Embodied Experience of Race and Gender in Precarious Work

Murat Kurnaz, born in Bremen but holder of a Turkish passport, is a well-known figure in Germany, due no doubt, at least in part, to his voluminous beard. A racializing interpretation would see it as a code for membership of an Islamist group. Following his unexpected release from the camp at Guantanamo, the riddle of his beard appeared to be of greater interest to the German public than the more than dubious manner of his abduction by US forces, and the even more dubious manoeuvres to hinder his release on the part of the German foreign ministry. The German authorities knew of his imprisonment at the hands of the USA by the beginning of January 2002, at the very latest. Although the German Guantanamo interrogators were convinced of his innocence and had determined that he had absolutely no connections with any terrorist circles, the BKA (Federal German Police Office) and the German Chancellor’s Office both refused his release to Germany as proposed by the USA in the Autumn of 2002. Coupled with a vaguely worded security risk, the assertion that, on account of Murat’s Turkish passport, his case did not fall within the remit of Germany’s obligations within International Law testifies to the productivity of a form of anti-Islamic racism. Here, efforts to restrict the residency rights of post-national subjects, a historical result of the immigration process, are flanked by a practice of a blanket suspicion of terrorism. In the meantime, although Murat Kurnaz has been rehabilitated, he still retains his highly suspicious beard. Is it possible that Murat’s mysterious beard is more than the performance of subordinate mimicry? Murat does something with the materiality of racist suspicion - he embodies it

I. Racism - an erratic archipelago

Throughout Europe, one can observe the contours of a racism directed against the rights of migrants and their descendants. Following Etienne Balibar, we can label racism directed against migrants as predominantly a manifestation of ‘neo-racism’. The history and dynamics of this racism differ among individual European states. In contrast to the monistic structure of 19th century biological racism, its manifestations and strategies have multiplied and been transformed: Novel frames have emerged. In Europe, racism appears as an erratic archipelago of differing and partially overlapping formations that range from openly racist violence to more subtle varieties of institutional racism, such as the headscarf ban, for example, legitimised on secularist principles.

Current racist strategies possess significantly more fluidity than traditional ones based on such naturalizing categories as ‘race’, and operating on segregation and exclusion. These current racisms fluctuate between biologistic and culturalistic markers that serve to structure superiority and inferiority. These racist practices are defined not only by binary differentiation and processes of exclusion but primarily through processes of limited inclusion. The history and dynamics of racism have always been a recodified answer to the struggles waged against it by racialized subjects and to the aleatory turbulences of fluid projects of migration. This emergence of new manifestations of racism raises the question as to what new theoretical concepts are appropriate for empirical analysis of racializing and ethnicizing processes.

Towards the dematerialization of critical racism analysis in Germany

In Germany, the critical debate on racism first began with the advent of Cultural Studies. In particular, the discussion of works by Stuart Hall, in the context of articles and publications of ‘Das Argument’ magazine and publishing house, were responsible for a theory transfer that occurred in direct response to the conceptualization efforts of ‘Cultural Studies’ in Britain. The ‘Project for a Theory of Ideology’ associated with the name of W.F. Haug emerged form a direct dialogue with the ‘culturalistic challenge’ of the work
on ideology coming from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham. This culminated in a series of works that were later to generate important impulses in Germany, such as an antireductionist analysis of racism.\footnote{8}

