style indicates the lines of Linguist.

Ist es so ungewöhnlich, wenn ein Afro-Deutscher seine Sprache spricht

Und nicht so blass ist im Gesicht?

Das Problem sind die Ideen im System

Ein echter Deutscher muss auch richtig deutsch aussehen

Blaue Augen, blondes Haar, keine Gefahr

Gab's da nicht 'ne Zeit wo's schon mal so war?

Is it so strange when a Afro-German speaks your language

And doesn't have a pale face?

The problem is the ideas in the system

A proper German must also look properly German

Blue eyes, blonde hair, not a threat

Wasn't there already a time when that was the case?

"Fremd im eigenen Land" draws a portrait of a systematic suspicion of Germans of color, and a definition of Germanness that saw an earlier embodiment in Nazi notions of what a true German looked like. Similar to US hip-hop, German language hip-hop was given its shape through people of color expressing their marginalized position in society. The unique turn German hip-hop makes is in the close intermingling of race and national identity in conversations of injustice. At the birth of a reunited nation, Advanced Chemistry simultaneously gave life to German-language hip-hop while critically questioning the way Germany defined Germans through race. In the face of marginalization they did not speak to their block, but to the nation. The streets and alleyways of Melle Mel's Bronx get turned into the Deutschland of Advanced Chemistry.

The State of Research

Academic work on hip-hop is relatively new. The first substantive work of hip-hop scholarship was Tricia Rose's 1994 *Black Noise: Rap Music And Black Culture In Contemporary America*. In the two decades since, hip-hop scholarship has focused on everything from space (Caglar), to authenticity (Kelley & Neal), to chronicling the development of the art form (Chang), to how it has spread around the world (Mager). However up to this point, race has not been dealt with in a polyphonous way. The Black American cultural origins of the genre and how this informs debates of authenticity (Judy), that is who can claim to be part of the hip-hop community, have been dealt with by many (Lee, Warikoo), but beyond that authenticity and provenance framing, race is not deeply discussed. The focus of my research, how race and national belonging are addressed in hip-hop, has only been touched upon in a limited way, particularly in American and German scholarship. The only notable exception is work on French hip-hop, where several scholars have noted a connection between race and national identity in the work of minority French rappers. This French-focused scholarship has discussed the tension between the genre being primarily done by rappers of color and a nation that is dominated by an implicitly or de facto white culture. Oscherwitz presents hip-hop from the *banlieue* (often immigrant populated suburbs) of France as presenting an alternative, multicultural vision of France (2004). In his work on white French rappers Bretillon explores how they navigate their place at the top of the ethnic/racial hierarchy while being in a genre that actively challenges and exposes that very hierarchy (2015).

Despite race and national identity being an unavoidable topic of discussion in German studies, hip-hop scholarship from that country has dealt with that issue in a cautious way. The introduction to one of the major works on Turkish-German and Afro-German hip-hop, *Fear of a Kanak Planet: HipHop zwischen Weltmusik und Nazi-Rap*¹⁰, states that any perspective which divides the international "hip-hop community" or is combative will not be embraced in the text, but rather that unity is the driving force behind of the book (Güngör and Loh). Racism is discussed, but hip-hop is primarily presented as a refuge from Germany's racism, rather than as a tool for anti-racism.

A scholarly work much more in tune with the aims of my research is Maria Stehle's 2012 monograph, *Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes*. Stehle takes the concept of "scapes" from cultural theorist Arjun Appadurai to analyze ghetto spaces in German society today. Appadurai's scapes reflect the way in which mediated images provide us glimpses into social realities. The way in which the German ghetto is portrayed and also how it reflects a contradictory reality of both inclusion and xenophobic exclusion in cityscapes, are the primary focuses of Stehle's analysis. She focuses on how rappers who identify as a variety of races, including white, use the image of the ghetto as a place to express various and often messy, contradictory notions of national belonging, ethnic identity and gender. The very process of trying to depict the ghetto, to make a scape of it, reveals its ever-changing and contradictory nature in contemporary German society. Up until this point, however, there has not been an in-depth focus in scholarship on how German rappers engage with national identity in their work. With the onset of the refugee crisis and the integration work it demands,

¹⁰ Kanak is roughly equivalent to the N-word in US rap and is used that way among Turkish-German rappers. The title also translates to "Hip-hop between World Music and Nazi Rap."

notions of who belongs in Germany are constantly being questioned. As street-level journalists, German rappers of color have been at the forefront of addressing these identity tensions in German society. This requires that scholarship on German hip-hop be renewed with an emphasis on how race and national identity have become central elements of contemporary rap in Germany.

II. So Schiller, so Schröder: Rebuilding Nation and Canon¹¹

German rappers of color position themselves in the nation through intrusions into canon, by challenging its very definition and composition. Frankfurt-based rapper Credibil is one of those figures contesting the place of hip-hop and artists of color in contemporary German society. His music has been described as "Street rap out of the library," and he asked in a profile by *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*: "Gehört Rap nicht auch auf den Lehrplan? (*Doesn't rap also belong in the curriculum?*)" His provocative answer in his track "Paradox" is: "Für meine Gegend ist die Hoffnung verloren, aber deutsche Dichter werden in Betonblocks geboren" ("In my area hope is lost, but German poets are being born in these concrete blocks"). Part street journalism, part provocation, part resignation and part bold optimism, Credibil traces a trajectory of hopelessness to becoming national poets.

Samy Deluxe similarly places himself into the national canon, but instead of merely existing alongside the greats, he dominates over them. In his track "Poesie Album" ("Poetry Album") he raps:

Ich bin so Schiller, so Goethe, so bitter, so böse

Noch immer der größte Poet, der hier lebt

Wenn ihr jetzt noch mehr wollt

Fütter ich euch deutschen Dichtern Reime

Bis ihr alle Brecht wie Bertolt

I'm so Schiller, so Goethe, so bitter, so angry

Still the greatest poet that lives here

¹¹ This section title references Samy Deluxe rapping about Gerhard Schröder in the song "Weck mich auf," and Friedrich Schiller in the song "Poesie Album."

If you still want more

I'll feed you German poet rhymes

Until you break (Brecht) like Bertolt

There is nothing future tense about Samy Deluxe's rhymes and proclamations; he puts himself in verse right alongside Goethe, Schiller, Brecht and Erich Kästner. He has German poetic rhymes to contribute as great German poets did before him.

Samy also aims to challenge the definition of who can build the German nation, thematically and personally taking on the legacy of the two World Wars in his song, "Dis wo ich herkomm." He also portrays a contemporary racism and xenophobia, which he has felt from his childhood in Hamburg into his adulthood. Nonetheless, in helping integrate the increasingly diverse youth of Germany, Samy sees an opportunity to create something that inspires national pride. He sees Germans of color helping other people of color as a way to have a future-centric, instead of backwards-referencing Germany where national pride can exist. In his constructions of a canon and a nation Samy Deluxe presents both things as containing the contributions of Germans of color in their very definitions. In those constructions he is presenting a decolonial work where he puts forth a nation and canon in which Germans of color participate at before unseen levels, even to the point of national pride being predicated on helping people of color. Samy Deluxe's aesthetic constructions are what decoloniality would look like if it were to come to fruition.

Suspicion pervades the work of Hamburg rapper Samy Deluxe. It is not his own suspicion, but that of a nation that does not quite know how to come to terms with him. As a bi-racial, multi-national rapper, Samy does not fit neatly into the identity of the nation of "Dichter

und Denker" ("poets and thinkers"). He is not a member of the white, Christian upper-class or politically influential like Goethe and Kant were, and moreover he does not produce in an art form with as much weight in German culture as theater or the novel. Self-described as being like Shakespeare or William Tell, "but browner and a bit sexier" in "Poesie Album," Samy knows that he is atypical for German and European arts. Nonetheless he engages with the nation and its canon and demands that his art and knowledge be taken seriously. In response to the suspicion-based cogito of Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Samy is the thinking and poetic other, and an ambitious one at that. He proposes a new way for Germany to positively reconstruct itself as inclusive. Through the complexity of his verse he also places himself in the canon with Germany's literary greats like Goethe, Brecht and Heine. Samy is not one for small ambitions, but in his presentation of canonical belonging and possible social progress for a country with the legacy of Holocaust he demands his knowledge and art be taken seriously; in short, he demands the decolonial turn Maldonado-Torres speaks of: "the definitive entry of enslaved and colonized subjectivities into the realm of thought at before unknown institutional levels" is demanded by Samy Deluxe.

Samy Deluxe, given name Samy Sorge, was born in Hamburg to a Sudanese father and a German mother. In a fortunate turn, whereby his mother was able to rent the apartment of an upper-middle class friend, Samy Deluxe grew up in the well-to-do district of Eppendorf in Hamburg (Deluxe & Bühler). The neighborhood where Sorge lived with his mother was entirely white, and upon his moving there neighbors were confused by Samy Sorge's presence. In one incident a neighbor asked, while Sorge was on his porch: "Is there something I can help you with?" as though the mixed-race child must have been lost ("Our Guest: Samy Deluxe"). This

reality, of feeling rejected by German society, found expression in his 2001 breakthrough single "Weck mich auf" ("Wake Me Up"). In this song Samy Deluxe describes the hopelessness many young Germans feel in a society in decay, one where racism, sexual abuse, and corruption are ignored. On racist violence he rhymes: "Umgeben von Skinheads, die Türken und Afrikanern das Leben nehmen / Während Bullen daneben steh'n, um Problemen aus dem Weg zu geh'n" ("We are surrounded by skinheads who take the lives of Turks and Africans / While the police stand by, in order to avoid problems"). In the view of a young Samy Deluxe, German society is thoroughly and systematically racist, with the police turning a blind eye to Neo-Nazi murder. He hopes to be awakened from the nightmare of modern Germany, where he feels trapped, hence the title of the song.

Samy Deluxe's music took a significant turn when, in 2009, he released the album and single "Dis wo ich herkomm" ("Dis is Where I'm From"). The song caused a furor in the German media for Samy Deluxe's stance on German history. He was called clueless on history, a revisionist (Erk) and an idiot by Philipp Mattheis, a columnist for the leading left-leaning *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (2009). Mattheis wrote that rappers should focus on other themes, calling into question their voices on serious issues. What was the issue Samy Deluxe raps about that caused such a negative response? It was an issue both deeply German and highly combustible: national pride after the Holocaust. Samy suggests that Germany's Nazi past need not stop contemporary Germans from feeling national pride. On the face of it this seems opposite of decoloniality: making past atrocities against the marginalized invisible again. But Samy Deluxe is instead highlighting the accomplishments of minorities in building a new, diverse society

despite Germany's legacy of violence and genocide. He raps:

Wir haben beide Weltkriege gestartet,
vielleicht kann man da auch keine Selbstliebe erwarten, aber
Was sollen wir tun? Etwa für immer depressiv sein
Trotz den ganzen Fortschritten der kulturellen Vielfalt? - Nein, ich find nicht!
Ich will lieber etwas tun, deshalb red' ich mit den Kids an den Schulen
Denn ich glaub immer noch an die Jugend und weiß, sie sind die Zukunft
We started both World Wars
Maybe then you can't expect any self-love, but
What should we do then? Always be depressed
Despite all the progress of our cultural diversity? - No, I'm not having it!
I would rather do something, that's why I talk with the kids in schools
Because I always believe in the youth and know they are the future

Samy Deluxe here plays with a fluid concept of collective identity. On one side he identifies as part of the long history of the German nation with the use of "we." Having a German mother he does have a familial history with the nation that extends further back than himself. At the same time Samy differentiates himself. He shares in the responsibility for Germany's atrocities, but also claims responsibility for its progress since. Samy talks about his work with youth in German schools, presenting himself as a figure of positive change. With his organization Deluxekidz, Samy Deluxe organizes events at schools where kids from diverse backgrounds can collaborate on a single project, either involving sports or hip-hop. He sees this kind of work as part of a national project to change the entire country, rhyming: "Ziele sind gesteckt und extrem groß, es

ist phä-no-me-nal, egal, was ihr auch sagt / Ich werd' beweisen, dass ich mehr für Deutschland mach als der Staat (*The goals are set and extremely large / It is phe-no-me-nal, I don't care what you say / I'd swear that I do more for Germany than the state*). "Samy poses as a defiant authority figure, one who contributes more to society than the German government does. On one hand this follows with his earlier criticism of contemporary German society in "Weck mich auf." If German society ignores Neo-Nazi violence, as Samy raps it does in "Weck mich auf," there is a great deal of room to make progress. What Samy is doing is, however, far more ambitious. Even while in a state that ignores his right to exist, in turning its gaze away from fatal racism, he is claiming the ability to make substantial change to that very nation.

Despite these grand claims, he is far from ignorant of his subaltern status in German society. Samy raps: "Das Land ist schon ok, ich glaub ich kann meinen Standpunkt vertreten / Obwohl mich viele hier anschauen, wie von nem andren Planeten" ("This country is ok, I think I can put forth my viewpoint / Even though many look at me, like I'm from a different planet"). This racist skepticism of his belonging in German society is further clarified through the lines: "Ich bin ein deutscher Mann, so steht's in meinem Pass / Und ich hab dieses Land hier fast mein ganzes Leben gehasst" ("I am a German man, it's written on my passport / And I've hated this land almost my entire life"). He has to show his papers to prove his German identity, since his mixed-race appearance is met with skepticism on the streets and in his own childhood neighborhood. In one song, "Dis wo ich herkomm," Samy Deluxe takes on a collective responsibility for Germany's past atrocities and presents himself as a victim of its contemporary racism: both wrongs influenced by a narrow view of who is German. He takes on responsibility as a victimizer and victimized. This can be explained in part by Samy's multi-national and multi-

ethnic lineage. He is both ethnically German from his mother's side and a black man from his Sudanese father. Another explanation is that Samy is prodding his audience, the German nation as a whole. Just as he does not avoid a collective responsibility for Germany's past, he does not allow the German nation to avoid its responsibility for its current exclusion of Germans of color. While fluidly associating with different groups in modern Germany, Samy is mostly speaking to white, ethnic Germans. Germans of color are well aware of the racist skepticism Samy speaks of, they live it, but ethnic Germans may not be. In order to be taken seriously as a German of color, he must speak to those who question his belonging and thereby his contribution to the German nation. His move from a collective national "we", to an individually discriminated "I", is a reminder to ethnic Germans that the work in building an ethnically and epistemologically inclusive nation also lies with them. To incorporate the knowledge and work on Germans of color into what defines Germany they must be recognized, and "Dis wo ich herkomm" is above all a call for Germans of color to be seen as national builders.

While a call to move beyond Germany's genocidal past seems counter to decoloniality, in his text Samy Deluxe never ignores racism past or present, but rather offers an optimistic alternative. The marginalized in his song have the ability to do what the state cannot; that is to create a new nation in which minorities, such as the children he works with, can take pride in the inclusivity they have built. The Hamburg-born rapper puts the ability to construct a decolonial state in the hands of the *damnés*, raising their authority to those who can recognize past and present injustices, but can also critically build a state which challenges them. When he sings at the end of the song: "Dies hier ist unser Deutschland / Dies hier ist euer Deutschland / Fuck it, das ist das neue Deutschland" ("This here is our Germany / This here is your Germany / Fuck it,

this here is the new Germany"), Samy Deluxe means a Germany built by the marginalized and respecting of the marginalized. In his shifting address he also indicates that while the marginalized can build an inclusive nation, it does not excuse ethnic Germans from doing their own work in constructing a new model of German identity. If the work of Germans of color is to be recognized and inform the nation, then the nation must make a new definition of itself; a task that requires the work of ethnic Germans as well. Germans of color can do the on the ground activism of constructing an inclusive nation, such as the inclusive spaces of Samy's youth organization Deluxekidz, but the intellectual work of defining the nation is a collective one. The formally invisible knowledge that Maldonado-Torres speaks of is present in "Dis wo ich herkomm," in that the marginalized become thinkers capable of founding a state.

The Canon of Color

Another approach Samy Deluxe takes in contesting coloniality is through challenging notions of what belongs in the German canon. In 2001 he released the single "Poesie Album." A *Poesiealbum*, traditionally written as a compound noun, is a book of collected quotes, sayings and images often traded among friends. In the song and video, Samy builds his own *Poesiealbum* with key figures from German literature. He also inserts himself into that *Poesiealbum* filled with the likes of Goethe, Schiller and Brecht, thereby building a canon where a rapper of color has as equal a claim to greatness as those, like Goethe, who wrote poetry while Kant was constructing a hierarchy of races. Samy Deluxe lays claim to that place in the German canon via the complexity of his use of the German language and a display of canonical knowledge. He is

also making a genre intrusion into the canon, incorporating his own hip-hop lyricism, and in the music video graffiti art, into the "national" canon.

One of the key verses in the song involves Samy Deluxe both showcasing his canonical knowledge and claiming his place along the greats of German literature, rapping that he like Schiller, Goethe and Brecht. These are towering figures in German and world literature. It is not modest company Samy places himself in; nonetheless, he describes himself as a contemporary great alongside them.

