

## 4 The Dynamics of Queer Politics and Gentrification in Berlin<sup>1</sup>

Zülfukar Çetin

“An encounter between Muslims and homosexuals in a mosque was cancelled,” begins a report in the *taz*<sup>2</sup>, in order to scandalize the supposedly failed attempt at a meeting between LGBTI\* representatives and spokespersons of the Berlin Şehitlik mosque (cf. Wierth 2014).

Beyond such scandalizing reports, this chapter takes a retrospective look at homonationalist tendencies and their accompanying processes of transformation in urban district politics in German cities, taking Berlin as a representative case. Along the lines of the concept of a “dominant culture” developed by Birgit Rommelspacher (1945–2015) (cf. Rommelspacher 1995), I will attempt to examine and explicate the concept of homonationalism, even as no claim to the perfect translatability of either concept will be made.

Rommelspacher begins from the premise of the co-constitution and reciprocal interplay of racist, heterosexist and class-specific relations of dominance in society. According to her, social analysis should look at “different dimensions of power” as structured “in terms of an interwoven network of dominance” (Rommelspacher 2006, 3). Racism, heteronormativity, and class dominance mutually influence and condition one another and are strengthened through the practice of exclusions and inclusions in social spaces, such as living and work spaces or

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2 *taz*, an abbreviation of the name *Die Tageszeitung*, is a left-wing German daily newspaper.

the institutions of the state and the city council. Even in so-called civil society, which plays a part in social policy and thereby necessarily influences it, one is confronted by the interwoven nature of the aforementioned dimensions of power.

In her longtime work in social analysis, Rommelspacher looks into the causes of social inequalities. In order to illuminate the effects of the dominant culture, she questions the West's universalizing claim to equality and deconstructs it using the example of white feminist emancipation discourse. This discourse assumes the oppression of non-white women in a (constructed) Muslim world, while simultaneously imagining white European women as their contrastive opposite. In this discourse, the West is ascribed a "superior, civilized status," while the "rest of the world" is declared to be "uncivilized," "backward" (cf. Attia 2009; Hall 1992; Erdem 2009; Prasad 2014; Shooman 2014). Parallel to white feminist emancipation discourse on the theme of "oppressed migrant Muslim women," a discourse about "gay Muslims persecuted and discriminated against by their own communities" continues to be cultivated. In both cases, what is at stake is the constructed invisibility of 'Muslim' migrant women and gay 'Muslims'.

What is made invisible in this discourse of emancipation are the contradictions of white feminism, which, although it speaks out against the oppression of Muslim women (or those marked as Muslim), not only reproduces racism against Muslim men, but also against women, who, on the basis of their (alleged) religious and cultural belonging, are turned into passive, non-agential, child-bearing figures, waiting to be liberated. A further contradiction of white feminism is manifested in the elision (in the frame of this discourse) of white, educated, and professional women's experiences of sexism as well, who have to endure them in their intimate relationships, working conditions, and other societal areas. In its discourse of emancipation, white feminism also fails to recognize the racism experienced by those Muslim women constructed as non-emancipated. According to Rommelspacher, the concept of emancipation points towards further incongruities in connection with its political claim:

"On the one hand, it overturns the hierarchization between women, and on the other, through the blending out of other relations of power, such as [...] the ethnic hierarchy, it advances an illusion of emancipation, which avoids the question of redistribution [of wealth] in gender relations. [...] For women who belong to the majority society, not only does it secure their own advancement, but it also relieves the pressure from their own gender relations, in that those conflicts are outsourced to a certain extent" (Rommelspacher 2009a, 4).

It is in this context that Rommelspacher demonstrates the enmeshment of different relations of dominance in societal structures which are postcolonial, and defined by patriarchy, class dominance, and racism. In these relations of dominance, as will be illustrated in the following text, civil society, the state, scientific inquiry, and the media are interlocked, in the sense of forming alliances for the continuation and enforcement of an emancipation mandate. In order to fulfill this mandate, migration, gender, and sexual politics that are shaped by racism are put into practice.

Critical feminist scholars such as Nivedita Prasad and Esra Erdem take up these discourses in relation to the political situation of those women who are marked as Muslims or migrants, and they come to the conclusion that the white feminist emancipation discourse in Germany is not only cultivated through the media, but also simultaneously influences social work, as well as social policy and research. They demonstrate in their scholarly work the alarming (immigration-related) legal consequences that the white feminist emancipation discourse leads to (cf. Prasad 2014; Erdem 2009). Rommelspacher also establishes in her research that, since the “headscarf ruling” in 2003<sup>3</sup>, the debate about the emancipation of Muslim women has escalated and become even more fundamental. Issues such as “forced marriages, honor killings and male violence” ever more frequently provided occasion to ask the question, whether Islam – rendered in the singular as “*der Islam*,” and understood as one monolithic entity – was at all reconcilable with Western democracies, and it became – and continues to be – ever more pressing to warn people about the influence of Islamists on Western societies (Rommelspacher 2009a, 1). For example, in 2007, the Residence Act (*Aufenthaltsgesetz*), among other regulations, was tightened, and migrants from so-called third countries moving to Germany as a result of their marriage to a German citizen now had to prove their knowledge of the German language before entering the country. In the frame of this change of law, the minimum age for so-called marriage migrants

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- 3 Editor’s Note (CS): In 2003, the Federal Supreme Court of Germany declared unconstitutional Baden-Württemberg state legislation prohibiting women wearing headscarves to work as teachers in public schools (while, for instance, Christian nuns in their traditional habits were allowed). Following this ruling, the city of Berlin passed a law, still in force today, banning all people exhibiting any sign of religious affiliation (like headscarves, kippahs or little crosses) from working in “exposed positions” of the public service. For a full account and trustworthy analysis of these legal controversies about headscarves in Germany, see Beverley Weber’s *Violence and Gender in the New Europe: Islam in German Culture* (2013).

(*Heiratsmigrant\_innen*) was increased in order to prevent alleged forced marriages (cf. Prasad 2014, 97). This tightening of the law, moreover, corresponded to the demands of the “hegemonic-feminist representatives of civil society” (ibid., 97). In particular, the study *Zwangsverheiratung in Deutschland – Anzahl und Analyse von Beratungsfällen*<sup>4</sup>, which was carried out in 2007 by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in collaboration with the white-feminist organization *Terre des Femmes* (ibid., 97), was mobilized to justify the new regulations and fostered culturalist, racist and gender-specific discussions about integration, civilization or modernity in Germany. In the course of these discussions, white feminism was transformed into a hegemonic feminism, which held German society, on the basis of its (post-)Christian-Western values, to be enlightened, advanced and humanitarian, and imagined it as threatened by Muslim migrants (cf. Çetin and Taş 2014; Prasad 2014).

Parallel to the white-feminist emancipation discourse, which, in spite of its contradictions, asserts a universalist claim to representation for all women and thereby elevates the “liberal-democratic” values of white European societies to the level of a norm, since at least the 2000s, an anti-Muslim and racist homophobia-discourse has also developed alongside it (cf. Çetin 2012, 73).

In my study, *Homophobie und Islamophobie* (cf. ibid.), using biographical-narrative interviews with binational gay couples, I showed how the entanglement of racism and heteronormativity could be demonstrated, bearing in mind the preponderant anti-discrimination politics in Europe. In order to analyze this multi-dimensional discrimination, interviewees were chosen whose multiple belongings, for example *gay*, *Muslim*, *migrant*, and *unemployed*, furthered these forms of discrimination. One of the central problematics of the study was directed towards debates about situations and contexts within which heteronormativity, racism, and class dominance overlap, defining the lives and circumstances of the interviewees to a considerable degree. A conclusion reached by the study was that the interviewees experienced discrimination on the basis of racist ascriptions, imputed religious belonging, institutional racism, homophobia, as well as social status (cf. ibid.). The study was able to testify to the fact that discrimination is socially and historically conditioned and very strongly influences the contemporary situation of a society such as Germany, one which migration can no longer be ignored. My study also illus-

4 English: *Forced Marriage in Germany – The Quantity and Analysis of Consultations*

trated the forms of legitimization of, first and foremost, racist discrimination, as well as the inadequacy of an anti-discrimination politics in combatting institutional and everyday forms of (multi-dimensional) discrimination in Germany. With those anti-discrimination policies of the 2000s, “the rights of (heterosexual) women and (male) homosexuals” were now jointly negotiated over and against non-Christian and non-Western sections of the population (Yilmaz-Günay 2014, 8). The media, political, and academic discussions about “women’s and gay rights” were aimed at securing one’s own access to social privileges, and at excluding certain groups regarded as contrastive to “Christian-Western” norms from symbolic and material resources (cf. Rommelspacher 2009b, 25).

A fundamental problem in the emancipation debate, Rommelspacher observes, is

“that even the demand for human rights can serve the legitimization of relations of dominance – namely, in those cases, where a specific form of their application, above and beyond all societal structures and social contexts, is declared binding for all. In contrast to such an understanding, it seems more sensible to more closely observe the possibilities and limits of freedom and self-determination in light of social and cultural contexts, as well as to see the chances and risks which, for example, a strategy of gender difference, as well as one of gender equality, holds within it” (Rommelspacher 2009a, 15).

Considering the universalist reach of human rights discourse, and especially this white-feminist emancipation discourse, it seems at this stage appropriate to understand homonationalism as an expression of a discursive hegemony, or for that matter the dominant culture, and to subject it to critique, insofar as it is shown in this chapter to be parallel with white-feminist emancipation and equality discourses.