Paradoxically, Hall’s interview ‘On Postmodernism und Articulation’, compiled by his colleague and successor Lawrence Grossberg, anticipates one of the central blockages in the theory of difference within the current discussion on racism in Germany.\footnote{9} Hall’s position in the debate around Postmodernism - which implies a criticism of Foucault’s power analytics - is as a prisoner between two unacceptable alternatives: Habermas’\footnote{10} defensive positions in relation on the old enlightenment project, and Lyotard’s\footnote{11} Eurocentric eulogies on the post modern breakdown. Hall wishes to salvage the concept of resistance in the ‘ideology versus discourse’ debate. He criticises Foucault’s resistance concept as flawed; instead, he advocates embedding power, within the analytic context of the constitution of hegemony, in ideology. According to Hall, an analysis of the different dispositifs of the truth - through which, according to Foucault, the practices of power work - should not stop with the statement of their actual plurality. On the contrary, it must be possible to define this plurality as a balance of forces within a concrete social formation. His reflections on a theory of articulation, however, where he orients himself around the post-Marxist works of Ernesto Laclau,\footnote{12} serve to relativize the scope of application of the ideological. According to Hall, the theory of articulation asks how an ideology discovers its subjects, and not how subjects think their necessary and unavoidable thoughts. With this deconstruction of the ontological primacy of the ideological, understood as the fundamental irreducibility of ideological articulations to one single socio-economic position, he raises objections against two forms of theoretical reductionism: against a total discursivity on the one hand, and a blunt empiricism on the other.

At this point we would argue that Hall’s objection to this double reductionism marks the strengths, but also the limits of his approach. With these arguments, Hall cautiously anticipates the current ‘material turn’ in the new feminist, anthropological, and complexity theory debates.\footnote{13} The question how a racist instance of interpellation discovers its subjects, while certainly important, does not, however, help to deconstruct the false alternatives of the racism debate - complete discursivity versus blunt empiricism.

Following Hall, the current debate within Germany on how to conceptualize diaspora subalternity as a symptom of discursive asymmetries in the racist dispositif reproduces these blockages; it reduces the analytic achievement of representation-political origin to a mere production of proof of the permanent presence of alterity within a historical continuum of power. Thus, what is in principle an always-the-same racism always structurally identifies the subjects of its interpellation in the same way. Representation in this sense signifies, according to our thesis, not only endless discursivity but, above all, the dematerialisation of empirical racism research. If the focus of this theoretical work falls mainly on the development of the discursive racist exclusion model, it is hardly surprising if forms of diaspora and/or migrant identity politics are generally considered under the concept of resistance which conform to this conceptualization, and not as the always newly to be worked out moments of specific historical struggles of migration against the equally specific, i.e. historicizeable formations of racism.

Kien Nghi Ha thinks this concept through to its extreme consequence. In his analysis of the colonial patterns of German labour market policy, he interprets the present racism in Germany as the continued existence of a ‘social-imperialistic logic’ in which the ‘colonial structure has retained its currency till the present day, partly as a state practice, partly as a public discourse’.\footnote{14} If, at this point, one follows the logic of Nghi Ha and assumes from the outset the ascendance of racist discourse in Germany in order to construct discursively generated moments of migrant subalternity in Germany, the history of labour migration then appears as an episode in the unbroken continuum of racist-colonial structures.\footnote{15} However, this backdating of the history of racism in Germany is based on the methods of post-colonial analytics. This endeavour corresponds closely with an attempt to procure historical illustrative material in order to accelerate the compatibility of local assimilation efforts of postcolonial theory with post-colonial criticism established in the Anglo-American space. The effects of ‘dematerialisation’ may be seen particularly clearly in this historically argued work.

**Biopolitical productivity and racialized subjectivity**

Against the background of these blockages, we undertake a renewed eclectic engagement with the work of Foucault, focussing on subjectivization processes and questions of dissidence, developed in his late work.\footnote{16} We place this in the context of a ‘post-disciplinary’ reading of biopower and biopolicy which we
judge promising for an analysis of productive moments in the constitution of racialized subjectivity. In sharp demarcation from a sovereign, repressive power, Foucault introduces biopower as a modern register of power which aims at the micro-dimension of a disciplining of individual bodies as well as at the macro-dimension of the regulation of the population. Foucault interprets biopower/biopolitical as an ‘archipelago of different powers’ which operate decentrally and materialize in the formation, arrangement and utilization of individual bodies, and the optimisation and enhancement of the population body. With Foucault, but going beyond the disciplinary / technological dimension of his biopower conception, it is possible to determine new rationalities and technologies of power which not only produce subject bodies and individuals, but subjectivities themselves. These become established in a double movement of submission and becoming subject - as produced and at the same time as active subjects capable of self-guidance. Such subjectivisation processes go beyond an easy mirroring of relations. However, it would be a mistake to assume that such processes take place on a terrain free from violence and dominance. It is rather the case - as Foucault remarks - that in no way have violent processes retreated before the birth of productive biopower. Thus, from the perspective of an analysis of racism that draws on Foucault, new technologies of power have not led to the elimination of violence and compulsion.

