

**The Museumization of Migration in Paris and Berlin:
An Ethnography**

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von : M.A. Andrea Meza Torres

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Gutachter/innen:

Erstgutachter: Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Kaschuba

Zweitgutachterin: Prof. Dr. Regina Römhild

Abstract

This dissertation is an ethnography about the field of the museumization of migration in Paris and Berlin. After having begun with a recognition of the visible differences between the national landscapes of France and Germany, the ethnographer's conclusion shifted into the opposite direction: the differences at the level of the "national" actually blur when colonial and imperial history are taken into account. Based on a combination of ethnographies and theory, this thesis shows how the representation of migration is historically connected with colonial history. This means that former representations of the "other" (the "indigenous" and the "primitive") continue to exist today, but now attached to the figure of the "immigrant". From this perspective, images of "Europe" and its "others" emerge anew in the present context. This thesis shows how, in both France and Germany, respective representations of the "others/immigrants" are very similar. In both countries, official representations of migration stand for how each nation selects and integrates diversity and mobility into the national narrative. On the other hand, images of the "national self" differ drastically between France and Germany. In this way, two distinctive fields emerge, namely: the European zone (made up of EU-nationals) and the non-European zone (made up of so called "immigrants"). In this thesis, the (conflicting) coming together of both fields at the museum is approached through the concept of the contact zone. This concept allows an ethnographic approach towards complex discussions about modernity, gender, racism, nationhood and citizenship – all of which emerge through the topic of migration. Finally, this thesis reflects on the impact of these conflicts on the making of "European" and "national" collective memories by looking at these debates from a power perspective and thus opening the path for the coexistence of collective memories in the public spaces of national and European landscapes.

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Dissertation bietet eine Ethnographie über die Musealisierung der Migration in Paris und Berlin an. Die Autorin stellt fest, dass trotz klarer Unterschiede zwischen den beiden nationalen, politischen Landschaften, viele Differenzen verschwinden, wenn die Kolonialgeschichte berücksichtigt wird. Die Arbeit kombiniert Ethnographien und Theorien und zeigt auf, wie die Repräsentation der Migration an die Kolonial – und Imperialgeschichte gebunden ist. Dies bedeutet, dass ältere Repräsentationen der „Anderen“ (wie „Eingeborenen/Primitiven“) immer noch präsent sind, und zwar als Teil der Repräsentationen von „Immigranten“. Aus dieser Perspektive werden Bilder von „Europa“ und den „Anderen“ neu konfiguriert. Die Arbeit zeigt weiterhin, dass in Frankreich und Deutschland die jeweiligen Repräsentationen der „Anderen/Immigranten“ sehr ähnlich sind, denn in beiden Ländern steht die Migrationsmusealisierung für eine selektive Integration von Diversität und Mobilität in den jeweiligen nationalen Gemeinschaften. Dennoch, und auch das zeigt die Arbeit, werden die Bilder des „nationalen/Eigenen“ in beiden Ländern unterschiedlich gestaltet. Aufgrund dessen emergieren zwei Felder: eine Europäische Zone (von EU-Mitgliedern) und eine Nichteuropäische Zone (von sog. „Immigranten“). Die Dissertation analysiert das konfliktive Aufeinandertreffen der beiden Felder im Museum mit Hilfe des Konzepts der Kontaktzonen. Dieses Konzept ermöglicht eine ethnographische Annäherung an

komplexe Diskussionen über Moderne, Gender, Rassismus, Nationalismus und Staatsbürgerschaft, welche immer in Debatten zum Thema Migration auftauchen. Darüber hinaus reflektiert die Arbeit den Impact dieser Konflikte auf das Europäische und nationale Kollektivgedächtnis aus einer Machtperspektive. Somit bietet sie eine Reflexion über Europäische und nationale Erinnerungslandschaften an und schlägt vor, dass diese aus verschiedenen Formen kollektiver Gedächtnisse zusammengesetzt werden können.

Key Words / Schlagwörter

Museum, migration, contact zone, Europe, colonial history, decolonial perspective, collective memory

Museum, Migration, Kontaktzonen, Europabilder, Kolonialgeschichte, dekoloniale Perspektive, kollektives Gedächtnis

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Selbständigkeitserklärung

Introduction

When I started the research for this PhD thesis, I felt that a comparison of Paris's and Berlin's (and Germany's) museum landscapes would be impossible to undertake. To me, it seemed difficult to find similarities between migration museums and exhibits on migration which were located in such different national contexts, memorial cultures and traditions of representation. The fact that France and Germany today make up the central axis of the European Union, also seemed a paradox to me. The Franco-German field seemed to be antagonistic by nature. How could two nations with such differing national myths join together on a common memorial quest? Beyond this, the fact that my observation fields were, on the one hand, a national migration museum (the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration*) in one city (Paris) and, on the other hand, several temporary exhibits on migration not only in Berlin but in several German cities such as Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Munich, seemed to be a proof that both countries were non-comparable¹.

Beyond this, other facts pointed to the non-comparability of both fields². For example, my field in Germany consisted of scattered, temporary exhibits about immigration into Germany, which contrasted sharply with the fact that there are two permanent museums for the history of "emigration" in two German seaports – Hamburg and Bremerhaven. Both museums depict the fate of German immigrants in countries like the United States and Brazil – and cities like New York or Novo Hamburgo / New Hamburg, Brazil. A further paradox seemed to be that, while in France I found no trace of the representation of ethnic Germans (immigrants) living in France, in Berlin the history of the French Huguenots (French people of protestant confession who migrated to Germany from France) has been firmly embedded into the history of the representation of migration in museums³. Another fact was the representation of colonial history concerning settler populations of ethnic French and ethnic German background: while in France the "pieds noirs" (ethnic French populations, colonizers in Algeria who returned by force to France after the Algerian Revolution) are not represented in

¹ This pointed to the centralistic and federalistic composition of each nation.

² I owe this reflection on "comparing" to Prof. Denise Laborde. During his seminars, where a group of researchers from France and Germany discussed the staging of the "world music" and "créole" in both countries, we discussed the topic of "comparability" extensively.

³ See the exhibit "Zuwanderungsland Deutschland. Die Hugenotten. Migrationen 1500 - 2005" at the *Deutsches Historisches Museum*, Berlin, which took place between October 2005 and February 2006. Also, at the former permanent exhibit of the *Kreuzberg District Museum* (which was replaced completely), the visitor could see the topic of the (French) Hugenotten at the very beginning of the exhibit – this was the first part; afterwards, the exhibit introduced other types of migration flows or ethnic groups which had settled in Berlin (i.e. flight and expulsion, Vietnamese and Turkish migrations).

the permanent exhibit of the *Cité nationale* because they are not considered to be immigrants⁴, displaced German persons (ethnic Germans who resided in Eastern Europe and Russia in the context of Germany's imperial expansion until the end of World War II) have been formally considered to be immigrants and thus represented as a key paradigm in various exhibits on migration⁵. A very important point is the fact that 'citizenship' and the question of juridical (national) belonging have had a very different history in both countries: while people belonging to territories colonized by France were entitled to French citizenship (and still are in the case of the Départements d'outre mer / Overseas departments such as islands in the Caribbean – Martinique and Guadeloupe - and the Indian Ocean – La Réunion), in the history of Germany, citizenship was never conceded en masse to dominated / colonized populations (in i.e. Africa) or guest workers. Legislation in both countries concerning nationality and citizenship rights has been antagonistic if we look at the 'soil' principle in France (*jus soli*) and the 'blood' principle (*jus sanguine*) in Germany. The history of the development of a sense of national belonging seemed to be completely different in both nations. Traditionally, national belonging in France is attached to French Republican values, while in Germany national belonging is attached to ancestry. Last but not least, the secular state (*laïcisme*) in France contrasts with the German non-secular state model.

During my research, I constantly asked myself: how can a comparison of France's and Germany's museological landscapes on migration be done? At some point in time I realized that I would find similarities between both national contexts / observation fields. The reason for this realization was that beyond the major differences between both countries - which were visible at the level of national discourses - the topic of migration placed me in the field of imperial history where I could find points of convergence. The fact that the topic of migration meets with the topic of colonial history led me to realize that - seen from my "outsider" perspective - it was the differences (between France and Germany) which seemed artificial and the similarities which looked real. At the same time, at the level of the making of representations of 'Europe' I could begin to see that a common European history between France and Germany made sense when seen from the perspective of imperial European history, which came to the fore in the museums and especially with representations about migration. Indeed, both the archive/museum and the representation of immigrants/others

⁴ According to a member of staff from the history department of the *Cité nationale*, Paris.

⁵ At the *Kreuzberg District Museum* and the *Deutsches Historisches Museum*, but there was also a plan to put displaced ethnic Germans together with guest worker immigrants – a project which never materialized. Further, in Berlin I found one project about migration and social work which had a list of people who were the 'targets to help'. At the top of the list stood people coming from the background of 'flight and expulsion'.

connect with imperial history. I even noticed similarities between different European countries. In this way, beyond apparent antagonisms, an image of “Europe” as entangled with the history of successive empires, colonial enterprises, and colonial subjects began to appear and consolidate in my research. Looking at the museological representations of migration, images of Europe (historical and contemporary) started to become visible.

With this, I want to point out that the object of my research (this is, exhibits on migration in museums), proved to be a fruitful field to find a common ground in a context which, at least at the beginning, seemed to be characterized by differences. As it is through the museum that each nation constructs an image of itself, but it is, likewise, through the museumizing of migration process itself that the history of colonial enterprises, and “othering” in both nations – as well as the presence of ethnic minorities in contemporary Europe - comes to the fore. And it is also through images of migration that an image of Europe is coherently visible – an image which brings together the imperial history of European countries such as Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and France.

Research about images of migration in museums makes possible a connection between the national contexts in France and Germany, because the museum represents a unique “arena” where national discourses are projected on a global scale. But the museum is also the arena where monolithic national narratives become fragmented and where the crisis of the modern nation can be discussed. In her PhD research about the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration* in Paris, British researcher Mary Stevens argues that the migration museum in France puts the nation together again (or “re-members” the nation) (Stevens, 2008); following Joachim Baur, who analyzed migration museums in New York, Canada and Australia in *Die Musealisierung der Migration* (“The Museumization of Migration”, Baur, 2009), this type of museum serves some nations in their staging of “multiculturalism” and thus reinforces national narratives which are grounded on diversity and migration processes. Further, Tamar Blickstein’s study on Argentina’s national migration museum in Buenos Aires gives an account on how the migration museum re-members a nation through oblivion; the fact that this museum presents the Argentinian nation as “built up by European migrations only” minimizes the presence of other migration flows (Blickstein, 2011). Gisela Welz also reached this conclusion in her study about the *Ellis Island Migration Museum*, in New York, as she described that the focus of this museum lies in the representation of migrations from Europe, thus minimizing other processes such as the slave trade, migrations from Asia and from Mexico and South America to the United States (Welz, 1996). As it is evident in the work of

these scholars, what is not represented at the migration museum is nevertheless present and visible – indeed conspicuous by its absence – before the eyes of the researcher. Stevens, Baur, Blickstein and Welz analyze representations of the “national” during a time of change (after the end of the Cold War in 1989). These museums (and this also concerns the case of Germany) give an account of how nations refashion themselves through the museumization of migration. They reburish themselves to appear anew in a global context, a scenario where a shifting of economies, toward what David Harvey calls “(...) China or some East-Asian configuration of powers centered on China (...)” (Harvey, 2009⁶), is palpable. While trying to re-member national contexts, migration museums also show the internal fractures of each nation and the internal conflicts which lead to the dissolution of the imagined national cohesion; they show the blind points of oblivion and are thus perfect arenas where people (such as ethnic minorities or post-colonial immigrants) can bring their forgotten narratives to the fore.

In countries like the United States, Canada or Australia, migration museums do mirror a certain type of collective memory, which reinforces national narratives that are built upon metaphors such as the “melting pot” or “multiculturalism”. In the case of the *Cité nationale* - the French migration museum – the migration museum actually breaks up the republican model and tries to re-organize the French national myth around the terms of multiculturalism and diversity (to the point of failure). Anyhow, all museums I mentioned are not representative of “real” migration processes. These only show a “part” of the whole of society, a part that is convenient to show and which allows “nations” to exist in a global era (characterized by a “crisis” of representation and modernity) and at the same time portray the image of “pots” or containers of diversity. In the case of France and Germany, the shown parts are contested by people with migration background who wish to enlarge social representations. The strategy of showing the “part” which stands for the “whole”, proves to be key to keep the national narrative together. In this way, migration museums embody arenas of tension which develop around national narratives.

⁶ On July 10, 2009, David Harvey gave a conference about “Ruptures and Continuities of Modernity” at the John F. Kennedy Institute at the *Freie Universität Berlin*. Here, he described a “shift of hegemony”: “And the obvious candidate or rival, if you like, or alternative hegemonic power is China or some East-Asian configuration of powers centred on China, so that the possibility of some hegemonic shift being on the way right now has to be seriously considered (...)” (Harvey, 2009).

In this PhD thesis I aim to give an account of both sides: on the one hand, the mainstream discourses of migration museums and exhibits on migration, which rely on representations of a whole nation but rely only on a 'part' of migration history (thus re-membering the nation). On the other, I aim to give an account of, first, critical scientific discourses and, second, the discourses of representatives of ethnic minorities and immigrant groups, who describe migration processes and histories which have been forgotten by the curators of mainstream exhibits and are thus not represented in these projects. Finally, I also attempt to describe the coming together of the mentioned narratives in the museological arena and reflect on the zones of contact and conflict which open up during such discussions and debates.

For example, a contested topic in exhibits on migration in both France and Germany is the topic of colonial history. This "blind spot" became conspicuous in my research: ignored and minimized by hegemonic discourse, it was stressed by immigrant groups and ethnic minorities. The point of tension seems to rely on the fact that images which configure nations (images of the 'self/selves') are intimately related with colonial images (about the 'other/others'). Migration museums engage in dealing with images of others, a fact which has been criticized in the sense that maybe these museums should not rely on the concept of migration but on colonial history and the history of the representations of colonial subjects⁷. Further, the history of migration museums is entangled with the rise of the archive (with contents about 'colonized others' like at the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville, Spain), with colonial and universal exhibits (where 'others' were exposed in juxtaposition to modernity in i.e. Paris, London, Tervuren (Belgium) and Berlin) as well as with cabinets of curiosity (i.e. in Amsterdam and Austria), botanical gardens, human and animal zoos, the science of anthropology (the royal anthropological schools), and the establishment of ethnographic museums. These would prove to be a fundamental process for displaying the wealth of colonial empires.

After official decolonization (of i.e. the African continent in the decades following World War II), museums have been key in representing nation-states and, with it, images of modernity. In this context, from colonialism to nationalism, the othering of people who are considered to be outside of modernity, but, informally (and geographically), inside of Europe in subaltern positions, has been a constant feature of representations (i.e. indigenous

⁷ I take the concept "colonial subjects" from Ramón Grosfoguel (Grosfoguel 2008, 608) (Grosfoguel, 2003). I will explain it in more detail in Chapter Three.

populations, religious others, all the way to today's post-colonial immigrants). Following this genealogy, the migration museum is attached to colonial history.

Here, I just outlined two narratives concerning the migration museum: one which describes how migration museums and exhibits on migration "open up" and modify the national imaginary (in the direction of multiculturalism and diversity), and another narrative which shows how contemporary representations of migration have strong ties with colonial and imperial history. Both narratives oppose each other, meet at the museum and engage in perpetual conflict.

Migration museums and exhibits on migration are also emblematic of a shift or "turn" in the global geopolitical landscape and the social sciences. Concerning geopolitics, migration in museums stands for the formation of a new regional image of Europe which, geographically speaking, contracts and expands at the same time. Parallel to the annexation of new nations, Europe today builds a new geography with new borders and this topic is contained in exhibits on migration; "what" or "who" is European is related to the concept of the new borders. At the same time, contemporary images of Europe also represent a continuation of colonial practices in a transformed way for a new "global" era. Through replacing the image of "primitives" with "immigrants", the latter have come to occupy the place of concern about the "others" within Europe, which is also reflected in the practice of anthropology. Concerning the social sciences and, more explicitly, anthropology, it is important to mention the role of migration and the epistemic meaning of new research on migration. Following anthropologist Caroline Brettell in her introduction to *Anthropology and Migration* (2003):

Anthropology, as a discipline, came relatively late to the study of migration as a social, political economic and cultural process. Indeed, anthropologists often chose not to write about it, even when it was happening right in front of them, because it did not fit the timeless and bounded idea of culture that framed their analyses. (...) However, by the late 1950's and early 1960's, it became apparent to many anthropologists that migration should receive more systematic attention as a topic of research. Initially the emphasis was on rural-urban migration, the demographic factor that most contributed to the exponential growth of cities (...) (Brettell, 2003: ix).

Today anthropologists can hardly avoid some consideration of migrants and the migratory process. It has been estimated that in 1990 120 million people were living outside their country of birth or citizenship, and that by 2000 this figure had risen to 160 million (Martin and Widgren, 2002). Anthropologists have not only continued to examine the impact of out-migration on sending communities, they have also increasingly turned their attention to the study of immigrant populations in the United States (for example, Chávez 1992; Gold 1995; Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001; Grassmuck and Pessar 1991; Khandelwal 2002; Lessinger 1995; Mahler 1995; Margolis 1994; Stepick 1998). (Brettell, 2003: x).