## **Homonationalism as a New Migration and Sexual Politics**

The concept of homonationalism was established by Jasbir Puar in 2007, who in doing so related it to Lisa Duggan’s term ‘homonormativity’ (cf. Duggan 2002). In her book *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, Puar problematizes a “new homonormative” sexual politics in the USA, which she describes as homonormative nationalism, or homonationalism. According to Puar,

homonationalism serves and reproduces heteronormative, nationalist, racist and class relations (cf. Puar 2007) and is based on the increasing acceptance of gays and lesbians in Western states as an expression of ‘civilizational superiority,’ particularly vis-à-vis Muslim societies, which, in contrast to the West, are seen as less civilized (cf. Dietze et al. 2012, 11).

Puar mentions the support given by white gay and lesbian organizations to the American War on Terror as a prime example of homonationalism; organizations which, on the one hand, see their rights as homosexuals threatened by putatively homophobic Muslim societies, and which, on the other, argue in support of the emancipation of Iraqi homosexuals (cf. Puar 2013; Böhmelt et al. 2012).

This concept of American homonationalism and the analysis of its mode of operation have been successfully carried over and applied to the German context by Jin Haritaworn and others, who at the latest by the early 2000s were problematizing the character of the prevailing debate around homophobia as culturalizing, racializing, ethnicizing, and classing (cf. Haritaworn 2009). In an essay co-written with other feminists, Haritaworn discusses this ‘new’ European sexual politics:

“Ethnicizing gender and sexuality discourses now play a central role in the New Europe’s ‘security and value debate’. The constructs of ‘Muslim sexism’ and ‘Muslim homophobia’ legitimate repressive anti-terrorism measures, the radical reversal of hard-won citizenship, immigration, and residency rights and the tearing down of social rights and civil freedoms. Alongside terrorism, gender and sexuality are the new principles upon which Islamophobic struggles are championed both at home and abroad” (Haritaworn et al. 2007, 8).

## German Homonationalism and its Patterns of Argumentation

The following section will address the history of the origins of German homonationalism, against the backdrop of the quoted explanatory approach. Subsequently, the concurrence of racist and class-determined processes of transformation and gentrification will be highlighted on the basis of concrete examples from urban district politics in Berlin. The arguments in this chapter are based primarily on the observations, analyses, and activities of activists, scholars, writers, and groups who find themselves in these processes and simultaneously critically intervene in them through their work (cf. Çetin 2015b, 35).

## German Homonationalism and Gentrification

Even though the discussion about homonationalism in Germany has only been taking place since the end of the 2000s, one can take an earlier genesis of this phenomenon as a starting point. With the AIDS crisis in the 1980s, the gay 'community' in West Germany also found itself to be the focus of 'preventive' health policies of the state and non-governmental organizations (cf. Bänziger 2014, 180f). The policies were designed to be both repressive as well as providing for liberal preventative strategies against the spread of AIDS. Through the crisis, conservative circles brought the promiscuity of gay men, among other things, to the fore, and wanted to force upon them a sexually abstinent lifestyle. In this way, they furthered moralizing and marginalizing processes in Germany, as a result of which, and in opposition to which, AIDS-Hilfe (English: AIDS-help) groups were founded and anti-AIDS campaigns launched. Through the anti-AIDS campaigns of individual organizations and AIDS-Hilfe groups, as well as through state-sponsored prevention strategies, the 1990s saw the normalization of AIDS (cf. *ibid.*). In the course of anti-AIDS politics in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the possibility of 'gay marriage' began to be discussed with increased fervor in Germany. Despite these being controversial positions, the Greens, who conceived of their 'gay and lesbian politics' as a civil rights issue, were able to raise the topic of 'gay marriage' in the Bundestag in 1987 (cf. Raab 2009, 235f). The Greens' discussions and struggles for gay marriage lasted until the end of the 1990s. These political efforts strengthened the establishment and institutionalization of, above all, a gay identity politics, and consequently the civil partnership law (*Lebenspartnerschaftsgesetz*) for same sex couples was passed in 2001 (cf. Voß 2013c). During its passing, the civil partnership law was explicitly criticized for its patriarchal and heteronormative character, in particular by representatives of the group *Lesbenring e. V.* (*ibid.*).

## The Institutionalization of Gay Identity Politics and the Contemporary State of Homonationalism

A precise chronology of German homonationalism would go beyond the scope of this contribution. Nevertheless, it is important here to be reminded of a few socio-political facts, which bring to the fore the entanglements of homonationalism with migration and citizenship politics, with urban district politics, as well as with journalistic and academic information politics.

In the context of a post-9/11 integration discourse in Germany and the attack<sup>5</sup> by a (non-'Muslim'!) animal rights activist on the gay Dutch right-wing populist Pim Fortuyn (1948–2002), who mobilized the issue of 'homophobia and Muslims' for his election campaign, Muslims – or those marked or perceived as 'Muslims' – at least those in Western societies, began to be subjected to racialized ascriptions wound up with, among other things, sexual and security politics.

These and similar events were and are routinely declared by the media and in the political sphere as attacks on 'democratic coexistence' in Western societies. This occurs through the uninterrupted construction of oppositions between an 'Us' and a 'Them', whereby the lines of demarcation are drawn along the issues of democracy and integration. On the basis of the construction of a democratic, tolerant, civilized 'Us', we hear repeated the necessity of protecting the 'oppressed, unemancipated and veiled Muslim' woman, on the one hand, and the 'Muslim' gay man, on the other. The forced visibilization of the veiled woman and the hidden gay man has consummated itself in an alliance of state, scientific inquiry, civil society, and the media of the dominant society, which, through studies, news reports, campaigns, and social work, manifests a 'clash of cultures' in the name of the 'liberal-democratic constitutional order' of Germany. It is in this tenor that the so-called 'Muslim test' was introduced in 2005/2006 by the government of the German state of Baden-Württemberg. The test required people in possession of a passport from 'Muslim countries' looking to naturalize in Germany to undergo a moral exam and answer questions related to terrorism, antisemitism, their religious outlooks, their ideas about femininity and masculinity, as well as about the acceptance of homosexuals (Migration & Bevölkerung 2006). In connection with these events, the young 'Muslim' man – in the context of 'civilization' – was transformed into the embodiment of an Islamist terrorist, an oppressor of women, and a violent homophobe, and simultaneously classified as a threat to the West and its democratic societal structures (cf. GLADT 2009).

Until today, a diversity of 'Others' are produced in media, political and schol-

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- 5 During the course of the investigation into Fortuyn's murder, the "ethnic" and religious affiliations of the perpetrator were speculated about for months on end. In the mainstream, the attack was assumed to have been radical-Islamist in nature, because Fortuyn, living as an "openly" gay man, regularly made Muslims and their relation to homosexuality a topic of his political career. Even though the perpetrator was identified as an apolitical and non-Muslim (white) animal rights activist six months after the attack, until today, Fortuyn's murder is thematized in connection with the murder of the filmmaker Theo van Gogh (1957–2004), and both cases are associated with the supposed barbarism, misanthropy and homophobia of Muslims.



arly discourses; ‘Others’ who thereby become the objects of studies, education projects or news reports, whereby their exclusion from education and work, as well as inner-city spaces, is supposed to be justified. Since 2001, the image of the ‘homophobic, misogynist, antisemitic, violence-prone, integration-averse’ migrant has been ‘scientifically’ researched through a series of studies, and cultivated in the media. Alongside the aforementioned study on the number of forced marriages in Germany, innumerable other studies – partly in parallel and partly in succession – have been carried out in a similar fashion by the Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany (LSVD), by the Berlin homophobic assault helpline MANEO, and by the Lower Saxony Criminological Research Institute (cf. Çetin & Taş 2014). These and other, comparable studies, which deal predominantly with the alleged homophobic attitudes, actions, and world-views of ‘migrants’, exhibit grave methodological and ethical shortcomings (cf. *ibid.*), bespeak culturalizing and biologizing forms of racism, which, among other things, propagate a new (homo-)sexual politics in the name of the ‘new German nation’. While, at the same time, people living in Germany are polarized as gay-friendly, on the one hand, and homophobic, on the other, discussions about one’s own homophobia cease to be had. In connection with this anti-Muslim homophobia debate, a Berlin-based queer of color activist group, following Puar, defined the term homonationalism for the German context,

“in order to describe this (not always successful) attempt at assimilation, and the accompanying invention of a ‘gay-friendly’ nation. This occurs at the expense of those whose belonging, in the context of war, the tightening of borders, and increasing criminalization, becomes ever more precarious: old and new immigrants, as well as their children and grandchildren – most of all those who are identified as Muslim – Roma and Sinti, as well as other people of color. It also includes those, whose real or fantasized sexual and gender identities (too many children, too little money, not monogamous, married too early, too patriarchal, too oppressed) appear increasingly not to fit into the national norm. Queer, trans\* and homosexual or bisexual people, who cannot pass as respectable citizens on the basis of their class-affiliation, whiteness, or their normative masculinity or femininity also fall by the wayside” (SUSPECT 2010a).

In the following section, a few concrete examples will illustrate the homonationalist tendencies which emanate from some white German gay ‘activists’, who are well-known in the gay mainstream. They regard Islam as a religion, which ostensibly promotes violence, murder, and discrimination towards lesbians, gays and

(heterosexual) women, and they see the 'civilized' West as threatened by the presence of people who feel themselves attached to Islam.

### Example I: Daniel Krause

Daniel Krause (born 1980), who completed his teaching degree and a Ph.D. in Sociology<sup>6</sup> in Münster, thematizes in his publications the alleged incompatibility of Western and Muslim societies in reference to the relation between homosexuals and those people, who according to him, belong to Islam. In his publications and talks he defines the West as, above all, an alliance that is neither Muslim nor Islamic: the United States of America, Israel, and Europe are the places in the Western world whose civilizational and liberal values are said to be endangered by the terroristic homophobia of (almost all) *Islamic* countries.