Investigations of racism should not, however, stop at a description of the restrictive nature of migration regimes and their immanent contradictions and by determining the dominant ‘interpellation’. We cannot start from the assumption that subjects merely reflect the ‘relations’, that they are exclusively their ‘victims’. That would be to ignore that the processes establishing subjectivity are a social field of conflict in which micropolitics and the desire for other, better activity and life projects express themselves.

However, neither is the figure of the self-identical, coherent rational deciding subject an adequate alternative. The present transformation processes demand research perspectives which can simultaneously determine relations of power and dominance as well as the dynamic productiveness of subjectivization; where subjectivization is grasped as a permanent becoming-subject in the sense of a persistent new formation and production practice, as multiple positioning processes, and as a new invention of practices and modes of subjectivization. It is a question of appreciating that processes of subjectivization strive to move beyond the conditions of biopolitical power technologies. And at the same time it is a realisation that subjects are not previously extant entities, but rather become established in specific power-knowledge relations.

These self-relations articulate a distance towards subjectivization, understood as submission to regulatory coercions and, hence, they cannot be deciphered as mere effects of relations of repression. It is rather a question of practices that resist the efficacy of regulatory coercion through strategies of avoidance, negotiation or reformatting. Hardt/Negri speak of ‘biopolitical productivity’ - in the sense of an oppositional desire. In the context of productive subject becoming, this invokes ‘re-working’ and invention of practices and forms of existence. Self-relationality also indicates that in this context subjectivization processes are to be examined as ‘circuits’ of a ‘becoming’ on a disputed terrain. This is marked, on the one hand, by established relations of power and interpellations via self-regulatory imperatives. On the other hand, the ‘circuits’ refer to productive subjectivization processes that evade normative structuralizations. It is a question of the vanishing points of a desire for existence that lies in the potential to use oneself economically, ‘nomadically’, affectively and culturally, of a praxis that prevents subjects from remaining the same and identical to themselves since they are constantly altering themselves and thus their field of experience.

II. Embodiment between affective strain, endurance and tricksterism

To pose the question of micropolitics and the lived experience of racialization processes implies a deconstruction of the usual victimological semantics whereby the ‘victim’ figure appears as the only intelligible subject position. Gilles Deleuze/Félix Guattari urge us to no longer regard racist practices in terms of binary differentiation and processes of exclusion, but rather as strategies of inclusion of varying depth. Hegemony functions in such a way that one concedes first alterity and then ranks difference according to ‘degree of divergence’ from normative whiteness. This norm structures social hierarchies and dominance relations and is inscribed in migration regimes, state regulation of the population and, in the practices of everyday life, they becomes incorporated experience. However, the practices of everyday life and embodied experience extend beyond and flee these structures as illustrated by the following interview passages.
Zeyneb, a 29 year-old journalist who was born in Germany and whose parents immigrated from Turkey, talks about her everyday (working) life in Germany and the ‘dangers’ to be taken into account that can limit her freedom of movement. The internalisation of invisible borders becomes physically materialised in certain spaces and situations as immediate ‘fear’ and ‘strain’ resulting from it. In her description of her occupational life in different German cities, these anticipated borders express themselves as changes to her bodily and emotional state. Transgressing these borders means a physical presence is enough to risk being stigmatised as a ‘Turk’ or ‘foreigner’ and thus become a target of racially motivated attacks:

I found Chemnitz difficult, it was also a bit dangerous, you were always scared on the train, scared of physical violence in case some Nazis came along and beat you up. It's still the same somehow, you think in 2006 the risk that something could happen is still there.