Brettell describes an important epistemic turn which has had an impact in the social sciences, anthropology and museology. In the European context, the study of migration processes to European metropolises has also increased considerably. The focus on rural-urban migrations, as described by Eugene Weber in *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France 1870 – 1914* (1976), has shifted to the study of transnational migration processes (Pries, 1977) (Vertovec & Cohen, 1999: XX - XXV) (Schiller and Fouron, 2001). This focuses on migrations on a transnational scale, which stem from the global South and go in the direction of European metropolises. The changes in urban and global landscapes – as well as the emergence of “in between” spaces of transnational migration and flows (such as revenues) – have affected the research on representations of the national and the regional. This shift is entangled with a change of representations in museums and the emergence of migration museums and exhibits on migration.

For example, the closing down of the *Musée de l'homme* in Paris in 2007 and the inauguration of the *musée du quai Branly* in the same year (and with the collections of the *Musée de l'homme*) embodies this shift. This event signalled the closing down of an era (of anthropological research and ethnographic representations) and the inauguration of a new one (where representations of anthropology and the ethnographic merge with aesthetics and the global art markets). In Berlin, the plans to re-build an imperial castle in Berlin-Mitte and inaugurate the *Humboldt-Forum* inside the castle with the anthropological collections of Berlin's *Ethnographic Museum Dahlem* (and the closing down of this museum) also embody this epistemic turn. Further, these changes in structure have paved the way for migration museums to emerge and exhibits on migration to proliferate. This shift – the closing down of museums engaged in anthropological image-making – created the necessity of depicting “otherness” in contemporary terms – namely, in the form of “migration” and “immigrants” – and in new places/agoras: migration museums and exhibitions on migration.

This important “turn” in the history of representations, which frames colonial subjects as immigrants, has been described by Pascal Blanchard and Nicolas Bancel in *De l'indigène à l'immigré* (From indigenous to the immigrant)⁸ (Blanchard and Bancel 1998). Concerning museums as places of memory, this “turn” has also had enormous consequences. For example, the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* was the first museum to be

⁸ Here it is important to point out that the term “indigène” emerged in the context of French colonialism and does not mean “indigenous” in English, but rather “colonial subjects”. Indigènes were colonial subjects in the French colonial territories. The political party “Les Indigènes de la République” makes use of this term exactly in this sense, this means, referring to the condition of post-colonial immigrants in France as “colonial/racial subjects” within the French Republic. Thus, they criticize racist practices which occur inside a European, democratic state.

conceived without an actual collection of objects (Lafonte-Couturier 2007: 8-15). The concept and project for a migration museum, the place/building to host the project, the staff, all of this was ready before actually ‘possessing’ the objects (collection!) for the exhibition. Objects had to be collected after the fact (Grognet, 2007: 28 - 37)⁹. This reversed process contradicts the very essence of the traditional museum as a place to store, conserve and safeguard existing collections of (i.e.) ethnographical objects, art pieces and/or historical documents. In the case of exhibitions on migration in Germany, I observed that most of the displayed objects had actually (or almost) no monetary value. Everyday life objects such as suitcases, plastic containers, pots, pans, and old sewing machines have no market value but, they do occupy contested spaces where, historically, only objects with monetary value have been displayed (i.e. national museums and art galleries). In both countries it was clear that established notions of museum planning (first we have the collection, then we undertake the museum project) and value (the displayed objects ‘have’ monetary value) had been unsettled.

It is important to stress that these changes would have never taken place without the process of Europeanization. Through this process, France and Germany engage in similar projects (such as the *quai Branly* and the *Humboldt Forum*) to create a common European space¹⁰. This common space goes hand in hand with the creation of the “others”, which will define the core of this European space. In this context, the new others are the “immigrants” of each nation. A metaphor of these processes of becoming similar through Europeanization is the exhibition “A chacun ses étrangers? France – Allemagne 1871 - 2008” (To Each their own Foreigners? France – Germany 1871 - 2008) / “Fremde. Bilder von den „Anderen“ in Deutschland und Frankreich seit 1871” (“Strangers. Images of “Others” in Germany and France since 1871”). This Franco-German joint venture, which took place in two national museums (the *Cité nationale* and the *Deutsches Historisches Museum*) embodies a place of dialogue between the European powers and their definition of the others (post-colonial immigrants, guest workers, illegalized people, candidates for French/German citizenship, Muslim populations and Islam, and social movements against racism) in each nation.

⁹ This has important implications: it could mean that the “model” for this migration museum was dictated long ago, and just had to be ‘filled up’. I will follow this perspective in chapter four, where I give examples of archives (*Archivo General de Indias*), exhibitions and museums which could be the “grandparents” of the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration*.

¹⁰ It must be pointed out that, while in France these changes occurred rather quickly, the German debate around the *Humboldt-Forum* and the representations surrounding it is a much slower process. In many ways it seems to be copying the developments of the French counterpart, at a much slower pace.

In the context of processes of othering, migration museums and exhibitions on migration also emerge as places of encounter and contact. These zones for the depicting of diversity are also zones of conflict. Here, the scholarship of Marie Louise Pratt (1991, 1992), James Clifford (1997) and Robin Boast (2011) is relevant to describe the turbulences evident in these agoras. James Clifford's term "Museums as contact zones"¹¹ is key to understanding the conflicts arising in museological arenas. The term "contact zone" refers to the encounter of different historical genealogies at the museum. Clifford coined this term through a description of the making of the *Museum of the American Indian* where representatives of communities were called to take decisions at this museum in Washington. In his more recent article "Neocolonial collaboration: Museum as Contact Zone Revisited (...)", Boast contextualizes the contact zone anew by taking Clifford's but also Pratt's focus in contexts of colonial history and power asymmetries into consideration to analyze contemporary (new) zones of contact and conflict. Although this scholarship does not engage specifically with migration museums, it does provide a theoretical and historical context to explain the encounters and conflicts at exhibitions on migration. For it is true that most conflicts happening around exhibitions on migration are intimately tied with the colonial question. In this dissertation, I will apply the term "contact zone" to migration museums in Paris and Berlin and so re-contextualize the zone of conflict between the indigenous and the modern as the zone of contact and conflict between immigrants and nationals. Through the contextualization of colonial history, both groups – one(s) defending the colonial civilizing missions and other(s) opposing colonization – become visible politically and epistemically. From this perspective, exhibitions on migration are the present agoras where power relations stemming since the beginning of the colonial enterprise are re-contextualized. They re-emerge anew in contemporary agoras dedicated to the representation and the study of migration.

For this work, the central question is the following: What do exhibitions on migration and the tensions they create say about the culture of remembrance in France, Germany – and Europe? In my view, the outcome (or aim) of this dissertation is to show the impact of these conflicts on the future of memorial cultures at both national and regional levels in Europe. In order to be able to explain this, it is important to take new and contemporary social movements into consideration to see how social tensions have also affected the continuity of national

¹¹ In his essay: "Museums as contact zones", in *Routes* (1997). P. 118 – 219.

commemorations¹². As Dipesh Chakrabarty pointed out in his article “Museums in Late Democracies” (Chakrabarty, 2002), museums have become contested arenas of debate where social movements have claimed an important presence. This point is related with the struggle about a national or regional culture of remembrance – as social movements contest the rituals of commemoration and the centrality or marginality of particular histories (i.e. the Holocaust, the slave trade, the colonial enterprise). In the following, I will give examples to explain the conflict between different cultures of remembrance to be able to show the fractures within notions of collective memory within national discourses.

The first example is the commemoration of the liberation of the ‘French’ from Nazi occupation on May 8th, 1945. This event is commemorated yearly to recall an occupation, which is openly condemned on a world-wide scale. The message of this ritual is to condemn the infamous Nazi occupation in France and ensure that it never happens again. Here, “right” and “wrong” – “good” and “evil” – are clearly demarcated. The French are represented as resistant fighters (as in “la résistance”) against Nazi atrocities; German Nazis are the occupiers who committed crimes. In the course of this commemoration, the German side apologizes to the French side. French and German actors from “within” Europe engage in a ritual of remembrance and social responsibility for a conflict which should never happen again. Meanwhile, there is another commemoration, which takes place parallel to this and which shows a deep fracture within French society: Since the year 2005, on this same date (May 8th), the political party of “Les indigènes de la République” (The Indigenous of the Republic¹³) organizes a public demonstration in Paris to remember the crimes committed by the French army in Algeria (on the same day and month, but on a different year). In this ritual, the massacres in the towns of Setif, Guelma and Kherrata are remembered; victims are evoked and the violence condemned. Ironically, this commemoration takes place on the same day that the French celebrate their liberation from Nazi occupation. So: what does this imply? This case of ‘double commemorating’ actually shows a clear fracture between rituals of remembrance within the same geographical space. For a certain group of people, it is important to celebrate their liberation from oppression (the French are liberated from the Nazis); for another group of people (consisting mainly of post-colonial immigrants from Algeria, but also from Africa and the Caribbean), it is important to remember the oppression

¹² Soline Laplanche Servigne (2009 : 56 – 67) gives a description of these movements from a comparative (Franco-German) perspective. It is important to follow struggles against racism in both countries in order to understand the conflicts and fractures at the level of national museums and memorial landscapes.

¹³ The manifesto of Les Indigènes can be found at: http://www.indigenes-republique.fr/article.php3?id_article=951&var_recherche=setif (Website consulted on 01.03.2013)

caused by those who (ironically) had themselves been also oppressed by a violent occupation (the French).

We could ask ourselves the following questions: which commemoration ritual should be celebrated with more enthusiasm? Can both commemorations be celebrated with the same media scope? Should one commemoration serve to oppress the other commemoration? Here, the fact that French resistant fighters who were opposing Nazi occupation were themselves supporters of the French colonial occupation, which was responsible for massacres in Algeria opens up the question of what is collective memory. Which group remembers what? And who represents the majority? French citizens of Algerian origin cannot forget the massacres in Algeria; but, as French citizens, they also support the French resistance against the Nazis and the liberation from German fascism. French people of European descent also celebrate French resistance, but: would they also condemn violence in Algeria even though their national identity might rely on the pride of the civilizing mission ('mission civilisatrice') in North-African territories? These are important questions. For: how can a collective memory exist - which satisfies the needs of every group of people living within the French hexagon, Germany or within the European Union? How can different forms of collective memories (bigger or smaller) fit in a national or European landscape? Here we are dealing with the question of how can different commemorations (in plural) come into dialogue in order to satisfy the memorial demands of all citizens within a territory. This example shows the existence of two fields of representations, two fields which – in demanding reparations – confront each other.

Coming back to migration exhibits, there is a further example, which supports the existence of these two fields: this is the intervention of the "Sans Papiers" movement¹⁴ at the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* in 2010. This intervention had a strong symbolic power and left a deep mark in the history of the museum because, while the French migration museum represents a space of change and dialogue (from the perspective of the national narrative), for illegalized workers from Africa and Asia (the *Sans papiers* movement) the museum became a tool/space, which they occupied during four months to fight for residence and working permits. Thus, the migration museum became a new arena of social dispute, negotiation and conflict, which went beyond the normal tasks of a museum. As the *Sans Papiers* had not been satisfied with the museum as a place to transform representations, they intervened to transform it into an active and efficient political space to claim and achieve their

¹⁴ The Sans Papiers movement is made up mostly by men from Mali (in Africa), although women and children from Asian countries were also part of the intervention/occupation. Sans Papiers refers to workers without papers – who never had papers or who were made "illegal" (loss of residence permit) through new legislation.

legal rights, residence and working permits, and thus avoid further marginalization and deportation.

In the case of Germany, I observed a similar phenomenon (although it was not identical to the French case): while exhibits on migration have been staged in important museums such as the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in Berlin – an example being the exhibit “Fremde” or “Zuwanderungsland Deutschland” – I observed that most of these exhibits did not recruit people with migration background in important positions. As I came to find during my research, due to this lack of participation (at a structural level), people with migration background have actively organized themselves to make temporary exhibits about migration where their particular histories and memories come to the fore. It is important to mention that the makers of these exhibits are aware of the structural exclusion they face in national institutions and have thus decided to put their efforts into self-made/or community made projects. More than a field of confrontation, in Germany I encountered immigrant organizations that took up the task of exposing their hidden or subalternized histories. Examples are: the archive *DOMID* (in Cologne), the cultural organization *KorIENTATION* or the *Aramäische Kulturstiftung* (Aramean Cultural Foundation) in Berlin. These are all examples of archives and associations, which were created by immigrants themselves to work on their own perspectives of history and display objects in museological spaces. For example, they engage in showing the history of “guest workers” in Germany mainly from the point of view of narratives of Turkish or Korean intellectuals and “guest workers”, or the cultural history of ethnic minorities and their struggle to keep their culture beyond their migration process, settlement in and integration into Germany. These archives, groups and foundations show the formation of alternative representations of history. They work either independently or in cooperation with bigger museological institutions, art galleries, cultural institutions, libraries or universities. One example is the exhibition “Geteilte Heimat. 50 Jahre Migration aus der Türkei. Paylasilan Yurt” (Divided Motherland. 50 years of migration from Turkey) which *DOMID* staged in 2012 at the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in Berlin. This is just an example, but it shows work on representation by minorities, which has opened spaces to narrate alternative historical narratives, which do not normally match with the hegemonic national narrative.

I also witnessed confrontations in the field of representations in Germany – these were zones of conflict, which also referred to the colonial question in the German context. For example, in academic discussions, the term “immigrant” – and “migration studies” itself - have come

under scrutiny because they allegedly wash away the analysis of structural racism by focusing the research on mobility. This critique has been strongly formulated by *Afro-deutsche* (Afro-german groups) but also by other African diasporas in other European countries such as The Netherlands (see Nimako, 2011 and Hine, Keaton, and Small (eds.), 2009). Also, there is strong critique of “The New Mobilities Paradigm” (Scheller and Urry, 2006), of Marc Augés “anthropology of mobility” (Augé, 2009) or “creolisation” as coined by Ulf Hannerz (Hannerz, 1996) because these theoretical perspectives ignore (or minimize) the impact of everyday structural racism on groups not considered to be Germans of ‘blood’ or ‘ancestry’. Also, the discussion about “Blackfacing” in the German theatre scene became turbulent. Here, it was debated if white actors should appear on stage performing as blacks - with their faces painted black. In this debate the role of black Germans, their opportunities and projects of self-representation in the cultural landscape has been extensively discussed (important events have taken place, for example the intervention “Mind the Trap” at the German Theatre (*Deutsches Theatre*) which took place in January 2014).

Other groups in Berlin have gathered around the “post-colonial question”. One group has intervened in the permanent exhibition of the *Deutsches Historisches Museum*. Through the project “Kolonialismus in Kasten” (Colonialism in Boxes) the group organized tours to the museum with self-made audioguides where German colonial history was told and objects related with German colonial history were identified and contextualized. The audio-guide and tour offered the information which is missing at the museum. Another example is the group “Berlin Postkolonial”, which actively opposes the building of the castle in Berlin-Mitte and the staging of the *Humboldt-Forum* tracing the link between ethnographical objects and the German colonial enterprise. Here, the debate about re-patriation of objects is also a turbulent zone of discussion. Beyond this, more and more interdisciplinary projects (between science, art, and activism at the museum) are beginning to emerge in Berlin and Germany. These projects bring to the fore the discussion about Germany’s colonial enterprise (i.e. in Africa – Togo, Namibia, Tanzania - and the South Pacific Islands) and criticize the continuation of colonial practices (i.e. against non-Germans and immigrants) in contemporary Germany.

Looking at the spaces of confrontation, we can clearly see how questions concerning demands on citizenship and against exclusion have become part of the museological debate on representation in both countries. Museum spaces, objects, curators, structures, knowledges, representations: every material and non-material aspect of the museum has come under scrutiny and is subjected to debate. From this perspective, similarities between both countries

become visible. At this point, I will describe some of the similarities which I could observe over time, since it is from this perspective that a comparison of both countries finally became palpable. After having looked from the standpoint of majority societies (where both nations are portrayed as essentially different and even historically antagonistic), a new perspective from the standpoint of those European people considered to be the “Others” of Europe opened new perspectives. From this space, similarities between both nations became visible and the process of the formation of Europe also became comprehensible. Here I will give a brief overview.

Despite differences, both France and Germany seem to have “exchanged” practices concerning the treatment and representation of non-French and non-German populations inside both countries¹⁵. Since the end of the 80’s and continuing today, both states have gradually succeeded in putting pressure upon populations which do not identify either with Christianity or, in the case of France, with the secular state (i.e. Muslims)¹⁶. In both nation-states, non-white citizens who have never physically left Europe have been progressively othered and made into “immigrants”¹⁷. Referring to the issue of citizenship, important changes and exchanges have taken place. For example, in 2001 a new immigration law proposal appeared in Germany (Zuwanderungsgesetz, which was approved in 2004) permitting children born in Germany to be candidates of German citizenship. With this, Germany started (partially) to practice the right of soil (jus soli) – something which was characteristic of France. Parallel to this development, laws in the neighbouring country France have become progressively tighter through modifications of the law Pasqua-Debré (Ocak, 2012: 2). With these changes, people born in France who do not hold the French passport (but who have been residents in France for a long time) or who do not support the ideals and myths of the French Republic (this must be signed through an integration contract ‘Contrat d’accueil et d’intégration’ since 2007) have been denied naturalization and the extension of their residence permits - or have faced deportation. This tightening of restrictions became even sharper in 2012 under minister of foreign affairs Claude Guéant. Looking at these developments in both countries, we could say that France has become “Germanized” while

¹⁵ I thank Prof. Ramón Grosfoguel for sharing this perspective with me, as it is through Grosfoguel’s lens and comments that I could actually see and describe this “exchange”. This paragraph is a summary of Grosfoguel’s comments which he shared with me in the year 2011, in Berlin.

¹⁶ I rely on the work of French activist Houria Bouteldja, spokesperson of the political party “Indigènes de la République”, who explains contemporary racism in France through a critique of the racism which lies behind secular ideology.