Alongside this right-wing populist point-of-view, Krause depicts himself, in a scandalizing, polarizing, and hierarchizing manner, as a left-wing gay victim who

"[can] no longer be silent. As hundreds of Salafists were congregating, he spontaneously held a counter-speech. Three minutes against violence, misogyny, and homophobia. Three minutes, during which he put his life on the line. Islamists and left-radicals insulted him as a 'Nazi' and began hounding him. For his own protection, [he] had to be released from his position. His rousing book exposed the contradictoriness of left-liberal Germany, which abdicates its most hard-fought achievements to its worst enemies" (Krause 2013).

Thus reads the blurb of his book *A Leftist Against Islamism: A Gay Teacher Shows Courage*. In this text, women and gays are portrayed as threatened by Salafists or Salafis<sup>7</sup>, who, at the same time, are used as a symbol for terrorists.

According to data by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, approximately 7,500 Salafists or Salafis live in Germany today (cf. BfV 2015). Krause's 2013 book appeared a year after the public debate, shaped by anti-Muslim sentiment, about Salafism and its implications for

6 Meanwhile Krause's doctorate has since been withdrawn by the University of Münster.

7 "In recent years, the descriptor 'Salafist' has established itself, whereas into the 2000s the term 'Salafi' was dominant. The suffix -ist produces associations to other negatively loaded terms, such as 'terrorist', 'extremist' and 'Islamist'" (Friedrich and Schultes 2012, 1).

Germany's security policies. The catalyst for this debate was the distribution of free copies of the Quran in large German cities. At the time, in 2012, this debate contributed to the de-thematizing of the self-exposed NSU [National Socialist Underground] terror group, in the course of whose crimes nine non-majority-German men and one majority-German policeman were murdered (cf. Güleç 2015). With his book, Krause intends to give his reader the impression that a minority, who he generalizes as Islamist terrorists, existentially threatens another (constructed) minority. In his book, he presents himself as the mouthpiece for women and men, young people and old, homo- and heterosexuals, who have supposedly evinced their solidarity with him (Krause 2013, 8). In the space of a few lines, he classifies this constructed (not simply by him) Islamism as the third largest totalitarian movement after Nationalism Socialism and Communism. His book profits from right-wing populist and anti-Muslim propaganda, while he, for his part, attended demonstrations against Muslims organized by the extreme-right.

In his next published book from 2014, he sharpens his position even further. He titled it *Allah's Unloved Children: Lesbian and Gays in Islam* (*Allahs ungeliebte Kinder – Lesben und Schwule im Islam*). In this publication, Krause becomes more explicit and does not hold back from using the designation 'Allah' polemically, as if Allah is supposed to only represent the God of Muslims (and is not simply the Arabic word for God). By presenting gays and lesbians as unloved children of the 'God of the Muslims', he once again constructs them in opposition to Muslims, whose attitudes towards homosexuality purportedly do not accord with that of the West's. The book's introduction puts it in the following way:

"Equality for lesbians and gays has developed into a characteristic of modern, Western societies: gay marriage, adoption rights, and anti-discrimination laws are increasingly a given here. In Western politics as well as in the Western media, lesbians and gays are muscling in at the very top. In contrast, in Muslim cultures, an opposing trend is identifiable. Not emancipation, but rather the discrimination, persecution, and murder of homosexuals is on the rise. Across the world, lesbians and gays find themselves in desperate straits as a result of life-threatening Islamization. Alongside Islamically-governed states, Muslim parallel-worlds in the midst of Western countries are also affected. Families commit religious 'honor killings' of their lesbian daughters. Islamic street gangs attack gays in broad daylight. Salafists threaten homosexuals with a worldwide 'Holocaust'" (Krause 2014, 9).

At this point, further commentary on these and similar lines that emanate from and are disseminated by Krause is rendered superfluous. What is relevant, however, is that he is not alone in his anti-Muslim position, in which he describes himself as a left-wing *Islamkritiker* (English: *critic of Islam*). Another well-known gay figure in the media, David Berger (born 1968), the erstwhile chief editor of the gay magazine *Männer*, did not simply express his solidarity with Krause, but also supported his public appearances, in which these right-wing populist ideas were propagated (cf. Queer.de 2014). Since then, Berger has insistently positioned himself “against Muslims, against all left-wingers, against ‘old-time gays activists with a veteran’s sentimentality (German: *Homo-Altbewegte in Veteranensentimentalität*),’ even against the friendliest critics, against the ‘compulsion to be faggy (German: *tuntig*)’ and the diversity-campaigns of the DAH, *Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe*, certainly against queer.de and blu, as well as against feminists and ‘gender-mania (German: *Gender-Wahn*)’” (Schulze 2014).

#### Example II: Jan Feddersen

Daniel Krause and David Berger represent an extreme form of homonationalism which constructs, on the one hand, a homophobic nation, and on the other, a gay-friendly one, presenting this construction as the truth via political, academic, and journalistic arguments. In this presentation, the term ‘nation’ is not necessarily used in the sense of a political community which exists within the territory of a particular state. It is much more about political demarcations between various (putatively) divided values and norms, which are supposedly irreconcilable with one another. According to this view, similarly to that expressed by the white-feminist emancipation discourse, societies whose cultural heritage is based in Christianity, the (colonialist) Enlightenment and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights belong to the ‘West’. These societies are not simply ascribed both humanitarianism and a respect for women, but also a self-evident acceptance for gay and trans\* people. In opposition to the West, it is not an ‘East’ that is spoken of, but rather an ‘Orient’, which symbolizes barbarism, misanthropy, misogyny, homophobia, and is simultaneously declared a hostile threat for the ‘West’ in different (international) political contexts.

Jan Feddersen (born 1957), a *taz* journalist who by his own account has been active in gay politics since the 1970s, can be named as a further

example of the representatives of homonationalism. His article, published in 2003, “What are you looking at? Are you gay?” begins with a claim (one that is represented time and again by the white gay community):

“A high percentage of the violence against gay people is carried out by people from the Islamic cultural sphere. The problem is tabooed, its thematization is politically incorrect. Instead, one asks: were those attacked too open with their sexual identity?” (Feddersen 2003)

Feddersen’s pattern of argumentation conforms to the operations of racism and the instrumentalization of homophobia towards the legitimization of his claims. The fact that the journalist counterposes gay people and the so-called Islamic ‘cultural sphere’ and declares them to be enemies shows, first and foremost, the polarizing character of his ordinary racism. Even the instrumentalization of homophobia, which putatively emanates from the Islamic ‘cultural sphere’, can be understood as an attempt by the writer to hierarchize two groups according to the frequency with which they experience violence and discrimination. Whereas (white) gays are presented as the victims of ‘Islamic’ violence, in the course of the article, they are also ascribed a (physical) inferiority in opposition to young Muslim men, who are imagined as hyper-masculine. According to Feddersen, there is more homophobia than racism in Germany, even as the latter is tabooed. The tabooization mentioned in the article is supposed to polemically substantiate the inferiority and victim-status of white gay men. Feddersen’s article is to be considered as a reproach to or sharp criticism of the non-Islamic (majority-)society, which does not care to protect the gay minority, afflicted by violence from *orientalized homophobes*: “The other passengers watched the appalling actions almost passively ... The three young men sat dazed in their seat, wordless, shocked, impotent even, because no one had helped them. They couldn’t even feel angry” (ibid.). Feddersen refers to data from Bastian Finke, director of MANEO, the Berlin-based violence counseling service for gay and bisexual men: “The public danger for gay men emanates to an extreme degree from young men of Turkish or, more generally, Islamic conditioning (German: *Prägung*)” (ibid.).

Feddersen’s reporting in this subject area is not limited to the article cited above. In a review of a publication by the Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany (LSVD), *Muslims Under the Rainbow*, he congratulates the editors because (their) volume

“breaks with the taboo. It is true and evident that the Western, capitalist world hardly persecutes gays and lesbians any longer. Even in the USA, the Supreme Court recently put an end to all state-level legislation which forbade ‘sodomite’ or ‘homosexual’ [acts], or indeed made them a punishable offense. All non-heterosexuals were exposed to lethal, or at least life-threatening repression, in those places where socialist totalitarianism ruled – or are today, harsher than before, where Islam sets the political agenda” (Feddersen 2004).

In the introduction to his review, Feddersen, as shown above, makes a distinction between the gay-friendly West and the hostile Rest (Muslims). He stands as an exemplary representative of an ‘enlightened’ Western gay man and speaks, on the one hand, to other Western gay men, who possibly don’t have access to a media platform. On the other, he addresses other Western people who in no way have a positive relation to either Islam or Muslims, and therefore, however, are supposedly ‘threatened’ by the latter. In this review, Feddersen carries his anti-Muslim rhetoric forward and accentuates his thesis, quoted above, through the assumption that the ‘conflicts’ staged in *Muslims Under the Rainbow* “find their continuation in the midst of the Western world – namely, in those districts in which Muslim-influenced immigrant groups shape everyday life in Christian-secular majority societies. That is to say, even in Germany, in its metropolises” (Feddersen 2004).

The cases presented thus far (Krause, Berger and Feddersen) can only exemplarily highlight a white gay journalistic homonationalism, whose legitimization, however, is to be found in a continuous interworking of the state, scientific inquiry, and civil society.