Apart from putting himself among the greats listed in this verse, he also mentions romantic poet Heinrich Heine, children's book author Erich Kästner and even prominent literary critic Marcel Reich-Ranicki. I see "Poesie Album" as an argument that is deployed in two stages. The first is proving his knowledge by referencing well over 200 years of German literature. He is not simply a poet, but a well-read one who partakes in a national tradition of watching Marcel Reich-Ranicki, a figure most famous for his literary talk show broadcast on public television, "Literary Quartet" (Dillon). When Samy Deluxe claims he belongs in the canon, he knows the canon he is speaking of and actively engages with.

Secondly, after establishing his knowledge, he inserts himself alongside the greats via his talent as a rap lyricist and a poet. In an interview with *Deutsche Welle* in 2011 Samy Deluxe claimed that he not only belongs alongside Goethe and Schiller, but he is better than them, because his rhymes are more complex. Comparing the complexity of Goethe versus Samy Deluxe is an endeavor which would likely have no satisfying answers, but by analyzing Samy's use of meter and rhyme in combination with the uniquely hip-hop element of flow, it is clear that "Poesie Album" is a thoroughly complex use of the German language. In performance he proves

himself to be a skilled artist with the German language and thereby has a legitimacy to his claim himself as a peer alongside the literary titans of previous eras. He is using hip-hop's measure of lyrical greatness, that is the complexity of one's rhymes, to stake a place in the German canon. He is not trying to establish himself as Goethe's peer with a novella or elegy, but rather stakes a claim to canonical legitimacy in his own genre's measure of greatness, making his canonical claim both personal and on behalf of hip-hop. To begin my analysis I will extend the Samy Deluxe verse quoted earlier in this section:

Ich bin so Schiller, so Goethe, so bitter, so böse
Noch immer der größte Poet, der hier lebt
Wenn ihr jetzt noch mehr wollt
Fütter ich euch deutschen Dichtern Reime
Bis ihr alle Brecht wie Bertolt
Das ist für mich echter Erfolg
Wenn der Text noch mehr rollt
Und ich schein' wie der Morgenstern
Hoffe, dass ihr alle aus den Reim' und den Worten lernt
Meine Damen und Herren
Was würde ich bloß tun hier, wär' ich nich' Rapstar?
Wahrscheinlich wär' ich der neue Erich Kästner
I'm so Schiller, so Goethe, so bitter, so angry
Still the greatest poet that lives here
If you still want more

I'll feed you German poet's rhymes
Until you break (Brecht) like Bertolt
That is for me is real success
When the text rolls even more
*And I shine like the morning star*¹²
What exactly would I do here, if I weren't a rapstar?
Maybe I would be the new Erich Kästner

The rhyme scheme here is ABCD-CCC-EEE-FF. That on the face of it suggest a very loose rhyme scheme verging on free verse. A duo of triple end rhymes and a couplet are about as close to a rhyme structure that the poem gets. End rhymes are not the totality of the rhymes either: the verse begins with an internal rhyme, *böse* and *Goethe*, and follows onto the next line with *größte*; is a triplet of internal rhymes across two lines. With the rhyme scheme alone Samy Deluxe showcases a complex and playful use of the German language. Samy moves in and out of a structure, putting rhymes back to back, not rhyming at all, with rhymes at the end, in the middle and even across lines. He is not a pedestrian user of German, but one who understands conventions and breaks them. Tellingly he ends a line with *Reime* (rhymes), but has the word rhyme with nothing else; it's ironically even a line where he promises to feed us German rhymes. Samy is highly aware of the rhyme conventions he is breaking and even leaves a clue to the close reader and listener as to exactly what he is doing.

Throughout there is no consistent meter, but rather a mixture of a Migos flow, and placement of stress on rhymes at the end and middle of lines. The Migos flow has a history in

¹²Here Samy is referring to Christian Morgenstern, the turn of the century author and poet. Morgenstern's last name literally translates to "morning star," hence the pun above on shining.

hip-hop, making Samy's use of it in itself a continuation of a hip-hop tradition.¹³ He is versed not only in the classics, but also in the artistic movement he is a part of. That alone would not be remarkable, but that Migos flow in combination with the varied, often off-beat stresses Samy Deluxe places on his rhymes forms a style of delivery which places him among hip-hop's more complex rappers. The opening line, "Ich bin so Schiller, so Goethe, so bitter, so böse," ends with emphasis on the fourth note of the beat and consequently at the end of the bar. This is a standard placement of emphasis, for hip-hop and poetic meter in general: iambic pentameter ends with a stress on the last syllable, for example. Beginning with the third and fourth lines he changes the emphasis entirely. In those lines, "Wenn ihr jetzt noch mehr wollt / Fütter ich euch deutschen Dichtern Reime," he places the stress on "Fütter," the first word of the third line, and deemphasizes "wollt," the last word of the last fourth line. This breaks two conventions. The first is musical, in that the emphasis in each bar is on the second and fourth notes. The second relates to meter, in that he breaks the emphasis on the end of each line, established in the first two lines, by deemphasizing the last word of the third line and emphasizing the first word of the fourth line.

In a mere four lines Samy Deluxe presents, and breaks, musical and lyrical conventions. These lines are representative of the entire song, which is rich in a lyrical delivery that is constantly on the edge of being unbalanced, and constantly giving and undermining structure. In a type of rap battle with the German canon, Samy Deluxe proves himself to be a knowledgeable and dexterous user of the German language. In the effort to prove himself worthy of inclusion in the German literary canon, he showcases his intricate usage of hip-hop lyricism. Instead of

¹³ A flow is what the musical rhythm in a rhyme or rhymes in hip-hop is called. Migos, a hip-hop trio from Atlanta, are famous for popularizing a flow consisting of triplets of eighth notes. For more see Drake in the bibliography.

participating in longer-standing literary forms, like a novel or the sonnet, and proving his literary legitimacy that way, Samy proves his claim of belonging via hip-hop's parameters of excellence. By performing an elaborate, technically intricate rap Samy proves his talent as rapper. By then placing himself in the canon within and through his rap, he also makes a claim for the legitimate belonging of hip-hop itself in the German canon. That in itself is also a call to include the artistic traditions of people of color in the German canon. Samy Deluxe is not only a German artist of color, but also one who creates in a genre that was invented by American artists of color. His canonical claims are about introducing art and art forms by people of color into the cultural foundation of the nation. It is a marked break from an exclusively white German literary tradition. Samy is introducing of new knowledges and new forms of artistic productivity. Through "Poesie Album," Samy Deluxe is engaging in the decolonial turn that Maldonado-Torres speaks of. He is not simply seeking recognition, but inclusion into a cultural institution, the canon, that has not recognized or made invisible voices such as his. In order to do so he constructs his own canon, his own "Poesie Album," where his artistic contribution and that of hip-hop have a place. His canon has art and artists of color. His canon is one where his graffiti signature is sprayed onto a library that never contained his verse. In tagging the institution of the canon he redefines it and overcomes its lack of recognition of voices and artists of color. This act finally lets the canon include and be defined by Germans of color.

In Samy Deluxe we have a figure who contests notions of nation and canon not simply through rhetoric, but through knowledge and action. In his questioning of who can belong in the conversation on national pride, Samy Deluxe references the very work he has done with his Deluxekidz organization to create something of which Germany can be proud, namely, building

understanding among diverse groups of German youth. When contesting the canon, comparing himself to Shakespeare, just "brauner und noch'n bisschen sexier" (browner and a little bit sexier), he is aware of how he does not fit the mold of European and German literary greats, but proves through his knowledge of the canon and his technical ability as a lyricist, that he is worthy of consideration as a skilled German artist. This bold and at times insolent, some might say hip-hop, approach directly confronts what is traditional, what is given, what is hierarchical. By presenting himself an authoritative figure while also being an "other," Samy Deluxe directly challenges the colonality, which does not recognize his potential contributions to national art. He simultaneously presents an expanded canon while challenging and revealing the limits of that very canon.

III. Decolonial Lovers

Love as a basis for theory has a history in the German tradition; it has been present in criticism and philosophy, and a driving force in German literature. Goethe's breakthrough novella, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* ends with young man killing himself after knowing he can never be with a woman who will marry someone above his station. Theodor Fontane's *Effi Briest* details the tragic love of a woman put in a marriage that her parents meekly admit may have been wrong, after she dies divorced and estranged from her daughter. Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* is centered around an impossible and forbidden homoerotic love and Christa Wolf's *Der geteilte Himmel* portrays a love split by ideology and the division of East and West Germany. German rappers Blumio and Eko Fresh also center works on love in ways that are both profoundly personal and respond to their contemporary political realities, with Blumio's work resonating with Chela Sandoval's concept of decolonial love and Eko Fresh's work demanding an additional concept, what I will call sarcastic love. Developed by Chela Sandoval, decolonial love proposes that the way to challenge racial, gender and sexual hierarchies is through the oppressed loving the oppressor. As a reaction to far-right violence and hate, Blumio proposes decolonial love. This instead of the Nazis Raus! (Nazis Out!) approach favored by many anti-fascist groups in Germany, which is about denying Neo-Nazis public space, he suggests inviting Nazis into his circle of friends to let them meet the people they typically express hate against. While this may seem at face value a wide-eyed gesture of unity, it is from a certain perspective fundamentally radical. Blumio is reaching across oppositional lines established by far-right hate and often deadly violence with a gesture of love and understanding.

In contrast, Eko Fresh does not aim to reach across boundaries, but with a sarcastic love

to make visible the racially exclusionary ideology of Germany's anti-immigrant right. His ironic portrayal of a Turkish-German man in love with the anti-immigrant politician Frauke Petry Eko Fresh functions through, what Katrin Sieg calls ethnic drag, as "a critique of the apparatus that determines what can and cannot be seen and known" (229). Eko Fresh, in pledging to commit anti-immigrant atrocities to win Petry's love, reveals the very real problems existent in the ethnically exclusionary definition of Germanness existing in anti-immigration political parties in present-day Germany. Whether through dissolving oppositions or bringing them to light, both rappers put love in the center of their responses to those who strive to exclude them from German society.

"Hey Mr Nazi, come to my party": The Oppressed Loving Their Oppressor

Blumio, given name Fumio Kuniyoshi, was born to two Japanese parents in the 50,000-person town of Hilden, which lies outside of Düsseldorf. In an email interview I conducted with him he described experiencing a great deal of racism while growing up in the town with very few Asian residents. He wrote: "Als Kind/Jugendlicher habe ich viel Rassismus erfahren. Ich wuchs in einer Kleinstadt auf und bei uns gab es halt nicht so viele Asiaten. Später habe ich es auch versucht in meine Musik einzubauen. (As a child/adolescent I experienced a lot of racism. I grew up in a small town and there weren't many Asians there. Later I tried to incorporate that into my music). He then described his introduction to hip-hop through the hard rock group Body Count, whose frontman was Ice-T, a key figure in the develop of gangster rap. Upon later hearing Ice-T's rap work, Blumio became excited by US hip-hop and eventually discovered German groups like Freundeskreis and Absolute Beginner, both being highly successful and politically engaged.

In being influenced by these hip-hop groups and in attempting to express a history of suffering racism, Blumio's music became inherently political.

Blumio's most successful song to this date the 2009 song "Hey Mr. Nazi." Upon acknowledging Germany's post atrocities and its current state problems with violent racism, Blumio proposes the loving act of inviting the "Mr Nazi" to his multi-ethnic circle of friends. Chela Sandoval writes in her work *Methodology of the Oppressed* "The act of falling in love can thus function as a 'punctum,' that which breaks through social narratives to permit a bleeding, meanings unanchored and moving away from their traditional moorings — in what, Barthes writes, brings about a 'gentle hemorrhage' of being" (140). Love for Sandoval is a way to create new, unmoored narratives. That which is unexpected in normal modes of interaction can exist, albeit in a subtle way with love. Love is the way, Sandoval argues, for a decolonial existence as well: "It is love that can access and guide our theoretical and political 'movidas'—revolutionary maneuvers toward decolonized being" (140). With reference to Derrida, Sandoval additionally brings forth the concept of *différance*, a new type of thinking that exists outside of the "us" and "them" binary: "This new language of *différance* can be generated only while one is in the grip of 'affirmation,' Derrida writes — apart from negativity. It is generated through a fresh sign system constructed through 'play,' he continues, with a 'certain laughter and with a certain dance,' modes of proceeding that are 'foreign' to the Western dialectic. To call upon *différance*, then, one must engage with the unsettling pleasures of faith, of 'hope,' of utopian possibility" (147-148). In his song "Hey Mr. Nazi" I argue that Blumio practices the very decolonial love Sandoval speaks of and provides a new dialogue, a new language and a utopian possibility for how relations between the oppressed and oppressors can be.

In "Hey Mr Nazi" Blumio engages in a conversation with a neo-Nazi. through a mixture of critique, lecturing and the offering of friendship assumes a position of power, from which he challenges colonial hierarchies in German society by taking on the role of an educator, not only to a neo-Nazi, but to German society more broadly. From a place of marginalization, Blumio aims to educate his marginalizer, the neo-Nazi, and to model an alternative approach for dealing with the national problem of neo-Nazism. He offers understanding and dialogue between the marginalized and the marginalizer, instead of the silencing and spatial exclusion typical of anti-Nazi approaches in Germany, such as the Nazis Raus! slogan found plastered all over the streets of Germany. His vision for an inclusive Germany is one based on a love that moves beyond oppositional binaries. The figures to move beyond those divisions are those lower in colonial hierarchies like Blumio.¹⁴ In line with the decolonial love outlined in Sandoval's writing, Blumio empowers the marginalized as those not simply capable of loving across racist divides, but in a more radical move, empowers them to provide the solution for a nation struggling with the embodiment of colonially-birthered racial ideologies in the neo-Nazi movement.

In the song Blumio presents a conversation with a neo-Nazi, with Blumio opening the track saying "Hey Mr. Nazi, ich muss da 'nen Wörtchen mit dir reden, bitte hör mir zu" (Hey Mr Nazi, I need to say a little something to you, please have a listen). Agency and initiative are taken by Blumio, who assumes a position of a lecturer, telling the neo-Nazi to take a seat. From this position of power Blumio begins by addressing the image that the Neo-Nazi has of him:

¹⁴ Being Japanese, Blumio is not ignorant of his status higher up in the racial hierarchy to compared to others. In my interview conducted with him he mentioned, in reference to a question about integration, that few demanded Japanese people in Germany learn German to integrate, but many expected Turks to learn the language. He sees even among people of color, who are the victims of discrimination like him, a hierarchy where some are given much stricter standards for integration than others.

Sieh mich an, was siehst du in mir?

Nur einen kleinen Ausländer, der so riecht wie ein Tier?

Ein dummer Schlitzauge, ein scheiß Reisfresser

Den man im besten Falle gleich einäschert

Look at me, what do you see?

Just a little foreigner, that stinks like an animal?

A slanted-eyed idiot, a damn rice eater

That one could in the best case turn into ashes?

In this opening stanza the listener is given a portrait of a far-right mindset, one which reduces Asian Germans of color to racist epithets, animals and ultimately ashes. There is a deadly process of contemporary dehumanization and destruction of the body of the "other" that has connections to the mass murder of the Holocaust. This neo-Nazi portrayed by Blumio immediately loses his power in the song, with Blumio rapping, "Bitte sag mir, denn ich will wissen was du denkst / Denn es ist mein Wille, dass du jetzt das Richtige erkennst" (Please tell me, 'cause I want to know what you think / 'cause it's my wish, that you know the truth). Again Blumio steps to the head of the classroom, quizzing his student to expose the weaknesses in his worldview. In a move to then challenge the traditional, far-right imagining of Germanness and Asianness being mutually exclusive, he raps:

Und Nein, ich will auch nicht nur Reis fressen

Manchmal will ich auch ne Bockwurst ins Senfglas reinstecken

Und dann genüsslich verschlingen, das hättest nicht gedacht

Siehste, jetzt hab ich in deine Welt etwas Licht gebracht

And no, I don't just want to devour rice

Sometimes I want to dip a Bockwurst into a jar of mustard

And then devour it with pleasure, couldn't imagine that

See, now I've brought some light into your world

In a refutation Blumio claims a German identity, in loving a sausage as any stereotypical German would. While not ignoring toxic contemporary racism, which I will address in detail later, Blumio nonetheless shifts to love instead of criticism or condemnation. He raps: "Denn es ist leicht zu sagen, Nazis raus / Doch jeder Mensch kann sich verändern, ich glaub Nazis auch ("Yeah it's easy to say, Nazis out! /But everyone can change, I think Nazis too"). His starting point is against the established approach of a blanket rejection of neo-Nazis summed up in the oft graffitted Nazis out! slogan. Blumio as an alternative offers hope for change, hope that Nazis can change. The avenue he offers for that change is dialogue and interaction. In the chorus he sings:

Hey Mr. Nazi komm auf meine Party

Ich stell dir meine Freunde vor

Das hier sind Rusbeh und Kati, Thorsten und der Fatih

Wir haben den selben Humor

Hey Mr Nazi come to my party

I'll introduce to my friends

Here's Rusbeh and Kati, Thorsten and Fatih

We have the same sense of humor

Blumio's own circle, his party, has a mix of nationalities and ethnicities: Arabic, Turkish, ethnic German and Japanese. To this event he invites the neo-Nazi. It is a friendly gesture to engage in dialogue, to understand, to get to know. If hate were his response to Nazi hate then Blumio's space would remain a diverse, but limited place, that is limited in terms of love. Blumio is, however, not ignorant of the radical gesture he is making. After appealing to the common humanity of the Neo-Nazi and his friends, their joy at falling in love, their heartbreak at being left, he tells a story of a deadly racist attack:

Doch du trittst auf den Mann ein und lässt ihn liegen

Und das Schlimmste daran, er war Familienvater und nun herrscht bei ihm zu Hause ein
Riesen Drama

Die Tochter verstehts nicht und fragt sich jeden Tag:

"Mama sag mir doch, warum ist denn der Papa nicht mehr da?"