¹⁷ As explained by Kwame Nimako (2012) at a conference at the *Institute of European Ethnology* at the *Humboldt University* in Berlin, May 2012.

Germany has become “Francicized”¹⁸. Both countries have sought to exclude those people who lie outside the legal frame and at the same time they have sought to enforce integration (through integration programmes) on those already possessing citizenship but expressing ‘cultural differences’.

A further phenomenon has been the success of the extreme right in France. Since the 80’s (with the success of Jean Marie Le Pen’s *Front National*), and in the last elections (the poll success of Marie Le Pen’s, daughter Jean Marie Le Pen) there has been a clear rise of right-wing ideas in France. This surprised international public opinion, which had framed right-wing extremism as a phenomenon characteristic of Germany – but not of the country, which officially opposed the Nazi regime and occupation. Further, during the Sarkozy administration, ideas of the far right, and especially those referring to questions of national identity (and which go in the direction of the ‘right of blood’ – *jus sanguinis*), were institutionalized in France. The questions: “what makes up the French nation” or “what is national identity?” – and, especially during the infamous debate with the title (“Le débat sur l’identité nationale”), which took place between the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010, were framed in racist terms. From the standpoint of Germany, I rather met astonishment toward this debate, as such a debate could have never existed (in those terms) in Germany. In the context of Germany, other debates took place. For example, the racism expressed during the ‘Sarrazin debate’ was a scandal, but at least Sarrazin’s overt racism was publicly criticized (at least to some extent). In France, official debates concerning “what is French?” began to be framed around ideas of race and blood, but also of religion (Christian) and geography (those having European descent) (Bouteldja, 2011)¹⁹; in this context, the expression “français de souche” (French of ancestry or “real” French) was employed uncensored in every-life and in public institutions. This process concerning France also points to a development of “similarities” between both countries at the level of “national” societies. Another strong point of convergence are the virulent debates around the questions of Islam, the veil and the role of Muslim women in Europe (here, debates in both countries seem identical). Further, representations of Arabs and Muslims as the official others of Europe became more visible in hegemonic discourse, in scientific congresses and in representations made in exhibitions about migration. Questions such as: “how can Islam be practiced in a form which suits European nations?” began to exert pressure toward Muslim populations in both countries.

¹⁸ Here I want to stress, again, that this is the view expressed by Grosfoguel, which was crucial to develop the theoretical frame of this dissertation.

¹⁹ This was clearly explained by activist Houria Bouteldja in a conference she gave at the *George Simmel Zentrum* of the *Humboldt Universität zu Berlin* in October, 2011.

This fact became visible in Germany through the law project against circumcision (2012) (through which both a practice of Judaism and Islam would become illegalized and its practitioners economically affected²⁰) and in France with the question of the presence of the Muslim veil in the public (secular) space. It goes without saying that the responses of those affected by the rise of right-wing discourses - minorities, immigrants and discriminated people - have also been similar in both countries. At the level of anti-racist engagement, similar developments have appeared and national official discourses have been contested within each nation. These can be seen in the discussions generated by social movements such as “Les Indigènes de la République”, in France or the “Network People of Color”, in Germany.

Another important aspect which stems from the common ground of the European Union concerns geography. The European Union has imposed a politics of reinforcing the territorial borders, protected by the agency Frontex. In this way, Germany closed its territory to asylum seekers (by strategically placing Poland, Eastern European countries and Italy as barriers of contention). In France, restrictive migration policies together with border controls (to exclude racialized others) became the way to protect the national borders. This has had important effects concerning inner European representations: for example, all those people lying beyond the official European borders do not belong to Europe. But, also, in both France and Germany, images of the “South” and “East” of Europe have taken a subordinate position. This is visible at the level of the museumization of migration. From the standpoint of the Franco-German axis, numerous exhibits on migration have been dedicated to show the history of Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Greek and Polish migration (to give some examples) into France and Germany. In these representations, the “South of Europe” is not represented as equal but rather as economically subordinated to the main European axis. The “South of Europe” and “Eastern Europe” (the other attached zone)²¹ are subalternized regions within Europe: the “retrograde South” and the “ex-communist east” (it must be said that even east-Germany did not escape from this subalternization). These blocks also build internal borders within Europe which exist parallel to the “outer” European borders, i.e. Ukraine, Turkey and North Africa. These examples account for a process where two nations “become similar” through the EU.

²⁰ See Çetin; Voß; Wolter (eds.) (2012), *Interventionen gegen die Deutsche Beschneidungsdebatte*. Edition Assemblage.

²¹ A good example of the museumization of East Germany is the *GDR Museum* located in a very touristy area of Berlin-Mitte, right in front of what used to be the communist ‘Palace of the Republic’ (which was taken down piece by piece). Also, Franziska Becker’s study of Görlitz (a striking city) is an example of the museumization processes which affected former East German cities after 1989 (Becker, 2005).

Having identified the differences and similarities between both national fields and, also, the different approaches to the representation of migration within both nations, I will proceed to describe the contents of each chapter. This PhD thesis is made up of different ethnographies, or five chapters, which combine empirical material (interviews and conversations) with cutting edge, critical theory. I also included descriptions of a collection of images (mainly photographs), which I gathered during my visits to the museums, exhibitions, and urban spaces throughout my fieldwork from 2007 to 2013. The fieldwork took place mainly in Paris and Berlin, but also in other European cities such as Seville, Granada, Amsterdam, Brussels and Trevuren, in French cities such as Marseille and in the German cities of Cologne and Hamburg. Also, in the many (yearly) trips I took to Mexico City (due to family reasons), I gathered important information about the museological landscapes in Mexico, the United States and countries in South America. This experience offered a very fruitful (outer) perspective to think about those landscapes in France, Germany, and Europe and to find ways of comparing the landscapes in both continents. Also, this trans-atlantic perspective offered important insights into the exchange practices (transfers of knowledge and practices), which have historically taken place between both continents.

The first chapter is an ethnographic approach to migration museums and exhibits on migration in Paris and Berlin (as well as other German cities) in the context of the conflicts arising in museums. This chapter will link debates about representation with debates about knowledge production by analyzing the conflicts that arose between the makers and the public and what happens when racialized immigrants visit the exhibitions and confront curators of majority societies. How do racialized subjects / immigrants cross over to the field of the makers and thus ‘turn’ around the view on migration? This chapter will give an account of debates on the American continent, which have had a strong impact in Europe and which have triggered discussions around the ‘cannon battles’²². At the level of representation of “otherness”, “migration” and “history writing”, epistemologies and canons are heavily contested. This chapter will explore the ethnographic material, which is the basis of my thesis, as it describes both fields or zones of historical articulation, namely a “European” zone and a “colonial” zone.

²² The ‘cannon battles’ refers to a debate which tore the US academy apart. It started with the publication of Guatemalan indigenous activist (and Nobel Peace Prize winner) Rigoberta Menchú’s book, *Soy Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia* (1983) (I, Rigoberta Menchú. This is how my conscience was born – my own translation of the book title). The question was: what should schoolchildren read? Rigoberta Menchú’s memoirs or Shakespeare?

In the second chapter I analyze the first – “European” - zone closely, through fieldwork I conducted with museum staff who are located on the zone of the visible, the depictable, and inside the language of modernity. This chapter describes practices of representation from within Europe and also the differences between French and German positions from within - from members of the majority society, or two national imagined communities (France and Germany) which have configured themselves as French, German or European. It is about actors who belong to a certain social class and possess a certain education (to make distinctions between Europeans themselves). This chapter entangles theories of Europeanization and globalization with empirical material stemming from conversations with museum staff (curators, directors, historians, scenographers, social workers at the museum) who are located mainly on the European side of identity and belonging. This means that these actors (or “cultural brokers”, following Welz (1996)) feel identified with national and European narratives and, most importantly, also feel recognized by those discourses as members of the national and / or regional communities²³. Here, I will describe the differences within hegemonic fields of power and focus on one joint-project which was a co-operation between both countries: “A chacun ses étrangères. France-Allemagne de 1871 à aujourd’hui” and “Fremde. Bilder von den “Anderen” in Deutschland und Frankreich seit 1871”. The project was staged first at the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration* in Paris, then at the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in Berlin. This chapter gives an account of representational practices and conflicts from within the European zone.

In the third chapter I describe the turbulences between the European and the colonial zone (which I already touched on chapter one), but in more detail. Here, I depart from Marie Louie Pratt’s concept of the “contact zone” and also from James Clifford’s application of this concept to museums “museums as contact zones” to frame and describe these conflicts. As part of this, I also include a description of my role as an ethnographer – someone who “migrated” between the European and colonial zones in the course of my fieldwork. Here, I describe how methods, aims and strategies of ethnographic writing changed dramatically throughout this process (a shift in perspective, which took place around the ‘middle’ of my fieldwork). This (my) transformation was responsible for a shift of focus and it helped me find and appreciate other objects of analysis as well as other discourses (different from the ones I researched at the beginning). From having engaged solely with curators attaching to hegemonic discourse, I moved on to listen to those people who felt rejected and “outside” of

²³ The opposite case would be those people “born in Europe” (like the exhibition of that name which is also described in this chapter) who are nevertheless not recognized as Europeans.

the European zone (in juridical, racial or cultural terms) – people who were contesting museological or knowledge representations through their bodies and particular knowledge. Here, I also reflect on my role as an immigrant woman and as an anthropologist doing ethnographies about Europe. This chapter will engage with examples of the contact zone, of turbulent spaces, which will pave the way to describe the colonial zone. I will show conflicts between academics and immigrant activists and between official (i.e. the *Cité nationale*) and autonomous projects (i.e. the archives *Génériques* and *DOMID*) in France and Germany. The issues will turn around representations of colonial history in France, contemporary migration discourses in Germany and, at the end, based on resources from “decolonial theory”, it will focus on the representation of guest workers from the “South of Europe” and Turkey in Germany.

In chapter four I give an account of the genealogy of museums through the historical lens of colonial history. Here, I will describe the historical foundations of the social and cultural expressions in the colonial zone. I will describe images of Europe, which are visible from the perspective of the colonial side. Here, I trace a history of museums that is not “traditional” in the sense of the existing scholarship about European museums. The history I trace links the archive, the universal exhibit, and the migration museum to the colonial enterprise. I take into consideration colonial history since the formation of the Spanish empire and the conquest of the “new world”, going all the way to the crucial role played by The Netherlands, Belgium, France and Germany in colonial history. I take colonial history to be at the basis of the rise of archives (i.e. the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville, Spain), colonial and universal exhibits (i.e. Paris or London), curiosity cabinets, museums and ethnographic collections as we know them. As I will show, this history is at the basis of the conception of the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration* and its permanent exhibit, “Répères”. In the second part of this chapter, I will give a view of the official representation of migration from the perspective of immigrants themselves and from Europeans with migration background who are not recognized as European (those who do not have a voice in the exhibitions). I will explain how they link ethnographic objects to their bodily experiences. This will reflect deeper the questions of participation and exclusion in the making of representations.

Chapter five shows ethnographic examples, which entangle curatorial practices of the making of representations of migration with concepts about modernity, women’s emancipation (feminism) and gender issues (queer discourses), as well as citizenship and colonial history. Departing from empirical material, I link state-of-the-art debates about modernity, gender and

Islam, citizenship and colonial history. I describe how different understandings of these topics shape the different representations about migration. I hold that all four notions - modernity, citizenship, colonial history, and gender – build up a background through which the contents of curatorial work (in exhibitions about migration) are defined. For example, the staging of “Universal / republican” values, or the staging of projects on “integration”, or “self-reflexivity”, or “multiculturalism”, “diversity” and “creolization” and of “post-colonial” narratives (hybridity) or “decolonial” perspectives – all these different concepts (which influence image-making) rely on different ideas of modernity. In the context of the representation of women, Islam and the veil, pro and contra positions also rely on ideas about western and non-western feminisms, on affirmations of modernity or on reflexive perspectives vis à vis the modern project. Further, the diversity of situated knowledges regarding the question of the representation of nations, empires, colonial history, and images of Europe (Europeanization) is entangled with different perspectives (ideological and geographical) about the beginnings and aims of the modern project and the role of Europe in processes of emancipation and decolonization. The different historical and geographical locations of the different theoretical narratives produce a wide range of positions and turbulent debates. The topics of modernism and avant-garde are also key to understand aesthetic representations of “selves” and “others” as they are also geopolitically attached to projects about modernity. Finally, the questions of citizenship and structural racism bring the question of the existence of a “second-class citizenship” in Europe to the fore. This second-class citizenship would limit immigrants and European individuals who live racial discrimination in their everyday lives, in the job market, and in the achievement of certain living standards. I explain how the effects of “second-class citizenship” are also visible in museums not only in the form of representations, but also in the policy of personnel recruitment and in the pointing out of “target groups” of people who will be represented at the exhibitions (sometimes against their will).

In the conclusions, I summarize the most relevant findings by pointing out the extent to which the results of my research contribute to explaining the nature of the fractures within the memorial landscapes in Paris and Berlin, and also at a European level. Here, I go into the question of collective and particular memories and also into the relevance of power relations between different memorial formations. In the national and European contexts, power asymmetries regarding memories of minorities and the cultural or objectified memories of nations are key to understanding contemporary conflicts and tensions.

1.- An Ethnography on the making of Exhibitions on Migration in Paris and Berlin

1.1.- Methodology: Interviews, Sources, Ideas

The following ethnography is the result of fieldwork I conducted between 2007 and 2011. Afterwards, I complemented it with experiences which I gathered during 2012, and which fitted well with the other examples. During this period of time, I interviewed museum directors, curators, academics and activists in Paris and Berlin who had been engaged in exhibitions about migration. My interest lay in debates about the “crisis of representation” in Europe and in changes in the museum landscape (of the last decades). For example, I was interested in the role/influence of the *Museum of the American Indian* (Washington), inaugurated in 1989, on the global landscape: to what extent did this paradigm of representation influence European museums to start re-organizing their collections and non-European objects? Was this re-organization related to the emergence of migration museums and exhibitions on migration? At the *Museum of the American Indian*, curators of indigenous communities were engaged in the making of the museum (Clifford, 1997). With this, the question of participation was raised anew. During my fieldwork, I noticed that this question remained unresolved – and it still remains unresolved. For example: what is the role of minorities in the making of representations in national institutions? This question summarizes the “problem of representation” in museums. For example, French anthropologist Emmanuelle Desveaux (who had been scientific director at the *Musée du quai Branly* in Paris before 2009) stated that the project of the *Musée du quai Branly* had reflected on the methods of the *Museum of the American Indian*, although they had come to the conclusion that each country has different ways of doing things and that France had its own concept where participation à la *Museum of the American Indian*-style was not possible. As Desveaux stated, it was all about determining and describing the place of the “other” in the national landscapes. As in the study of kinship, museums tried to answer the question: “who lives in the house of whom?”²⁴.

As I will show in this chapter, there is not much difference regarding anthropological museums (objects of overseas or non-European cultures) and migration museums / exhibitions

²⁴ After his work at the *musée du Quai Branly*, Desveaux was guest professor at the *Institut für Europäische Ethnologie*, at the *Humboldt University*, in Berlin where he gave seminars and conferences – from which I took the relevant statements for this thesis.

on migration. The question of the place of the “other of modernity” – its place in the exhibition, the extent of its engagement, the validity of its claims – still remains open. The question of participation opens a huge debate on the writing of history and ethnographies, as well as on museological arrangements and the validation of knowledge at universities. The debate on this question reached a turning point in the US in the 80’s around the book *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia* (1983) (in English translated as *I, Rigoberta Menchú*. Anyhow, the translation takes out the “and this is how my conscience was born” from the title). This example of a testimonial novel was written by Venezuelan/French author Elizabeth Burgos and Guatemalan activist Rigoberta Menchú. The question of “should this book be read at school alongside other works of literature (i.e. Shakespeare)?” triggered a heated debate, which became known as “the canon battles”. The validity of the universal canon for teaching and producing knowledge was deeply questioned. This “battle” continues to divide US academia today.

I mention this debate because, during my fieldwork, it was clear to me that the effects of this debate had also reached Europe. In my experience, this debate had gotten stronger in Europe in the year 2000 and its strength increased considerably until 2013 - the year I wrote the final version of this dissertation. I would describe the presence of this debate as a “transatlantic transmission” of knowledge, which impacted the French and German social and epistemic fields, from social struggles all the way to museums and universities (the centers of knowledge production). During my research, I had the impression that the debate got bigger and that it reached a very heated point around the topic of migration and national belonging. Questions were posed: what is the (French / German) nation and who are its members? Who deserves (French / German) citizenship? The question of the place of the “other” in European nations got strongly related to the “avantgarde” (1900), to “Revolutions”, “Emancipations” and “Decolonization” (1960) and it also reappeared as a debate on “migration”. But, nevertheless, it also appeared in the debates around “security”. Within this debate, colonial images of the “primitive” merged with contemporary images of the “immigrant” and with the Anglo-Saxon post-colonial debate. With this, exhibitions on migration became very complex spaces; a deep theoretical knowledge became necessary to understand these agoras. They could not be adequately deciphered with only one theoretical lens, but it became necessary to explore as many theoretical debates as possible as it became hard to disentangle these concepts and traditions of thought. Beyond knowledge of different theories and debates, it was necessary to locate the points of enunciation of social actors making representations at the museums or contesting them. For example: are these actors expressing themselves from

the standpoint of the history of the ”“discovery” of the Americas? Or from the standpoint of the history of slavery? Do French intellectuals take the history of the US Empire as a point of departure for a critique of power? Are curators departing from assumptions of “Universalism” while they re-order representations of minority groups within nations? These different locations / articulations mean the construction of different archives with different sources and different ways of producing knowledge and history. But they also express different ideas of society and political aims. Migration museums and exhibitions on migration – while trying to produce collective memories – became heavily loaded with discourses, which were difficult to locate and disentangle. I will go deeper into this topic in chapter five.