## Homonationalism through the State, Scientific Inquiry and Civil Society

In discourses around antisemitism, terrorism, societal violence, and the violation of women’s and LGBTI\* rights, Muslims and those marked as Muslims are constructed as the cause of these problems. In this discursive (anti-Muslim) racism, they are portrayed as being incompatible with ‘one’s own’ Christian-Western values and norms. Indeed, in these propagandistic anti-Muslim discourses, the ‘occidental’ contradiction is de-thematized through the suppression of colonial history and the invisibilization of post-colonial racist practices, such as those in refugee, border-regime, and migration policies. This contradiction reveals itself most of all in the perpetrator-victim-reversal and victimization in relation to

discriminatory acts, which, among other things, are constitutive of racism, homophobia, and class dominance.

The homonationalist interplay of scientific inquiry, civil society, and the state manifests itself in the (re-)production of anti-Muslim racism in the context of an incessant anti-Muslim homophobia discourse (cf. Çetin and Saadat-Lendle 2014). The claim that gay and bisexual men are said to be most severely threatened by young Muslim men has been legitimated by numerous studies, such as the MANEO-surveys between 2006 and 2008, the Simon study in 2007, or even the Pfeiffer study in 2011. Notwithstanding their methodological deficiency, the undertakers of these studies disseminated the results of these and other studies that were just as polemical as they were polarizing. This occurred at the expense of a group that was ascribed a migration background (German: *Migrationshintergrund*) and a Muslim religious belonging (for an analysis of these studies, see Çetin & Taş 2014; Çetin and Saadat-Lendle 2014).

### On the Visibility of Victims and Perpetrators

The aforementioned studies were carried out with public funds in cooperation with universities and gay and lesbian organizations. They aimed primarily to bring about a discussion about two supposedly conflicting groups, and to hierarchize the discrimination experienced by these two groups against each other. Whereas gays are presumed to be a minority that is most discriminated against, Muslims, whose religion supposedly forbids homosexuality, are imputed to belong to the heterosexual majority across-the-board. Along with heteronormativity, Muslims were credited with further misanthropic 'isms', such as sexism, antisemitism, and terrorism, as a consequence of which the West's 'hard-fought' and enlightened universal human rights and civilization is represented as threatened. As Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez points out,

“Racism and its variant, ethnicization, can only be thought in relation with nationalism or with new forms of the reproduction of a hegemonic “West” in the name of Europe or the “Western alliance”. The “West” and Western nation-states imagine their “national or transnational lines of belonging” in relation to a “parallel society,” which is imagined as “pre-modern, under-developed, and involved in particular ethnic and religious community-forming rituals and struggles”. It is in this context that a discourse about “ethnicized communities” is medially, politically and socially produced” (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2006).

Between 2006 and 2008 the gay anti-violence project MANEO carried out two surveys in Berlin on the subject of violence experienced by gay and bisexual men in Germany. The second survey was funded by the German lottery foundation (*Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie*) and conducted by academics at the Humboldt University, the Evangelische Hochschule Berlin (Protestant University of Applied Sciences Berlin), and the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin (MANEO 2009, 4). The study “is located within the [...] problematic of trivialization and would like to shine a light on those areas within which homophobic acts of violence are downplayed and not registered and perceived as such” (ibid., 10).

The questionnaire encompassed, among other things, questions “about experiences of violence [...] and risk assessments,” as well as about an incident which had impacted the respondents the most in the 12 months preceding the study.

The following is established about the perpetrators of homophobic violence (cf. ibid., 27): 86 percent of the perpetrators are male; 78 percent are young (18 to 35 years old); 40 percent have a *migration background*.

To ascertain a perpetrator profile, MANEO included the per se problematic ascription “migration background” as one of the possible answer-categories. In this way, the study and its public presentation aimed at depicting young white German gay men as victims of young, *migrant* men who were marked as heterosexual (cf. ibid., 19), and to migrantize the perpetrators of homophobic violence. As a result, men who were young and marked as migrant (Muslim) were rendered visible with the characteristic of being “violence-prone” (German: *Gewaltbereitschaft*) and foregrounded in the homophobia debate. In this act of making the young, migrant perpetrator visible politically and in the media, one can easily recognize a mix of biologizing and naturalizing racism. Thus, for example, they are not only rendered as Others on the basis of their putative migration background, but are additionally ascribed criminality and (homophobic) patriarchy.

In parallel with the MANEO surveys, Bernd Simon carried out a study commissioned by the LSVD at the University of Kiel in 2006 on the attitudes of young people with and without a “migration background” towards homosexuality. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth as well as the Berlin Senate Administration for Education, Youth and Sports financed the study. Its goal was to investigate the homophobic attitudes of “Turkish, Russian and German” youths between the ages of 14 and 20 and to compare their attitudes towards homosexuality with each other.

Simon proposed the thesis “that in groups with a migration background the perception of group-based discrimination was positively associated with homophobic attitudes, in the sense of a competition of minorities and/or that of a



scapegoat-function of the homosexual minority” (Simon 2008, 8). Departing from this thesis, his study aims at the following research results:

“1) Youth with a migration background [...] register a more homophobic attitude than youth without a migration background [...] 2) Religiosity and the acceptance of traditional norms of masculinity are generally positive correlates of a homophobic attitude. 3) Personal contacts with homosexuals are generally a negative correlate of a homophobic attitude. 4) The association of religiosity and a homophobic attitude is [...] especially strongly pronounced among youth with a Turkish migration background. 5) Perceptions of discrimination of youth with a migration background [...] are a positive correlate of a homophobic attitude, and the extent of these youths’ integration into German society is a negative correlate” (ibid., 9).

Simon deploys questionable claims that are not further scrutinized: Thus with the adoption of the civil partnership law in 2001, an improved climate was apparently created for lesbians and gays in Germany, and a tacit societal acceptance (for homosexuality) is said to obtain; however, one which is threatened by certain members of the “migrant society” (ibid., 4f). The youths, who are constructed in accordance with certain, imagined ancestries in line with the blood-and-soil (German: *Blut und Boden*) principle, are counterposed to other youths without a “migration background, who apparently represent a value system that is constructed as European and is held to be markedly less homophobic. The polarization of all interviewed high schoolers (German: *Gymnasiast\_innen*) took place during the course of the study at the level of discursive cultural racism: youths constructed as Turkish are defined as Muslims, and Islam is explained as the cause of their homophobia (ibid., 24). With this thesis, homophobia is placed in opposition to racism. And in this way, youths constructed as Russian and Turkish are ascribed the *feelings* and *perception* of racial discrimination, as if this type of discrimination wasn’t a social phenomenon and was instead the result of individual sensitivities. Simon states it in the following way: the more the respondents felt discriminated on the basis of their ancestry, the more homophobic they supposedly were. He claims that the Turkish and Russian youths saw themselves as members of a minority in competition with homosexual minorities and therefore judged the latter negatively (cf. ibid., 7).

The racializing and culturalizing presentation of the study in the media and at various events lead to its being heavily criticized, in particular, by queer and non-queer academics, activists and journalists of color.

The study “The Living Conditions of Lesbians and Gays with and without

a Migration Background in Germany” can be cited as a final example for white lesbian and gay studies with a racializing potential. Commissioned by the LSVD, this study was carried out by Melanie Steffens at the University of Jena with financial support from the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (cf. Steffens 2010). Central research questions included, among others, societal integration and identity, religious belonging, coming-out, respondents’ relation to their family, their family’s values and attitudes, gender roles, and their relation to lesbians and gays with a so-called migration background (Steffens 2010, 11). According to the summary of the study, it is urgently necessary that the living conditions of lesbians and gays with

“a ‘migration background’ be precisely researched, since they are ‘directly affected by the split between different cultural sub-groups with irreconcilable value systems and [are] possibly endangered. Secondly, the observation of lifestyles that succeed under these circumstances ought to be fruitful for general research into stress and identity” (ibid., 9).

The following findings emerged from this study: in contrast to lesbians and gays without a “migration background,” there are reportedly more (migrant) lesbians and gays who have not come out (of the closet). Coming out is thereby taken to be a phenomenon without a “migration background”. This situation is rationalized on the basis of the reactions of the respondents’ families. Whereas the families of the “German respondents” would respond positively to the coming-out of their lesbian and gay children, families with a “migration background” are supposedly negatively predisposed to homosexuality. Homosexuality would supposedly offend the religious and moral values of these parents, which is why they would react negatively to the coming-out of their children (Steffens 2010, 2).

Special attention is paid in this study to the question of “integration”. In this way, it is established that the (lesbian and gay) respondents with a so-called “migration background” would feel comfortable and thereby integrated in society with majority-Germans, because they would offer a greater acceptance for homosexuals than other societies.

An interesting result about the life-satisfaction of the respondents with and without a “migration background” reveals a major contradiction. Whereas, according to the study, the respondents with a “migration background” have had negative experiences with their parents as a result of their coming-out, they experience a higher life-satisfaction as a result of stronger social support compared to majority-German lesbians and gays. However, this finding about life-satisfaction

is seen as jeopardized by the act of coming out. While integration is posited as a prerequisite for the life-satisfaction of non-white lesbians and gays, the invented category of “migration background” is retained as a risk-factor for the respondents’ health and life-satisfaction.

In the conclusion of the study, the experiences of discrimination of respondents with a “migration background” are analyzed and established. According to this, lesbians and gays with a “migration background” have more experiences of homophobic discrimination than racist discrimination. Therefore, the study encourages migrantized lesbians and gays to talk more about homophobia than about racism.

In the end, the LSVD study, under the direction of Melanie Steffens, draws the following, highly problematic conclusion:

“Migration background is a risk factor for low life-satisfaction, worse health, a less positive self-image, and the availability of social support for lesbians and gays, if they come from countries with strong repressive measures against homosexuals, and if their parents are less integrated in Germany” (ibid., 5).