"Er hat aber versprochen er kauft mir neue Schwimmflügel und das wir Picknick machen
Gehen bei den Windmühlen."

Später wird sie verstehen was das alles heißt, doch jetzt steht sie nur da und sieht die
Mama weint

But you kick a man and leave him lying there

*The worst of it all, he was a father and now there's a great drama at hanging over his
home*

The daughter doesn't understand and asks every day:

"Mama tell me, why isn't papa here anymore?"

*"He promised he'd by me new water wings and that we would have a picnic by the
windmills"*

*Later she'll understand what is was all about, but now she just stands there and sees her
mother crying*

A humanization of the neo-Nazi is bitterly countered by a dehumanizing murder by the same neo-Nazi and the grief that it brings. Blumio does away with any notion that he has a naïve understanding of the task he is undertaking. The chorus of "Hey Mr Nazi, come to my party" follows right after the lines above, creating a jarring transition from a woman widowed by a neo-Nazi to Blumio inviting that Neo-Nazi into his circle of friends. It is a deeply drawn line Blumio is striving to traverse with love, but in the space Blumio creates with love, the fatal opposition created by neo-Nazi ideology can possibly be undone. It is not an end, but a beginning, where dialogue, understanding and ultimately a mutual humanity can be found. Love offers the potential for the rehumanization of both parties, the oppressed and oppressor.

Blumio speaks to a neo-Nazi, but he also explicitly and implicitly speaks to a nation possessing the haunting presence of ideologies from the Nazi era. With love offering the potential for salvation for individuals, it also contains the potential of offering a way for the nation to address neo-Nazism. As an alternative to exclusion, Blumio presents a place where even the radical right can be integrated. If Germany's dark history and its lingering presence is to be overcome then the *différance* Sandoval references must be created and Blumio strives to create that very third way in which dialogue can exist beyond ontological oppositions. According to Blumio, the possibility of undoing Neo-Nazi ideology exist, through a radical love, a love in which a mutual humanity is acknowledged.

A Walk in the Moonlight in Dresden: Sarcastic Love

In contrast to Blumio, Eko Fresh uses love to reveal the ideology of those in German society who want to further marginalize people of color, such as the anti-immigrant right, and to

sarcastically tease the far-right along with other people of color. The two functions of Eko Fresh's utilization of love reflect one of the roles that performance of race as a masquerade, or "ethnic drag," has in the scholarship of Katrin Sieg. Speaking of Native American theater troupe Spiderwoman, Sieg writes that a campy Indian stereotype, namely an Indian princess, in their work "serves to distinguish two styles of reading identity, one mimetic and one hegemonic, the other performative and partisan" (227). For an in-group, Native Americans or more broadly those marginalized for their gender, ethnicity and/or sexuality, the performance of a stereotype is seen as inauthentic. For the hegemonic audience the performance of ethnically aligned stereotypes is taken as authentic and a reinforcement of hegemonic readings of the marginalized. This "double-address to in-group spectators and hegemonic spectators is central to the drag show's cultural intervention. Only by certifying the Indian princess as an effect of the dupe's *willful and continuing misrecognition* is Spiderwoman able to shift the terms of discourse from a critique of the image (the princess as misrepresentation) to a critique of the apparatus that determines what can and cannot be seen and known" (229). Eko Fresh in his tongue-in-cheek love song to a far-right politician, "Nur für dich" (*Only for you*) also speaks to two audiences and thereby reveals "the apparatus that determines what can and cannot be seen and known." Eko Fresh does not truly identify with the figure in his song, in a Brechtian sense he has a critical and comical distance from it (Sieg 222,) but in pretending to love an anti-immigrant politician he reveals her ideology that excludes him and other people of color from been seen as "natural" members of German society.

Eko Fresh, whose given name is Ekrem Bora, has been active in German hip-hop for some 15 years. He has also collaborated with Blumio, as I will address later in this study, and

Samy Deluxe, making him the common meeting point between the artists I have analyzed. Among the artists presented here he has shown himself to be singularly brazen and provocative throughout his career. In his song "Quotentürke" (Token Turk) for example, he criticizes the tendency of German mainstream media to invite one person of color onto their program to seem inclusive. In "Quotentürke" Eko Fresh plays an Arab, an Indian and a Turkish man who cannot correctly speak German, in order to criticize his reduction as merely another "foreigner" instead of an accomplished German-language rapper. One of his most recent videos from 2016, the above-mentioned, "Nur für dich (Liebeslied für Frauke)" (Only for you: Lovesong for Frauke), features him singing a love song to the head of the right-wing party Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany), Frauke Petry, who famously said that shooting refugees crossing the border into Germany should be an option for police ("As Germany Welcomes Migrants"). He pledges to burn homes for asylum seekers, spit on the buses bringing in refugees and making sure every train to Germany is hijab free to win Petry's love. He raps of all of this while holding a Döner kebab, the ubiquitous German street food invented by Turkish immigrants. Describing himself as the "hip hop Kanake," Eko Fresh weaponizes his otherness as a tool to critique elements of Germany society hostile to or not fully accepting of Germans of color.¹⁵ Whether in response to the anti-immigrant sentiment of Petry, or tokenism, he is the confrontational other.

"Nur Für Dich (Liebeslied für Frauke)" was released by Eko Fresh on April 9th, 2016.

While posted on Youtube and shared via Facebook in the lead up to his April 22nd, 2016 album

¹⁵ *Kanake* comes from the Polynesian word *kanaka*, meaning person. The word entered Germany with the meaning transforming to mean anyone with a "Southern" appearance, that is darker skin. As immigrants came to Germany in the decades after WWII, *Kanake* was used as a racial epithet against the new, mostly Italian and Turkish immigrants. During the 1990s, Germans of color, like Feridun Zaimoğlu with his book 1995 *Kanak Sprak* (Kanak Talk), took on *Kanake* as a positive term of self-description. Eko Fresh uses the term in a similarly reappropriative fashion. See Amirpur.

"Freezy," it is not included on the album or for sale in any capacity. Eko said in an interview with online publication *bento* about this choice: "Ich habe diese Songs aber bewusst nicht auf mein Album genommen. Es ging mir um die direkte Message, deshalb habe ich die Songs frei zur Verfügung gestellt" (I consciously did not include these songs on my album. What's important to me is the direct message [to people like Frauke Petry], that's why I put out the songs out for free)" (Hölter). In the same interview he cites the motivation for releasing the love song on Youtube and a previous track called "AfD: Albtraum für Deutschland" ("AfD: Nightmare for Germany"), was "Aber in diesem Jahr sind einfach so viele Dinge passiert, die mich als Migrant betrafen. Ich konnte das einfach nicht ausblenden und musste das verarbeiten" ("But in this year [2016] there have been so many events that affected me as a migrant. I couldn't just ignore them, I had to process them somehow").¹⁶ As he mentioned in an another interview with the newspaper *Westdeutsche Zeitung* on his AfD songs, hip-hop is his way of dealing with the political events that affect him (Schmidt).

The music video "Nur für Dich" begins with Eko receiving a letter with the picture of AfD leader Frauke Petry on it, with the words "Merhaba Ekrem, bla bla bla ..." and a heart in the bottom corner with E+F written in it. Merhaba is Turkish for hello. The beat itself is from Puff Daddy's 1997 track "I'll Be Missing You," which was a tribute to the then recently murdered Notorious B.I.G. A review from when the track was released sums up the original: "With lyrics like 'Know you're in heaven, smiling down/Watching us as we pray for you,' 'I'll Be Missing You' gives the lie to those who claim hip-hoppers are above self-serving sentimentality" ("I'll Be

¹⁶ Eko is using a play on words with the party name AfD: Alternativ für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany), with AfD: Albtraum für Deutschland (Nightmare for Germany). Both share the same abbreviation, AfD.

Missing You"). Eko references the sentimentality of the Puff Daddy original to underscore the tongue-in-cheek satire of his love song to Frauke Petry, and furthermore speaks to hip-hop fans, who are most likely aware of his Puff Daddy reference.¹⁷ Details that further add to the false sentimentality he is deploying are Eko walking through a field of flowers, and dancing by the Rhine river with a bouquet of roses: the €4.50 price tag still on it. Through this act of fake sincerity, the Grembranx rapper places himself in a tradition of Turkish-German humor, such as Kanak TV, a German comedy troupe comprised of people of color who filmed mock news anti-integration segments (Stehle 59-60). One illustrative example is when members of Kanak TV go into a rich neighborhood in Cologne and ask the residents there what it is like to live in the "white ghetto" and ask what the "Bio-Deutsche," or "organic Germans," can do to better integrate with their non-white compatriots (Kanak TV).

The rap love song fundamentally plays on a similar undermining of traditional roles and narratives in German society. Conservative German politicians often blame Germans of color for avoiding integration or *Intergrationsverweigerung*, with a recent integration law denying long-term right to residency in Germany for immigrants who do not show a strong desire to integrate by doing things such as learning the German language ("Koalition Einigt Sich"). In many ways Eko plays up his Turkishness to strengthen his stance as one who "resists" integration. His eating a Döner kebab visually underscores his non-German identity; the video even includes slow-motion shots of Eko savoring it, crumbs falling in his mustache.

As a rapper, the primary way in which Eko Fresh highlights the taboo nature of his longing for Frauke Petry is, however, lyrical. First, Turkish phrases are peppered throughout the

¹⁷ One imagines Petry did not have Notorious B.I.G. or Puff Daddy in her 1997 music rotation.

song: the love note from "Petry" at the beginning of the video has Turkish written in it; he also puts the phrase *amina koyim* at the end of a twice repeated line, which translates as "fuck it." Another sign of his status as a Turkish heart-on-the-sleeve rap balladeer, he raps "Hab dir meine Box gewidmet *amina koyim*" ("I dedicate my boombox to you, fuck it").¹⁸ Saying *amina koyim* also reflects the forbidden status of a relationship with Petry, in her being an anti-immigrant politician and Eko Fresh visually looking like an "other"; he is throwing caution to the wind. Eko's efforts to pursue someone who questions his very belonging in German society and has built her politics in a large way around anti-immigration stances are extremely unlikely to succeed, but yet he dedicates his music to her, with a Turkish "fuck it" to further highlight the fundamental impossibility of a romance with Petry.

In the first line of the song, one of those very stances is referenced: "Amor gab wohl einen Schießbefehl" (Love gives an order to shoot). The reference to cupid's arrow is fitting for a love song, but it also references Petry's call for the use of guns by border police. In an interview she said: "Wir brauchen umfassende Kontrollen, damit nicht weiter so viele unregistrierte Flüchtlinge über Österreich einreisen können" ("We need comprehensive measures to prevent so many unregistered refugees from entering from Austria"). When asked what exactly these measures would be, Petry responded by saying a fence should be built and if refugees climb that fence "notfalls auch von der Schusswaffe Gebrauch machen" ("If necessary guns should be used") (Mack and Serif). While Petry herself never used the term *Schießbefehl* (order to shoot), interviewees and commentators latched onto it, with the leader of the center-left SPD Thomas Oppermann saying: "[Petry's] recommendation of an order to shoot is a reminder of the

¹⁸ I can only guess that Eko Fresh is also referencing John Cusack in "Say Anything."

GDR[...]The last German politician that allowed shooting at refugees was Erich Honecker [the last leader of East Germany] ("Oppermann Vergleich").

The mixture of humor and grim reality continues with the line: "Wenns sein muss würd ich auf dich 1000 Jahre warten" ("If it's necessary I would wait a 1000 years for you"), with Eko attaching the Nazi party's ambition of having a 1000 year empire to the AfD leader. Yet another touchstone of German history is references with Eko saying: "Wir spazieren, im Mondschein in Dresden" ("We'll go on a walk in the moonlight in Dresden"). Dresden, apart from being Petry's birthplace, has become the focal point for demonstrations from anti-immigration/Islamophobic group PEGIDA, translated as "Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident." Petry's AfD party had aligned itself with PEGIDA, despite their leader being convicted of inciting racial hatred (Smale and Eddy, Weiland). Eko imagines a romantic walk on the very same streets where Islamophobic protests take place, creating even more dissonance in the love between him and Petry. Playing with the notion of love conquering all, he is using it to prove the inverse. Someone like Petry would never love him, as the anti-Islam protesters in Dresden never would, — nor would Eko love Petry — but he provocatively perseveres in order to even further draw the lines of contrast between himself and the anti-immigration right-wing. Eko plays a naive other in the face of a far-right opposition that questions his right to exist in Germany. The problem is not his capacity to love, but rather Petry's refusal to accept him, something he is all too aware of in dedicating his love to her.

Even more provocative is the way Eko draws a contrast between himself and Petry in ethnic terms the: "Stell dir vor, unser Kind, halb deutsch, halb sächsisch / Und geht in Kalk zur Schule - Wäre das nicht fantastisch?" ("Imagine it, our child, half-German, half-Saxon /

And they'd go to school in Kalk [Cologne] - wouldn't that be fantastic?") By identifying her as born in Saxony, and himself as German, he makes Petry an other. The line "Wär das nicht fantästisch?" is even rapped in a mock Saxon dialect.¹⁹ A root of this dislike for the Saxon accent runs back to the East-West divide. Saxon became code for the bumbling, incompetent Easterner. A post-fall of the wall, pro-West bias is exploited by Eko here. Rather than Eko being the one who does not fit, it is Petry whose status as part of the nation is questioned. Her province and dialect exclude her, while Eko, with his German, peppered with Turkish, ironically identifies as part of mainstream German identity. He challenges the definition of Germanness through language. His Germanness here is not explicitly related to race in this context, although it is always an undercurrent, but to different variants of the language. The kind of language variation that transnational peoples in Germany, like Eko Fresh, use is often called foreign and exotic (Jankowsky) or seen as incorrect or as a weakening of the language (Wiese).²⁰ These hierarchies of "correct" and "incorrect" language are subverted by Eko. First, with her usage of *Merhaba*, he makes Petry a user of a mix of Turkish and German, making her "complicit" with him in the "incorrect" use of German. Secondly, he echoes dominant attitudes towards the Saxon dialect as unlikeable and not necessarily welcome in today's Germany. There is two-fold othering utilized here: Petry is both unlikeably German in her Saxon dialect and un-German in her usage of Turkish. While performing the role of a naive lover, he uses a sophisticated knowledge of the politics of the variations of the German language for his satire, further revealing the insincerity

¹⁹ In a 2009 survey published by *Der Spiegel*, only 7% of Germans in a survey said they liked the Saxon accent. See "Umfrage: Sächsisch."

²⁰ Counter to the view that language mixing is bad for the German language, Wiese argues the mixing of languages that people with an immigrant background, like Eko, do is part of a new German dialect and a form of innovation.

of his naive love. Eko Fresh is far from naive on the dynamics at play in what is ethnically and linguistically included in standardized definitions of Germanness.

It is in the chorus of "Nur für dich" that the song returns to the current refugee crisis and the many xenophobic acts that refugees have been the victims of. The lines below are sung by Eko Fresh and an uncredited woman in a soft R&B timbre:

Jedes Flüchtlingsheim

Reiß ich für dich ein

Jeder Asylant wird am Bart verbrannt

Frauke nur für dich

Jeder Reisebus

Wird vom Heim bespuckt

Jedes Zugabteil ist jetzt kopftuchfrei

Frauke - nur für dich

Every refugee home

I'll tear down for you

Every asylum-seeker will have their beard burnt

Frauke only for you

Every bus will be spit on

Every train compartment will be headscarf-free

Frauke only for you

In the year of 2015 Germany had seen more than 1600 crimes against refugees, including firebombing of places meant to house refugees, beatings, the painting of swastikas on refugee

homes and in one case Neo-Nazis urinating on refugee children on a suburban Berlin train. The vast majority of these acts have been connected to far-right xenophobia by German authorities and are nearly double the number of xenophobic crimes committed in 2014 ("Mehr Als 1600 Delikte"). One of the most publicized xenophobic acts committed in 2016 was the blocking of a bus transporting refugees to Germany. Around 100 far-right protestors chanted "Wir sind das Volk" (*We are the people*)²¹ and spit at then crying refugees as they exited a bus with "Reisegenuss" (The joy of traveling) displayed on it ("Video Vor Asylunterkunft"). Instead of positioning himself as a victim as a person of color, Eko mimics the role of "true" member of the far-right, promising to prevent any Muslims from entering the country. Coming from a Muslim family himself, Eko is performing a type of radical self-denial and self-hate in his portrayal of a naive lover. Eko Fresh and other marginalized people in Germany know not only that Eko Fresh's love is inauthentic, one imagines Petry would be aware of this as well, but also that he is using love to reveal the racist underpinnings of the anti-immigrant hate of her party. Even the extreme racist violence he swears to commit would not be enough to win Petry's love. Far-right bonafides involve explicit and implicit xenophobia, making the act of loving someone like Eko Fresh incompatible with belonging to groups like AfD and PEGIDA. Eko's love then functions to reveal an ideology that denies him. He was born in Germany, grew up in Germany, made his career using the German language, yet still could never expect to receive love in return from Frauke Petry and other anti-immigrant Germans. Love is utilized as a tool in "Nur für dich" to survey the contours and depths of anti-immigrant xenophobia and racism in contemporary

²¹ "Wir sind das Volk" (We are the people) has become a chant for the PEGIDA movement. The chant "Wir sind das Volk" originated during protests in East Germany in 1989/1990 and reflected a desire to increase the power of the voting public, the people. In the PEGIDA movement it has taken on the meaning of white, Christian Germans as "das Volk."