These borders are, on the one hand, imagined borders that relate to ‘danger zones’. On the other hand, they materialise themselves as an incorporated emotional coding, as an embodied experience of fear of physical violence. Zeyneb avoids these conditions, however, by a practice of exodus and emigration to a west-European country in which she feels less obtrusive, and less vulnerable and threatened in the protection of bigger communities. However, borders refer not only to the geographical space of so-called ‘no-go-areas’ in which racist motivated violence threatens. There is also a materialisation of racism in which more subtle forms of border delineations play a role.

The following is an excerpt from the interview with Saliah (29), whose family immigrated to Germany 26 years ago from Iran, and refers to a temporary paralysis of her capacity to act. It first expresses itself in a basic acceptance of the situation, ‘that's just how it is’, which is nevertheless ‘paid for’ by expenditure of additional effort on her part. Saliah focuses on this by comparing her behaviour in claiming legal entitlements from state authorities with that of her majority-German student colleagues:

What has struck me, is that, for example, if I, well, if I feel that the guy or the woman behind the desk [at public authorities and offices] isn't doing their job properly or is unfriendly or has made a mistake, and this has certainly happened, then what happens is that I don't put my foot down as perhaps my German friends would. I don't say: “What kind of an [incomprehensible]’ or “I have a right to it!” or anything like that, no, I just can't say it because I well, eh, maybe I would now because I'm aware of it, but this happened to me two years ago, a civil-servant in the scholarship office had made an obvious mistake and this got me into financial difficulties and I did nothing, so a friend of mine said: “Yes, so hopefully you put your foot down and said what is this all about and that’s not on!” But I didn’t do anything, for example, not in other situations either because I didn’t feel that it was really my entitlement. So it was more like: “OK, I live here and benefit from the fact that there are scholarships, but as to demanding it like a German probably would, no, I didn’t feel: “I can make a fuss because I’m entitled to this and they should be more careful!” Or something to that effect. I just simply accepted the fact that they had made a mistake and that I would have to pay for it.

Although Saliah has both German as well as Iranian nationality and thus the same civil rights and legal entitlements as the majority, she has incorporated the ever-present experience of not really being a part of German society into her habitual structure and self-positioning. The idea that, as a descendant of migrants, she is not able to enjoy the same legal entitlements or claim her scholarship the same as a majority-German can be analysed as an unquestioned component of her habitual disposition. Following Pierre Bourdieu, one can interpret this as being the result of symbolic power. Bourdieu designates symbolic power as those forms of submission that may not be decoded directly but reveal themselves at most in affective coding; they have become, as it were, the habitus, since they have anchored themselves in the physical hexis and in supposedly natural and unquestioned cognitive orientations and practices. These are the forms of a submission whose ‘magic’ consists in the fact that they inscribe themselves in the ‘self-relations’ or ‘self-practices’, and in the bodies of individuals so that the arbitrariness of power and dominance is not recognized.

Nevertheless, a different reading of the interview segment might question how self-evident it is that migrants should assume the action options of the majority members. The statements that are at first assigned to a lack of assertiveness ‘not really putting your foot down’, ‘just couldn’t say it’ and ‘just
accepted it’ may also point towards a temporary refusal within racist relations: a non-compliant posture that refuses to acquiesce directly to the performance of violent representations in order to claim legal entitlements. Even if, in the next step, Saliah does get caught up in the structural, coded racist blockages and, in the end, creates some free space for herself (understood as the distance needed for the ability to act) through additional work so as to compensate for the other’s ‘mistake’ and to solve her problems. In the next interview passages, such a balancing act between mute perseverance and a ‘time shifted’ response as the situation demands becomes rather more a theme of partially empowering trajectories.