What results from the studies by Simon and Steffens is that an image of Germany as a gay-friendly country is foregrounded, while the imagined countries of origin of gays and lesbians with a so-called “migration background” are declared to be fundamentally homophobic. One can also observe the construction of an opposition in Steffens’ study, namely that of a gay-friendly West and a homophobic Rest.

### **Gay-Kisses-are-German-*Leitkultur***

Puar uses the term “homonationalism” to describe the invention of a “gay-friendly” nation. In an interview with the Berlin-based writer Deniz Utlu, she explains that

“homonationalism is not only about racist or privileged queers. Even if the term is often used this way. What is important is the tension between the perception of an increasing visibility and an increasing social acceptance of gays and lesbians [...] What it is about for me, above all, is how this recognition is won at the expense of particular subjects, who do not fit into the image of desirable homosexual subject – racialized subjects, impoverished subjects, and even subjects who are not homosexual, but whose sexuality is perceived as perverse” (Leben nach Migration 2014 [2010], 152).

Alongside the analysis of the aforementioned studies, publications, and other articles in the media, as well as the dominant discourses on topics around homophobia in the immigration-shaped society of Germany, German homonationalism can be identified on the basis of a new definition of homophobia. According to this new definition, homophobia is a migration-specific phenomenon which has anchored itself in Western societies and is primarily directed against white lesbians and gays.

Even homophobic actors are described in a manner that situates them (abroad) in a culturalizing and racializing manner. People who have a “migration background,” who are young and possibly Muslim, and come from “educationally disadvantaged”, economically underprivileged families are supposed to exhibit more homophobic tendencies and practices than others who distance themselves from this pattern. In contrast, the victims of homophobia are supposedly, for the most part, white German gays. German homonationalism is distinguished by the fact that it continuously culturalizes, racializes, classes, and genders the phenomenon of homophobia.

In opposition to these negative generalizations, today there is talk about the recurrent question of a “new German national identity” and a “German *Leitkultur*”. The most recent debate about a “German *Leitkultur*,” which has become important once again in the course of the movement of refugees out of Syria since the summer of 2015 at the latest, reveals the complicity of many representatives of the established political parties. For instance, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2015, the General Secretary of the CDU, Peter Tauber, wrote the following in the well-known German-language magazine *Cicero*: “Because when more people from other countries come to us and stay, our country will change. We must explain to these new fellow citizens those values that shape our homeland (German: *Heimat*), and how co-existence here works” (Tauber 2015).

The discussion about “integration” is once again on the agenda of the political parties. Society is once again moving towards the right, and, moreover, not just since the 1990s. The functioning co-existence in Germany is now supposed to be taught to refugees on the basis of an explanation by a white German *Leitkultur*. In his short article in *Cicero*, Tauber continues:

“The basis of our *Leitkultur* is naturally the *Grundgesetz* (English: *Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany*, colloquially, the German Constitution). But there is a lot more to it than that: the readiness to engage in volunteer work in society; the idea that everyone who works hard and makes an effort can advance; that religious freedom means being free to change one’s religion; that equality means that

women increasingly take on leadership positions. And tolerance and equal treatment [mean] that two men can, as a matter of course, kiss in the street; that families with many children receive support from all, and are not put down as asocial; but also the commitment to Black-Red-Gold as the colors of freedom, pride in Germany, the singing of our national anthem – not simply during football, but also gladly, a little louder and more joyously, on our national holiday. All of this is not in the *Grundgesetz*, but in my opinion, it would be a beautiful and important component of a new German *Leitkultur*” (ibid. 2015).

The topic “refugees and migration” from Syria re-mobilized urban panics in the large and small cities of European countries. Queers and migration were re-thematized in these re-mobilized urban panics. Refugees were represented as a hetero-masculinist threat coming out of Syria to the Western majority society. They would supposedly not only bring with them homophobia and misogyny, but also terroristic Islamism, and would thereby put the “Occident” (German: *Abendland*) in danger. The director of the Center for Migrants, Lesbian and Gays (*Zentrum für Migranten, Lesben und Schwule*) suggested in an interview that queer refugees in the collective shelters were threatened by IS-supporters, an assumption by the spokesperson that is not provable and is based in anti-Muslim speculation. The following excerpt from an interview clearly illuminates this urban panic:

“– What are the problems with which they come to you? – At the moment, the accommodation of queer refugees is the biggest problem. We receive daily complaints that the situation in emergency shelters is catastrophic. For example, some refugees are housed with 14 men in one room, some of whom are homophobic or even ISIS-supporters. That is, as you can imagine, no easy co-existence. – There are ISIS-supporters in the refugee shelters? – That is what a client recently told us. Evidently, it is not, as a matter of fact, all that rare. Recently, an ISIS-supporter was even caught and deported” (Heywinkel 2015).

## The City of Gays and the Invention of a New “Nation”?

### The Gay Neighborhood: Schöneberg

The fact that Klaus Wowereit was elected the mayor of Berlin in 2001 with the phrase “I’m gay – and that’s a good thing!” encouraged Berlin gay identity

and neighborhood visibility politics, as a result of which a type of “queer nation building” (cf. Wolter 2014 [2011]) was established in Berlin-Schöneberg. Salih Alexander Wolter describes the historical processes of transformation in the district of Schöneberg and illustrates, with the help of literary examples, the way in which an “Anatolian” neighborhood was transformed into a “Western” gay neighborhood:

“In contrast, the more recent question in Schöneberg is: ‘European or Anatolian side?’ It implies the solution to a problem which became urgent after 1989/90 in this half of Berlin, where the reality becoming apparent was that of an ‘economic-geographic concept of Germany,’ [...] which made the decades-long debate about a systemically staged ‘Us’ palpable: How might a continuing sense of belonging be rooted in a ‘community of values,’ which, in spite of the end of East-West conflict, could be redefined as “the West”? The answer – ‘There needs to be new blocks which, in a convincing way, stand in opposition to one another’ – connects up [...] with the social advancement of a particular part of the German gay scene. For them, ‘Schöneberg’ is equally a cipher as it is a coveted address – whereby, everything that is associated with it is located in the ‘West’ [...] It was here, in front of the city hall [...] that a Green Party mayor in 1996, for the first time, raised the rainbow flag on Christopher Street Day, and since August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2001, one has been able to stylishly enter into a civil partnership in the building’s Golden Hall. A little further north, alongside ‘gay’ flower shops, the neighborhood around Nollendorfplatz and Motzstraße offers a well-assorted night life, including bars in which young men from Romania sell their services, and clubs which specialize in the most varied fetishes [...] Even the ‘Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany’ (LSVD) has been based here since a few years – in a characteristic *Altbau* suite, whose rent is paid for by the district. From there, it would be a comfortable walk into the East, along Bülowstraße, to the ‘Bosphorous’. However, after 9/11, influential gay publicists would not tire of attesting to the danger of this proximity” (ibid., 17).

In the area around Nollendorfplatz and Motzstraße, which today counts as the “rainbow neighborhood,” and where one can find innumerable pubs and bars with darkrooms, since 1989 homosexuals who were persecuted and murdered in Nazi Germany have been commemorated with a plaque at the Nollendorfplatz U-Bahn station. In this way, the increasing, and later dominant, existence of a gay population was historicized<sup>8</sup> in numerous scholarly volumes, both through

<sup>8</sup> For a critique of such a ‘commemorative culture,’ see Yılmaz-Günay & Wolter 2013.

an urban-political commemorative culture and the romanticizing and dramatizing historiography of a gay movement. Since a few decades, the visibility of a “gay population” has been on the rise, and a gay recreation sector as well as a “colorful” urban district politics have come to be established, one which campaigns for the realization of a commercial Gay Pride. Simultaneously, the existence and history of immigrant workers and other residents of North Schöneberg who continue to be marked as (Muslim) immigrants is often made invisible. An example of such identity and urban district politics that is affected by historical amnesia, one can name the disappearance of the migrant rights and anti-racist activism by the former Schöneberg association *Ausländerkomitee Berlin (West) e. V.* from the collective consciousness. The association cooperated with migrant and non-migrant initiatives and groups. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the association initiated campaigns for the implementation of municipal (German: *kommunal*) voting rights, against immigration barriers, and campaigns concerning the cultural identity of immigrants. The association was located in Langenscheidtstraße in Schöneberg, and it was the target of numerous arson attacks, which have now been wiped out of our collective memories (cf. *Ausländerkomitee Berlin [West] e. V.* 1981). In fact, Schöneberg is regarded today as the center of the second German gay movement and the contemporary gay nightlife scene, which dominates a not-insignificant part of the district with the colors of the rainbow and has become the trademark of a gay neighborhood.

An examination of the question of visibilities and invisibilities of desirable and undesirable ‘population groups’ can help one better understand the racist exclusionary capacities of homonationalism. Since the gay movement achieved its goals to a “large” extent – and since Germany, after passing the civil partnership law<sup>9</sup> in 2001 and the General Equal Treatment Act<sup>10</sup> in 2006, more consciously understands itself to be enlightened, tolerant, and progressive – Muslim migrants have been made, both through the aforementioned studies as well as through projects and news reports, into hyper-visible and incongruous “Others”. This occurs through the way “they” are discussed as a threat and a danger to peaceful gay life in “our” society, and the corresponding manner in which one acts on such talk (see the remarks on Andrea Mubi Brighenti’s “thresholds of visibility” in the first chapter of Voß and Çetin 2016).

Gay Pride, celebrated annually across the world, has also taken place in Berlin since 1979 as *Christopher Street Day* (CSD). The gay movement had concerned

9 German: *Lebenspartnerschaftsgesetz*

10 German: *Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz*

itself until then, first and foremost, with the demand for the complete repeal of §175 of the criminal code, which made male-male sexual relationships criminally punishable. Gay activists of the time were shaped by key objectives such as sexual freedom and the acceptance of (non-heterosexual) sexual orientation(s), by which was meant primarily a gay male identity.