Germany. An in-group reading of Eko's performance knows that it is both insincere and meant to criticize Petry and her anti-immigrant politics sarcastically. Calling himself a migrant and writing these songs as a response to parties like Petry's AfD, Eko Fresh is clearly not in love with her, but with a sarcastic love he can reveal and critique her ideology.

In a strong contrast to Blumio, Eko Fresh does not want to invite Petry and her allies into his world, but rather to bring into the open their radical, often violent ideologies. In a spiritual embodiment of Paul Klee's sentiment that art is not about reproducing what can be seen, but in making things seen that would otherwise be invisible, Eko uses art to make marginalizing ideologies visible. By offering love to a right-wing figure that would never love him, he reveals what lurks behind anti-immigration sentiments in Germany. His performance also showcases a sophisticated understanding of not only the roots of current anti-immigrant sentiment, but also of German identity and the ethnic and linguistic fault lines within it. By playing a Turkish lover willing to commit acts of violence against refugees, Eko also puts into a harsh light the violent denial that exists in anti-immigration parties.

With their varying imaginings of love — Blumio's radical and integrative, and Eko Fresh's sarcastic and critical — contemporary German rap presents us with two ways of dealing with racist ideologies in today's Germany. Blumio's love is decolonial à la Chela Sandoval, whereas Eko's love is decolonial in that it draws into light the limits of the love of the far-right. Blumio extends a loving hand to his marginalizer, whereas Eko Fresh plays a joke on his marginalizer through love by revealing the hegemonic stereotypes they use to define people of color. Blumio's murderous neo-Nazi does not need his support in order for racial hierarchies to be revealed. The true depths of Petry's support of colonial racial hierarchies are revealed when

met with love from the "other." Blumio invites his oppressor in, whereas Eko Fresh while feigning a desire for closeness clearly rejects any notion of common ground. Both strategies, however, fundamentally challenge the coloniality still existent in ideologies in contemporary German society. The violence committed in the name of these marginalizing ideologies affects them seriously and has become a substantial part of their artwork. In response to violence one they offer differing responses, but both seek to unravel marginalizing ways of thinking.

IV. Integrated Spaces

In contrast to the national and interpersonal focus of the two previous sections, this section is primarily concerned with the construction, definition and claiming of spaces by Germans of color, spaces where they can fully express their complex, multinational identities. As a movement born from claiming and reclaiming public spaces, identity production in hip-hop is intimately tied to defining space. Both in collaboration and as individual artists, Eko Fresh and Blumio also utilize the definition and creation of space to allow self-definition. Within these spaces defined by artists of color, tensions that arise from national, ethnic and linguistic differences also have the potential to dissolve. They are integrated where a Japanese-German is as at home as a Tunisian who speaks with a Cologne dialect. In a collaboration with Eko Fresh, Blumio accomplishes this integrated space creation with an approach that has resonances in Doreen Massey's concept of spaces not containing borders, but in being outward-looking, extroverted and containing links between the local and global. In a different work and through a different approach, that I will call the hyperlocal, Eko Fresh creates and defines an integrated space as a refuge from the stereotyping of Germans of color. This hyperlocal, which I will describe in more detail later, is a neighborhood, a block, a street corner where the marginalized can ground their identities. From these places of more stable belonging, they can speak to the broader nation. Between the poles of these two different kinds of space creation, Doreen Massey's extroverted third space and the hyperlocal, the limits of how the German nation defines itself and its citizens, those of color and ethnic Germans, are expanded, challenged and made permeable. Where the nation shows itself to be inadequate in defining spaces and people,

German rappers of color offer alternative spaces where identities and peoples put in opposition or pushed to the margins can co-exist, co-mingle and ultimately embrace the richness and complexity of their identities.

"I'll make my own world": The Individualized Integrated Space

In her 1994 monograph "Space, Place and Gender" Doreen Massey presents a flexible, malleable concept of space, quoted by Schade as writing: "Can't we think rethink our sense of place? Is it not possible for a sense of place to be progressive; not self-enclosing and defensive, but outward-looking." Elaborating further Massey writes: "Instead, then, of thinking of places as places with boundaries around, they can be imagined as *articulated moments* in networks of social relations and understandings[...][T]his in turn allows a sense of place which is extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local" (146). The reimagining of space as progressive, outward-looking, global and local, is informative when looking at the collaborative work of Blumio and Eko Fresh focused on integration. The spatial insufficiency that both rappers present is found in public spaces. By performing stereotypical German identities, the two rappers discover that their racial otherness still excludes them from full acceptance into spaces where traditional German national identity sets the parameters for exclusion and inclusion. Upon meeting this site of interdiction, both rappers offer an alternative, highly personal space and identity in line with what Massey proposes: it is outward-looking, extroverted and full of connections. Their model of integration is not one where everyone adopts a single model of "Germanness," but one where each individual, particularly those with migrant backgrounds, adopts an interconnected identity

built of elements of many different cultures and identities. It is here that Blumio and Eko Fresh finally find true integration, where the complexity of their identities can live in agreement instead of excluding them from spaces enclosed by a impermeable model of German identity.

In Spring 2015, Blumio released the album *Blumiologie*, featuring the track "Gute Ausländer" (*Good Foreigners*), a collaboration with Eko Fresh, where they both perform the roles of two people of color in German society who try to integrate via different means. The song opens with a conversation between Eko Fresh and Blumio with both speaking of the everyday racism they experience. Blumio is called a "slit-eye" while trying to board a street car and Eko Fresh is not let into a night club. Both then decide to give an insincerely good effort at integrating, using the very word "integrieren" (*to integrate*), and present two models for what integration can look like. Blumio first performs the character of a person with an Asian background that is a patriotic soccer hooligan. His first lines are:

Ey yo, schwarz rot geil, 'Schland for life!

...

Wat Blumio? Ich heiß Andi Rakete

Kein Asiate, ich bin Assi, verstehste?

Ey yo, black, red, tight, Schland for life!

...

What Blumio? Call me Andi Rakete

*I'm not an Asian, I'm asocial, got it?*²²

²² Notes on wordplay: 1. Schwarz, Rot, geil is a play on the German flag colors Schwarz, Rot, Gelb (black, red, yellow), with geil and Gelb sounding similar. 2. 'Schland is short for "Deutschland," and sayings like "'Schland for life" are popularly used when national teams are playing. 3. Assi is short for Asoziale (Asocial), a word used to describe people who break typically conservative social norms.

In these lines there is already a denial of his non-German identity in order to integrate. Despite the multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and in fact multi-national composition of the German national team Blumio's character feels an impetus to blot out his Asian identity. He changes his name, says he is not Asian and instead adopts a sports-centric patriotism tied with an asocial hooliganism. This reveals a double-standard in German society in that Blumio's character recognizes that simply existing as Asian is more problematic than adopting a white, hooligan persona. A white German can be asocial and still a patriot, but an Asian person in Germany does not have access to Germanness and thereby patriotism, no matter their behavior.

Blumio's verse continues by detailing the alcohol-laden sexual exploits of his hooligan, ending with the line "Wir schreien: Fußball, ficken, Alkohol!" (*We yell: football, fucking, alcohol!*) The debauched lifestyle of his character epitomizes an extreme white masculinity, yet despite his character performing that identity faithfully, he still cannot escape his otherness, he cannot be "one of the boys." His attempt at integration reveals itself as impossible when he raps:

Ich mache Party im Deutschland-Trikot

...

Ich schmeiß 'ne Runde, Jungs seid ihr mit mir?

Da sagt einer: "Wat will 'n der Tourist hier?"

I party with my Germany jersey

...

I'll buy a round, fellows are with you with me?

Then one says: "What does this tourist here want?"

At the scene of patriotic celebration, the narrator's otherness prevents him from joining in the fun. Even with a jersey on, he is misidentified as a tourist, because of his Asian appearance.

Patriotism may be allowed during sporting events, but it is not open to all. His belonging, despite his actions and dress, is undone by his existence as a person of color. The realm of patriotism is delimited as only being a space for whiteness, into which Blumio's character in his Asianness is not allowed entry; no matter how much he may perform white, patriotic, identity, he is seen as not belonging.

On the other hand Eko Fresh presents, in his verse, a Turkish-German character who strives to be the model of an orderly German, as opposed to Blumio's asocial sports patriot. He changes his name from Ekrem Bora to Eberhard Brenner, another acknowledgement that having a non-German name denies integration and he also raps in a meek, accented voice in an attempt to not disturb his German neighbors sonically. Furthermore, in an effort to enforce that non-offensiveness, he writes a letter of complaint to his noisy neighbors.²³ He even brushes his teeth with liverwurst, a quintessential German food. Ultimately, while sitting with his dog his character says "Ich bin so angepasst, ich bin unsichtbar" ("I fit in so well, I am invisible"). In the integration process his character has adopted he becomes so German that his Turkishness, not just his Turkish name, but his entire identity disappears, leading to the narrator's own disappearance. Anonymity and invisibility is what the protagonist takes on as a model of integration.

Eko Fresh's protagonist, however, is also denied in his attempt to integrate in public space. Despite the name change, his polite language and lifestyle, his appearance denies him

²³ German society, legally and culturally, has stringent limits on noise, particularly on Sundays, when noisy activity can be punished by law.

access into German society. In the penultimate scene of his verse he is met with opposition:

Guten Tag, ich bin eigentlich auf Wohnungssuche

Und ich wollte einfach rein in die gute Stube²⁴

Bitte ignorieren Sie den türkischen Schnäuzer

Ich krieg die Wohnung nicht? Ich bin wirklich ein Deutscher!

Good day, I am on a search for accommodation

And I simply want to move into the front parlor

Please ignore the Turkish mustache

I will not get the flat? I am really a German!

His character is not simply on the hunt for a place to live, but wants to be in the front room, among proper people. However, as with Blumio, his appearance as an other denies him access to and respect in German society. Eko Fresh's character can take on stereotypical German behavior, but he cannot effectively hide his visual otherness and so fails at integrating.

Throughout the song the attempts of both characters to integrate by fulfilling stereotypes of Germanness are bound to fail due to their inescapable visual otherness. The process of exclusion during an attempt at integration is reminiscent of Homi Bhabha's description of the failure of mimicry. Bhabha quotes Freud on the nature of fantasies, split between the unconscious and preconscious: "Their mixed and split origins is what decides their fate. We may compare them with individuals of mixed race who taken all round resemble white men but who betray their coloured descent by some striking feature or other and on that account are excluded

²⁴ The *gute Stube* is the room in a German home that is traditionally reserved for guests and not used on a daily basis.

from society and enjoy none of the privilege" (130). Bhabha summarizes the otherness described by Freud as "[a]lmost the same but not white: the visibility of mimicry is always produced at the site of interdiction" (130). Through mimicry the protagonists in "Gute Ausländer," also strive to be "good foreigners," to be integrated, but their but not quite white status makes this impossible. The racialized definition of Germanness, shown in Zantop's work to deeply historical roots, displays itself when non-white Germans mimic Germanness. That is, the failure at integration is not the result of missteps by the protagonists of "Gute Ausländer," it comes from the very definition of Germanness itself. The Asian and Turkish features of the song's protagonists make integration impossible, because the definition of Germanness is so intimately tied to whiteness. Having met the impossibility of integration once their non-whiteness was recognized, in the closing verse, Blumio and **Eko Fresh**²⁵ offer an alternative saying:

Mann, ich hab mich so angestrengt

Eko, ich hab mich benommen wie ein anderer Mensch

Ey yo Blum, wir müssen uns nicht verstellen, nein

Sondern im Grunde wir selbst sein

Du hast recht, da war wohl jemand zu stur

Wir nehmen uns das beste jetzt aus jeder Kultur

Einfach Mensch sein, davor haben viele Leute Angst

...

Hi Leute, ich bin wie ich bin, das find' ich nicht schlimm

...

²⁵ **Bold** indicates Eko Fresh's lines.

Hi Leute, ich bleibe ich selbst und schaff' mir meine eigene Welt

Guck mich an ich bin ein guter Ausländer

Man, I tried so hard

Eko, I behaved like a different person

Ey yo Blum, we don't have to pretend, no

Instead we have to be entirely ourselves

You're right, someone was too stubborn

We'll take the best from every culture

Simply be a human being, many are afraid of that

...

Hi people, I am who I am, I don't find that bad

...

Hi people, I'll stay myself and make my own world

Look at me I'm a good foreigner

Both rappers move away from their performed characters back to their own identities. They offer a solution to each other's hardship. Blumio admits to having tried hard to integrate, that he tried to be another person, much like his character Andi Rakete. In response and as a way out, Eko Fresh says both should be entirely themselves. Being entirely themselves involves taking things from many cultures and, as Eko raps, in creating his own world. Their combined response to failed integration is authenticity and agency. Authenticity exists in embracing their identity as multicultural people. Agency exists in creating their own worlds. Where German society and spaces fail them, in providing full recognition and housing, they turn to making a world entirely

their own. Instead of turning to others for agency and identity they turn to themselves. They are do-it-yourself space creators like the originators of hip-hop in the spaces of the South Bronx. Where no public space is defined for them, they define a private space for themselves. As artists with multinational and multilingual identities it is natural for them to have the extroverted, conscious of the outer-world space that Massey speaks of; in fact, is it necessary. The confines of traditional German identity provides no spaces for the identities of Eko Fresh and Blumio to speak freely, to make the connections to the local and global. Indeed, their very existence as people with a connection to places outside the German border exclude them from inclusion in spaces entirely inside the German border. This necessitates the creation of a space where, as Eko Fresh says, they can take the best from every culture. The co-existence, the dialogue between all those cultures can occur in the space these rappers of color create. In that space there is finally the integration of all the elements that make up who they are.

"This one goes out to my North Africans": The Ghetto as an Integrated Space

From Massey's conception of a interconnected, global and local third place, I now turn to a space which marginalized people (re)define, create from and identify with. That place is the contemporary ghetto, particularly its utilization in US and German hip-hop. Using the work of Maria Stehle and Robin D.G. Kelley, I will detail how the ghetto has been defined throughout history, how it is used to define authenticity and how hip-hop artists use ghetto authenticity to gain agency in the nation. From there I will give a history of German localism and how identifying with the ghetto is another form of German localism. Bringing my analysis into the present day I will focus on Eko Fresh's song "Domplatten Massaker" ("Cathedral Square

Massacre"),²⁶ his response to sexual assaults by refugees on New Year's Eve 2015 in Cologne, and how it embodies what I call the hyperlocal, the use of a grounded, very local identity to engage in national dialogues. Eko Fresh gains his authenticity, both as a rapper and as a local German, through the ghetto, and uses that authenticity to present the German ghetto as the only truly integrated space in modern day Germany.

The definition of the ghetto I will use comes from Maria Stehle and is a product of post-war Germany. The greatest weight the word has in the German context is of course in reference to the Jewish ghettos of WWII, which were "spaces of racial terror, poverty, murder, and deportation, but also of resistance and defiance" (Stehle 12). During the 1970s, however, the term ghetto was used to describe to ethnic minority neighborhoods that came into being after waves of post-war immigration. West Germany brought in immigrants primarily from Southern Europe and Turkey to aid with reconstruction in the 60s and 70s. Ghetto in the 70s then took on a newer, differently racialized meaning describing immigrant, non-ethnic German neighborhoods. US ghettos, such as Harlem, were also used in 1970s West German media to portray what could happen in Germany if immigration was not contained. The ghetto was an area that represented a potential problem for West Germany. This continued after unification with center right politician Jörg Schönbohm saying, in response to a question in about whether Berlin had ghettos in 1998: "Today there are neighborhoods where one has to say: this is not Germany anymore" (Stehle 13). In media portrayals over the last decade the immigrant German ghetto has taken on the role as the source of violence in Germany, as Maria Stehle writes: "In discourses about youth violence, the figure of the disenfranchised East German Neo-Nazi vanished almost completely; roles for

²⁶ Eko is specifically referring to the Cologne Cathedral, an architectural and cultural landmark of Cologne and Germany.

victims and perpetrators were recast. In short young migrants did not have problems any longer, they were the problems; the protected, contained, and instrumentalized Other of the multicultural ideology was transformed into the violent ghetto Turk who cannot and does not want to integrate" (Stehle 14).

Eko Fresh came of age in one of these migrant ghettos, the Gremberg district of Cologne. It is a place with an unemployment rate of 15.8%, with 20.4% of the population receiving some state assistance and 49.9% of the population having an immigrant background.²⁷ The average unemployment rate for Cologne is 9.2% and the city-wide portion of residents that are immigrants is 17.7% (Kölner Stadtteillinformationen 2014, Arbeitsmarkt im Überblick 2016). In comparison to the city as a whole, Gremberg is notably poorer and far more multicultural. Perhaps that is why Eko Fresh calls Gremberg Grembranx, making it a phonetic sister city, at least in a German accent, of the Bronx. Eko Fresh has drawn several musical portraits of the city that reflect the reality of living there, with poverty, drug dealing and prostitution as vignettes in the large picture he draws of Grembranx.