**Invent distancing tactics**

Zora came to Germany on a tourist visa at the age of 19 following the war in the former Yugoslavia and lived for many years as a ‘sans papier’. She forged an existence for herself through a wide variety of jobs, done partly in tandem, in household services, the catering trade and boutiques. Her legally insecure residency status as well as racializing, ethnicizing and genderizing differentiation processes position her in the extremely low paid household related sector as well as in other slightly better paid employment.

I took care of the grandmother and the two children, I cleaned the whole house, I cooked and ironed. You only find those kind of jobs or cleaning jobs when you don’t speak the language properly and you are illegal. And I was illegal.

After her arrival in Germany, Zora was faced not only with degrading positioning in the labour market and occupational hierarchy, but also by the denigration and disdain associated with the racist ‘Slav’ tag. In her everyday interactions with members of the majority society, a minoritizing process takes place which is not only experienced as a signifying practice. It involves a configuration of subject positions that are articulated along an axis of hierarchy from ‘normal’ to ‘abnormal’ and in symbolic equivalence ‘of higher value’ and ‘inferior’:

When I arrived in Germany I felt quite normal and then I noticed that I wasn’t normal somehow. Here, I am something… bad. Then there were cleaning jobs where people felt superior and they thought Slavs were inferior and me a cleaning lady and then from a crisis area, I was just rubbish for them. And I sometimes felt very bad, like I was carrying a heavy stone on my back as I washed the floors. At that time nothing could touch me. So I bent down and cleaned and felt bad, but at that time I just couldn’t allow myself to think about it, like: “Have I been badly been treated or not?” Because I just mightn’t have had the strength to come back again. I only started thinking about it much later, when I could allow myself.

This case of differentiation and hierarchization takes place not as a unique act, but occurs as iteration, as a repeating performative production of positionings. Zora reports ‘verbal abuse’ to which she has often been subjected and a physical attack and insults at the hands of an old man in a bookstore after she had answered his question about her origins. This social disdain also materialises itself in Zora’s self-relations as physical, affective sensitivities in terms of indisposition and depression that she articulates by the metaphorical idiom of the ‘heavy stone on her back’. On a superficial level, when she speaks of ‘bending down and cleaning’ and ‘cleaning the floor’, she seems to accept her assigned subject position and so performs an image of supposed submission.

Nevertheless, her statements also reveal that her interpellation is not fully delivered; she turns away as it were ‘tactically’. ‘Getting through’, securing her existence, is the first priority: ‘At that time nothing could touch me’. She suspends dealing with racist positionings at work and in other everyday interactions so as to concentrate on improving her life. Following de Certeau, we may designate this as a calculated tactics that does not emerge from a place, as it were, ‘of its own’. Tactics belong on the terrain of the others; there, she is a ‘poacher’ and causes some surprises.

Indeed, the racializing constructions of difference that operate through the ‘Slav’ signifier do impinge on Zora’s self-relations and self-perception. She accepts the position of difference assigned to her. However, she averts this attack by a reference to the role of the Germans in the First and the Second World Wars. So, she does not remain fixed within the racist discourse model and a naturalization of inferiority and superiority, but, with a resort to history, rejects the claim to dominance by adducing moral inferiority:

And I was, I have to say, very, very surprised because the Germans have no right to
consider us Slavs as something inferior since they started the Second World War, they started the First World War, and they murdered so many people in our country. And this was so ridiculous that they thought I was something bad.

Zora also breaks with the typical postures of resignation when she defends herself against the exploitation that she at first accepted in the café where she works. The repeated ironic remarks of her boss, ‘Oh, you poor thing, you got no tips again’, after he had deducted them himself while helping out due to lack of staff, elicited this response from Zora one day:

then I, well, one day I’d really just had enough, so I gave in my notice and said “there you go, now do it yourself, since you think you can do it all by yourself and its only me that can’t” because of the way I am, then help yourself, I am i-l-l-e-g-a-l, I don’t owe you anything, so you have no rights over me, go ahead, just do it yourself, I’m gone” and I really left him in the lurch one evening, he just went crazy [grins].