“Gay Pride” has so far been organized by white-dominated gay(-lesbian) organizations. At this event, which was originally conceived of as emancipatory, the participation of queers of color is “often” done without. Moreover, previous CSDs have masked racist campaigns or openly and knowingly reproduced racist exclusions, which was why Judith Butler in 2010 declined to accept the Civil Courage Prize of the official CSD organization (cf. SUSPECT 2010b).

In the week of CSD, the established media regularly reports on homophobic and anti-gay incidents and contribute to the public awareness of the large-scale event, whose organizers are convinced of the necessity of a “political” mega-party:

“In fact, year after year, the *taz* brings out articles at the time of the Berlin CSD with a global-strategic perspective on local events. On the eve before the 2010 parade, for instance, the paper reminds us – in light of presumably increasing attacks by young men ‘with migration background’ of visitors to the gay party district in the Schöneberg neighborhood – about the fate of a different ‘minority’” (Yılmaz-Günay & Wolter 2013, 60f).

Such news reports not only encourage the circulation of anti-Muslim racism, which in this case emanates from a white gay organization, but they also strengthen the construction of a supposed opposition between gays and Muslims, who are taken to stand in an extrinsic and hostile relation to one another.

Even though the organizers of the CSD express their openness to a pluralist society online (see the Internet presence of the CSD association), they do not manage to actually put this into practice. At least since Judith Butler’s public refusal of the Civil Courage Prize, the criticism of the CSD organizers has grown louder: the demand to be anti-racist and to face up to one’s privileges as members of the white-German (majority) society were nevertheless rejected with the argument that (even white) gays belong to a minority which is subjected to homophobic discrimination.

Further criticisms were centered on the invariably commercial character of an originally political movement, one which invokes as its genesis the New York Stonewall uprising of 1969, which was carried out by victims of not only homo-



phobic, but also racist, transphobic and class-specific discrimination (cf. Voß & Wolter 2013, 28–32). Since the aims and contents of the Berlin CSD diverged more and more from the political aim of the Stonewall protests, and the large-scale event in June of each year transformed itself into a pink-commercial party, the criticisms and demands of numerous queer organizations occupied center stage. According to them, the CSD ought to take up political issues once again. The CSD-organizers picked up these critiques and decided in 2014 to rename the “CSD party” “Stonewall”. The desired political aim, however, could not be achieved through the name-change. The event remained not only a pure mega-party, but extended its delimiting and exclusionary practices: Black and queer of color groups no longer participated in the organization of the “party”. The anti-violence project *LesMigraS* of the Berliner Lesbenberatung e.V. (the Berlin lesbian counseling association) put out a public statement problematizing not the renaming of CSD, but rather the exclusionary structures which remained unchanged in the preparation and realization of the new Berlin Stonewall. It was made clear in this statement that politics is about more than a name and that therefore power structures ought to also be changed with the renaming. Thus, *LesMigraS* reminded the CSD organizers about the original

“[Stonewall] uprising against racist, trans\*discriminatory, classist and homophobic police violence. It was primarily trans\* people, drag queens, LGBTI people of color and sex workers who took part in Stonewall. Stonewall was a street battle, which was not simply about the recognition of equal rights, but also a radical making-a-stand against everyday violence. Stonewall was about multiple belongings and manifold experiences of discrimination. Anyone who appropriates the term Stonewall must take up this history. In order to bear the name “Stonewall,” the Berlin CSD, in our opinion, must grapple with its own racist, classist and trans\*discriminatory exclusions, must campaign against police violence, concern itself with multiple discriminations, and be ready to take to the streets – on more than one day in the year. A commitment [to fight] against homophobia and trans\*discrimination is superfluous without an anti-racist and anti-classist perspective and practice. If the Berlin CSD renames itself as the Stonewall Parade without relating to these political struggles, then Stonewall will once again be appropriated to mark the birth of the lesbian and gay movement” (*LesMigraS* 2015).

In this statement, *LesMigraS* – a project for and by lesbian, trans\* and bisexual migrants and by Black lesbian and bisexual women – makes clear the invisibilization politics of the Berlin CSD association: this politics is thus characterized not

only by the appropriation of histories of resistance of those affected by racist, trans-discriminatory, and class-specific power relations, but also by the erasure of these (resistance) histories in the contemporary commemorative culture that has established itself in former CSD parades. A further central criticism is that those affected by multi-dimensional discrimination do not occupy center stage in the (new) Stonewall Parade, but rather others who, on the contrary, are privileged, are the ones formulating and implementing policies, information, discourses, and (new) definitions.

One example of how certain areas of Schöneberg have become the gay- or rainbow-neighborhood is the lesbian and gay street festival, which is organized annually by the *Regenbogenfonds der schwulen Wirte e. V.* and carries (above all) gay visibility to the extreme. Every year, scores of associations, institutions, and unions take part in the Motzstraßenfest in order to collectively lay down the marker against homophobia. Another aim of the city festival is the representation of all oppressed LGBTIQ\* people, who are supposed to present and represent themselves at the city festival and assert their legal, societal and political interests. However, the history of the city festival clearly shows that, in spite of good will, this ideal is not realized. Thus, Queer.de reported on May 31<sup>st</sup> 2015 “that [it has] taken 23 years for the gay and lesbian city festival in Berlin to display a female subject on a poster for the first time” (Queer.de 2015).

This first step to also publicly represent lesbian identity and to set an example against racism was initially welcomed by numerous LGBTIQ\* organizations, as the poster depicts a female couple kissing. What was criticized, however, was that the couple, intended to be perceived as lesbian, was depicted with culturalist and racist markings. The Berlin-Brandenburg Migration Council (*Migrationsrat Berlin-Brandenburg*, or MRBB), in its statement, held the intentions of the organizers to be good, because, with this poster and the slogan “Equal Rights for Unequals,” they wanted to champion a “diverse” city. What was culturalizing, however, was primarily the depiction of one of the two women, who was fitted with a headscarf so that viewers could perceive her as “Muslim”. The poster also conveyed the (imagined) religious belonging of the headscarf-wearing lesbian through the Arabic translation of the slogan, for the reason that the Arabic script can quickly produce an association to the Arab and/or Muslim world. Therefore, in its public statement, the Berlin-Brandenburg Migration Council brings into question the image and representational politics of the organizers of the city festival. Thus, the *Regenbogenfonds e. V.* cannot through its (poster-)campaigns represent those people that were not included in the organization and preparation of these campaigns:

“We assume that the Regenbogenfond’s intention, through the putatively more diverse representation of people on the poster, was to reach people and communities who so far were not – or only minimally – represented at the city festival. Had the aforementioned autonomous migrant organizations, groups and associations truly and meaningfully been able to participate in the planning (e.g. of the poster), the city festival might have actually, where possible, gained access to other communities” (MRBB 2015).



Illustration 1: A poster of the lesbian and gay city festival from the year 2015

## Kreuzberg and the End of Trans\*genialen

Much as in North Schöneberg, where the LSVD and the gay assault helpline MANEO carry out their civil society campaigns and projects – largely at the expense of the “Muslim” migrants projected as homophobic – similar homonationalist developments have occurred in Berlin-Kreuzberg, which Haritaworn describes in one of their essays as a “sexual spectacle of neighborhood and nation” (cf. Haritaworn 2009, 41ff).

When a group of drag kings was attacked in June 2008 during a festival by an allegedly “Turkish” group of people, the (anti-Muslim) assumptions by LSVD and the assault helpline MANEO were updated and spread by Kreuzberg-based queer groups as well. After this incident, white queer groups “felt” threatened by Turkish youth in Kreuzberg. A single day after the violence against the drag kings, they were able to mobilize thousands of people against “migrant” homophobia and fly the rainbow flag in the “migrant” neighborhood under the slogan, “Smash Homophobia!” Haritaworn problematizes both the lesbian and gay reactions as well as the left-wing press coverage about this incident by arguing that, once again, what was fostered was a discourse about the homophobia of the “others” – and this time not only with the help of studies by the LSVD or MANEO, but also through a “left-queer” moral panic and warnings about violent “migrant” homophobia (ibid., 45).

In view of urban district politics, which involves not just the city council, but also associations, organizations, housing cooperatives, and political parties, the would-be “anti-homophobia demonstration” in Kreuzberg sent a clear signal against the “migrant” residents of the neighborhood, who, for generations, have been living in Kreuzberg alongside different marginalized groups and are simultaneously vilified with racist ascriptions. This demonstration, too, can be understood as an expression of a homonationalist dominant society. In their observations and analysis, Haritaworn highlights the way in which, analogously to the white-feminist emancipation discourse, white-left “queer” groups’ claim to representation is constituted (ibid., 60). In this context, Gabriele Dietze also speaks of an ethnicization and orientalization of homophobia in white-left queer groups in city spaces such as Berlin-Kreuzberg (Dietze 2009, 44). In view of this demonstration and earlier campaigns by lesbian and gay organizations, one can translate the “struggle against homophobia” as a “struggle” against “migrant” populations, who, in the name of the “liberal-democratic” constitutional order, are incessantly confronted with the demand to either come out as gay-friendly and to publicly distance themselves from homophobic incidents or to face the consequences of their “oriental” homophobia.