These portraits have their forerunner in Melle Mel's hopeless depiction of the 1980s Bronx. Unlike the work of Melle Mel in 1982's "The Message," however, Eko Fresh in the 21st century is not only depicting his ghetto to give voice to the hardship of people of color, but is also partaking in a tradition of claiming authenticity through association with the ghetto, a tradition developed in hip-hop since the time of Melle Mel. As Maria Stehle writes: "[M]ost hip-hop artists work with notions of realness or authenticity. Their claim to authenticity is also often the key that grants them space and agency within mainstream culture, which, in turn, turns

²⁷ German law does not allow census data based on race, but does allow collecting data based on nationality. Therefore, tracking an immigrant background often serves as a statistical stand-in for race.

performance of authenticity into a political strategy" (164). To establish a working definition of hip-hop authenticity I take Robin D.G. Kelley's exploration of social scientists' constructions of the ghetto. He traces a history of conceptions and markers of realness from the 60s through the 80s in poor black urban areas in the US. While admitting that defining ghetto realness is elusive, Kelley offers up a definition of an authentic ghetto sensibility as "the true, honest, unbridled, pure cultural practices that capture raw, ruffneck 'reality' of urban life" (145). Ghetto authenticity or realness establishes, as Kelley hints, an unobtainable standard, but the striving towards being "true" to the ghetto life through cultural practices is the idealistic core of hip-hop realness.

Whether this is representing your block, in the vein of the South Bronx block parties, or illegally spraying buildings with graffiti, hip-hop realness is about continuing cultural practices which are the product of and respond to ghetto reality, that is, marginalization as ethnic and class others.

From that place, I argue, they can claim a hyperlocal Germanness and thereby engage in national dialogues. The claim to a local place establishes a spatial belonging within the greater nation, an original, authentic and foundational place of being. With what I will call a hyperlocal place of belonging, German rappers of color have a platform to speak to and about the nation. They are from Cologne, Berlin, Düsseldorf and so on, and from there can cry out to Germany. Ghetto belonging serves as a "backdoor" into national belonging and narratives. As it is removed from the national, their local identity is harder to contest, yet it simultaneously provides a spatial foundation for belonging within the nation.

With the movement has a tradition of representing, or "repping" one's city, hip-hop serves as an ideal place for an articulation of the hyperlocal. From the corner-claiming origins of hip-hop in the South Bronx, to Canadian rapper Drake asserting the position as ambassador for his

home city Toronto, hip-hop is a genre and movement rich in not only spatial claims, but in representing and carrying the flag for a place. As Stehle writes of hip-hop, it "has never been just music: it always worked with spatio-political claims" (122). The ghetto is not merely the place where minorities live, it is a place they strive to define. Contemporary German hip-hop also has a tradition of songs based on proving ghetto authenticity. Stehle argues German rappers all offer similar imaginings of the ghetto in Germany to not only prove ghetto authenticity — having formative years in working class, often largely minority and migrant neighborhoods — but also to engage with American hip-hop's tradition of portraying the ghetto (134-35). From Nas riding through Times Square and shaking hands in front of New York projects in "If I Ruled The World," to Kendrick Lamar performing in front of a large Compton sign in "King Kunta," to DeJ Loaf dancing in landmarks of her Eastside Detroit, American hip-hop has a tradition of representing one's hood or block. In German hip-hop, rappers like Eko Fresh, Sido and Bushido all have songs and music videos where they represent where they grew up. In fact, Eko Fresh's most popular song is his 2006 song "Gheddo," which features Bushido. In the track, and accompanying video that portray "the ghetto," a specific ghetto is not identified, Eko and Bushido rap about the harsh reality of growing up in the ghetto, and how they still maintain close ties to it.

Keeping it real for Eko Fresh functions at an intersection between Stehle and Kelley's models of hip-hop authenticity. Authenticity for Eko Fresh serves, following Stehle's definition, as a key to space and agency in mainstream culture. German society broadly and hip-hop specifically expect Eko to be a tough kid from the ghetto, so in performing that identity he can be heard. Eko's realness is also racial and spatial, in line with Kelley, in that his status as a

marginalized Turkish-German of color from the ghetto permeates his self-representations in his music. With its birth in ethnic and spatial marginalization, hip-hop naturally built parameters of authenticity/realness that were based on racial and spatial otherness. Just as black Americans claimed the street corner, their block, their hood as a place they could own, define and creatively produce from, Eko Fresh claims the ghetto as a grounding for identity. Through realness, rappers like Eko Fresh can gain a rooted identity. Despite being a transnational person, his grandfather emigrated from Turkey with his mother, and having an ethnic identity that is not readily accepted as German, ghetto authenticity gives Eko Fresh a stable place of belonging and consequently a platform for politically charged artistic production.

Fatima El-Tayeb sees hip-hop in Europe as translocal, connecting rappers from Germany to those in France and beyond as common members of the "hip-hop nation" (2011), and Maria Stehle sees the ghetto "as a tool of translocal identification" (17) in the face of German nationalism. These arguments had a resonance in German hip-hop before the onset of the refugee crisis, but with the ever increasing conversation as how to integrate immigrants and refugees, and the simultaneous rise of far-right anti-immigrant parties, German hip-hop has responded by turning from an international scope to a national and then extremely local one. Blumio said in the interview I conducted with him that hip-hop mirrors society. With a society striving to define who belongs in Germany, and what Germanness is, German rappers have contributed their take to that national conversation. I will argue that, in contrast to being a tool for the translocal, the ghetto, particularly association with the ghetto is an exercise in what I call the hyperlocal. That is to say that in the face of a national belonging questioned by a model of German identity based on white masculinity, Eko Fresh finds stability in the turn to his ghetto, Grembranx, where his

complex and contested identity more effortlessly fits. In "Domplatten Massaker," Eko Fresh depicts himself as made by the ghetto and belonging to it. Where Germany denies him, Grembranx constructs and sustains him. The unique turn Eko Fresh takes is in using his ghetto grounding to intrude into national debates.

This works particularly well in Germany, since it is a nation only founded through unification of disparate German-speaking territories in 1871. The relatively short history of nationalism that followed was catastrophically questioned and delegitimized in the century that came after the founding of the nation-state. A defeat in WWI, followed by the tumult and economic chaos of the Weimar Republic, shattered any national pride built in the early decades of the unified German nation. In the shadow of the Holocaust, Germans in East and West reengaged with the local and regional as sources of pride, when national identity and national pride were then difficult if not nearly impossible to justify. Many aspects of life in the post-war Germanies, from travel to cultivating heirloom apple varieties, strove for a local identity in the face of imposed identities and traumatic national experiences. Faced with skepticism at their belonging to the nation in the first place, German rappers of color can turn to hyperlocal identity and share a form of identification with ethnic Germans who turned away from national identity out of shame at past atrocities. While the reasons for turning away from national identity are different, the response, a local turn is the same. From that local turn rappers of color can claim local legitimacy and thereby join the rest of nation in local pride.

After mass sexual attacks and robberies on New Years Eve in Cologne in 2015, with many suspects believed to be asylum seekers, Eko Fresh released the video for "Domplatten Massakar" (Smale, "As Germany Welcomes Migrants"). In the video he proudly represents

Cologne, but also speaks to Angela Merkel and his German "brothers and sisters," in a move that vaults from the hyperlocal to the national. I will argue that this pivot, from the hyperlocal to the national, functions in the intersection between the ghetto-based constructions of authenticity in hip-hop and the embrace of regional and local pride in Germany. In being proud of being from the Cologne ghetto, Eko Fresh can claim a local identity, from there he can make incursions into national debates. His legitimacy as a *Ghettokind* (ghetto child) from Cologne is less easily dismissed than his legitimacy as a German. Additionally, his Cologne identity and upbringing gives him a legitimacy to speak on the New Year's sexual attacks and robberies, which became a topic of national conversation.

Among the three rappers I have profiled in this thesis, Eko Fresh is the one who most routinely engages in association with and representation of his hood: ghetto politics permeate his music. Apart from the 2006 track "Gheddo," Eko said in an interview that his whole 2016 album "Freezy" was dedicated to Grembranx (Hölter). While this continues the tradition of representing the ghetto in US hip-hop, Eko Fresh makes a unique contribution in his portrayals of Grembranx. Rather than merely showing that life is difficult there and that he remains true to his hood, he also portrays the racial and ethnic dynamics of his neighborhood in a way that distinctly reflects the reality of his German context. Eko Fresh's ghetto is a place where ethnic and racial minorities in Germany commingle and communicate with white Germans. The split between the so-called parallel societies, or *Parallelgesellschaften*, from the "leading culture," or *Leitkultur*, is far more

navigable in Eko Fresh's imagining of his ghetto and Germany as a whole.²⁸ That navigability is embodied in figures like Eko Fresh who feel comfortable both in his multi-ethnic Grembranx and on the national stage. He models a cultural permeability and adaptability rich in multiple associations and identifications. Rather than embracing a single *Leitkultur*, Eko embraces various cultures —German, Turkish, Kurdish, North African, Kölnisch — that encompass his lived reality.²⁹ He embodies and represents a positive image of the ghetto as a place of successful integration, making it a place where German problems are solved rather than created.

Eko Fresh's home city Cologne came into the national spotlight after New Year's Eve celebrations in 2015. On that night hundreds of attacks, including theft and sexual assaults, were reported by women as they attempted to enter Cologne's central train station. A number of the perpetrators were identified as being of Arab and/or North-African decent (Smale, "As Germany Welcomes Migrants"). This spurred a discussion across Germany over whether the country could really welcome the 477,000 refugees who had come into the country in the year leading up to the attacks (Asylgeschäftsstatistik Für Den Monat Dezember 2015). Many Germans across the ideological spectrum wondered if Arab/Muslim men could integrate into a society with "different" gender roles, arguing from the assumption that Arab and Muslim men attacked women in Cologne because of cultural differences, that is, less respect for women ("Sexism and Islam"). This very premise has been contested by some German feminists, but anxiety over

²⁸*Parallelgesellschaft* is a term coined by sociologist Wilhelm Heitmeyer in 1996. It is the idea of enclaves of ethnic minorities that are separated, or live parallel to, mainstream society. See Heitmeyer for more.

Leitkultur means white, Christian culture in Germany.

For more on *Parallelgesellschaft* and *Leitkultur* see Häußermann.

²⁹ Kölnisch is the German adjective for things from Cologne.

refugees and their ability to become part of German society came to the fore after the Cologne attacks.³⁰ As a Cologne native Eko Fresh saw it as important to offer a counter-narrative to anxiety over refugees and to defend his native city and so released the music video for "Domplatten Massaker." In an interview, Eko Fresh said about these recent politically charged videos and the song from 2016 that he took it upon himself to be the "voice of migrants," and beyond this he felt a need to represent his home: "Ich habe versucht, den Standpunkt der normalen Kölner, der normalen Bürger, meiner Kumpels, wiederzugeben. Ob Migranten oder nicht, das kann man hier sowieso nicht mehr unterscheiden. Ich kenne hier viele Leute, die wie Türken aussehen, aber Kölsch reden" (I tried to represent the standpoint of normal [residents of Cologne], normal citizens, my friends. Whether migrants or not, you can't make a distinction here. I know lots of people who look Turkish, but speak in the Cologne dialect") (Schmidt).

Eko uses identification irreverently. He simply is, in turn, German, a migrant, Turkish and anything else by the sheer act of claiming it. He claims those identities with specific aims in mind; they are tools of expression and criticism for him. He said in an interview of his identity as a "migrant": "Als allererstes habe ich mich immer für einen guten Rapper gehalten. Deshalb habe ich mich darüber gewundert, dass ich vor allem in den Mainstream-Medien immer nur als Migrant vorgestellt oder gefragt wurde. Darauf habe ich dann mit Humor geantwortet – mit meinem Song 'Quotentürke.' Irgendwann habe ich mich mit dieser Rolle aber auch angefreundet, da es etwas ist, was die Leute von mir erwarten" ("First and foremost I see myself as a rapper.

³⁰Feminist German scholars Christina Clemm and Sabine Hark discuss in their piece "Sexism: Did we become a feminist nation overnight?" that the public concern for German women being mistreated by refugees as representing a combination of sexism and xenophobia, in that German women need to be protected from non-white refugee men. They also highlight how sexism has not been imported to Germany by refugees. One key point they make is that existing laws are entirely inadequate in dealing with sexual assault. German laws at the time of the Cologne attacks, for example, would have made the sexual assaults, such as men touching women's breasts and vaginas, not punishable by law.

That's why I wondered why the mainstream media always presented me as a migrant or asked about my migrant background. I responded to that with humor, with my song 'Token Turk.' Eventually I also befriended that role. It's something that people expect from me") (Hötler). As an artist, Eko sees the possibilities in adopting identities that are not really his: in "Quotentürke" he is criticizing a German media that calls him up when they want to seem inclusive, in his love song to Frauke Petry it is to highlight the racism embedded in the rhetoric of the her party, and with "Domplatten Massaker" it is to maintain a multiculturalism he sees as a longtime element of Cologne society.

Similar to Samy Deluxe in "Dis wo ich herkomm," the Grembranx rapper shows that multiculturalism is not dead, as Angela Merkel infamously claimed, but rather that Germany, particularly Cologne, has already accomplished it ("Integrations-Debatte – Merkel"). The main thrust of "Domplatten Massaker" is Eko's advocating for sustaining the multiculturalism he has lived in, in the face of anti-immigrant anxieties and the ruptures it can inspire. Each verse in "Domplatten Massaker" is dedicated to different groups in Germany, with Eko attempting to avoid outcomes that might endanger Cologne on the local level and the nation more broadly. The first verse is directed towards the perpetrators of the New Year's attacks. He does not spare them any criticism, saving his most polemic words for them. He calls them uneducated, strung-out criminals. Ultimately he says they deserve to be deported and thrown in jail. This puts Eko in line with the center-right of German politics; Angela Merkel called for quicker and easier deportations of asylum seekers following the events in Cologne ("Nach Vorkommnissen in Köln"). His motivations, however, are very different. Merkel's move to make deportations of asylum seekers easier was also in part, because many in her party were unhappy with the number

of refugees entering Germany. When speaking of the Cologne attacks Merkel said regarding the number of refugees entering: "Es ist deutlich weniger, als wir hatten. Aber es ist immer noch deutlich zu viel" ("It is notably less than we had before, but it is still clearly too many") ("Nach Vorkommnissen in Köln").

After labeling himself as a migrant, despite the fact that he was born in Germany, Eko does not express a desire to make it easier to deport people like him or lower the numbers of refugees in Germany. His outrage against the Cologne attackers, expressed in his call for deportation, is inspired by a desire to defend the reputation of asylum seekers and Germans of color in general. He raps: "Ihr Unehrenhaften, Hauptbahnhof-Fummler / Zieht den Ruf von allen Ausländern runter" ("You dishonorable, central-station-gropers / drag down the reputation of all foreigners") and later on says "Flüchtlingsfamilien, die sich um ihre Obdach sorgen / Werden mit euch Bastarden jetzt in einen Topf geworfen" ("Refugee families, that worry about finding shelter / Will be thrown in the same pot with you bastards"). Eko's anxieties emerge in response to the way he knows the right, even the center-right of Angela Merkel's CDU, will respond to crimes by people of color. His first response to the crimes in Cologne is to distance himself from the attackers and to condemn them in the first verse. With that he joins a broad spectrum of German society who condemned the attacks, from the left-wing feminist academics mentioned earlier to the AfD and neo-Nazis (Herwartz).

He both distances himself from and identifies with several groups. On the one hand, he does not try to rationalize to attacks and lessen their severity, but on the other hand his concern is

not primarily for the direct victims, but rather for people of color in Germany.³¹ Eko Fresh has a consciousness of how quick German society is to condemn and essentialize people of color. In Eko's view the asylum-seeking attackers played right into the hands of those who are afraid of people of color in general and refugees specifically. Unlike white German men who commit crimes, refugees who commit crimes endanger the reputation of all people who look like them. For the refugees searching for a place to sleep at night, as Eko mentions, a tarnished reputation further threatens their access to basic necessities. That is why his concern for people who look like him also encompasses a recognition of anti-people of color sentiments. Survival means recognizing the political reality of marginalized peoples and how every action by a person of color can threaten the most vulnerable among them, namely refugee families. Simply put, the perpetrators of the New Year's attacks should have known better.