The weak point of her exploitation as an illegal worker emerges in the practical reinterpretation and rescinding of this subordinate position. At the very moment she becomes irreplaceable, she updates the interpellation of her ‘illegality’ by the tactic of converting it into her employer’s legal weakness (‘I am illegal, you have no rights over me’) and exits the place of her exploitation.

**Play the game, vary the rules**

Racism is - as further analyses of the interviews suggest - not a monolithic apparatus of hegemony and dominance. If, as Manuela Bojadzijev suggests, one focuses equally on migration regimes and racializing practices and on the dissident practices of migrants, one recognises that such practices should not simply be decoded as a reflex to ideological race constructions; they are rather to be seen as processes of contention where forms of racism, as much as those of escape, reform again and again. However, such dissidence does not come from a homogeneous collective subject, but is found in the myriad of scattered, indiscernible everyday practices of migrants, in their self-positioning and self-relations, in their embodied experiences that pass through, over and beyond these forms of socialization.

This can be illustrated by Zora’s history. Her story illustrates the connection between the occupational positions and the self-representations of those that fill them. With the concept of ‘sexual work’ Boudry/Lorenz/Kuster point to the fact that the representation of embodied, sexually differentiated individuals is also linked to work. Hence, specific workplaces require not only specific skills, but also particular embodiments of gender and sexuality viewed as hegemonic. Going beyond Boudry et. al., we can stress that together with these embodied practices, ethnicity and class are also being performed. Zora is - as becomes clear during many interviews - an ‘observer’. She acts, as it were, as an ethnographer, as an analyst of the present, who renders explicit these ‘unspoken contracts’ with which the symbolic orders of ethnicity, national affiliation and heteronormativity are reproduced and negotiated. Zora decodes these orders. Her body becomes a deployment and resource used tactically to produce an ‘inhabitable place’ on the field of labour - in this case in boutiques and bars. It is a question of a specific reservoir of explicit knowledge of the game rules of this order which is also an economic, heteronormative and ethnicizing/racist one.

Zora may be compared with one of the ironic narrative figures taken from Donna Haraway, a ‘trickster’, a devious and crafty person who adapts her form according to the specific context. She is a Cyborg figure, she proceeds in ostensibly complicity with the informatics of dominance. She has deciphered their game rules. She knows the expectations of her respective potential employers and the unmarked inherent symbolic orders. She accepts the scheming challenge and joins in the game only to vary the rules. She strives to correctly decipher and address the arrangement that is expected in each context. She produces not only an embodiment of ‘being a woman’ in the heteronormative order, but also this ‘is well integrated’, ‘apolitical’, and this ‘being German’: expectations masterfully performed in order to decide the game for herself.

So when I’m looking for a job, then…well, I still do it this way, then I’m not really me, I can’t just say that I’ve worked illegally and that I’ve worked as a cleaning lady so if I, so to speak, offer myself somewhere, to get a job, well, except in [the social facility], I don’t have to there, there I can say quite honestly who I am, there was…, well it doesn’t matter, but in
other places I have…I don’t know, five different applications, for example, where my different jobs are in different combinations for the people and . I have to sell myself over and over again as well integrated, and so play down my political / like side. And then to act as if everything is great here and I have learnt German, “Are you happy with it?” And yes, I’m able to, so I also behave like a German. So in certain situations… . I express myself succinctly, I talk quickly and I don’t talk too much and I don’t look anybody in the eye for too long and I don’t come too close to anyone, if I apply for a job and act as if I’m very competent so [laughs] now it’s all come out, hasn’t it? That’s how you apply for a job here. And don’t trouble anyone, don’t trouble anyone, I’m not too chatty, I’m nice, but I’m too n i c e and, and things like that [laughs] yeah.