An argument against the generalizing claim of “oriental” homophobia is that Kreuzberg is demonstrably one of the few places in Germany where people of different sexual, gender, and socio-cultural identities actually live together. At the former *Transgenialen Christopher Street Day* (TCSD), which was held annually in Kreuzberg between 1997 and 2013, the participants and organizers protested together with the residents of the SO36 Kreuzberg neighborhood, which is known across Europe, against all forms of racist, transphobic, and homophobic discrimination. They criticized the ever more commercial large-scale CSD celebrations, at which all social and sexual identities are not represented, but instead is only an “über-normalization” of a white gay visibility that is aspired after. Even though TCSD no longer takes place, the causes for its dissolution can, in fact, be traced back to the discussion of a new racism within the organization team.

The south-east of Kreuzberg is, since at least the early 1980s, a place where numerous pubs and bars that cater, first and foremost, to all queers are run, but which are also open to other people of the neighborhood and the city. As a concrete example of such places, one can name the nightclub SO36 in Oranienstraße. Every month, the event *Gayhane* aka *House of Halay*, a party for queers of color and their friends, takes place. Their Internet presence describes it as follows:

“GAYHANE has long been known beyond the borders of Berlin and already has imitators in many large cities. Since almost 8 years now, lesbians, gays, trans\* people and their friends meet one another on the HomoOriental dance floor, which the DJs Ipek, mikki\_p, Khandan and Ceto fashion with Turkish and Arabic, but also Greek and Hebrew, pop music. In a mix of oriental and occidental sounds and temperaments, an atmospheric party very quickly develops, one whose flair is accentuated by the fantastical transformation of the event space into an oriental festival tent” (Gayhane 2016).

A further example for the places for and by queers of color and their friends is the café *Südblock* at Kottbusser Tor, which still counts as a social problem area (German: *sozialer Brennpunkt*) among the middle-class majority population and, due to the presence of other marginalized scenes, such as that of “junkies,” still provides cause for scandalizing reports in the mainstream press. The café *Südblock*, which is located almost at the center of the marginalized, continually holds events on themes related to racism, trans\* discrimination, homophobia and socio-economic inequalities, and calls not only on its guests, but also on its neighbors to set an example against the polarization of Kreuzbergers in the form of “queers vs. migrants”. The café is located, moreover, next to the activist group *Kotti &*

*Co – the tenants’ union of Kotbusser Tor in Berlin Kreuzberg*, which since 2011 has been campaigning against rent increases and displacement, and for the retention of affordable apartments. The relationship between *Kotti & Co* and *Südblock* is characterized by neighborly solidarity, in that the café provides a venue and publicity for the protest events and other activities of the activist group. The group is comprised of members who don’t necessarily see themselves as a homogenous collective, but nonetheless pursue a common goal. It is not only migrants, the migrantized, queers or white leftists who feel addressed by *Kotti & Co*, but also other residents who are fighting for affordable living spaces and join forces with disadvantaged groups. Even houseless<sup>11</sup> people find a sympathetic ear and a space in which they feel welcomed and are not made into (superfluous) others.

In public discussions about homophobia in the migrant society of Germany, these demographic givens are either ignored or denied, because they do not serve the legitimization of dominant anti-migrant and racist (gay) identity politics discourses.

This part of Kreuzberg, which is also known as “küçük İstanbul,” i.e. Little Istanbul, is often problematized as a “no-go area” for gays and lesbians and made the subject of the “oriental” homophobia-discourse.

The *Kiss Kiss Berlin* campaign by MANEO, which has taken place regularly since 2006, is a good example through which to understand the sponsors of such public debates. According to the organizers, *Kiss Kiss Berlin* is supposed to set an example against homophobia in the “symbolic” areas of the capital city, such as Neukölln, Kreuzberg and Wedding – the homophobia by which, according to MANEO, the majority (white) gays are affected. The date of this campaign, the May 17<sup>th</sup>, has meanwhile become known as the day on which the General Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1990 removed homosexuality from the list of mental disorders. The removal of homosexuality as a disorder is celebrated, among other such annual events, by the aforementioned Berlin campaign. According to the organization, their goal is, additionally, to push through the “tolerance” and acceptance of gay visibility in certain neighborhoods – those declared to be homophobic – with the support of numerous non-governmental organizations and politicians represented in parliament.

The studies carried out in past years, which attempt to demonstrate the homophobia of the selected “symbolic,” “Anatolianized and orientalized” places,

11 Translator’s (SD) note: This usage (i.e. *houseless*, rather than the conventional *homeless*) is intentional. The current generation of houseless activists prefer this term to the dehumanizing label “homeless”.

along with the collaboration of white-gay dominated businesses, organizations and prominent political personalities, produces a majority opinion which rapidly becomes the general knowledge of the majority white German society.

“With the support of members of the Berlin “Tolerance Alliance,” comprised of 130 companies, events and institutions, we organize numerous campaigns in Berlin during this period every year; in the past year they already numbered at 30. Together, as the “Gay-Straight-Alliance,” we set conspicuous examples, advocate for a colorful and cosmopolitan Berlin, for societal tolerance and diversity, and position ourselves against racism, homophobia, transphobia – against every form of group-based enmity. With our campaigns, we hope to reach people, spark their interest, and bring them along” (MANEO 2015).

Even if MANEO has in recent years been making an effort to also articulate the word racism in its advertising texts, posters, and campaigns, the project still fails, however, to conduct its campaigns against homophobia and trans\* discrimination in an anti-racist manner. The 2015 *Kiss Kiss Berlin* campaign repeated the ignorance of gay visibility politics and attempted once again to orientalize homophobia. The selected places at which the campaign was held were, in the organizers’ opinion, supposed to symbolize places of homophobia and trans\* discrimination. The Berlin districts and neighborhoods, such as Kreuzberg, Neukölln, and Wedding, which were described by the organizers as “representative” places, are shaped by the history of labor migration and the present-day lives of the children and grandchildren of migrant workers. The answer to the question of who or which groups are represented here remains cryptic in the campaign’s advertisement texts. The issue is also about the categorization of homophobia and trans\* discrimination using the example of migrant workers and their descendants, who are not only orientalized, but also constituted as a “class”. Even the organizations by and for queers of color, such as GLADT e. V. as well as MRBB, felt blindsided by this campaign. In their statement on *Kiss Kiss Berlin*, published on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015, GLADT e. V. criticized MANEO for its ignorant approach:

“Quite simply, this campaign makes us queasy, and this for multiple reasons. First of all, in Kreuzberg, where so many different communities and scenes flow together and thereby create a very diverse and specific social space, the MANEO campaign appears downright grotesque: a white, cis-male-dominated gay organization launches a lifebuoy for a better world, without pausing to think that local activists here



have been carrying out community-based anti-discrimination work for years. These activists weren't invited on even one occasion. This is not only arrogant; it is most of all disrespectful! We criticize MANEO's actions! We live in a society that is racist, discriminatory, homophobic and trans\*phobic, and we utterly condemn violence and discrimination.

We perceive it as a slap in the face that MANEO concentrates on attacks in places where we have achieved so much in recent years through establishing contacts, listening, answering questions, posing questions, empathizing, laughing on occasion and fighting on occasion. We live in Kreuzberg and Wedding, this isn't a short-term platform for MANEO's staging of a colorful cosmopolitanism. On the contrary, the MANEO campaign jeopardizes the relationship-building with our neighbors and puts it to the test" (GLADT 2015).

Gay dominance asserts itself not only in Schöneberg and Kreuzberg, as thus far depicted, but also in the the north of Neukölln, which is known as one of the largest social problem areas of the Republic. The history of North Neukölln is not only shaped by labor migration, but also through unequal access to living spaces, employment, and schools, as well as to public places where discussions about successes and failures and about those willing to integrate and those refusing to are continuously conducted. These discussions, which prevailed in Neukölln, aimed at a clear dichotomization of society into "Muslims and Germans," "Muslims and homosexuals," etc. The contribution of gay visibility politics in Neukölln to this polarization has had an outstanding impact on the neighborhood that finds itself in the midst of a rapid process of gentrification since the early 2010s.

### **Neukölln: From an "oriental neighborhood" to a "gay neighborhood"**

What the Kreuzberg and Schöneberg examples demonstrate about gentrification and the transformation of these districts from "oriental Anatolia to an occidental gay neighborhood" can also be observed in the Berlin district of North Neukölln in the 2010s, which is distinct to South Neukölln with regard to demographic structures. In contrast to the north, the south of Neukölln can be described as petty-bourgeois, middle-class, white, familial and heteronormative (Loy 2013). Instead of apartment buildings, this part of the district is dominated by private terraced houses. The number of voters in the parliamentary and municipal elections in South Neukölln is significantly higher than in the North. North Neukölln was known as a district of "the unemployed, alcoholics, junkies,



criminals and migrants,” mostly from Arab countries and Turkey. The term “social problem area” was used as a synonym for North Neukölln. It is not only the migrant population associated with this area, but also “asociality or parasitism”. In contrast to the North, in the southern regions like Rudow, Buchow and Britz live mostly inhabited by employed, working, tax-paying, majority Germans who, “naturally,” use their voting rights to determine the lives of those in North Neukölln.

At the very latest, following the closure of the Tempelhof airport and the re-branding of the airport field in 2010 as “Tempelhof Freedom” in 2010, this erstwhile “social problem area” in Berlin became an attractive place for students, artists, knowledge producers and left-wing groups. The visible and palpable demographic and architectonic changes could be observed in the appearance of new groups of people, the emergence of art spaces and safe spaces for and by ‘queers,’ as well as new bars, galleries, and discos for – especially – gay people. When the old *SchwulenZentrum*<sup>12</sup> (SchwuZ) announced its relocation from Kreuzberg to Neukölln, this became an issue of much concern in the Berlin print media and online news portals. A report in the *Berliner Morgenpost* about the relocation deemed that “the issue has, as it were, only one catch” (Kittle 2013):

“The former Kindl brewery is located in a neighborhood about which, as recently as two years ago, newspapers printed this headline: ‘Living Where Nobody Wants to Live’ – even though that was an article about a successful case of integration. The reason being that precisely this neighborhood around Hermann-, Karl-Marx-, Flughafen-, and Rollbergstraße is not known for integration projects, but rather for high rates of illiteracy, for parents who would rather invest their social welfare payments in alcohol than the education of their children, and for social tensions between different migrant groups” (ibid.).