The second verse begins with a distinct change of address and identification: "Das hier geht an meine deutschen Brüder und Schwestern" ("This here goes out to my German brothers and sisters"). It is a jarring change of identification. In the first verse he identifies with refugees who do not possess German citizenship, then in the second he calls Germans his brothers and sisters. He goes from speaking for the marginalized and unmoored, to addressing the legally and politically more stable. The second verse aims in part to counter the essentializing of people of color that is the thrust of the first verse with the lines: "Bitte glaub nich' allen, die über uns lästern / In der Presse gibt es viele Lügner und Schwätzer" ("Please don't believe all those, who talk shit about us / There's a lot of liars and loud-mouths in the press"). In these lines there is

³¹ The women who were robbed and/or sexually assaulted are not Eko's main concern or at a minimum he does not see it as necessary to also defend them. They are not addressed explicitly in "Domplatten Massaker." His main concern is for men of color like him, revealing a blindspot in his approach.

another change of identification: now the "we" is not his German brothers and sisters, but people of color in Germany. In the space of two lines, he speaks as both German and as not German. The "we" in "Please don't believe all those, who talk shit about us" cannot possibly be "us" Germans, as he is addressing white Germans who are susceptible to believing sweeping negative characterizations of refugees and all people of color in Germany like him. Then in line four Eko raps "Lasst uns nich' zerstör'n, was wir mühsam erweckt hab'n" ("Let us not destroy what we tried so hard to make happen") and follows that with: "Ein Miteinander und wir sollten uns die Hand / Geben, denn auch wir sind stolz auf dieses Land" ("A coming together and we should offer our hand, / for we too are proud of this land"). The "us" here is again all Germans, returning to the first line of the second verse. It is a dizzying plasticity of identity that Eko adopts to speak to all possible audiences in German society.

In "Domplatten Massaker," identities are used as an act of preservation and protection. Eko adopts a migrant identity — one thrust upon him — to protect people of color from dangerous generalizations. Despite being seen as an other by German society he also claims Germanness to defend the nation's positive image brought on by Angela Merkel's initial call for Germany to embrace refugees. The sentiment expressed again echoes Samy Deluxe's call for Germans to see current progress with integration as a sense of national pride. Eko does not see the threat dwelling on Germany's history of war mongering and genocide, like Samy did, but as turning away from being an open, welcoming society in the face of the New Year's Eve attacks. Angela Merkel advocated for a "welcoming culture" ("Willkommenskultur") in the earlier stages of the refugee crisis. Such an openness to those in need was seen as possibly reframing Germany's image. Merkel said of that very reframing: "The world sees Germany as a country of

hope and opportunity, and that was certainly not always the case" (Bennhold). There is no hint that Eko sees himself as carrying the weight of the Holocaust, as Samy does, but rather that he realizes that Germany trying to rehabilitate its image is beneficial to people of color in Germany more broadly. That is reflected in the final verse of the song, which is dedicated to "meine Nordafrikaner" ("my North Africans"). Apart from having a shared Muslim cultural background, there is nothing on the surface that clearly connects Eko Fresh to North Africans. Part of him saying "my North Africans" is simply to show a friendship with North Africans; later in the verse he calls the main street of Grembranx, Taunnusstraße, "Little Marrakech." The true connection established in the final version is one of empathy for fellow people of color. He raps: "ich weiß, das tut weh / Wenn sowas wie "Maghreb-Täter" in den Zeitungen steht" ("I know it hurts, / When you read something like 'Maghreb Perpetrators' in the papers"). He continues with the lines "Auf einmal kriegt ihr einen Spitznamen verpasst / Man bezeichnet euch als 'Nafris,' wer kriegt denn da kein' Hass?" ("All of the sudden you get called names like 'Nafris,' / who wouldn't develop hate from that?").³² Eko calls "his North Africans" his friends because they both suffer from the same type of demonization in the press and he offers a form of solidarity in empathy. Earlier in the song Eko fought against an imposed identity, that is the foreigner as a threat, but here he uses that very imposition of identity as a means of communicating to those who are not necessarily like him. The one thing they intimately share is the same kind of discrimination; both reduced to criminals and called epithets, and both could respond to that discrimination with anger. A shared hardship becomes the means and legitimation for communication and identification. Again, the adoption of an identity not entirely his own has a

³² Nafris is short for North **A**fricans.

political purpose. The verse ends with the lines:

Haltet durch, haltet aneinander fest

Mer stonn zosamme und nich' jeder unter sich³³

Kölle war schon immer bunt gemischt

Auch wenn der Nazihass sinkt, überall Razzien sind

Werdet ihr von uns hör'n, wie echte Nachbarschaft klingt

Stay strong, lean on each other

We're stronger together und not everyone for themselves

Cologne has always been colorfully mixed

And even when the Nazi hate dies down, and there are raids everywhere

Then you'll hear from us what true neighborliness sounds like

What the Cologne rapper hopes to offer is hope and strength for his fellow victims of racism.

Apart from that, he also wants to show that Cologne has historically had a place for them. The city with a Little Marrakech can offer them a place with camaraderie and protection against far-right and state violence. The papers and the far right may be quick to demonize North Africans in Germany, but Cologne, and Grembranx in particular can be more understanding and supportive. As Eko references in his earlier verses broad integration may be in danger, but places like Grembranx can offer a refuge from the bigotry of broader German society.

Throughout his career Eko Fresh has associated himself with a broad range of identities, from German to Turkish, from at home in the ghetto to talking to the entire nation. None of these identities are mutually exclusive, Eko Fresh embodies all of them, yet mainstream media and the

³³ Eko Fresh is using the Cologne dialect here and a phrase also popular among the FC Köln soccer club's supporters, another way of showing his belonging to the city's culture.

right-wing of German politics gravitate towards Eko's identity as a person of color, as a person with roots outside of Germany. That role of the other is embraced by Eko on the one hand, revealing the ways in which German society denies him all aspects of identity. On the other hand, he uses his othered identity to empathize with those who suffer from that rejection of their identity, such as people of a North African background after the New Year's Eve attacks in Cologne. All those utilizations of his marginalized or othered identity serve a revealing purpose: they reveal how the definition of what constitutes Germanness, and who is given full humanity in German society, excludes people like Eko Fresh. The only safe space for people of color in Germany to be embraced in all their complexities and humanity, according to Eko, is in places like Grembranx. People of color in Germany have no other place to turn to when methods of exclusion, like the housing discrimination Eko highlights in "Gute Ausländer," marginalize them.

What Eko Fresh does with that very marginalization and essentializing of his identity is use it as a platform to speak, to criticize, to expose the failure of German society to embrace him and other people of color. His identity as a person from the ghetto is not in question. With all the racialized coding that comes in the usage of the term ghetto, it is yet another way to exclude him from the definition of Germanness. On the other hand, as a rapper identification with the ghetto earns him an authenticity as someone who has hip-hop knowledge, that is, understanding the marginalized origins of the genre. The confluence of an embraced hip-hop and imposed othered identity give Eko Fresh a platform for critiquing the nation. The ghetto is a place where, according to the nation's and hip-hop's parameters for authenticity, Eko Fresh belongs. Eko uses the one place where he is said to belong, his hyperlocal place, as the first step on a ladder of legitimacy. From uncontested ghetto belonging, he can move to belonging in the city. From the

city — his city — he can move to speaking to the nation. To the nation he presents his ghetto as the place where true and broad integration occurs, completely undoing the narrative that casts the ghetto as the source of Germany's problems. According to Eko Fresh the solution to racial tensions in German society is in embracing a space defined in opposition to traditional white, masculine German identity. Whether German society will take Eko seriously remains to be seen, but through his hyperlocal ghetto belonging, German society can at least hear him, if it has ears to hear.

V. Conclusion

Post-reunification Germany saw a wave of national pride and the simultaneous birth of politically engaged hip-hop. Advanced Chemistry originated German-language hip-hop in Germany with their single "Fremd im eigenen Land," and gave the genre a socially engaged voice by responding to a national pride that excluded them as Germans of color. In the more than 20 years since, German hip-hop has maintained its critical stance, responding again and again to instances where Germany falls short in fully recognizing the humanity and contributions of its people of color. Contesting the coloniality of German culture, its model of German identity based on white, Christian masculinity, German-language hip-hop has from its inception been decolonial. By contesting constructions of canon and national identity through verse, practicing decolonial and sarcastic love and mapping hyperlocality, Samy Deluxe, Blumio and Eko Fresh carry on the decolonial tradition of German hip-hop founded by Advanced Chemistry. By responding to national issues, from national pride to Neo-Nazism and the refugee crisis, German rappers of color have remained ever responsive to the way German society as it stands is inadequate in including people like them.

The genre has in fact remained so responsive to current events that two songs, "Nur für dich" and "Domplatten Massaker" were added to this study in the process of writing it. Samy Deluxe released a new song "Mimimi" on April 29th that takes its title from "**Mitbürger mit Migrationshintergrund**" ("Fellow Citizens with a Migrant Background"), which turns the bureaucratic term "Migrationshintergrund," a term for people of color, into a source of pride. The song includes lines like "Ich werd' hier niemals der perfekte Schwiegersohn /

Nur wegen meinem Papa seiner Migration / Integration ist eine Illusion / Aber gibt es so 'n / 'Mimimi des Jahres' -Award, dann werd' ich mir den Titel holen" ("I'll never be the perfect son-in-law / Only because my father and his migration / Integration is an illusion / But if there is a / Mimimi of the year award, then I would win it"). Seven years after "Dis wo ich herkomm" Samy Deluxe pulls no punches in showing how Germany in 2016 still reduces highly successful German rappers of color to token "foreigners." The remix to the song, featuring Eko Fresh, is rich in references to the AfD, PEGIDA and the refugee crisis as well, pulling content for the song straight from the headlines. Palestinian-German and Munich-based rapper Ali As also released the single "Deutsche / Ausländer" in early 2015 with ethnic German rapper Pretty Mo, which involves a trading of stereotypes about Muslims and white Germans, culminating in the music video with both rappers sharing a long kiss. In his May 31, 2016 track, "Kollateral" ("Collateral"), Iranian-German rapper P.A. Sports tells the story of a refugee who arrives in Germany, then becomes radicalized after experiencing xenophobia and commits an act of fatal terrorism. These examples show a genre that is ever new, ever responsive and ever concerned with the racial tensions in German society. As a source of criticism, perspective and potential paths forward there is every indication that German hip-hop will remain relevant and that future scholarship can draw upon it to gain insight into how Germans of color respond to their ever-changing nation. As a barometer of where Germany is on respecting and including its people of color, no movement could be more appropriate or sensitive. As illustrated by Samy Deluxe, Blumio and Eko Fresh German, hip-hop can also do the work of tackling national problems. German rappers of color are not disinterested journalists, but public intellectuals who offer solutions and knowledges that are non-existent in mainstream German culture. German hip-

hop is not merely a movement that strives to present realities, but to create them. In view of the failures of German society to respect them, German rappers of color present models for dialogue, integration and even nation building that fundamentally recognize the humanity and capability of people of color. We not only *should* take German rappers of color seriously, but if we want a German nation which fundamentally includes people of color, we *must* take them seriously.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Blumio Interview³⁴

1. Wie haben Sie mit HipHop angefangen? z. B Einflüsse aus Deutschland, den USA, andere Ländern? (How did you start with hip-hop? Which groups from Germany, USA and other lands inspired you?)

Ich kam mit 13 Jahren zu Hip Hop durch die afroamerikanische Hardrockband Body Count. Der Frontsänger hieß Ice T und war hauptberuflich Rapper. Die Rock Band war nur ein Nebenprojekt. So habe ich mir dann auch seine Rap Sachen angehört und war begeistert. Nach und nach kamen dann auch Deutsche Hip Hop Gruppen dazu, die mir gefielen, wie die Absoluten Beginner oder Freundeskreis.

(I was introduced to hip-hop by the African-American hard rock group Body Count. The lead singer is called Ice T and he was primarily a rapper. The rock band was just a side project. So then I also listened to his rap stuff and was excited by it. Gradually I also discovered German rap groups that I also liked, like Absoluten Beginner and Freundeskreis.)

2. In Ihrer Musik und Ihren Videos gibt es eine Vermischung von Ihren deutschen und japanischen Seiten. Es scheint als ob Ihnen so eine Vermischung Ihnen ganz einfach kommt, aber gibt es persönliche Schwierigkeiten und Probleme mit so einer Identität, die so vielfältig ist?

z.B schrieb der Türkisch-Deutsch Dichter:

Ich habe meine Füße auf zwei Planeten

wenn ich sie in Bewegung setze

zerren sie mich mit

ich falle

ich trage zwei Welten in mir

³⁴ All translations are mine.

**aber keine ist ganz
sie bluten ständig
die Grenze verläuft
mitten durch meine Zunge
-Zafer Şenocak - Doppelmann**

(In your music and videos there is a mix of your German and Japanese sides. It seems like such a mix comes easily to you, but are there personally difficulties and problems that come with such a diverse identity? For example the Turkish-German poet Zafer Senocak wrote:

**I have my feet on two planets
When I put them in motion
They tear me apart
I fall
I carry in me two worlds
But none are complete
They perpetually bleed
The border runs
Through the middle of my tongue
-Double Man)**

Als Kind/Jugendlicher habe ich viel Rassismus erfahren. Ich wuchs in einer Kleinstadt auf und bei uns gab es halt nicht so viele Asiaten. Später habe ich es auch versucht in meine Musik einzubauen. Aber eine Identitätskrise habe ich nicht. Ich bin froh, dass ich mehrere Kulturen mitbekommen habe und die guten und schlechten Seiten kenne. Aber im tiefsten Inneren fühle ich mich Japanisch. Das kommt aber mit dem Alter.

(As a child/adolescent I experienced a lot of racism. I grew up in a small town and there weren't many Asians there. Later I tried to incorporate that into my music. But I don't have an identity

crisis. I am happy that I am part of several cultures and know about the good and bad sides of them. Deep down though I feel more Japanese than anything. That comes with age)

3. Wie finden Sie D-Rap in Bezug auf Integration und Toleranz? z.B. haben Sie mit Eko Fresh gearbeitet, Advanced Chemistry hatte viele verschiedene Rassen. Ist das besonders bei D-Rap, spezifisch im Vergleich zu den USA? (What do you think of German rap in terms of integration and tolerance? For example you worked with Eko Fresh and Advanced Chemistry had members of many different races. Is that specific to German rap, in comparison to the USA?)

Es ist tatsächlich so, dass sehr viele Kinder mit Migrationshintergrund Rap mögen. Aber die sind genau so tolerant bzw. intolerant gegenüber anderen Rassen wie es überall in Deutschland auch ist. Ich finde Hip Hop nicht toleranter als andere Musikrichtungen. Vielleicht war das mal so Ende der Neunziger, aber heute sicherlich nicht mehr. Heutzutage wird in Rapbattles offen gegen die Rasse oder Nationalität des Gegners gerappt und das Publikum feiert es sogar.

(It's a fact that lots of kids with an immigrant background like rap. But they are just as tolerant and respectively intolerant to other races, like how it is everywhere in Germany. I don't find hip-hop more tolerant than other music genres. Maybe it was like that at the end of the 90s, but that's definitely not the case anymore. These days race and nationality are targets in rap battles and the audience celebrates that.)

4. Mit „Hey Mr Nazi“ stellen Sie so ein Bild von Ihrem Freundeskreis dar, das sehr tolerant und multikulti ist, Knuspe, Fatih, usw. Ist das für Sie Hip-hop oder ist das nur eine persönliche Situation? (In "Hey Mr Nazi" you present an image of your circle of friends that very tolerant and multicultural, with names like Knuspe (sic), Fatih and son on. Is that for you hip-hop or is that only a personal situation?)

Rusbeh nicht Knuspe ;) Ich denke, dass sich die Jugendlichen eigentlich sehr gut untereinander verstehen. Z.B. gibt es viele Kuren (sic) und Türken im Rap-Geschäft, die viele Songs miteinander machen. Aber das ist auch im Fußballverein so oder einfach im Klassenzimmer. Das hat nicht unbedingt was mit Hip Hop zu tun. Also ist das Lied Hey Mr. Nazi eher bezogen auf mein Umfeld und nicht auf Hip Hop spezifisch.

(Rusbeh not Knuspe ;) I think, that adolescents really understand well, for example there are lots of Kurds and Turks in the rap scene that make songs together. But that's also the case in a soccer team or in the classroom. That doesn't necessarily have something to do with Hip-hop. The song Hery Mr Nazi has more to do with my environment and not Hip-hop specifically.)

5. Glauben Sie, dass D-Rap ein besseres Vorbild für Deutschland und Deutschtum präsentiert? besonders in Bezug auf Integration und Vielfaltigkeit? (Do you think German rap presents a better model for Germany and Germanness, especially in terms in integration and diversity?)

Nein. Ich finde, dass Rap eher ein Der Spiegelbild der Gesellschaft ist. Im Grunde verstehen wir uns sehr gut hier untereinander. Es gibt nur immer diese Extremen Gruppen - Rechtsextreme oder Extrem-religiöse Gruppierungen, die versuchen, die Gesellschaft zu spalten. Politiker machen das auch gerne. Arm, reich, Deutsch, ausländisch. Aber der Großteil der Gesellschaft - und ich kann da nur von meiner Generation sprechen - versteht sich gut und ist auch gut integriert.

(No, I think that rap is a mirror image of society. In the main we understand each other really well here. There are however still these extreme groups - the far-right or extreme religious groups that try to divide the society. Politicians are like doing the same: poor, rich, German, foreign. The majority of the society though - and I can only speak of my own generation - get along with each other well and are well integrated.)

6. Warum haben Sie eine so starke Reaktion auf den Fall Tugçe? Ich konnte mich vorstellen, dass viele sagen würden, dass jemand, das nicht Deutsch-Türkisch ist, es wirklich nicht verstehen könnte. (Why did you have such a strong reaction to what happened to Tugçe? I could imagine that many would say, that someone who is not Turkish-German, would not really understand it.)