My observation fields were the migration museum in Paris (*Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration*) and diverse exhibits on Migration in Berlin²⁵ (although I also took into consideration exhibitions in other German cities such as Frankfurt, Cologne, and Bonn). I made many visits to the French migration museum and I visited at least once the majority of the exhibitions I talk about here. I also analyzed some exhibitions (like for example “Crossing Munich”) through exhibit catalogues and or with conversations with the curators. I collected most of my material during one intense year of fieldwork (2009 – 2010). In addition, I conducted interviews with museum directors, curators, experts on migration, politicians, and journalists in Paris and Berlin. Although I interviewed many representatives of the majority societies in both cities, I also came to interview representatives of minorities. While the first group of people defined themselves either as French, German and/or European (and articulated from the premises of the project of modernity), most representatives of minorities did not identify as either French, German or European. Of course, some representatives of minorities did feel “integrated” into the country/culture they were born in, but others did not identify with national or European identities or with the modern project at all. I recorded most of the conversations with members of majority society, because the interviews had been carefully planned. The rest of the conversations happened rather spontaneously and I never asked if I could record them - as I was afraid to disrupt them.

Throughout this process, I built a network of relations between personal experiences, conversations, photographs and the contact with different materials which made up – through my years of research – a sort of ethnographic archive. The selection process of sources and

²⁵ Permanent and temporary exhibitions in four District Museums in Berlin; a project of the Africa department at the *Ethnologischen Museums* Dahlem; an exhibition at the *Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst* (New Society for Visual Arts); a theater play at *Ballhaus Naunyn* (2010); events at the *Haus der Kulturen der Welt* (House of World Cultures, Berlin); exhibits at the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* – among other places which I will carefully introduce through ethnographies.

themes was carried out through a dialogue between outside conversations and subjective criteria. I gained these subjective impressions during museum visits, from reading materials from / about the museums, theories, events happening at the museum (i.e. conferences, films, musical events, discussion rounds, etc.) but also by unexpected events (i.e. by the expelling of the migration minister Eric Besson from the *Cité nationale*, by the taking of the *Cité* by the *Sans Papiers* or by the discussions about good or evil Europe during the opening of the exhibition “Fremde” at the *DHM*); I also made my own photographs of the museums and objects and of the urban spaces where the museums and exhibitions were located. I also took into consideration social movements, when I thought that these impacted the urban space of representations, which were part of the context of museums and exhibits. I made personal visual narratives and constantly wrote notes. I read a broad range of topics which are entangled, but which often come in “separate” formats: “migration”, “museum”, “art and avant-garde”, “collective memory”, “cultural heritage” “architecture”, “nation”, “citizenship”, “transatlantic history”, “circulation of knowledge”, “urbanism”, “politics” and “border regimes”. I described the most relevant insights in many small notebooks (they all were of different colors and sizes). Also, a very important process involved conversations about the material with other PhD candidates and researchers on the topic²⁶. These shed light on empirical aspects which, in some cases, became relevant objects for this dissertation. Also, by organizing my own seminars and workshops at the *Institut für Europäische Ethnologie* and reading the students’ papers and / or feedback from the participants, I discovered empirical and theoretical aspects, which were worthy of description. It was through this process that the ethnographies for this thesis developed.

There were always questions going through my head: through which objects, events and / or conflicts is the crisis of representation visible? How is this crisis dealt with in museums? How are solutions about representation topics found – or not? Which knowledge is represented? Who makes representations? Who are the museums’ directors, curators, representatives of immigrant organizations, experts on migration, politicians and journalists? How is knowledge about “others” and the national majority society (us/them) represented and re-ordered within the liminal spaces of migration exhibitions? Which images of modernity are transformed or produced here? These questions remained, faded or changed throughout the seven years it took me to write up this dissertation; but, the exercise of questioning remained throughout the research and writing process. The final product is, then, made up by my subjective interaction

²⁶ Here I want to thank, especially, my friends and colleagues Victoria Bishop-Kendzia, Ana María Gómez Londoño and Prof. Robin Ostow for sharing with me their thoughts and findings.

with the field, which influenced my decisions concerning “what” was going to be described. A reflexive subjectivity influenced the written representations in this thesis.

In the following ethnographies, I will focus on the museaumization of migration as a continuum of a crisis of representation, which had a focal point (but not only) in the cannon battles, which took place in the United States of the 80’s (Cusset, 2003). These battles, which are closely related to issues of migration, unleashed important debates in all fields concerning representation: the formation of academic knowledge and teaching curricula (Fassin, 1993; Beverley, 1999), the practice of ethnographic writing (Kaschuba, 2006), debates on citizenship, migration and ethnic minorities (i.e. Chicano and black movements) as well as on “national” identities. These debates reflect the battleground within “ethnic studies” in the United States which is today caught between multiculturalism, disciplinary colonialism, and de-colonial studies (Grosfoguel, 2007). They have reached the domain of museums and have naturally impacted the making of representations (Chakrabarty, 2002). Museum landscapes have become important fields of research, as they are arenas where the crisis of the nation is discussed face to face with demands of social representation of immigrant and non-immigrant minorities as well as diasporas, and with questions arising from the field of post-colonial studies. In my view, the migration museum in Paris, as well as exhibitions on migration in Berlin, are examples of how these issues, debated from the other side of the Atlantic, have emerged and become “visible” in both these European capital cities. They also show the potential of the debates that can be unleashed around the museum which, in the case of both countries, concerns also the creation of images of Europe and of a new politics of migration.

The following ethnographic cases show spaces in which established knowledge formations are contested.

1.2.- The « Palais des Colonies » : the “Entrance” to the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration*

My research began with the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration*. Inaugurated in Paris in 2007, it is the first national migration museum in Europe. The museum is actually an enormous institution in which visitors can lose themselves as if they had entered a labyrinth. Instead of offering answers about migration issues, the museum space opens up a field for infinite questioning regarding the making of representations in contemporary societies. After two years of observation, all I can grasp at the museum are notions of the complex dynamics of the institution. This can be due to the fact that the museum has no “centre” and it is made

up of fragments: it is loaded with different contents, actors and controversies, and its structure is very weak. To give an example, the day of its opening neither President Sarkozy nor any other important representatives attended it, in October 2007. In France, all national museums are inaugurated by the prime minister and the representatives of the ministries which financially support the institution²⁷.

The *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* has a very liminal (or marginal) existence. It is a project to represent immigration - which is complex enough - which unfortunately landed in a very difficult historical and architectural context: at the “Palais des colonies”, at Porte Dorée, which was specially built for the colonial exhibit in 1931. From my perspective, such a heavy history carved in such huge stone confronts visitors with a complex juxtaposition of elements. And this occurs long before visitors enter the museum. In my opinion, visitors are either encouraged to go on asking questions, or they are blocked by the historical overload. Many interview partners and / or friends who came with me to the museum confessed that they could not go into a building with such a violent history. Some went inside, but with great effort.

I will begin by showing an example of how confusion may arise: on Monday the 21st of June, 2010, I attended the “Fête de la musique”, at the *Cité nationale*. The museum had announced its participation and engaged two groups to perform outside the building, in the courtyard of the “Palais des Colonies”. When the “Fête de la musique” started, at around 7 PM, the access to the exhibitions and the museum was already closed. All that visitors could see was the entrance made of huge stone carvings and the logo of the *Cité nationale*.

The first group performed a piece about “dressing up” and, just after it, there was a music group. Both came from “Africa” or were associated with “Africa”. The music was “African”, the representation “African”. And the visitors saw these evocations of “Africa” just outside the building, so the only thing they could link to it was the colonial history. The project of the *Cité nationale*, the permanent exhibit “Repères”, which strives to change the images of immigrants in France, was hidden on the second floor of the (closed) museum. Thus, the logo of the *Cité nationale* was associated to the colonial history (the building and its stone carvings) and to contemporary diasporic and ethnic images of “Africa”.

Beyond this example, it is important to say that, when the museum is open, visitors are immediately confronted with huge colonial frescoes - just behind the reception, on the first

²⁷ In this case, the Ministries of Immigration, Culture, Education and Scientific Research.

floor of the former Palais, depicting images of colonization which justified the enterprise at the time. These frescos have been declared world-heritage objects by *UNESCO*. At both sides of this first floor, visitors can see the former working place of two colonial officers in the style of “art deco”. Third, if visitors decide to go to the basement before ascending to the second floor, they land in the aquarium, where the fish are classified and contextualized in their habitats in ways that recall how “non-European” peoples were displayed during colonial exhibitions (Blanchard, et al, 2002). With this, I would argue that the project of the *Cité nationale* is surrounded and oppressed by the history it is supposed to change the meaning of.

The scientific committee behind the *Cité nationale* (i.e. the historian Gérard Noiriel) had the aim to transform the meaning of colonial heritage through the making of a new project – by juxtaposing the exhibition and museological activities with the building, thus transforming the oppressive historical patrimony into a positive reflection of the past. Nevertheless, this history proves to be all too big and perhaps unchangeable. Although there are indeed activities in which schoolchildren, students and visitors are introduced to the history and the project, thus having very positive results (Gasó Cuenca, 2010), the event of the “Fête de la musique” was, in my eyes, a good example of how the project of the *Cité nationale* tends to disappear, devoured by the building.

Nevertheless, if we do arrive at the museum’s upper floor and look closely “inside” the project, we can see that the *Cité nationale* embodies the convergence of many departments - history, social organizations, art, anthropology, museography, cultural activities and pedagogy - which seem to work quite independently from each other. The project is quite large and open and, at the same time, the coexistence of such different departments and areas renders its existence very conflictual. During my fieldwork, I have talked with most of the main actors behind each department / area: with historians who took part in the scientific commission to make the *Cité nationale* and who decided to resign their duties in mid 2007, due to the opening of the “Ministry for immigration, national identity and co-development” – which, until November of 2010, financed half of the budget of the museum²⁸. Further, with actors engaged by the museum and in charge of the departments/areas of history, anthropology, contemporary art, the collection of 19th and 20th century objects and with perhaps the most important department of the museum: the network of immigrant and social associations (the

²⁸ The « Ministère de l’intégration, de l’identité nationale et développement solidaire » began its existence in 2007, thus being responsible of half of the budget of the *Cité nationale*. The ministry was abruptly closed in mid November 2010, and immigration affairs were transferred to the “Ministère de l’intérieur” (This information was confirmed by a member of staff of the *Cité nationale* in 2010).

“réseau”). There is huge work involved in each department, and the different backgrounds and aims of each section collide with each other at the moment of negotiations, thus provoking internal conflicts. This situation renders the tracing of a linear “history” of the museum’s concept and trajectory very complex – but here lies also the huge potential of this museological arena.

In the following I want to describe the small, temporary exhibition “Football et immigration. Les initiatives du réseau” organized by the network of social institutions and staged by the designer who was also in charge of the permanent exhibit of the museum. The exhibition “Football et immigration. Les initiatives du réseau” is located in the “Hall Marie Curie”, which fills the passage between the colonial frescoes and the “Médiathèque Abdelmalek Sayad” – the museum’s library which gathers works and key publications about migration. This small exhibition focuses on social work. It is, actually, a miniature version of the main exhibit “Repères”, in that its space works as a platform for the intersection between many areas. The first area contains the work between art students and schools; schoolchildren had made up images of football and immigration, while art students had taken these images and made a bigger collage - a representation - for the exhibition. The second area is made up by contemporary art works which reflect also on the main topic. Objects of plastic art, photography, drawings, collages and video-installations were spread through the exhibitions between the works of the other areas. A third aspect would be the representation of social projects in France and “development” projects in Africa, which intersect with football. Near to the entrance to the “Médiathèque Abdelmalek Sayad”, an electronic guest book, about one meter high, takes on the role of an object of the exhibition. Outside the “Hall Marie Curie”, in the room with the huge colonial frescoes, visitors find two permanent brown cabinets. One of them is bound to the exhibition. Here, visitors can access an intranet space to research about the social and immigrant organizations which participated in this exhibit.

The intersection between the areas was solved by the means of design – optic and spatial ways of organizing diversity and difference in the museum space. The exhibition is small, but elaborate. It shows the mixture between various representational techniques: first, avant-garde representations depicting “otherness” (in this case, the images of “Africa”); second, “art deco” to organize heterogeneity in a national space (Rosenfeld, 2005); third, baroque, as the representation of “migration” is bound to images of excess, proliferation and labyrinths - thus preferring curves than lines. Social work is also successfully incorporated to the design. By

the way of repetition, this “design” elaborates a way to depict migration in the French context, thus inscribing itself in the viewing practices and memories of the visitors.

Now, I will turn to the main exhibition “Repères”. Here, the design is worthy of mention, since it is part of what visitors take in emotionally through image viewing, representation techniques (installation in the space) and the audio-guide (which is also part of the spatial and visual ensemble). The design organizes knowledge and tries to fill in the voids of interdisciplinary work, discussions and - thematic as well as temporal - conflicts.

For example, concerning “history”: chronologies and historical documents - like press articles, magazines, videos and migration laws are organized in small tables, which correspond to the ten topics of the permanent exhibition, each one placed in the respective thematic area: “émigrer”, “face à l’état”, “terre d’accueil, France hostile”, “ici et là-bas”, “lieux de vie”, “au travail”, “enracinements”, “sport”, “religions” and “cultures”. It is important to note that this strategy was adopted contrary to the wishes of some historians, who would have preferred a chronological sequence to structure the exhibition’s narrative. The designer, Pascal Payeur, worked much more closely with the the museum’s political representative, Jacques Toubon, than with the individual departments. The pressure to finish the museum in a period of political uncertainty was the main goal of these two individuals. (Interview Payeur, 30.09.2010). This provoked tensions surrounding different ways of documenting and displaying the collection.

Throughout the exhibition visitors see personal objects and interview pieces on video screens. These were collected by the anthropologist Fabrice Grognet for the permanent exhibition. Grognet has a perspective of defining migration which, contrary to historians who prefer the juridical definition, relies more on the self-representation and self-definition of people themselves as “immigrants”. He did not only choose the objects as such, but he selected interview partners who were to leave their testimonies and biographies in the museum. He has a set of criteria through which he collects temporary or permanent donations (objects) from people to the museum.

Next, the art department would be engaged to choose contemporary art works to display. Throughout “Repères”, visitors can see photographs (artistic and documentary), paintings, sculptures, films and art installations. These pieces are inserted between historical facts (history tables) and the personal (immigrant’s) objects. This department relies on other - aesthetic and thematic - criteria to choose what will be exhibited as art and naturally contrasts

with Grognet's work, as it does not take people's self-definitions as the point of departure. Artist's origins or biographies are not supposed to play a role in these criteria. The department selects the works relying on the depicted themes and their relevance for the exhibition, and presents them to a higher commission, which attests their aesthetic quality and approves their inclusion into the museum. Isabelle Rénard, art historian and researcher of the art department of the *Cité nationale*, explained to me that works from artists with migration background, but which did not show a thematic relation to "migration", were not bought by the museum to be part of the permanent exhibition. On the other hand, art works of non-immigrants who referred pictorially or thematically to "border" topics or who used materials, and designs related to travelling, cultural difference or religion, were indeed taken into consideration. Here, "how to collect" becomes a key process.

Having described this, I would like to comment on the difference between the work of the anthropologist, Fabrice Grognet, and the art department. Based on a conversation with Grognet, I will show how conflicts arise between different (disciplinary) ways of collecting, displaying and producing knowledge.

In March of 2010, I met Grognet in one of the large meeting rooms of the *Cité nationale*. At some point during our conversation, he mentioned the exhibition of contemporary photography, "Ma Proche Banlieue. Photographies 1980 - 2007", which was shown at the *Cité nationale* between May and October of 2009. This exhibition of Patrick Zachmann's photographic work in a specific banlieue had been organized by the art department. Grognet did not criticize the photographic works or the exhibition as such, but rather the fact that it was placed at the *Cité nationale*. The exhibition showed pictures of a poor "banlieue", thus stigmatizing all "banlieues" and, further, the photographed people. The juxtaposition of the picture's content with the *Cité nationale* proved to be counterproductive, as it puts the museum's aim at risk. Instead of changing prejudices against immigration, the museum would have actually achieved the contrary effect reinforcing existing prejudices.

And here comes the interesting point, as exhibitions do not end at the doors of the museums, but are also tied to people and to their bodies. With this exhibition, the museum was not showing contemporary artistic photography of anonymous people, but rather of real French citizens who live in Paris. So, what happened next? One day, according to Grognet, some of the photographed people recognized themselves and complained to the museum. Why? Because they argued that they were not immigrants. They were, in administrative terms, "French", and did not want anything to do with the museum's narrative.

This incident is very important, as it shows differences between anthropological collecting - which links images and objects to bodies and tries to reflect on this - and the dynamics of the contemporary art market and its difficulties when juxtaposed to the French migration museum. Grognet emphasized that, what troubled him, was that anonymous people were classified as immigrants because they had a somehow “different” skin color. He posed the following questions: “who was making them into immigrants? What if the photographed people came from the Antilles and were thus French? The museum is labelling people. And, unfortunately, the *Cité nationale* is not seen as a sacralized place like, for example, the *musée du Louvre*.

Here, artistic criteria had incidentally reversed the museum’s aim: instead of taking immigrants out of mainstream discourses and make them look better in the French nation, it had turned “French” people into immigrants (!)²⁹. This situation makes clear that the word “immigrant” has, in France, a negative connotation, which in turn makes the museum a political space of social struggle and contestation. Also following this example, we can say that the exhibition would go against the juridical / administrative definition of migration which, according to Amar (Interview, 02.2010) was agreed by the committee of historians at the *Cité nationale*. This is what Grognet meant when he expressed his unease that skin color might lead to false classification: immigrants are, as according to Amar, only those who are not “French” in juridical terms.