Even though the representatives of SchwuZ distanced themselves from the assumptions of the press and politics – in short, from the reigning opinion that Neukölln was particularly homophobic – the media still warned of the dangers for homosexuals in the neighborhood. In connection with this relocation, and through the construction of the ‘violent homophobia’ of ‘migrant’ youth, an ‘urban panic’ (cf. Tsianos 2013, 2014) was stoked. In order to justify this urban panic, the reporter Sören Kittel of the *Berlin Morgenpost* interviewed Gilles Duhem of

12 SchwuZ was founded in 1977 by the group “Homosexual Action West Berlin” as a meeting point for activist gays in Schöneberg. See: <http://www.schwuz.de/de/schwuz/Geschichte.html>

the *Rollbergkiez*<sup>13</sup> youth education project, and on the basis of this interview, reported on the possible ‘homophobic’ conflicts in the neighborhood:

“It is not hard to imagine that one might also see violence in the neighborhood. If that should happen, Gilles Duhem hopes that a counter-reaction immediately takes effect: ‘Police, the filing of charges, convictions, prison – then they will see that their behavior does not work in Berlin.’ However, Duhem is a little worried about SchwuZ patrons: ‘When in doubt, they can also hit back, they aren’t few in number’” (Kittle 2013).

In the period running up to and after the relocation of SchwuZ various events dealing with the situation of homosexuals in Neukölln were held in the aforementioned new spaces for and by ‘queers’. In summer 2012, the local association of the *Die Linke* (Left Party) in Neukölln organized a panel discussion with Neuköllners on the following question: “Is Neukölln more homophobic than Schöneberg?” The aim of the event was to openly discuss homophobia in migrant Neukölln and to find ‘possible solutions’ in order to live ‘together’ (cf. Die Linke 2012). A further, similar event was held in a queer bar close to Rathaus Neukölln, asking the question: “How queer is Neukölln?” The event text included the following: “Together with you, we want to discuss how we can actively effect a positive development of the neighborhood and a respectful coexistence” (cf. Bündnis 90, 2013).

Both the interview with Gilles Duhem and the news coverage of SchwuZ’s relocation, as well as these and other, similar events about the conditions for ‘queer’ people and neighborhood development politics in Neukölln attest to, for one, the polarization of society in ‘Us’ (the ‘gay-friendly’ nation) vs. ‘Them’ (the ‘homophobic’ migrants). For another, social inequalities (too many children, too much alcohol, too many unemployed people, etc.) are so inverted that socially disadvantaged groups appear to be blocking their own access to a better life and standard of living, which is why they would, among other things, become ‘homophobic’.

### **Mosque: only for heteros?**

In November 2014 the association Leadership Berlin tried to organize a visit of a group of lesbians and gays to one of the most famous Berlin mosques in North

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**13** *Rollbergkiez* is a neighborhood in the district of Neukölln that became infamous in the mid-2000s for the alleged lack of integration of pupils in its local school and for its high percentage of immigrant and poor families.

Neukölln. The event was to happen as part of the tolerance and acceptance project *meet2respect* in cooperation with the Şehitlik Mosque, the *Völklinger Kreis* – professional association of gay executives – and the LSVD. The Şehitlik Mosque usually hosts tours of medium-sized groups in which the mosque and its history are presented and possible questions about Islam and the Qur'an answered. At first, the mosque representatives accepted the request of the group and wished to coordinate an appointment. However, as the interested *meet2respect* and LSVD representatives requested and then insisted that their invitation be extended to include a discussion round in the prayer rooms, the mosque representatives rejected this "wish" with a understandable argument: the mosque cannot be considered as a venue for events because it is used at different times of the day as a prayer room, and this use takes precedence over any discussion session. The refusal of the mosque referred only to the space of the discussion – a meeting with the interested parties was neither ruled out nor problematized. The mosque representatives were in favor of the discussion event in another venue where prayers are not carried out. Despite the alternative proposals, the LSVD scandalized the "cancellation" by the mosque in the media without mentioning the background discussions among the participants. The scandal of this "rejection" lead, yet again, in the mainstream media to a polarization of people into "homosexuals" and "Muslims". The division of humanity in this form raises the ironic question of whether Muslims have any sexual orientation, or whether all homosexuals are non-Muslim. For example, in the year 2008, there was a joint declaration against homophobia and discrimination against all people from the Muslim umbrella organization DITIB, which also includes the Şehitlik mosque and other Muslim organizations (see GLADT, 2009).

Due to the scandalous reports issued by the LSVD, the Şehitlik Mosque published a press release on November 20<sup>th</sup> 2014, in which it made clear that the mosque representatives do not reject a dialogue with all other parties, including homosexuals, who are interested in Islam and in the mosque. Not only because of the scandalization, but also on grounds of the LSVD trying to make a name for itself at the expense of the mosque and its (heterosexually living) Muslims, the mosque decided against a meeting with the LSVD, but not against one with interested homosexuals:

"On November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the national association DITIB Berlin will participate in a *meet2respect* discussion meeting that will be held in the conference room of the Jerusalem Church. This event will replace the planned mosque tour and subsequent discussion originally organized by Leadership Berlin as part of its project *meet2respect*. The Lesbian and Gay Federation of Germany (LSVD) refuses to par-

ticipate in this discussion and continues to insist on an event inside the mosque. Contrary to other statements, no concrete plans or appointments were made for a mosque tour. However, we are happy to continue the dialogue as part of *meet2respect*. In order for our openness not to be misused for self-aggrandizement, we have not said “yes” to any binding appointment. We cannot understand why the LSVD wishes to self-aggrandize itself at the cost of our mosque and to politically exploit an encounter which is so important for us. That’s why we want to refrain from further talks with the LSVD and have no further comment on their media conduct.”

## Muslims versus Homosexuals

To return to the quote in the introduction, I would like to once again point to the polarization of society into ‘Muslims vs. Homosexuals’. As long as two groups are spoken of as being in opposition to one another, it is not possible for a society to consider itself progressive. The quote clearly demonstrates the white-hegemonic opinion that there are either no homosexuals among the Muslim community or that, if they do exist, they are, as a matter of principle, not accepted among them. This mode of speaking and acting by white-hegemonic gay organizations, politics, the media and (large) parts of society must be problematized in this and other scholarly and education-policy work in order to make the exclusions and inequalities in a plural society visible, audible and criticizable. Interventions in political, academic and civil society debates have as their goal the reduction of discrimination.

Specifically, we need to criticize the scholarship that, in Germany, has so far been hardly influenced by intersectional approaches and which does not take multidimensional discrimination seriously – not just for methodical reasons, but also from the perspective of one-dimensional identity politics, “Here the gays, there the Muslims”.

Civil society should be called upon, in the light of their lobbying at the expense of the “Others” who they construct, to deal with multidimensional discrimination and to work in favor of, or at least not against, the people who suffer from multidimensional discrimination.

It should also be noted that the hierarchization of victimhood should not be made the main starting point for the lobbying of civil society organizations. Such one-dimensional work may further contribute to making a group increasingly targeted by a form of discrimination, such as anti-Muslim racism. In this situation, the other group, constructed as a greater victim of discrimination, is able to more

strongly promote this form of anti-Muslim racism in the way that it reproduces the arguments for contrived contrasts.

From the point of view of intersectional research, it is necessary and beneficial when non-governmental organizations work in cooperation with scientific institutions and universities, in order to legitimize the former's concerns and their socio-political investigations. Justifiable interests and concerns, for example, for more funding for the infrastructure of the organizations can ideally be supported by the state or other sponsoring institutions. The studies analyzed here differentiate discriminated groups initially from a white-gay-and-lesbian perspective as competitors on the question of discrimination. Such a method of politics and lobby work can ultimately help and (further) privilege a group that is presented as the victim of another discriminated group. The establishment of the construction of perpetrators as above all heterosexual, young, male and immigrant can, in the worst case, lead to racism by governmental measures (strict integration measures), police interventions (racial profiling) or simply as a result of the anxiety of (white) citizens, racism which is either relativized or completely omitted in the fight against homophobia, sexism and antisemitism. This too occurs in the collaboration between the state, civil society and scientific inquiry.

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## Author

Zülfukar Çetin completed his PhD work on *Homophobia and Islamophobia. Intersectional Discriminations against Binational Gay Couples in Berlin* (*Homophobie und Islamophobie. Intersektionale Diskriminierungen am Beispiel binationaler schwuler Paare in Berlin*, 2012). He is currently working at the University of Basel/Switzerland in a research project on HIV/AIDS activism and politics in Turkey and simultaneously teaches social work at the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences in Berlin. His publications include the anthology *Conversations about Racism. Perspectives and Resistance* (*Gespräche über Rassismus. Perspektiven und Widerstände*, 2015), published together with Savaş Taş, and *The Dynamics of the Queer Movement in Turkey before and during the Conservative AKP Government* (2015), the latter being his concluding paper as a Mercator-IPC Fellow at the Science and Politics Foundation.

## Translator

Smaran Dayal studied English, American Studies, and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Freiburg and the Humboldt University in Berlin. He is now completing a PhD at New York University. His academic work has appeared in various scholarly journals, including *Citizenship Studies*, *Interventions*, *Lernen aus der Geschichte* and *Heimatkunde*.