Ich bin ein Mensch. Und ich verstehe sehr wohl wie sich eine Familie fühlt, wenn sie einen geliebten Menschen verliert. Das ist weltweit so denke ich. Dafür muss man kein Türke sein, um das zu verstehen.

(I am a human being and I understand very well how a family would feel when they lost a loved one. I think that's universal. So one doesn't have to be Turkish to understand that.)

7. In dem Track „Gute Ausländer“ verarschen Eko Fresh und Sie nicht nur „typische Deutsche,“ so genannte Bio-Deutsche, sondern auch die Idee von Integration. Sind Sie gegen Integration oder ist das mehr so eine Kritik, wie Bio-Deutsche Integration präsentieren? (In the track "Gute Ausländer" you and Eko Fresh poke fun at not only the idea of a "typical German," the so-called Bio-Deutsche, but also the idea of Integration. Are you against integration, or is it more of a critique of how Bio-Germans present integration?)

Ja ich verstehe das Wort Integration nicht so recht. Hier in Düsseldorf spricht kaum ein Japaner Deutsch. Aber sie zahlen alle viel Steuern, weil sie hier gut verdienen. Da sagt keiner, die sollen sich hier integrieren. Doch die Türken in Berlin Kreuzberg sollen sich integrieren und Deutsch lernen. Was denn nun? Sollen die Deutsch lernen oder Steuern zahlen oder was? Jeder sollte sich bis zu einem gewissen Maße an eine Gesellschaft anpassen, klar. Aber dann sollte das für alle gelten.

(Yeah, I don't really get the term integration. Here in Düsseldorf barely any Japanese speak German, but they pay their taxes, because they do well here. No one says that they should integrate themselves here. The Turks in Kreuzberg, Berlin should integrate themselves and learn German though. What exactly do people want? Should they learn German or pay taxes or what? Everyone should make an effort to fit into a society to some extent, obviously. But that should apply to everyone.)

8. Wie sehen Sie sich selbst in Bezug auf Deutschtum und traditionelle deutsche Identität?

Ich habe das Gefühl, dass viele Menschen mit einem Migrationshintergrund in Deutschland versuchen, dieses traditionelle Bild von Deutschtum zu kritisieren und neu zu definieren. In der Tat glaube ich, dass viele Musiker mit einem Migrations/ Einwanderungshintergrund glauben, dass sie ein „Deutschtum“ besser als die „Bio Deutsche“ machen können. Stimmt das für Sie oder nicht? (How do you see yourself in respect to Germanness and traditional German identity? I have the feeling that a lot of people with a migrant background are trying to criticize the traditional image of German identity and to redefine it. In fact I believe a lot of musicians with a migrant believe they can create a Germanness that is better than what "organic Germans" have made. Do you believe that too?)

Ich weiß nicht was "Deutschtum" bedeutet. Ich finde also mein "Deutschtum" auch nicht besser als das der "Bio-Deutschen." Ich fände es gut, wenn wir uns gegenseitig mehr respektieren und mehr Herzlichkeit und Wärme in Deutschland herrscht. Deutschtum oder nicht Deutschtum ist mir egal.

(I don't really know what "Germanness" means. I also don't find my "Germanness" better than "organic Germans." I would find it nice, when we also had mutual respect for one another embraced sincerity and warmth in Germany. Germanness or not, that doesn't matter to me.)

Appendix B: Song Lyrics (In Order of Appearance)

All lyrics from genius.com

Samy Deluxe, "Weck mich auf" (2001)

Wir leben in 'nem Land, in dem mehr Schranken stehen als es Wege gibt
Mehr Mauern als Brücken, die Stimmung ist negativ
Und die Alten fragen: Warum rauch' ich täglich Weed
Warum sind ich und meine ganze Generation so depressiv?
Wir sind jeden Tag umgeben von lebenden Toten
Umgeben von Schildern, die uns sagen: „Betreten verboten!“
Umgeben von Skinheads, die Türken und Afrikanern das Leben nehmen
Während Bullen daneben stehen, um Problemen aus dem Weg zu gehen
Umgeben von „Ja“-Sagern, die alles nur nachlabern
Den' kaltes, dunkles Blut pumpt durch die Schlagadern
Umgeben von Kinderschändern, die grad mal Bewährung kriegen
Genau wie die scheiß Nazis, deren Opfer unter der Erde liegen
Hat dieses Land wirklich nicht mehr zu bieten
Als ein paar Millionen Arschgesichter mit 'ner Fresse voller Hämorrhoiden?
Die meinen, dies' Land sehr zu lieben, doch sind nicht sehr zufrieden
Passt zu eurem Frust - oder warum seid ihr hier geblieben?
Ich muss mich von euch ganzen Schlappschwänzen abgrenzen
All den ganzen Hackfressen, die mich jeden Tag stressen
Sind die gleichen Leute an der Spitze, die sich satt essen
Und Minderheiten werden zur Mehrheit und trotzdem vergessen

[Hook]

Weck mich bitte auf aus diesem Albtraum
Menschen sehen vor lauter Bäumen den Wald kaum

Man versucht uns ständig einzureden
Dass es noch möglich wär', hier frei zu leben
Weck mich bitte auf aus diesem Albtraum
Menschen sehen vor lauter Bäumen den Wald kaum
Ich und du und er und sie und es sind
Besser dran, wenn wir uns selber helfen

[Verse 2]

Ich bin der Typ, der kurz nach Beginn der Party schon geht
Weil ich nicht feiern kann, solange ich in Babylon leb'
Wir haben miese Karten, regiert von Psychopathen
Verwaltet von Bürokraten, die keine Gefühle haben
Kontrolliert von korrupten Cops, die oft Sadisten sind
Verdächtige suchen nach rassistischen Statistiken
Gefüttert von Firmen, die uns jahrzehntelang vergifteten
Informiert durch Medien, die's erst zu spät berichteten
Scheiß aufn Unfall im Pkw, Schäden von THC, wir hab'n bald alle BSE
Und du schaust noch auf dein EKG, bevor dein Herz stoppt
Und denkst: „Aufn dickes Steak hätt' ich trotzdem jetzt Bock!“
Verdammt nochmal! Gehirnwäsche pur, rund um die Uhr
Und Vater Staat schlägt und vergewaltigt Mutter Natur
Die scheiß Politiker dien' der dunklen Seite wie Darth Vader
Und hab'n 'nen Horizont von circa einem Quadratmeter
Keine eigene Meinung, doch zehn eigene Ratgeber
Die schwachsinnigen Scheiß reden als hätten sie 'n Sprachfehler
Hoffen, die braven Wähler zahlen weiterhin gerne Steuergelder
Doch ich bin hier, um Alarm zu schlagen wie 'n Feuermelder

[Hook]

Weck mich bitte auf aus diesem Albtraum
Menschen sehen vor lauter Bäumen den Wald kaum
Man versucht uns ständig einzureden
Dass es noch möglich wär', hier frei zu leben
Weck mich bitte auf aus diesem Albtraum
Menschen sehen vor lauter Bäumen den Wald kaum
Ich und du und er und sie und es sind
Besser dran, wenn wir uns selber helfen

[Verse 3]

Was sagt wohl Schröder dazu? Ich glaub', ich ruf' ihn mal an
Sag zu ihm: „Gerhard, schau dir doch unsere Jugend mal an:
Ein Drittel starrt mit offenem Mund auf ihre PlayStations
Das zweite Drittel feiert im Exzess als Rave-Nation
Abhängig von teuflischen pharmazeutischen Erzeugnissen
Weil sie nicht wussten, was diese scheiß Drogen bedeuteten
Das dritte Drittel hängt perspektivlos rum auf deutschen Straßen
Kids mit dreizehn Jahren ziehen sich schon dies' weiße Zeug in die Nase
Die keine Ziele, nur Träume haben und das sind meist teure Wagen
Sie planen ihr Leben nicht weiter als heute Abend
Denken, zur Not geht es wie bei Nintendo noch neuzustarten
Scheißen drauf, ob sie bald sterben - wer will schon alt werden?“
In diesem Land, in dem mehr Schranken stehen als es Wege gibt
Mehr Mauern als Brücken, die Stimmung ist negativ
Für die Alten: Darum rauchen wir täglich Weed
Und deshalb sind ich und meine ganze Generation so depressiv

[Hook]

Weck mich bitte auf aus diesem Albtraum

Menschen sehen vor lauter Bäumen den Wald kaum
Man versucht uns ständig einzureden
Dass es noch möglich wär', hier frei zu leben
Weck mich bitte auf aus diesem Albtraum
Menschen sehen vor lauter Bäumen den Wald kaum
Ich und du und er und sie und es sind
Besser dran, wenn wir uns selber helfen

Samy Deluxe, "Poesie Album" (2011)

[Intro]

Guck mal hier, dies' mein Poesiealbum
Schau' mal rein, in mein Poesiealbum
Schwarz auf weiß, in mei'm Poesiealbum
Album Album Album

[1 verse]

Hallo Deutschland, kennt ihr mich noch?
Kennt ihr das noch? Echten Hip-Hop!
In 'nem Land, wo man sogar mit 'nem Hit floppt
Wo der Soul keine Seele hat, der Rock nich' rockt
Wo bei Funk oft der Funke nicht überspringt
Und der Reggae leider nach Schlagerliedern klingt
Und der Rap so 'ne schlechte Reputation hat
Wer kann dieses Gefühl von damals wiederbringen?
Wer bitte, wer wer kann es sein?
Sag mir den Namen und ich nehm ihn unter Vertrag
Oder die, oder sie, ganz egal wer es ist
Hast du bitte mal 'ne E-mail oder Nummer parat?

Nein, es gibt kein'
Denn die Sänger sing'n und die Rapper kling'n
Als hätten sie nie Hunger gehabt
Und sogar wenn's im Internet deine Lieder umsonst gäb
Keiner mit Geschmack hätte die je runtergela-
Den, denn
Nun ist es da, unmittelbar
100 Karat, warum ich das sag?
Ich bin so brilliant, so phänomenal, fundamental, radikal
So wie in jüngeren Jahren, als ich direkt aus'm Untergrund kam
Diese Position, die ich mir hier erarbeitet hab'
Kann keine Geldsumme bezahlen
Aber ich komme nicht klar auf diese ganzen Rapper
Die scheinbar nix wissen über diese Kunstform
Und deshalb muss ich die Massen von Neuem bekehren
Und das Verständnis für unsere Kunst form'
Denn ich hab' dieses Haus hier mit aufgebaut
Ihr habt's demoliert, ich hab's renoviert
Ich bin der Super-MC, ich bin das Buch von Jay-Z
Ich hab Rap für die Massen hier dekodiert
Definiert, etabliert und noch mehr schlaue Worte mit "-iert"
Und wenn ihr vermutet, ich sei hier der beste Poet
Dann vermut' ich, dass ihr euch nich' irrt
Ich bin nur ein Fremder und habe mich aus Versehen hier verirrt
Ja, es gibt tausende Rapper da draußen, doch wen interessiert's?
Guck mal hier

[Refrain]

Guck mal hier, dies' mein Poesiealbum

Schau' mal rein, lies mein Poesiealbum
Schwarz auf weiß, in mei'm Poesiealbum

[Verse 2]

Ich bin so Schiller, so Goethe, so bitter, so böse
Noch immer der größte Poet, der hier lebt
Wenn ihr jetzt noch mehr wollt
Fütter ich euch deutschen Dichtern Reime
Bis ihr alle Brecht wie Bertolt
Das ist für mich echter Erfolg
Wenn der Text noch mehr rollt
Und ich schein' wie der Morgenstern
Hoffe, dass ihr alle aus den Reim' und den Worten lernt
Meine Damen und Herren
Was würde ich bloß tun hier, wär' ich nich' Rapstar?
Wahrscheinlich wär' ich der neue Erich Kästner
Lass' die ganzen Neider schnell noch fertig lästern
Nur durch euren Hass werd ich besser
Kletter hoch auf der Karrieretreppe
Oh nein, das heißt Karriereleiter
Wenn's 'n Fehler war, dann nur ein derbe kleiner
Und ja, ich bin ein sehr gemeiner
Rapper, der aus der Masse heraussticht
Du bist einfach nur irgendeiner
Was du machst, interessiert überhaupt nich'
Wünschst dein Flow wäre mehr wie meiner
Kannst gern probier'n zu kopier'n, doch ich glaubs nich'
Dass du es schaffst, oder raffst, was ich mach
Wie ich's mach, wenn ich's mach, es is' einfach unglaublich

Es ist wie, wenn Wilhelm Tell und William Shakespeare
Auf Crack wär'n, nach'n Paar Beck's-Bier
Nur ich bin brauner und noch'n bisschen sexier
Check den Text hier, so flüssig und heilend, nenn ihn Elixier
Das heißt Zaubertrank
Bitte merks dir (3x)

[Bridge]

Lass sie alle reden, lass die Halle beben
Was für'n geiles Leben, ich mache Scheine, scheine
Indem ich Reime reime so wie Heinrich Heine
Album kommt im Frühjahr
Und meine Konkurrenz wird spätestens
Im August ein' Fall erleben
Der Richter und Henker für Dichter und Denker
Er stürzte ab, denn er war von der Dürre matt
Und stand zu dicht am Geländer
Von meinem Hotel Suite-Balkon
Und das war's aus mei'm Poesiealbum
Und darauf reimt sich grobe Viehhaltung
Punkt

[Refrain]

Guck mal hier, dies' mein Poesiealbum
Schau' mal rein, lies mein Poesiealbum
Schwarz auf weiß, in mei'm Poesiealbum

Ich, rhetorisch gewitzt wie Marcel Reich-Ranicki

Samy Deluxe, "Dis wo ich herkomm" (2009)

Ey, Uh, Yeah, hört ihr das?

Das 'ne neue Perspektive auf die ganze Scheiße, Haha!

[Hook]

Dies hier ist unser Deutschland

Dies hier ist euer Deutschland

Dies ist das Land, wo wir leben

Dies ist das neue Deu... (pssst)

Dis wo ich herkomm

Dis is wo ich herkomm, man

Dis wo ich herkomm

Dis is wo ich herkomm [und]

[Verse 2]

Pass auf, es geht so

Hoff ihr versteht's so

Wir müssen was für unser Land tun, für unser Ego

Dies ist der Startschuss für die Kampagne, es geht los

Ziele sind gesteckt und extrem groß, es ist phäno-

Menal, egal, was ihr auch sagt

Ich werd' beweisen, dass ich mehr für Deutschland mach als der Staat

Mit meinen Partnern, denn wir geben hier den Kids Perspektive

Bisschen mehr Aufmerksamkeit und ein bisschen mehr Liebe

Aber nicht wie Michael

Ich schau mich um und habe Zweifel

Wie es weitergehen soll in diesem Land, das meine Heimat ist

Und ich seh' ein, dass die Vergangenheit hier nicht einfach ist

Doch wir können nicht stehen bleiben, weil die Uhr immer weiter tickt - tick, tack
Und wir haben keinen Nationalstolz
Und das alles bloß wegen Adolf - ja toll
Schöne Scheiße, der Typ war doch eigentlich 'n Österreicher
Ich frag mich, was soll das, als wäre ich Herbert Grönemeyer
Die Nazizeit hat unsere Zukunft versaut
Die Alten sind frustriert, deshalb badet die Jugend das aus
Und wir sind es Leid zu leiden, bereit zu zeigen
Wir fangen gerne von vorne an, Schluss mit den alten Zeiten
Ich sag's mal so

[Verse 2]

64 Jahre nach 'm Krieg, 20 nach der Wende
Das war kurz nach dem Mauerfall, krass, wenn ich dran denke
7 Jahre nach der DM, 3 Jahre nach der WM
Ein' Monat waren wir kurz stolz, dann mussten wir uns wieder schämen, denn es heißt
Wir haben beide Weltkriege gestartet, vielleicht kann man da auch keine Selbstliebe erwarten,
aber
Was sollen wir tun? Etwa für immer depressiv sein
Trotz den ganzen Fortschritten der kulturellen Vielfalt? - Nein, ich find nicht!
Ich will lieber etwas tun, deshalb red' ich mit den Kids an den Schulen
Denn ich glaub immer noch an die Jugend und weiß, sie sind die Zukunft
Und brauchen bloß 'n bisschen Hoffnung
Wenn man genauer hinschaut, ist Deutschland schon ganz in Ordnung
Hier gibt es zumindest Chancen was aus seinem Leben zu machen
Gibt es noch eine Mittelschicht zwischen Reichen und Armen
Gibt es noch eine Basis auf der man aufbauen kann
Und ich wollte selbst schon weg von hier man, ich war drauf und dran
Aber dann hab ich gesehen, dass dis is wo ich herkomm

Scheiß auf eure Bemerkung, ich scheiß auf eure Bewertung - Was?