This incident points to the role of immigrants as persons and bodies and their role in the museums as images, objects and actors / performers. In the following examples I will explore these questions in more depth.

1.3.- Migration and Museums in Berlin: when Immigrants become Performing Actors, Colonial Heritage and / or Post-colonial Curators

As I argued in the previous chapter, “people” and their “bodies” end up taking a central role in museological representations of migration – either as objects, as actors or, as we will see, as museum staff and curators – thus dissolving the border between established notions of “selves” and “others”. In this second part, I will give five examples of the representation of migration in museum spaces in Berlin, which are closely related with this issue. I will take on three separate cases at three different levels. Germany does not have a national migration

²⁹ This reverses the title of Eugene Weber’s book: *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France 1870 – 1914*, which appeared in 1976.

museum and Berlin does not have a centralized space to exhibit migration. There are, nevertheless, numerous disseminated stages where migration is depicted – either directly or indirectly. In these arenas, the relationship between bodies, objects and museological stages becomes tense. The figure of the immigrant as a person who is represented in the museum, poses many questions concerning representations. Like in the case of the exhibition “Ma Proche banlieue”, in the *Cité nationale*, the distance between represented images and represented persons tends to disappear, which means that the representations can be directly contested anytime. This “open field” leads me to think about the complexity of the crisis of representation, and about the social structures which are possibly at the origin of this crisis.

1.3.1.- Immigrants as Curators and Performing Actors (*Jugendmuseum Schöneberg*)

The first example is a small, local municipality, museum in Berlin, the *Jugendmuseum Schöneberg*, which is aimed at children and young people in the district of Tempelhof-Schöneberg. The goal of the museum is to represent the history and contemporary society of the district together with two other small museums (Stadtteilmuseen) which make up a local museum complex. Since 2002, it has housed the exhibition “Villa Global”, which aims to represent the cultural diversity of the district’s “neighbours”. I take on this exhibition because of the way it engages with the community of the district in its curatorial practices. Conceived from museum pedagogy, social work and intercultural dialogue, this exhibition has opened a small theatrical and social space, in which the display of “otherness” has acquired important dimensions.

“Villa Global” is a “house” with 14 rooms occupied by people of different origins who are residents of the area of Tempelhof-Schöneberg. To set up the exhibition, the museum worked with “real neighbours” from the area. The museum director and staff chose people with “migration background”. The participants designed their own rooms, freely, choosing the topics, the objects and the representational strategies they wanted, and each participant made his/her own “installation”. This raised very important questions about social participation in the museum. Moreover, this complexity increased at the moment in which some of the curators were incorporated to the museum as guides of “Villa Global”.

In one of my visits to the museum during the Spring of 2010, I wanted to know more about the effect of “self-exotization” which had taken place in some of the rooms. For example, in the “Peruvian” room of “Mr. Rodríguez”, I had found many (too many!) pictures of Machu Pichu hanging on the walls. The room was full of Peruvian and Latin-American symbols like

photos of Che Guevara, many CD's (salsa and afro rhythms), as well as a baroque altar with a saint. This particular room seemed more like a museum than a place to live. Also in "Mr. Odgesou's" room there was a great deal of traditional objects, but at least the visitor could sit down on a couch to comfortably watch a TV-series from Ghana.

Walking through the hostel, I asked the woman in charge of the exhibition who exactly had curated each room and how. Her answer was: "well, many people... like, for example, myself". "Ms. Dubinina" had curated the "Ukranian" room. She showed me the objects and I had the feeling that I was actually in "her" room. We picked up the phone and listened to a conversation in her mother tongue. Afterwards, she told me where she had bought each and every object and the stories behind how she had taken them all the way to Berlin. As we went out of the room I asked her if I could see someone else. In that moment, a man who crossed our way turned to be the curator of the "Iranian/Persian" room. He had come back to the museum to check and replace some objects. We went into his room, which was also full of many very traditional objects - which could also be, actually, pieces in an ethnographical museum. "Mr. Bahadoran" made a performance with some of the objects while we talked about revolutions and exile.

Each room had a proper name. All names were pseudonyms, except for one: "Layla", who was also engaged by the museum during the weekends. I came back as soon as I could and, on the day of this visit, "Layla" was standing at the entrance hall welcoming visitors, wearing an outfit with a headscarf - her usual clothing. She was not pretending to be someone else. I introduced myself and my research topic, and immediately noticed that she felt uncomfortable. Nevertheless, she kindly showed me the exhibition and her room specifically, where I had the feeling that she felt more at ease. The room was a very intimate sphere, very elegantly decorated to display the story of her marriage and wedding party. She showed me a collection of headscarves, which she would usually show to schoolchildren and, also, her wedding pictures, one by one.

Afterwards, she took me to "Yücel's" room. This room is a very traditional, "Turkish" place, but at the same time very real – so it seemed to me. It had a little tea room, a bed, and objects and pictures of a circumcision ritual and feast of "Yücel's" own son. After the visit, Layla agreed to introduce me to "Yücel", since "Yücel" was not engaged by the museum at the time. I subsequently went to visit "Yücel's" boutique in another district of Berlin. There, we met and talked for some time about the display of intimacy and other topics. For example, it turned out that her son, some years after the opening of the exhibit, had kindly asked her to

dismount the circumcision ritual objects, as this was beginning to become too intimate for him as an adult. We kept on chatting about how immigrants develop different personalities. The personality she had left in the museum's room was only one aspect of her; it was her traditional self, through which she lives some aspects of her life. But this image did not wholly describe her being. And, for this reason, she had her boutique, which offered a modern image of an independent woman. But this was also just one aspect among others. When she was asked to make the room for the museum, she had thought that the best would be to show a compact version - a collection - of her "traditional" self.

My trips to the museum brought me closer into the intimacy of people's lives and took me all the way to the other side of Berlin. Entering the museum in Schöneberg, I came out in the district of Wilmersdorf-Charlottenburg. I was quite surprised by this journey, which started with coming into contact with a display of the real. The bodily presence of the makers in their own rooms opens up a contact zone, a space of performance between the spheres of curation, of the represented objects, learning processes, and every-day life. This is a stage in constant flux.

During an interview with the museum's director, Petra Zwaka (which took place at the *Jugendmuseum Schöneberg* on 11.08.2010), we discussed the risks and advantages of this stage. The risk of self-exotization and the over-display of intimacy could become a problem, as the makers can easily lose the sense of the border of what to display and where to display it: a "carnival" effect. A further and very important problem was the generational gap. While the older generations tended to focus on tradition, young people showed other ways to represent their memories. This was visible in the selection of everyday-life objects, where older generations distinguished themselves by displaying traditional furniture while the younger ones preferred to bring items from *Ikea*. This creates an inter-generational tension between different ways of displaying otherness and images of the self.

Zwaka had tried to bring change to the exhibition by asking new people to move in as other participants moved out. Nevertheless, she was not happy with this and has plans to change the project³⁰. According to Zwaka, the exhibition at the *Jugendmuseum Schöneberg* had existed for nearly eight years, and the representations and performances were already beginning to

³⁰ This statement is very similar to what the director of the museum of the district of *Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg*, Martin Düspohl, told me in Nov. 2009 regarding the exhibition "ein jeder nach seiner Façon? 300 Jahre Zuwanderung nach Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg" ("everyone his/her own way? 300 Years of Migration to Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg"). Although it has been successful, he said that he was also unhappy about it: something had to change. Approximately two years after this interview took place, the exhibition disappeared and was replaced by a completely new concept.

look old. This instability, as described by Zwaka, is partly related to the generational gap, but also to the nature of migration exhibitions, which have to be in constant transformation in order to make sense. Migration exhibitions might have a short life, especially when they are closely tied to communities, which are constantly changing. Changes in identity and in the relations between transnational spaces also mean changes in representation.

1.3.2.- Colonial Imaginations in Liminal Spaces: “Africa” at the “Carnival of Cultures” and at the Museum

The second example is a project of the Africa-department of the *Ethnologisches Museum* in Dahlem. This project stems from a bigger project, which was conceived by Peter Junge, the head of the Africa-department, specifically for Berlin’s future *Humboldt-Forum*. In contrast to Paris, Berlin is a capital city “in the making”, which is still re-organizing a whole range of representations and museological collections with the creation of the *Humboldt-Forum*, which will be located at the city’s centre.

I see this re-organization through the perspective of the shifts, which took place in France / Paris as collections moved prior to the creation of the *musée du quai Branly*. For it was this re-organization which, in Paris, paved the way for the placing of the project of the *Cité Nationale* at the building in Porte Dorée. As collections shifted from Porte Dorée to the *musée du quai Branly* and to Marseille, the palais at Port Dorée was empty and could host the project of the migration museum. Crucially, a significant contrast with Berlin is that the project for the *Humboldt-Forum* does not plan to include the topic of “migration”. Migration remains a blind spot, a fact which has been heavily criticized in some academic circles.

The topic of migration - although not mentioned - does “filter” through the walls of the *Humboldt-Forum* - in the way of actors, bodies and objects. The Africa-department of the museum developed a project especially for the *Humboldt-Forum*, which is extremely interesting as it works with the notion of community, but under the image of a diaspora in Berlin. This project contrasts with other departments of the *Ethnology Museum* in Dahlem, which prepared projects for the *Humboldt-Forum*, which engage with local, traditional and ethnic communities in i.e. Alaska or Mexico. The Africa-department seems to be working with a Nigerian community, but is actually working with people who moved demographically from Nigeria (their place of birth) to Berlin, this means: with immigrants who are officially associated in Berlin and engage in the cultural life of the city. Nevertheless, the museum does not want to call them immigrants. Junge explicitly refuses to make this shift, although he

himself accessed a very important piece for his project in a place permeated through and through by migration processes: the *Karneval der Kulturen* (“Carnival of cultures”) in Berlin.

To transform the African colonial heritage of the museum for the *Humboldt-Forum*, some steps have been taken since 2006: the first one was to present ethnographical objects as art (“Kunst aus Afrika” / “Art from Africa”, 2006). The second, to extend the project with the exhibition “Ijele. Zeitgenössische Kunst. Bamum. Benin.” (“Ijele. Contemporary Art. Bamum. Benin”) (September 2009). This new stage begins with a small room in which a big and colorful object is shown: the “Ijele Mask”. This mask was made in Nigeria, especially for the “Carnival of Cultures”, in Berlin and it is contextualized as part of the intercultural work of the association *Ikuku-Berlin*³¹ at the Carnival.

To acquire this mask, Junge had negotiated with John Durumba, the head of the Nigerian association *Ikuku-Berlin*. I was very surprised to know that the negotiation had taken place so easily, and that it had been the will of both – Durumba and Junge - that the mask be shown at the museum. Regarding this issue, I engaged in conversations with both actors and there seems to be no evidence of tensions during the negotiations. During a conversation with Durumba (2009), which took place at *Ikuku-Berlin*, I asked him if he had gone to the museum or if the museum had called him. He answered the following:

The museum saw the presentation during the carnival. (...). So Dr. Junge (...) came to see the mask and took some pictures of it. And about three or four months later we had a contact, I got a call from (...) the “Karneval der Kulturen” director (...). So she called on me, then I went to her, we had a discussion, she brought the proposal, if it would be good to present it at the *Ethnological Museum* – and I said “actually that was my intention, that was my idea” (...). So that is how Herr Junge comes, and then we start a discussion (...) We borrowed it (the Ijele mask) to them for one year (...).

The version of Junge is similar. As I interviewed him on the 22nd of April, 2010, he narrated how he had seen the “Ijele mask” at the carnival and how he wanted to show it in the museum. This mask would be rare and he had only seen one outside of Nigeria. He had been surprised. Sometime after the carnival, while he was wondering how to get the mask, he had received a call from *Ikuku-Berlin*.

What is important here is the role of the institution of the “Carnival of Cultures” in Berlin as the “contact zone” between museums and social / immigrant organizations. The carnival was the place where the “Ijele mask” was shown for a Berlin audience. This means, that the object was already mediated for a specific public. And it was the carnival which made a quick

³¹ *Ikuku-Berlin*’s aim is to promote Nigerian culture in Berlin/Germany. It was grounded in 2006 as a German/Nigerian initiative.

contact possible between *Ikuku-Berlin* and the Africa department of the *Ethnologisches Museum*. The carnival played the role of a successful mediator between both actors.

Nevertheless, the ambivalence implied in the acquisition of the mask is what makes the representation of *Ikuku-Berlin* as “diaspora” very contested. The carnival is, on the one hand, an important place for social participation and for the display of cultural “differences”. The roots of this type of carnival in Europe are usually traced back to the *Notting Hill Carnival*, in London. The *Karneval der Kulturen* in Berlin would embody its rhizomatic extension. But, on the other hand, it is also the place for self-exotizations in which objects made in Berlin could be seen as the “other”. It offers a collecting platform for museum curators – among others. The carnival is thus a market of primitivism, which keeps representations in the stable place of “otherness”. During the long weekend of celebrations, the carnival naturalizes participants and objects as “others”. And it is in the context of this liminality in which the negotiation of objects begins. In addition to the example of the Africa department of the *Ethnologisches museum* I could observe other examples, like the *Stadtteilmuseum Neukölln*, which displays a carnival mask from Colombia in its newly opened exhibition (in the new premises in Britz). And it is also in the context of the carnival in which Nigerian culture can be linked to Germany’s colonial heritage – by the way of an object.

In the example of the “Ijele mask”, people who have lived a long time in Germany are presented as a diaspora, and, in juxtaposition with colonial collections, thus silencing migration processes which – this is my observation– threaten, nonetheless, to emerge at any moment³². When migration lies at the background of a cultural process, it tends to leak through the representations and emerge at the margins of cultural politics or cultural productions, even in the contexts where it is not wanted. It can always emerge and make the whole ensemble of representations very unstable. This point has been criticized in regards to the *Humboldt Forum*.

In her work about the debates around the *Humboldt Forum*, European anthropologist Beate Binder describes how the planning of the Forum announced a “dialogue of cultures” with a picture of an exotic female dancer from the *Karneval der Kulturen* (Binder, 2009: 292). The carnival seems to have the most important role regarding the representation of “otherness” in

³² This silencing of “migration processes” is a constitutive part of Germany’s nation-building process. According to Kaschuba “The dramatic experience of migration is invisibilized. Migration is conceived as “otherness”, and all the psychological and social problems related to it are silenced. Remembering becomes tabu, and memory becomes a trauma.” (2008: 310) (my translation). This silencing process - where migration and transformation are taken to be shameful - can also be seen in the case of the “German diasporas”, the “guest workers” and the “integration” of the former GDR after the so-called “re-unification”.

the *Humboldt Forum* project, and will thus acquire important visibility in Berlin and Germany. Emerging in Notting Hill, London, and travelling to Berlin, the carnival dynamics have been appropriated by local/national projects. The *Karneval der Kulturen* might fulfill the role of making and securing a peripheral space for the display of otherness, and of making this place stable enough to stage “temporary” performances – in which acts of participation can be simulated.

In my view, this is a very important phenomenon, because it can be compared to the dynamics of the contemporary art market, which has been flourishing in Berlin for years. Returning to the exhibition “Ijele. Zeitgenössische Kunst. Bamum. Benin”: If we move beyond the small room where the “Ijele Mask” is placed, we land in a space called “Contemporary art / Africa”. Here, there is a clear relation between the museum and the art market - galleries and art *biennales*. The latter mediate images of otherness and make the contact between artists and ethnological museums possible. In the work shown in the exhibition, it is not clear through which criteria this art is representative of “Africa”. The art market is a process by which art is mediated into museums and thus plays a similar role as the institution of the carnival (simulating participation of “Africans” in the exhibition). But before proceeding to the example of an artistic place, I will give another example of objects from communities in an ethnographic museum and an example of people from minorities interacting with a *Stadtteil* / neighborhood museum.

1.3.3 New Ethnographic Objects and Contact Zones at the *Rautenstrauch Joest Museum* in Cologne

A similar case took place at the *Rautenstrauch Joest Museum*, an ethnographic museum in Cologne. With this example, I want to describe how the process of carnivalization and production of new contact zones between migrant communities and museums is actually happening simultaneously in many museums in Germany (and elsewhere) and not just in Berlin. It might be a global phenomenon in which museums integrate and /or appropriate an object which had a real use for a community / minority in Europe. Representations of “otherness” at the *Rautenstrauch Joest Museum* were similar to the ones I witnessed at the Africa department of the *Ethnographic Museum Dahlem* and the *Jugendmuseum Schöneberg*.

On September 6th of 2011, I went together with the participants of the summer-school “Migration in Museums” to the *Rautenstrauch Joest Museum* - a classical ethnographic museum. To begin with, the group took a guided tour of the new permanent exhibition with

members of staff. Some of us were astonished to see the topics of “migration” and “diversity” in the foreground of the main exhibition; from entrance to exit, these topics gave a new framing to the representation of ethnographic collections. My observation is that, throughout the exhibition, we experienced the display of self-reflexive techniques. The quality of these displays was very good. Nevertheless, this “self-reflexivity” turned out to be just an intellectual technique – a design for the surface – to give the museum a state-of-the-art discourse, which serves as a make-up for old ethnographic approaches of collecting and displaying. To our discouragement, we were going to learn this fact during backstage talks with some members of staff. Here, it was clear that the displays did not match the ideas and anthropological and museal perceptions of the hired staff.