In this context what is required is not only a knowledge of the unmarked regulating norms, it is also a matter of delivering a persuasive embodiment of gender, sexuality, ethnicity and national affiliation specific to each context. Thus the individual body becomes the incessant locus of address and positioning on the field of labour. This can be described as the embodied experience of a new biopolitical capitalistic regime - ‘embodied capitalism’ which allows individual bodies to become the venue for regimes of exploitation and conflict. They are involved in local and global capital logics as well as in a hegemonic nationalism, ethnicity and a heterosexual order.

At the same time embodiment and performativity do not simply follow the dumb compulsion of mirroring these logics, ‘really, I’m not really me when I apply’ - as Zora says. During these negotiations and re-writings the production of subjectivity takes place as sequential, productive subjectivization. To read her self-relationality as mere submission is too simple because there is a difference in comparison with subjectivization in and through the compulsions of national labour migration regimes and the orders of heteronormativity and ethnicization. The question here is why the interview partner fulfills the strictures of the neo-liberal order in virtually anticipatory ‘obedience’ and which compulsive apparatuses and regimes of domination she tries to avoid. Embodiment and performance become tactical elements that go beyond requirements and unreasonable demands - vanishing lines of a desire for existence. An intelligible existence which seeks to avoid being defined as the deprived ethnicized migrant worker and undermines this position. Using her abilities and qualities to redesign herself for continued adaptability to work - to redesign again and again and to perform expectations does, on the one hand, undoubtedly follow the neo-liberal paradigm of self-economisation. On the other hand, it may also be read as an ironic-reserved almost parodic queering and crossing of the orders, as a negotiation and re-working that evades the threat of enclosure in the fixed category of socially declassed migrant with no rights and all the devaluations that this entails.

Notes

2. Demirović, Alex/Bojadžijev, Manuela (Hg., 2002) Konjunkturen des Rassismus. Münster
3. Despite all the geopolitical particularities, however, it is still possible to determine three more or less clear discursive formations that form the basis for this racism and its inherent logics and practices: it is a matter of colonial, anti-Semitic and anti-Islamic discursive configurations.


15. Thus, the present work seems unable to escape the reservations expressed by Hito Steyerl against the ‘obscure special case’ adoption attempts of post colonial criticism in Germany (Steyerl, Hito (2003) Postkolianismus und Biopolitik. Probleme der Übertragung postkolonialer Ansätze in den deutschen Kontext. In Gutiérrez Rodríguez, Encarnación/Steyerl, Hito (Hg.) *Spricht die Subalterne deutsch? Postkoloniale Kritik und Migration*. Münster. pp. 38-55, p.49) At this point another effect of these analytics emerges, on which we am unable to enlarge here: the history of German anti-Semitism.


28. The starting point for these thoughts and the following writing is an analysis of interviews from two teaching research projects at the University of Hamburg: ‘Precarious Labour and Subjectivity’ and ‘Immaterial Labour and Migration’. Up to this, 120 guide-supported interviews have been conducted with people in different forms of precarious work/life relations. In this contribution, we refer, on the one hand, to a selection of the sample: 10 interviews with ‘sans papiers’ migrants in undocumented employment in Germany. On the other hand, 40 persons whose parents immigrated to Germany were also interviewed. These interview partners have grown up in Germany, some have German nationality, others still have their parents’ nationality or else double citizenship. These people are highly qualified ‘immaterial workers’ (i.e. as …) who are mobile within the European space and live so-called ‘pluri-focal’ biographies.


33. ibid., p. 89


40. Butler, Judith (1991) *Das Unbehagen der Geschlechter*. Frankfurt am Main. p. 37 [↩]

Article printed from darkmatter: http://www.darkmatter101.org/site

URL to article: http://www.darkmatter101.org/site/2008/02/23/performing-the-context-crossing-the-orders/