Ich bin ein deutscher Mann, so steht's in meinem Pass

Und ich hab dieses Land hier fast mein ganzes Leben gehasst

Doch seh' jetzt

[Verse 3]

Und

Mir ist egal, ob du Wessi bist, Ossi bist, Pessimist, Optimist

Wie blank oder gestopft du bist

Ob du nun hergezogen oder hier geboren bist

Wenn du in diesem Land hier lebst, hoffe ich, dass du offen bist

Für ne neue Rangesweise, nicht mehr dieses Land ist scheiße

Sondern es gibt viel zu tun, das hilft gegen die Langeweile

Die wir anscheinend haben, weil wir uns die ganze Zeit beklagen

Wie schlecht es ist, aber den ersten Schritt, damit es besser wird, den will hier keiner wagen und

Ich sag das nicht, weil ich mich so schlau oder wichtig fühl

Nur, weil ich mich durch meine Geschichte dazu verpflichtet fühl

Das Land hat mir etwas gegeben, ich will was zurückgeben

Früher dacht ich fick Politik, heut will ich mitreden

Im Land, das wir hassen

Im Land, das wir lieben

Im Land, wo wir leben

Wer kann uns endlich Antworten geben?

Das Land ist schon ok, ich glaub ich kann meinen Standpunkt vertreten

Obwohl mich viele hier anschauen, wie von nem andren Planeten

Und ich bin nicht religiös, doch möchte anfangen zu beten

Dass Leute endlich aufwachen und endlich anfangen zu reden

Über paar andere Themen als Promis, Fußball und Wetter

Zum Beispiel wie man die Bedingungen unserer Jugend verbessert

Und zwar jetzt man
Denn dies ist euer Deutschland

Ich sag's nur einmal

Blumio, "Hey Mr. Nazi" (2009)

Aha

Hey Mr. Nazi

Ich muss da nen Wörtchen mit dir reden, bitte hör mir zu

Sieh mich an, was siehst du in mir?

Nur einen kleinen Ausländer, der so riecht wie ein Tier?

Ein dummer Schlitzauge, ein scheiß Reisfresser

Den man im besten Falle gleich einäschert

Bitte sags mir, denn ich will wissen was du denkst

Denn es ist mein Wille, dass du jetzt das Richtige erkennst

Ich stink nämlich gar nich, ich dusch mich jeden Tag

Man würd ich stinken, dann blitz ich doch bei den Mädels ab

Und Nein, ich will auch nicht nur Reis fressen

Manchmal will ich auch ne Bockwurst ins Senfglas reinstecken

Und dann genüsslich verschlingen, das hättste nicht gedacht

Siehste, jetzt hab ich in deine Welt etwas Licht gebracht

Ich greif dich nicht an, ich reich dir die Hand

Bitte hör auf meine Worte, saug sie ein wie ein Schwamm

Denn es ist leicht zu sagen, Nazis raus

Doch jeder Mensch kann sich verändern, ich glaub Nazis auch

Und ich sag

[Refrain]

Hey Mr. Nazi komm auf meine Party

Ich stell dir meine Freunde vor

Das hier sind Juspé und Kati, Thorsten und der Fatih

Wir haben den selben Humor

Und wir sagen hey Mr. Nazi komm auf meine Party ich zeig dir meine Kultur

Das hier sind Sushi und Technik, Mangas und Origami

Ich kenn das seit meiner Geburt

Kennst du das Gefühl, wenn ein Mensch dich verletzt

Weil ein Mensch dich verlässt, obwohl du kämpfst bis zuletzt

Oder das Gefühl wenn dir was gutes passiert und für kurze Zeit die Sorgen um die Zukunft verlierst

Oder wenn du verliebt bist, ich brauch es nichtmal selbst zu sagen

Das Gefühl als könntest du die ganze Welt umarmen

Ich weiß du kennst es auch, wir sind nicht komplett verschieden

Doch du trittst auf den Mann ein und lässt ihn liegen

Und das Schlimmste daran, er war Familienvater und nun herrscht bei ihm zu Hause ein Riesen Drama

Die Tochter verstehts nicht und fragt sich jeden Tag:

"Mama sag mir doch, warum ist denn der Papa nicht mehr da?"

"Er hat aber versprochen er kauft mir neue Schwimmflügel und das wir Picknick machen Gehen bei den Windmühlen."

Später wird sie verstehen was das alles heißt, doch jetzt steht sie nur da und sieht die Mama weint

[Refrain]

Es ist nicht leicht sich mit Einsamkeit herumzuschlagen
Jeder Mensch will doch Gleichgesinnte um sich haben
Und eh du dich versiehst bist du I'm Freundeskreis, indem man mit dem Finger auf
andershäutige Leute zeigt
Und das kann schnell gehen, das ist keine Lüge
Die meisten Menschen haben irgendwo rassistische Züge
Ich seh rassistische Lehrer und rassistische Hauptmänner und rassistische Deutsche und
rassistische Ausländer

Und früher war ich selbst ein kleiner Rassist und sowas kommt von mir, seht ihr
Jetzt wie einfach das ist?
Ja ich weiß, ihr hört mich immer sagen Japse hin und her, doch im Grunde ist mir das scheißegal
Ich bin nur n' netter Kerl

Und jetzt verleih ich diesen Worten meine Kraft und so leg ich heute alle meine Vorurteile ab
Du sagst ich seh das mit den Vorurteilen viel zu krass, doch genau die sind der Ursprung für
Krieg und Hass

Und wir sagen

Blumio, "Gute Ausländer" (2015)

[Intro: Blumio & Eko Fresh]

Boah Blumio, alter, ich bin letztens schon wieder nicht in die Disko reingekommen
Bruder, das kenn ich, ich war letztens auch im Straßenverkehr, da meinte einer zu mir:
"Mach mal die Augen auf du Schlitzauge"
Aber weißte was? Ich hab 'ne Idee: Wir machen jetzt richtig auf Integration, alter!
Ja man, so richtig integrieren! Richtig gute Ausländer, Bruder!

Richtig anpassen, okay?

Yihaa!

[Part 1: Eko Fresh]

Jawoll!

Nicht mehr Ekrem Bora, ich heiße Eberhard Brenner

Auf jeder Fete der Renner, ist meine Theke im Keller

Hol mir 'ne Genehmigung

Dafür, dass ich mir 'ne Genehmigung holen kann, mein Sohnemann

Ich pass mich so sehr an, ob mein Schäferhund weiß

Dass ich mir mit Leberwurst meine Zähne putz'

Ordnung muss sein, abends gibt's nur Butterbrote

Bewahre meine Unterhose in der Tupperdose

Was soll denn der Krach da, obwohl es schon acht war?

Achja typisch, der Nachbar

Einen Beschwerdebrief verfasse ich dem Unglücksraben

Und sag ihm auch, es würd' ein Ast in mein Grundstück ragen

Liebe meine Hecke, sie ist harzig und weich

Und im Garten der Teich, er ist staatlich geeicht

Mein Hund sitzt da und ich da

Ich bin so angepasst, ich bin unsichtbar

[Hook: **Eko Fresh** & Blumio]

Hi Leute, ich mach's wie ihr

Ich will, dass ihr mich akzeptiert

Guck mich an, ich bin ein guter Ausländer

Guter Ausländer, **guter Ausländer**, guter Ausländer!

Jo Leute, ich bin wie ihr

Ich bin voll geil integriert

Guck mich an, ich bin ein guter Ausländer
Guter Ausländer, guter Ausländer, **guter Ausländer!**

[Part 2: Blumio]

Ey yo, schwarz rot geil, Schland for life!
Sach bloß, wat los? Schwanz voll steif
Wat Blumio? Ich heiß Andi Rakete
Kein Asiate, ich bin assi, verstehste?
Weg da, weg da, hier kommt mein Vectra
Geb Gas, (brumm brumm), überfall dein Kettcar
Jeden Sommer hänge ich am Ballermann ab
Und spritz' deine Uschi mit meinem Ballermann ab
Wie's mir geht? Muss ne? Allet jut!
Ich geh zur Trinkhalle, muss dahin laufen tun
Da ist die Petra, dat süße Tülpchen
Die werde ich mir bald mal überstülpen
Schaschlik, Arschfick, steigert meinen Puls
Prost ihr Säcke! Schulz!
Scooter, Titten, Marlboro
Wir schreien: Fußball, ficken, Alokohol!

[Hook: Eko Fresh & Blumio]

[Part 3: Blumio]

Ich mache Party im Deutschland-Trikot
Mach, dat du wegkommst, du reudiger Sohn
Ich schmeiß 'ne Runde, Jungs seid ihr mit mir?
Da sagt einer: "Wat will 'n der Tourist hier?"

[Part 4: Eko Fresh]

Guten Tag, ich bin eigentlich auf Wohnungssuche

Und ich wollte einfach rein in die gute Stube

Bitte ignorieren sie den türkischen Schnäuzer

Ich krieg die Wohnung nicht? Ich bin wirklich ein Deutscher!

[Bridge: Blumio & **Eko Fresh**]

Man, ich hab mich so angestrengt

Eko, ich hab mich benommen wie ein anderer Mensch

Ey yo Blum, wir müssen uns nicht verstellen, nein

Sondern im Grunde wir selbst sein

Du hast recht, da war wohl jemand zu stur

Wir nehmen uns das beste jetzt aus jeder Kultur

Einfach Mensch sein, davor haben viele Leute Angst

Ich bin guter Ausländer, ich liebe Deutschland!

Hi Leute, ich bin wie ich bin, das find' ich nicht schlimm

Schau mich an, ich bin ein guter Ausländer

Guter Ausländer, guter Ausländer, guter Ausländer!

Hi Leute, ich bleibe ich selbst und schaff' mir meine eigene Welt

Guck mich an ich bin ein guter Ausländer

Guter Ausländer, **guter Ausländer**, guter Ausländer!

Eko Fresh, "Nur für dich" (2016)

Ich hab dein Liebesbrief bekommen

Leider war deine Unterschrift nicht drunter

Frauke - das macht mich traurig

Du weißt doch ich brauch dich

[Verse 1]

Amor gab wohl einen Schießbefehl
Nur die Liebe zählt, es ist nie zu spät
Es heißt doch nix, dass du 8 Jahre älter bist
Bei so 'ner liberalen Weltansicht

Nein, mich hat's erwischt, dein leichter Silber-Blick
Ich will heiraten und Kids, nicht nur einen wilden Fick
Ich weiß du bist ne Chick, die meinen Sohn recht erzieht
Und dass deine Mumu nach Rosenblättern riecht

Frauke die Granate, sie raubte mir den Atem
Wenns sein muss würd ich auf dich 1000 Jahre warten
Ich glaub ich krieg ein' harten Anfall von Herzenskummer
Ich wäre gern ein Zwerg, der in deinem [?] schlummert

Wir spazieren, im Mondschein in Dresden
Dannach wirst du Svenni los sein auf jedsten
Die Lügenpresse will uns auseinander bringen
Ich hab meine Box dir gewidmet Amina koyim

[Hook]

Jedes Flüchtlingsheim
Reiß ich für dich ein
Jeder Asylant wird am Bart verbrannt
Frauke nur für dich

Jeder Reisebus
Wird vom Heim bespuckt

Jedes Zugabteil ist jetzt kopftuchfrei

Frauke - nur für dich

[Verse 2]

Ich weiß, du bist 'ne gelernte Akademikerin

Und jetzt schämt sich dein Prinz, weil ich dämlicher bin

Doch ich nehm das so hin und werd ab heute studier'n

Denn ich will dich nicht vor deinen schlaunen Freunden blamieren

Besuch mich in Köln, ja mein Schatz

Schreib mir Whatsapp und ich hole dich vom Bahnhof ab

Baby - geil, Petry - Heil, ich bin in sie verliebt

Sie ist Chemikerin und deshalb stimmt die Chemie

Ich würd dir gern die Füße massieren

Frauke, zeig mir deinen Hamster und ich bürste das Tier

Stell dir vor, unser Kind, halb deutsch, halb sächsisch

Und geht in Kalk zur Schule - Wär das nicht fantastisch?

Weißt du was ich will? Einfach mal so chillen

Ich versprech dir auch, ich hab wirklich keinerlei Bazillen

Denk nicht, dass ich so ein Kanake bin

Hab dir meine Box gewidmet Amina koyim

[Hook]

Jedes Flüchtlingsheim

Reiß ich für dich ein

Jeder Asylant wird am Bart verbrannt

Frauke nur für dich

Jeder Reisebus
Wird vom Heim bespuckt
Jedes Zugabteil ist jetzt kopftuchfrei
Frauke - nur für dich

Frauke Petry
Ruf mich doch mal an
Und probier Kanakenfleisch

Ja, das war meine Antwort für dich Baby
Ich hoff sie hat dir gefallen
Denn es ist mein Köln, jetzt weißt du bescheid
Klingel mal durch

Ich bin einfach verknallt in dich
Ich liebe deine Art
Deine burschikose Art

Du bist so redegewandt
Du hast mich beeindruckt
Deshalb musst' ich diesen Song machen
Ich brauch dich

[Hook]
Jedes Flüchtlingsheim
Reiß ich für dich ein
Jeder Asylant wird am Bart verbrannt
Frauke nur für dich

Jeder Reisebus
Wird vom Heim bespuckt
Jedes Zugabteil ist jetzt kopftuchfrei
Frauke - nur für dich

Eko Fresh, "Domplatten Massaker," (2016)

[Verse 1]

Dieser Verse geht an die Täter von Silvester
Stellt euch mal vor, es geht um eure Schwester
Hat euch etwa eure Mutter so erzogen?
Unter Einfluss von Drogen, Alter, unterstes Niveau
Ihr liegt falsch, wenn ihr denkt, es lässt uns völlig kalt
Ich bin 'n Domstadt-Jung, Viertel Köln-Kalk
Kommt noch mal her und liefert euch am Dom 'nen Kampf
Wir sind grade Jungs und ziehen euch die Ohren lang
Ihr Unehrenhaften, Hauptbahnhof-Fummler
Zieht den Ruf von allen Ausländern runter
Allein dafür müsstet ihr schon Schellen kriegen
Abgeschoben werden und bis dahin in 'ner Zelle liegen
Flüchtlingsfamilien, die sich um ihre Obdach sorgen
Werden mit euch Bastarden jetzt in einen Topf geworfen
Versucht den Scheiß in euren Heimatgebieten
Wir lassen uns so eine Scheiße nich' bieten, Kölle alaaf

[Hook]

Eine Armlänge Abstand, wir sind alle da
Heute kriegt ihr euer Domplatten-Massaker

Ihr kriegt uns nich' auseinander, Kölle alaaf
Wir lieben das Leben und feiern unser Karneval
Es is' unser Bahnhofsviertel, alles klar?
Heute kriegt ihr euer Domplatten-Massaker
Das geht raus an Sigmar und die Angela
Mer stonn zosamme, viva Colonia

[Verse 2]

Das hier geht an meine deutschen Brüder und Schwestern
Bitte glaubt nich' allen, die über uns lästern
In der Presse gibt es viele Lügner und Schwätzer
Lasst uns nich' zerstör'n, was wir mühsam erweckt hab'n
Ein Miteinander und wir sollten uns die Hand
Geben, denn auch wir sind stolz auf dieses Land
Die meisten Ausländer sind gute Menschen und sie sind für euch da
Der Junge, der diesen Beat gebaut hat, is' ein Deutscher
Und jeder, der bei Merkel nach 'nem Ende schreit
Darf nich' vergessen, dass ein Rechter sich die Hände reibt
Wegen dem, was in diesem Land geschieht
Schlägt die AfD aus eurer Angst Profit
Lasst uns zusammenhalten - ich mache mir nur Sorgen
Uns're Bürgermeisterin ist deshalb abgestochen worden
Wir sind uns alle einig, dass man sowas nich' braucht in Köln
Und uns're Frau'n in Ruh' über die Domplatte laufen könn'n

[Hook]

Eine Armlänge Abstand, wir sind alle da
Heute kriegt ihr euer Domplatten-Massaker
Ihr kriegt uns nich' auseinander, Kölle alaaf

Wir lieben das Leben und feiern unser Karneval
Es is' unser Bahnhofsviertel, alles klar?
Heute kriegt ihr euer Domplatten-Massaker
Das geht raus an Sigmar und die Angela
Mer stonn zosamme, viva Colonia

[Verse 3]

Das hier geht raus an meine Nordafrikaner
Ich weiß, auch für euch is' sowas nich' tragbar
Brüder und Schwestern, ich weiß, das tut weh
Wenn sowas wie "Maghreb-Täter" in den Zeitungen steht
Auf einmal kriegt ihr einen Spitznamen verpasst
Man bezeichnet euch als "Nafri," wer kriegt denn da kein' Hass?
Anständige Bürger werden über einen Kamm geschert
Auf einmal seid ihr der Sündenbock und keiner kann sich wehr'n
Die Helfenden werden abgespeist als Gutmenschen
Hoffe, ich kann euch mit diesem Track etwas Mut spenden
Taunusstraße, wo ich herkomm, Klein-Marrakesch
Haltet durch, haltet aneinander fest
Mer stonn zosamme und nich' jeder unter sich
Kölle war schon immer bunt gemischt
Auch wenn der Nazihass sinkt, überall Razzien sind
Werdet ihr von uns hör'n, wie echte Nachbarschaft klingt

[Hook]

Eine Armlänge Abstand, wir sind alle da
Heute kriegt ihr euer Domplatten-Massaker
Ihr kriegt uns nich' auseinander, Kölle alaaf
Wir lieben das Leben und feiern unser Karneval

Es is' unser Bahnhofsviertel, alles klar?
Heute kriegt ihr euer Domplatten-Massaker
Das geht raus an Sigmar und die Angela
Mer stonn zosamme, viva Colonia

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