For example, the collecting processes of the objects I will describe in the following section, give no evidence of a real exchange (or tensions) between community and museum (although it seemed to be so). This is contrary to the case of *Ikuku-Berlin*. Further, there was no transformation in the museum’s logic or in the anthropological reflections of its staff³³. It was interesting to see how the museum had adopted and discussed techniques from i.e. the *Musée du quai Branly*, in Paris. In a room, ethnographic objects are displayed in glass cases, “as art”; but, going further, the cases actually criticized this form of display: by pressing a button, the visitor could see the “context” of the objects (which appeared as an image - i.e. a natural landscape - behind the object), thus seeing the difference between displays of “art” and “context”. The objects at the exhibition were arranged by themes and not by regions, thus breaking with geographical (area) entities: i.e. there was a “clothing/gender” room, a mask/ritual room, etc. One of the rooms, which caught my attention, was the “religion” room, as it showed objects of the museological collection as well as altars of contemporary communities of migration. Here, the first thing which springs to mind is that the museum shows a very interesting way of interacting with communities through the display of objects.

By the display of topics like religion and ritual, the museum seemed to actually engage in “contact-zones” and thus communicate with “immigrants” living in the “German city of Cologne” and performing cultural practices through religion. To my disappointment, the beautifully furnished room popped out as an artificial display of objects to emulate “contact-

³³ The museum included in its exhibition a room to show a discourse of “critical whiteness” and anti-racism, in which visitors question and deconstruct racial stereotypes. This example shows how the museum adapted a discourse, which is considered to be radical. Nevertheless, after engaging in discussions and conversations with members of the staff, it was clear that they had no understanding what racism means and no intention of developing the critical-whiteness discourse further.

zones” which did not exist. For example, the room shows a Mexican altar “of the dead”. It looks traditional, not extremely elaborated and thus gives the impression of being of ordinary use. Nevertheless, after some inquiry with the museum staff, it turned out that the altar had been designed by a Mexican anthropologist who had ordered the objects from Mexico and designed the altar as an “every-day life” (and thus quite simple) arrangement. The altar had nothing to do with actual rituals or with a “group”.

But the most impressive object was a religious altar from Bangladesh. The altar is big, wide and colorful. It is an elaborated religious item. When I asked the staff about this ritual object, I was told that it had actually belonged to a migrant community in Cologne and that it had been used for a religious feast. The altar had been acquired by the museum because the community did not need it anymore. The museum decided to buy it - otherwise, it would have been thrown in the garbage. This last point was very interesting because, by acquiring “waste”, the museum had turned the altar into a worthy piece of folklore. Clifford’s “contact zone” was the only concept that came to my mind, which would help describe that altar and what was happening at the museum. The altar stood for a dialogue between the museum and a community; but also, collecting practices had been inverted in this case. The museum did not collect something of value, but actually a piece of garbage. It was a beautiful piece, beautifully located at the museum.

As I wanted to know more about the acquisition of the piece, I asked who had brought it to the museum. Weeks later, I spoke on the telephone with that member of staff. Dissapointingly, during our telephone conversation I learned that the altar had not been the result of an engagement between a community and the museum, but rather the personal choice of a curator who had engaged in a personal relationship with one community member who happened to mediate to get the altar. This was a disappointment, because what seemed to be a “contact zone” (a zone of conflict and negotiation between real groups of people), was actually a coincidence and the personal choice of a member of staff. The altar at the museum was not the result of social engagement. The altar symbolized a non-existent cultural relation and the representation of self-reflexive techniques. Actually, this example shows how a clever display can actually mask non-reflexive practices or can give the impression of consultation and inclusion where none exist. Delving deeper into self-reflexive techniques: there was another part of the main exhibition, which reminded me of the *Jugendmuseum Schöneberg* in Berlin. But, this time, the *Rautenstrauch Joest Museum* in Cologne showed a much fancier curatorial version. A section contained a series of rooms where cultures were made by

representatives of those cultures. The museum had engaged people from i.e. Canada or Turkey to represent “their” cultures. Each one had a very big room. With this, representations enjoyed an aura of legitimacy; also, “participation” is represented here, because “immigrants” or “traditional people” have the possibility to curate rooms themselves. This strategy seems to have become widely spread. The museum could profit from this because, if anything went wrong (i.e. if exotization happens), then “it was they who did it” and any exaggeration is to be blamed on the indigenous / immigrant person who is trapped in his own invented culture or tradition. It is important to remark that indigenous peoples are mostly engaged only for the time of the preparation of the exhibition, but never hired on a permanent basis. During my research, I could see that museums in Germany do not have non-German experts as permanent members of staff. There are some rare exceptions and, also, minor jobs like security and cleaning (people I also spoke with during my visit) are also performed by non-Germans. By incorporating the “other” in its permanent exhibition, the *Rautenstrauch Joest Museum* in Cologne succeeded in showing the mask of diversity.

1.3.4.- Representations of Migration at the *Stadtteilmuseum Neukölln* – A District Museum

The *Stadtteilmuseum Neukölln* - like the Jugendmuseum Schöneberg or the Kreuzberg museum – is a neighborhood or district museum. All district museums are considered to be “Stadtteil museen” or museums corresponding to a specific area of the city of Berlin (Stadtteil meaning a specific area of the city). These museums played a very important role during my fieldwork in Berlin (and they play a very important role in Berlin’s museological landscape) because they have become spaces where migration is represented in a natural way. As I said once to the director of the *Kreuzberg-Friedrichshain Museum*, Martin Dühspohl: “for me, district museums are like natural-born migration museums” (I remember Mr. Dühspohl laughing and agreeing with me in this point). It is kind of obligatory for these museums to represent migration without going deeply in complex conceptualizations. Why? Because the aim of these small museums is to mirror the history of the places in which they are located. They reflect urban history and its changes and, in this process, migration is a natural phenomenon that needs no theorization. Migration, in the sense of a displacement of populations, is depicted as a fact (and not as a concept).

On one occasion, Martin Dühspohl (director of the district museums *Friedrichshain/Kreuzberg*), said that the population in the Kreuzberg district changed completely approximately every 30 years. People would move in, and then out. Some

populations would be replaced by others. In this sense, these museums depict the social transformations of the neighborhoods. In districts such as Kreuzberg or Neukölln, such transformations are visible at the level of every-day life. These museums depict a local microcosmos, which is nevertheless entangled with global phenomena (i.e. global migration flows)³⁴.

Following this logic: if these museums represent life in the neighborhoods, then they must depict whoever lives there. It is as if “real society” would influence the representation in these museums – much more than the museum staff. These cannot define the totality of the representations. Ironically, the tradition of these museums had been very strong during the Nazi period (Roth, 1990), because “German” (every-day life) culture was depicted and praised at these museums - and it was not “high culture”, but the “culture of the people” which was shown. And this is ironic, because these erstwhile tools of the Nazi regime have become usefull for exactly the opposite purpose today: thiat is, to represent the flows of non-German populations who have installed themselves in the urban space of Berlin and Germany. And, as I mentioned, this process happens without neighborhood / district museums having to have big (conceptual) projects behind them.

During my research, I visited neighborhood museums in the districts of Friedrichshain/Kreuzberg, Neukölln, Schöneberg, Mitte/Wedding/Pankow, Charlottenburg and Schöneberg. All of them showed representations of migration. In some of them, migration was bigger and better represented; in others it took smaller spaces. For example, when I visited the neighborhood museum in Charlottenburg, I saw an exhibition about “Chinese in Berlin”; when I went to the office to ask for more information, I was shown a catalogue about the project of Chinese migration in Charlottenburg. Allthough here the topic focused solely in one ethnic group (the Chinese diaspora), significant work and resources had been invested in this project. For its part, the neighborhood / district museum in Mitte/Wedding/Pankow had a space dedicated to the oral history (recordings, photographs and diaries) of immigrants. It also offered some of its rooms for German “integration courses” (German language for foreigners) to take place – thus mixing museology with “real life” situations.

Another neighborhood / district museum, the *Stadtteilmuseum Neukölln*, was located at the Donaustraße, in the heart of one of the areas most associated with Turkish migration in Berlin.

³⁴ Here, I follow Grosfoguel’s concept of the city as “a microcosmos of empire”. Following this idea, the districts of Kreuzberg and Neukölln would reflect (locally) migration flows which also take place on a larger/global scale. Grosfoguel talked about the city in the conference “Decolonizing the City”, at the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung in Berlin, in September 20, 2012. <http://www.decolonizethecity.de>

Unfortunately, this museum moved to Britz at the end of my fieldwork about neighbourhood museums (in 2010), a place much more difficult to reach, and so I could not continue my observations as often as I had done before. But it was at the Donaustraße where the district museum impressed me by the beauty of its old building and the creativity of its exhibitions. For example, when the exhibition “Wie Zusammenleben?” (“How to live together?”) took place, I witnessed interesting work with objects that resembled the displays at the *Cité nationale*. Later, during an interview with the director Udo Gößwald in May of 2010 (in the new premises of the museum, in Britz), I learned that the way of collecting every-day objects at the Museum Neukölln matched the collecting practices of anthropologist Fabrice Grognet, from the *Cité nationale*. Gößwald stated that his museum had started with their collecting techniques before the project of the *Cité nationale* had. Here, objects were collected from immigrant communities, and the history of these objects (related to everyday life, i.e. cooking – like pots - or religion – like saints or a Koran) was told / contextualized, to represent social engagement and inter-cultural cooperation. The people who donated the objects were chosen by the museum in cooperation with three offices of urban management in the area (Quartiermanagement). This exhibition was situated in one half of the museum. The other half showed the urban history of the neighborhood (Rixdorf). This was an interesting juxtaposition because urban history was told side by side with a room full of contextualized migration objects. This museum was a very important meeting place (as I think many district museums are). For example, on one occasion, I went on a weekend to watch a piece of shadow-theater, “Karagöz”. The museum was full of families and children. Most of the families were Greek and there was great excitement in the room. The Karagöz was beautiful (I enjoyed it very much) but, most of all, I enjoyed to see the museum as a meeting place for the weekend and especially for children.

In addition, it must be said that neighborhood museums have taken the role as laboratories for the experimentation of bigger exhibits. There are numerous examples. One example is the Wedding neighborhood / district museum, which experimented with curatorial and participatory work, which was then part of a bigger, EU-funded project, namely *Entrepreneurial Cultures in European Cities*, which was then shown (as a much bigger project) in at the Museum of European Cultures (*Museums europäischer Kulturen e.V.*) in 2010 (Kistemaker, Tietmeyer (eds.), 2010). Also, the exhibition “Born in Europe” was initiated at the *District Museum Neukölln* in 2003. Afterwards, it was also part of a bigger, European project that went on to tour European cities between 2003 and 2005 (*Born in Europe*, Exhibition Catalogue, 2010).

Now I want come back to the district museum Neukölln because, on one occasion, I saw a rather peculiar event, which I think reflected the state of the debate in Germany. I found remarkable that, at these museums, events seemed to reflect “real life” outside. This was an event for Abiturienten (senior high school class, completing the requirements for university entrance) from France and Germany on a weekday in the evening, at 6 or 7 O’clock. I do not have the exact date, but the event took place in the Autum of 2008. A debate was held inside the museum. The topic was “migration”, and the discussants were the head of a *Volkshochschule* in Berlin and a political scientist – a woman who presented herself as “a person born and raised in Germany and of Turkish origin”. The *Volkshochschule* is an open school where people learn things like cooking, photography, languages (i.e. Japanese or Arabic) or Brazilian dances for a very small price. The director of the *Volkshochschule* was invited because the *Volkshochschule* had become a place to promote integration, and so German courses for candidates for German citizenship were held there. This was telling about the increasing interest of merging district museum with integration politics (as I mentioned above, the district museum in Mitte held language integration courses inside its premises).

On that evening, a debate framed around the “problem of migration” took place. During his intervention, the head of the *Volkshochschule* defended the right of any nation (in this case Germany) to select its population; to select who was going to come in and who was going to stay out; to include and to exclude. As he finished, the political scientist gave a statement criticizing her opponent - but somehow her efforts were useless. Although she was very angry, her arguments were somehow not strong enough and so the head of the *Volkshochschule* practically “won” the debate. I found this very controversial, because he had argued that a specific level of German language (written and spoken) was a very valid criterium to select who was going to achieve citizenship – a German passport – and who would not. Only those who passed the exam were eligible to hold a German passport. After his final statement, I remember a young girl of about 17 or 18 years of age raising her hand. She belonged to the German side of the group, and clearly had a migration background; she was shaking and looked very angry. She asked the head of the *Volkshochschule* to clarify his statement. She argued that many of the older generation of people of Turkish descent were not able to read or write in their own language (i.e. Turkish), so: how could they possibly learn to read and write German, a language far from their mother tongue? The girl was very nervous as she asked the question. When she finished, the head of the *Volkshochschule* responded: “such people (who could not read or write) are – in my view - not entitled for German citizenship”. He strongly stressed his argument. The young girl looked angry and, facing this

violent answer (I could feel that “those people” he referred to could be her parents), she could not continue to speak. At this point, the museum’s director Udo Gößwald stepped in and concluded the venue. He thanked the young high-school students and the other guests.

As I looked around, I saw a woman who had studied Anthropology with me at the *Freie Universität Berlin* and who was working as an assistant for the district museum *Neukölln* at the time. She looked very shocked but was smiling as if to hide her disagreement. I was very shocked and sad. As I came to her to say goodbye, we could not exchange any word about what had happened, but I sensed an uncomfortable feeling in the room. This event was indeed representative of what was “going on outside”, between neighbours.

A couple of months later, the *Stadtteilmuseum Neukölln* moved to Britz, to a completely new place and building. Also, the permanent exhibition was made anew and it concentrated solely on objects (this is documented in the new catalogue, *99 x Neukölln. Die Ausstellungsobjekte*) thus shifting the social and urban issues and also the topic of migration to the background. Objects dominated the new exhibition, which I thought was a pity. Migration as a topic of exhibition was consciously taken out of the museum’s conception. Approximately a year later, the *Kreuzberg Museum* was also completely renewed. It was as if a change of era had taken place and forced these museums to renew themselves completely. I was shocked to see how the “reality” I had seen in these museums had been replaced by something “new”. For example, in 2012 the *Kreuzberg Museum* had a completely new concept for its exhibition; here, “immigrants” had been replaced by maps, but still the topic of migration remained. It is important to note the role of the museums and the fact that a change of “era” had taken place. For me, it was as if a “quai Branly effect” would be impacting museums like domino pieces falling one after the other.

In this context, I find it extremely important to point out that, although these museums changed their looks, they nevertheless remain attached to the representation of the real. I mention this because I think this is a characteristic of the German museum landscape. As I would learn in Paris, there are great differences between these types of museum in Berlin / Germany and those in Paris / France. In Paris, migration is depicted only at the *Cité nationale* – the place officially assigned to depict migration. There are also neighborhood / district museums in Paris, but they do not depict migration; they only focus on urban history without giving space to different people “moving in” (Castellano, 2011). In Germany, there is no central place to depict migration (no migration museum like the *Cité nationale*), but migration is naturally depicted in Berlin’s district museums. Also, district museums feel the effects of

changes made in anthropological museums. In this way, discourses of the “anthropological other” have a direct impact on discourses of the “immigrant other”.

Now I will turn to another example, namely art institutions in Berlin. These play an important role in changing dynamics and roles in the work of representation. As I will show in the next example, democratic art institutions offer a stage in which “new” actors (not the traditional museum curators) can depict community work, transnational identities and migration on their own terms.

1.3.5.- The Immigrant Association *Korientation* and the *Neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst*

To focus on the role of artistic spaces for the representation of migration, I will describe an exhibition which was held in an art institution, the *Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst* (NGBK) or “New society for visual arts”³⁵. The exhibition was called “Shared. Divided. United” and was inaugurated in October 2009. The exhibition embodied the convergence of the immigrant organization *Korientation* and this art institution, the NGBK, of which practically anyone can be a member. At the NGBK, the rule is that five members of the curatorial board have to support a project in order for it to be approved. Five members of *Korientation* - “first” and “second” generation, some with academic background, who define themselves as German-Korean - joined the democratic art institution and worked out a concept for an exhibition. It was approved. With it, an interesting representation of their work came to life.

“Shared. Divided. United” was a unique exhibition in regards to the representational strategies it showed. The exhibition’s narrative was built in the way of an art installation, as it created history out of objects collected from the people themselves who had lived the migration experience between a divided Korea and a divided Germany. It mixed works of visual and plastic art with documentary pieces (video) and relied on the epistemologies of post-colonialism and gender. This was visible in the style of narrating the history of Korean guest workers to Germany and on pictorially representing the gender division of labor.

The exhibition was complex and carefully elaborated. It also showed a continuity with concepts and work which had been done in Germany in the past years. As I engaged in a conversation with one of the curators, Sun-Ju Choi, she confirmed that she and another

³⁵ The NGBK has been financed by the *Stiftung* (Foundation) *Deutsche Klassenlotterie* since 1969.

member of the curatorial board had been part of “Projekt Migration” (2005 - 2006). “Projekt Migration” has been the biggest exhibition on the topic of migration in Germany, which heavily relied on contemporary art as a medium of expression. The importance of “Projekt Migration” is not to be underestimated, because it brought together actors from many different disciplines. An example is the enormous exhibition catalogue, where the international selection of authors represents the academic disciplines of sociology, history, post-colonial studies, gender, and art. The catalogue gives space to images of art and documents related to migration. The texts were published in the original languages with translations. The publication/catalogue *Projekt Migration* displays similarities with avant-garde magazines like *Documents*, *October* or *Lettre Internationale*.

Nevertheless, the exhibition “Projekt Migration”, which took place in the open urban space of the city of Cologne, had lacked much more participation from the part of “non-German actors” within German society or, using the mainstream political language, actors with “migration background”. This was the statement made by Choi during our conversation on the 23rd of November 2009, and which I think has to be reflected upon, as this problem comes up very often when interviewing “non-German” actors, and the issue will intensify in the coming years. The members of *KorIENTATION* had felt underrepresented at the time of the making of “Projekt Migration” and this would be one of the reasons which led them to make their own exhibition. Choi stated that, although they had played the role of scientific researchers in “Projekt Migration”, the decisions – the selection of historical materials, the “look” of the exhibit – had been taken by the “Mehrheitsgesellschaft” (members of the German social majority).

Thus, “Shared. Divided. United” can be described as a project of “continuity in difference”³⁶, as it stems from the “German” project *Projekt Migration* and takes its representational strategies and conceptual framings to depict their narrative. But, at the same time, it develops differences and specificities. As Choi pointed out, “Shared. Divided. United” was conceived by German-Koreans only – all coming from the socialization of post-colonial studies - and from its natural counterpart, gender studies. Also, the exhibition relies much more on post-colonial epistemologies, gender perspectives and art (installation) as representational strategies than “Projekt Migration” had. Further it stands as a statement about lack of participation, affirming difference.

³⁶ I take the phrase “continuity in difference” from Gayatri Spivak’s conference at the *Freie Universität zu Berlin*, on June, 2010.

To come to an end here, I want to make two last observations. Surprisingly, this last example makes me think about phenomena which I have been observing in Paris. The first one is: “Shared. Divided. United” was inaugurated at the time of the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall. It could be seen as an example of the engagement of immigrant associations in representing their histories and their contributions in the context of national commemorations. This shows an important parallel to what happened in France as the preparations for the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the French Revolution took place in 1989. The association and archive *Génériques*, in Paris, created the exhibition “France des étrangers, France des libertés. Presse et communautés dans l’histoire nationale” (1989), which was made specifically for the commemoration festivities. Here, we can see how immigrant associations have inscribed social and cultural work as well as their memories in the national landscapes / memories through participating in commemorations of the “histoire avec un grand H”.

My second observation is that, in both countries, some of the political activists and representatives of immigrant associations I have talked to show not only affinities with post-colonial and gender epistemologies, but rely explicitly on the example of social movements, which took place in the United States: the civil rights movement, the Chicano movement, the “teatro campesino” (El Yazami, 31.05.2010) and / or take events like the Obama election as crucial acts concerning political representation - which are far away from taking place in Europe (Brandalise, 28.04.2010). In my conversations with members from *Génériques* as well as with the representative of the *Migrationsrat Berlin Brandenburg*, it was clear that their work is based in transatlantic bonds and transnational networks.

In the field of representation, these bonds are presented through the means of visual and plastic art, and performance to build up in-between narratives. This is the path which “immigrant” (“non-German” or “non-French”) actors have taken to represent migration, their communities and their transnational bonds, as well as to empower themselves and become curators in the scene.

1.4.- A Comparison of Representational Practices in Paris and Berlin

The projects in Paris and in Berlin show important points of convergence when seen through the perspective of the “crisis of representation” and, also, when related to the fact that immigrants, simultaneously understood as actors, bodies and objects of “western” history, have found different ways to act and change the established narratives of migration.

The *Cité nationale* (2007 - 2010) as well as *Projekt Migration* (2005 - 2006) have developed representational strategies which have established ways of organizing diversity. Nevertheless, these strategies are made up from the standpoint of national perspectives, as immigrant groups and individuals are hardly represented in the overall making of the exhibitions. All museum staff holding relevant positions in France and Germany lack “migration background”.

The visual arts and design are crucial in order to create spaces of communication and to include “otherness” into national and European narratives. Also, interdisciplinary approaches and the de-centering of the museum - making exhibitions outside the museum, in the urban city spaces (like in Paris and Cologne) – as well as community work are relevant representational practices. The display of “migrations” is based in a mix of visual and audio technologies and the representation of biographies and oral history; this type of work crosses with ethnographical interview methods. Further, with two European traditions of depicting “otherness” and displaying images of the “Avant-garde” which play key roles to “filter” images of migration: that is, “white / European” representations of the history of “Jews” and the “Shoa”, as well as “Africa”, “blackness” and “slavery” – these two being the most dominant diasporic representations in Europe (Vergès, 2007). All migration, or the performace of migration, tends to be filtered through these “white or European-constructed” perspectives, thus running the risk of freezing on their way to singularity.

Beyond design and frozen images of the “other”, which are also related to the geopolitical construction of the “third world”, we have seen how actors and communities empower themselves, thus establishing a continuity in difference (as curators). One important actor in this field is the association and archive *Génériques*, in Paris, as it engages in collecting, documents, and safeguarding memories of immigrant associations, producing knowledge (as an ensemble) and displaying migration through exhibitions – all this ever in tension with official representations. In Germany there exists a similar archive, *DOMID*³⁷, which is not located in Berlin but in Cologne and strives for a similar aim as *Génériques* (but with much less success). As I commented in regard to political activists and this type of archive, it is important to observe their transnational ties with minority movements and transatlantic transfers of knowledge. Although the exhibitions (as final products) may be presented as “French” or “German” – as they are shown in national contexts, are partially or fully state-

³⁷ *Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland e.V.* („Documentation Centre and Museum of Migration in Germany“).

financed and even juxtaposed to national commemorations – they emerge from transnational and transatlantic exchanges.³⁸

Although the main difference between Paris and Berlin is that France has a national migration museum and Germany does not (one field being centralized, the other fragmented) the fields are not so divergent if we take into consideration that, even if the *Cité nationale* embodies a “center”, the museum has no stability and no linear narrative – nowhere to hold on to. The building, the departments, the various ministries which finance it, everything points to a structural weakness. It seems as weak as the small and temporary projects in Berlin.

In both countries, we find work between the museum and the communities. Here, the *Cité nationale* and the *Jugendmuseum Schöneberg* (as well the other Bezirke or Stadtteilmuseen) converge in their aims to work with communities and to think up new ways of participation. The *Cité nationale* has given the space of the small “Hall Marie Curie” for Associations like the (now defunct) Turkish cultural association *ELELE*³⁹ to organize temporary exhibitions (in 2009). Also, the Spanish association *FACEEF* mounted an exhibition with the *Cité nationale* (in 2007), but in this case it was staged “hors les murs”; this means, that they re-routed their visitors to the premises of the Spanish association, thus extending the scope of the museum to the urban space (Gasó Cuenca, 04. October, 2010). The association *Génériques* played a much bigger role at the *Cité* in the large gallery space dedicated to temporary exhibitions, located just beside “Repères”. They managed to present a larger narrative (in time) with the exhibition “Générations, un siècle d’histoire culturelle des Maghrébins en France” (2009 - 2010).

Overall, one can argue that while the *Jugendmuseum Schöneberg* showed individual self-representations in “Villa Global”, the *Cité nationale* showed this process at the level of social and immigrant organizations (as cultural units). We can observe how the museum structures open special, rather small and temporary, spaces for the performance of migration. Although individuals and immigrant associations perform, they do not enter the larger stage of decision-making, as the concepts are made and knowledge produced by representatives of the national societies. From another point of view, this is a very contradictory situation: in the national

³⁸ A networking between different fields of knowledge which recalls the international character of the Avant-garde. For the linking between migration and Avant-garde see Römhild (2007).

³⁹ *ELELE* disappeared surprisingly in April of this year (2010), as the *Ministry of Immigration*, decided to cut its financial support. All associations have been affected by this abrupt and unjust decision, but not all have disappeared from one day to the next, like *ELELE*. (Petek, 29. Sept. 2010). This sort of occurrence highlights the precarious situations such associations find themselves in, dependent on the whims of dominant state actors for their very existence.

landscapes, migration museums and exhibitions on migration – although made mostly by “nationals” – also occupy the most peripheral places within these landscapes and have the lowest budgets.

The second convergence between the fields Paris / Berlin is the re-organization of collections and projects to stage a transformed revival of the colonial heritage. In both cities, there are attempts to transform colonial heritage and prepare it for a new era. At the *Cité nationale*, this is concentrated at the “Palais des Colonies” and poses a big crisis of representation for the museum itself. In Berlin, i.e. the Benin collections (like the Benin bronzes) are also displayed in “transformed” landscapes – designed for the *Humboldt Forum* – but which are also very problematic as it links the performance of an associated group of people to a colonial history, which is not critically examined. Like in the case of the previous examples, the German-Nigerian association does not impact the concept or decision-making of the exhibition. The project does not show “immigrant” presence but rather links them to their mythical origins and thus displays frozen images of “otherness”. With this strategy, controversy and debate around colonial issues and German colonial history are silenced, as the project cannot be linked to debates of contemporary migration⁴⁰. Nevertheless, this debate threatens to emerge at any moment on the grounds of the coming exhibitions, in Berlin.

Right now, the *Cité nationale* is experiencing very threatening moments, as it finds itself imprisoned between the Immigration Ministry and the history of the palace⁴¹. Since its grounding in the Spring of 2007, the Immigration Ministry applied an aggressive migration policy in the national and, in 2008, also at a European level (as France took the European presidency for that year) – thus going against the work and the initial aim of the French migration museum. Towards the end of 2009 and continuing until the beginning of 2010, the Ministry launched a debate on “national identity” which threatened to revive ideas and sentiments coming from the far right. Further, the plans to build a *musée de l’histoire de France* (Thiesse, 2010) threaten to dismount the autonomy of the *Cité nationale*, should the

⁴⁰ Kaschuba explains how this silencing is linked with a process in which immigrants are kept only in the area of “communicative memory” - gathered around immigrant associations, sport clubs and ethnic restaurants - but out of the area of the production of “cultural memory” Kaschuba (2008, 315). Like in the case of carnivals and some co-operations with museums, immigrants are in “in-between” and temporary spaces, in the periphery and in the areas of “communicative” (Halbwachs, 1991) and “performative” memory; the latter are associated with bodily practices and rituals, as Connerton (1989) stresses in his book *How Societies Remember*. But these spaces do not impact the production of cultural memory (Assmann, 2007), which is closely related to museums and objects, or knowledge (as stressed by post-colonial theory). The breaking of these taboos would unleash new debates on subalternity and representation.

⁴¹ Since the beginning, there have existed critical voices who have plead to use the palace for a museum of colonial history (i.e. Pascal Blanchard).

immigration ministry decide to re-route the financial support for the *Cité* in another direction. In 2010, Sarkozy's racist campaign to expel the (European) Roma with the support of this / his Ministry, took the crisis of national representation to a European (regional) level. The Ministry closed abruptly in November of 2010, which means that the budget of the *Cité* will be administered by a different ministry.

Further, from October 2010 to January 2011, the *Cité nationale* was occupied by the labour union (CGT) and the Sans papiers movement to demand the promises of regularization that were made to them. The *Cité nationale* became their political forum. The museum remained open and adjusted itself to its new "visitors" and, since this day, the gap between museums, colonial history, and civil society has practically vanished. Compared to this major event, the examples described in this paper look minor. The 500 Sans Papiers experience their everyday-life in the museum, inhabiting the *Cité nationale* - sleeping, eating, washing, and organizing their "dossiers" in the museum – (Sperrfechter, 2010). And they also play the role of visitors, as the staff seems to have prepared tours of the exhibition "Repères". As Sperrfechter (2010)⁴² has noted, they are making an important political and symbolic presence visible – as the men (mostly from Africa) as well as the women and children (mostly Asian) have been photographed in front of the colonial frescoes - thus naturally creating an arch that reaches all the way back to colonial history and reviving old debates on representation and exclusion⁴³.

During my fieldwork, it was clear that the *Cité nationale* was not attracting much public⁴⁴. But it has a public, which comes naturally to it. When exhibitions open their doors they bring people in – their bodies and their political presence flow into the museum space. As the place of struggle and contestation, the *Cité nationale* became the forum for demands of labour and citizenship: these debates reached the museum and its staff, making it an explicit platform of a crisis of representation. From the perspective of this event, the solutions are no longer in the domain of curators, but extend to the general field of social / national representations and to the domain of politics. It might be that the most important political activity of the museum has been to offer the *Sans Papiers* space and support to prepare their *dossiers*, demand their regularization and help them acquire a "legal" status.

⁴² Ute Sperrfechter worked at the *Cité nationale*, in the department which organizes the cultural activities and events. She reported on the experience between the museum and the Sans Papiers in a conference in Vienna in November, 2010.

⁴³ I will explore this occupation in more detail Chapter Four.

⁴⁴ Some conversation partners said that the public was made up by researchers and PhD students, like me. I would be the ethnographer, fan and public of the *Cité nationale* – all in one.

Before exploring this last subject further, I would like to take a step back and analyze the material I gathered during the first phase of my fieldwork; namely, with curators and actors from the majority societies. While the present chapter gave an account of the turbulences between different spaces articulating migration, in the next chapter I will focus on my interviews with French and German curators in the context of national identities and Europeanization. Afterwards, I will turn again to the topic of the “turbulences” between politics of representation in the third chapter “Zones of Contact and Conflict in Museums”.

2.- On Exhibiting “Migration” and “Europeanization”: Images of Europe from Within

It is a fact that nobody can think about “migration” from within national discourses. During the years of my research, I talked to many different people about the topic of “migration”. After endless conversations about this topic, something became clear to me: those people who had difficulties to think about “what is migration?” expressed an unquestioned national sense of belonging. They had great difficulty indeed in recognizing that “migration” takes place, in thinking about it, and in giving it a place in the world. Some conversation partners expressed astonishment and anxiety in something which was, according to them, “out of place”. The fact is that national discourses usually erase migration processes in favor of linear narratives. In this sense, migration becomes unthinkable and unimaginable; or it only emerges in the conversation as something pathological (i.e. “those poor migrants”). But there are some exceptions to this rule, for example countries like the United States, Canada or Australia. These three countries actually celebrate migration processes as the founding narratives, which constitute the social fabric of those nations. But it must also be said that these countries celebrate migration processes from the European continent (i.e. the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum*) and have difficulties in staging migration from the “South”. Following Tamara Vukov’s PhD thesis *Imagining Canada, Imagining the Desirable Immigrant: Immigration Spectacle as Settler Post-colonialism* (2000), representations of migrations in countries like i.e. Canada celebrate the spectacle of “settler post-colonialism”, which becomes then the general figure of “migration” and thus erases local indigenous discourses of resistance (the colonized indigenous populations). Also, in these countries, debates turn around the question of the line between European immigrants and “other” immigrants. An example is the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum* in New York, where topics like migration flows from Mexico to the US, the slave trade and / or migrations from Asia find little or no space in the project (see Welz, 1996). But, at least, these countries promote an awareness of a process of geographical displacement called “migration” and - beyond internal debates - “migration” exists as “part of” national discourses.

This is very different in the national discourses of, for example, France and Germany (the topic of this dissertation). In both countries, migration processes are not conceived as having contributed to the nation-building process. On the contrary, in hegemonic discourse, “migration” is portrayed as a process which can dismantle the nation, thus bringing it to a

crisis – and to its decay. This is why migration is conceived as a process which must go in the direction of integration to the national discourses; this means, to disappear slowly and gradually in favor of the national hegemonic discourse⁴⁵. Here, it is the national discourse that defines the future of “immigrants” and not the other way around. This is the particularity of national discourses of European nations like France and Germany.

2.1.- Actors Articulating “Migration” from Within French, German and / or European Discourses

The dominant narratives in France and Germany (which also determine every-day life experience) dictate that immigrants must adopt hegemonic discourses. For this reason, in my encounters with museum directors and curators, as well as with historians of migration during my years of research, I remarked how all of these actors were thinking from the standpoint of a national discourse (either French or German). But, second – and most important: I could see that they were all working toward a visibilisation of a process (migration) which is normally erased in public discourses. They were not defending hegemonic discourses, quite to the contrary: they were trying to “open” and enrich them. In their narratives, diversity and otherness were not something negative (or a problem), but a stance to rethink national realities. Many of these scholars have done extensive work in the fields of history writing and media analysis. For example, historian Gérard Noiriel has written extensively about ways to move beyond the national discourse by taking experiences of migration into account (*Le creuset français. Histoire de l’immigration (XIXe – Xxe siècle)*, 1992). Further, he has written about the history of immigrants as part of the history of the French nation (*État, nation et immigration. Vers une histoire du pouvoir*, 2005). Also Patrik Weil’s work and activism has questioned the formation of a discourse about national identity and citizenship, and analyzed the legal aspects of those people who are not considered “French” (*Q’est-ce que’un Français?*, 2005). For their part, Yvan Gastaut and Laure Teulières have written about the media representation of migration. Gastaut, in the press (newspapers) and public opinion (2000) and in sports (2006; 2008); Teulières, in the history of representations in cinema (2006). Marie-Claude Blanc-Chaléard has contributed with a “history of immigration” (2001), as many other scholars in France have done. Examples of the scholars who have devoted their work to migration are numerous: Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch has intervened from a perspective located in the African continent (1997; 2009) while Nancy Green has

⁴⁵ Regarding this point, I was astonished to hear a colleague of mine quoting a professor of visual arts who, in 2008, stated at the *Universität der Künste* (University for Visual Arts) in Berlin, that the process of migration “had already ended, and so now a process of “integration” was taking place”.

contextualized France from a north-American standpoint (2007) (these are just some examples). In Germany, Klaus Bade has established studies about research on foreigners (Ausländerforschung, in Osnabrück). He also published (together with other European authors) an encyclopedia of migration into Europe (2008), thus “opening” the historical debate and re-thinking the national/regional in terms of migration flows. Here, it seems that the regional image of Europe as well as its nations could fall apart due to all processes (hundreds of examples of migration to Europe) which enter and are absorbed by national (and the EU regional) discourses. These extensive works aim to give answers concerning “what to do with so much diversity?”.

Other scholars such as Sabine Hess and Johannes Moser (2009) go further by stressing transnationalism and questioning the power of national borders from the standpoint of migration as a process which has a strength of its own. In this way, they criticize the container-model of the nation - following Nina Glick Schiller’s critique on methodological nationalism (Schiller and Wimmer, 2002) - and the politics behind discourses of integration. Also, authors like Tsianos, Karakayali and Bodjazijev have strengthened a view of the “Autonomy of Migration”, thus de-centering the national discourse in favor of a perspective which comes from immigrants themselves (immigrants being those who have displaced themselves or have been displaced). Another example of a publication which shifts the static view in favour of the moving eye is *Turbulente Ränder* (2007), by the scientific research group Transit Migration (editor of the book). Rejecting the metaphor of integration and also bringing gender debates to the fore, these works stress the existence of “hybrid” and turbulent (border) spaces from which ethnographies, politics and knowledge can be produced. Also, such work is compatible (in my view) with the work done at the *Ballhaus Naunyn*, a theater house in the district of Kreuzberg (Berlin). Here, I could witness “migration theatre”, which are plays dealing with the lives of young people belonging to second generations; but it has also staged avant-garde plays, works of dance-theatre which place migration as the conceptual starting point of the performances. These plays are avant-garde in the sense that they place “other” bodies and “border” experiences at the center of the narratives - in the way that reminded me of how artists like Antonin Artaud or Pablo Picasso placed the “other” in their respective works. Here, migration took the place which the “primitive” (in a positive sense) had taken before. Also, the *Ballhaus Naunyn* has staged figures of “post-identity” and “post-migration”, an approach which in my view is also poststructuralist in the sense that it avoids essentialized identities. “Post-migration”, promotes a permanent creation of spaces and a constant transformation of identities which avoids fixity and essentialism. It is in favor of

change, but not in the sense of integration into the national narratives – but rather “constant change” as a way of resisting it.

At this point I have to say something about myself – about my own standpoint. I have to say that I am a woman from Mexico who migrated to Germany 15 years ago. I am myself an “immigrant” and my perspective is that of a non-European woman in a juridical, historical and cultural sense. For this reason, I always felt different from the scholars and researchers I mentioned above. Not so much at the beginning of my research, but towards the end I felt I had a completely different understanding of my topic. From my point of view (which also changed in time), I see these researchers as either French or German but also as European - in the ontological sense of belonging.

This is why, in this chapter, I will write about knowledges produced from within European (French / German) identity. As I will show, these actors have a strong sense of belonging to national or European discourses and their narratives seemed attached to concepts of modernity and universalism⁴⁶. Nevertheless, they are willing to change the fixity of national discourses and are politically engaged in favor of diversity; they all agree in most of the critiques against racist discourse (i.e. Sarrazin), border patrolling (Frontex) and the politics towards asylum seekers. Here, I am not making a critique but I would rather describe these researchers – from my perspective – as people who are working towards a positive understanding of what migration means. Their standpoint is western culture and their work is directed toward a critique of national discourses. Further, they are dedicated to the presentation and diffusion of knowledge which tries to dismantle mainstream media propaganda, which depicts migration as a “problem” and which leads to practices of racism and exclusion. These scholars do not represent the mainstream of national societies, as they work towards fighting and transforming stereotypes. They represent migration and difference as something positive and also what is usually called “critical thinking” (and here they are also strongly linked with gender studies)⁴⁷.

⁴⁶ I was able to frame this view thanks to Houria Bouteldja’s conference at the Georg Simmel Zentrum at the Humboldt University in October 26, 2011. In this conference, Bouteldja explained the general pillars of white, French identity: an ancestry attached to Catholicism (even as people declare themselves to be agnostic, their lineage is catholic); light (white) skin; the embodiment of universal thinking and, finally, support of the secular state.

⁴⁷ Anyhow, as Houria Bouteldja states in “Au delà de la frontière BBF ” (2011b) and Kwame Nimako in “About them but without them” (2011), these critical thinkers also build up a “frontier social science” or, in other words, a wall which stands for the limits of rational expression. Therefore, critical thinkers become entitled to express that which racialized people cannot.

Further, these researchers embody a difficult position, because they are criticized by conservative nationalists (by siding with immigrants or being immigrants) and, at the same time, they are criticized by minority groups and immigrants themselves for appropriating migration discourses for their own benefit (Bouteldja, 2011b) (Nimako, 2011). For this reason, in this chapter I will describe the work of these actors as articulating a critique but within national discourses. This means, that their critical postures have limits and these limits are criticized from non-European standpoints (which I will explain in the next chapters). I will show how these researchers are struggling against mainstream discourses from the inside of national identities. Later, I will focus on a critique, which comes from people who speak from outside of national and European identities and who feel that these actors could do a bit more and radicalize their discourses. In both Paris and Berlin, the actors I interviewed - who belong to majority societies of each country and identify with them - do get resources (scholarships, grants, jobs and money for exhibitions or research projects) to work on migration; but these resources are, of course, limited. They are not a mainstream in academia and they are questioned by it. These actors struggle to go against racist images of migration; they engage in projects to transform these images in the public sphere but they remain within academia and do not have the support of the totality of actors who are affected by discrimination in both countries. In a way, this actor's critique builds up a frontier – a line of demarcation between the zone of accepted critique and the zone of non-accepted critique (Bouteldja, 2011b) (Nimako, 2011).

These actors represent those voices which can enunciate legitimate critique from within the scientific field. Although I remarked that these researchers are not considered to be mainstream and rather represent critical thinking, they build up what activist Houria Bouteldja describes as the field of the permitted. The positionality of these scholars is complex because it has come to represent a field which elaborates discourse about migration but which differentiates itself from those which are – legally or epistemically – strongly affected by the French, German or European politics of migration.

2.2.- The European Space and the European Community (Europeanization)

Before going into their discourses and showing some conflicts and differences between these actors, I want to elaborate briefly on the formation of something called a European Community. This point seems relevant to me, since the Franco-German discourse rests on

discourses of Europe and, at the same time, France and Germany build up the core of the European Community. It builds a place of encounter which defines the field of permitted critical thinking. I take this idea from activist Houria Bouteldja, who articulates a definition of the field of white/French (Bouteldja, 2011a) which I use to reflect upon the Franco-German and European levels, respectively. In her definition, French / white identity rests upon four characteristics: an ancestry / lineage attached to Catholicism; light / white skin; the embodiment of universal / rational thinking and, finally, support of the secular (western democratic) state. In the case of Germany, this definition seems pertinent, but with some changes: the first characteristic should be extended to catholic AND protestant; in Germany the blood principle has been articulated in stronger terms than in France (to define “Germaness”); Germany has no state-secularism but it privileges rational thinking over non-christian ways of religious thinking and/or cosmologies.

This is important to reflect upon because a European community of legality and privilege is taking shape at the same time that another community - of the “illegalized” or the “non-members” of Europe (but within Europe) - is also becoming more and more visible (Ocak 2012: 3). Two different spaces seem to develop within the same geography and each space has its own epistemic production. This space is also important to contextualize the work of the scholars and researchers I mention: their work is found in the “legal” zone of the European while the work of other scholars (i.e. Muslim scholars) is not taken into account or considered part of the zone of the “illegal” (Bouteldja, 2011b).

This partition of spaces within the same geography also speaks for processes of exclusion which culminate in the formation of communities of “belonging” and communities of “non-belonging” within European nations. As I mentioned, in this chapter I will show the field of image-production of migration which is located within the legal zone of the visible; this means, within and for the context of France, Germany and the EU (European identity). I gathered the empirical material for this chapter mainly from conversations with actors who work to produce these images of migration from the standpoint of French, German or European identity(ies). I recorded most of these conversations. In the cases of actors who had published extensively (i.e. Gérard Noiriel), the interview matched the publications and so the content was practically the same, although the presence of the person - nuances while speaking, tone of voice, expression, etc. were crucial to re-interpret some of the contents. In most cases, these actors express a critical view of society and of the national discourses. In some cases, actors speak about strong conflicts with the conservative political field or with

hegemonic discourses (mostly with integration discourses). Since museological representations of migration in Europe speak not only about migrants but also about image-formations of a geography called “Europe”, the conflicts expressed by these actors speak for the “border” of the image of Europe. Conflicts arise where Europe or narratives which are pillars to the nation (i.e. modernity or universalism) are criticized too much or questioned too much. The interviewed actors show the contours of European discourse: where it begins and where it ends. In this way, “migration”, as a topic used to depict the border, is also indicative of the beginning and end of narratives of modernity, European history, European citizenship, legal existence and epistemic validity. It is part of the contemporary process of image-making of Europe (from within).

But: what is contemporary Europe? Seen from the inside, “Europe” has been taking shape – since the end of World War II – as a region of peace, respect between European neighbours, human rights, and first-class citizenship. At the turn of this century, it became an economic unit – as the Euro came into being thus building a counterbalance to the United States economy. Third, Europe has been expanding and introducing member states to the Eurozone: the “South” and the “east” of Europe. At the same time, it has been defining its geopolitical frontiers – where Europe ends - i.e. the Mediterranean or the frontier between Poland and the Ukraine (to name some examples).

The central economic axis of this configuration is built up by France and Germany – an axis which celebrates mutual respect and has been expanding through commerce, educational programmes and exchanges – and which has accepted countries of the “South” like Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece; also, the Republic of Ireland (an ex-colony of the British Empire) and countries from the ex-communist block or “eastern Europe” (*Osterweiterung*) such as Poland or Hungary. Further, the EU has integrated small regions which became independent after 1989 (i.e. Lithuania) thus introducing a process to create common regulations which set off a process of economic transformation (Vonderau, 2008). In the context of creating a common European geography, a discourse of “integration” of internal European differences was designed. Here, the question of citizenship and of access to the European space became crucial, the result being a European space for European citizens. Parallel to this, the question of “what is Europe?” permeated the media: questions of religion (Christianity vs. Islam), history (i.e. Greece as the cradle of Europe), collective memory (memorial landscapes, monuments, museums) and belonging (discourses of cultural identity and integration). Seen

from this perspective, “images of the other” mark the border of what has become integrated (Europeanized) and what has been left outside.

An example of a “border place” in this sense would be Turkey. Legally outside of the EU but geographically part of Europe, the debate about the inclusion or not of the Turkish Republic into the EU is a mayor debate which defines the discussion of “what is Europe’s” border – in an economic, cultural, geographical and religious sense. This is why many exhibitions about the Turkish nation, Turkish art as well as human rights in Turkey are also about the extension and limits of the modern project – seen as the implementation of radical modernization at the level of national institutions, as an artistic avant-garde or as engagement for human rights in the western sense. From this perspective, the crisis of Europe’s borders would also be reflected in key geopolitical places like Cyprus, an island belonging half to the EU and half to Turkey. The case of Cyprus brings the political constructedness of the European border regime to the fore – since there is no natural geographical justification for such a border.

Beyond border issues, a process of Europeanization has been taking place from within. This means, through the interaction of those people who are members of the EU. From this perspective, “integration” is part of the Europeanization process (Kaiser, 2012) (seen from an “outside” perspective, integration would be a process of forced assimilation of non-Europeans into hegemonic discourses, but I will not handle this dimension in this chapter). This Europeanization process has set off in the form of contests, cultural activities, art biennales, educational programmes and urban design. This has been well documented by Gisela Welz and Annina Lottermann in *Projekte der Europäisierung. Kulturanthropologische Forschungsperspektiven* (Projects of Europeanization. Research Perspectives from Cultural Anthropology. Welz and Lottermann (eds.), 2009). In their book, the authors show examples of activities organized by people striving to create European common spaces. These activities, which have been increasing, have complemented a process of Europeanization which started before - in the form of institutions like the European Parliament as well as representations of the European commission outside of Europe (which resemble embassies). Also, Europeanization in the form of European schools and institutions has taken place. There exist, for example, colleges (in i.e. Brussels) striving to produce the elite “European Man / Woman” who speaks several European languages, knows European geography, has participated in inter-cultural exchanges with other European countries and engages in long-term relations with other Europeans (Poehls, 2009). Further, European universities offer exchanges between European countries; such exchanges are called “Erasmus”. Meanwhile, European internships

can be made through the program “Leonardo” (I tried to participate in these programmes myself, but this failed because I did not have a European passport or a permanent visa – unbefristete Aufenthaltsgenehmigung). Films about European identity and which encourage European mobility - such as *L’auberge Espagnol* part I and part II - have become popular. Here, it must be said that the experiences of the protagonist (a Parisian student studying his Erasmus year in Barcelona), would not be possible if he did not hold a passport from a European member state.

In endless conversations with friends who had children in Berlin and Paris, I came to know about “European schools” (in Germany Europa-Schulen) and daycare centres, which welcome children who have the ambition to master a bicultural education or several European languages. In other conversations with teachers and social workers engaging with migration, I learned that they now organize themselves at the EU level to make demands (i.e. demand more salary) and to introduce new common technologies to get more opportunities in their working field; this seems to have affected and directed their aspirations. It can be said that, in all of these areas (education, culture and social work), “mobility” in the sense of “Europeanization expanding” also crosses with other inter-continental mobilities, which do not get to enter into the European space. This fact creates confusion because mobility of Europeans creating a community is not the same as mobility from non-european immigrants entering the geography of Europe - but not joining the community. These are two types of migrations which nevertheless cross and, as a result, “migration” and “mobility” begin to shape contemporary images about Europe.

As a conversation partner (a curator of a migration exhibition in Germany) told me in 2010, it is also a fact that many projects about migration – such as exhibitions, seminars and workshops – which have been rejected for funding at a national level, were later funded by the protective umbrella of the EU. In her opinion, when projects about migration come into conflict with national frameworks, they have a better chance of getting funded through programmes of the European commission. An example of an exhibition of this type would be *Enterpreneurial Cultures in Europe. Stories and Museum Projects from Seven Cities*, shown at the *Museum europäischer Kulturen* in Dahlem. This project was EU-funded from 2008 to 2010. Seen from within the European space, to exhibit enterprises conceived and run by non – Europeans (i.e. people from Turkey, Iran, Ethiopia, Cuba) in European cities (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Liverpool, Tallin) means to exhibit “Europe”. This exhibition shows cities

which represent the essence and contours of Europe, as well as non-European “others” who live within these spaces.

A further EU project which depicts “otherness” within Europe is the exhibition “Born in Europe”. This exhibition toured European cities such as Göteborg, Aarhus, Berlin, Lissabon and Copenhagen from 2003 to 2005. It displayed pictures of people not belonging to Europe (i.e. of Peruvian, Chinese, Iranian, Kurdish, Somalian, Bosnian, North American, Algerian, Palestinian, Brazilian descent) who gave birth to children in the European cities mentioned above. The moments of “pregnancy”, “birth” and family life are depicted in the exhibition. Ironically, the depiction of the birth of these children with non-European parents symbolizes, simultaneously, the birth of Europe as a region (Catalogue *Born in Europe*, 2010). In the words of the main curator of the exhibit (from an interview in 2010, where I specifically asked about the exhibition “Born in Europe”):

Das Thema hatte natürlich einen starken Fokus auf den Aspekt Migration, aber es geht eigentlich um Familien in Europa, die aus anderen Ländern kommen und in dem neuen Land ein Kind zur Welt bringen. (...) Und die Perspektive der Eltern auf ein neugeborenes Kind symbolisiert immer etwas sehr Grundsätzliches und etwas sehr Existenzielles, weil sie da am Scheideweg stehen, weil sie sich definieren müssen. Wollen sie mit ihrer Familie in dem Land bleiben oder wollen sie irgendwann wieder zurückkehren, in das Land wo sie hergekommen sind? Diese ganzen Definitionsprozesse sind auch ein Ausdruck von einer kompletten Neuorientierung innerhalb der Europäischen Gesellschaft. (...) Und der Topos „Born in Europe“, der klingt ja wie dieses Motiv „Born in the USA“; der war der berühmte Hit von Bruce Springsteen, und ist quasi eine geheime Nationalhymne der Vereinigten Staaten. (...) Und entscheidend ist hier die Frage: wie arbeiten wir konzeptionell so, dass wir die Zukunft auch projizieren? (...) Europa, vor zehn Jahren, war absolut unbeliebt. (...) Heute ist Europa super aktuell, weil Europa erkannt wird als ein Regulationsmechanismus für eine große Krise. Denn es ist logisch, und es hat sich gezeigt: kein Land in Europa kann alleine mehr bestehen. Die Gründungsväter von Europa haben das vorhergesehen. Und diejenigen die sich ein bisschen mit Globalisierung und globaler Ökonomie auskennen, die haben erkannt, dass Europa nur dann funktioniert, wenn es eine starke, selbstbewusste Identität gewinnt, mit der Zeit. Und das Schöne ist, dass diese Identität (...) entstanden und gewachsen ist aus dem Bewusstsein der Nationen, die sich zusammenschließen müssen. (...) Und dieses Gewachsensein einer inneren Struktur, die auch eine Struktur der Gemeinschaft darstellt, die kulturelle Werte, die Gesetze und Rechte verteidigt, die auch eine Perspektive einer gemeinsamen Wirtschaftsordnung und eine gemeinsame Stabilität erzeugt. (...) Deshalb muss sich Europa formieren und definieren, was es in der Zukunft machen kann. Und zu diesem Europa gehört eben auch die Neudefinition, zu sagen, dass Europa ist ein Land der Migranten, Leute die eingewandert sind, und Leute, die es geschafft haben, in diesem neuem System ihre Position zu finden. Und mit diesem menschlichen Kapital, mit diesen Qualifikationen, das andere Elemente von Kulturen einbringen, entsteht etwas Neues und entsteht auch etwas, das produktiv sein kann für die ganze Welt. Und interessanter Weise nähren sich dadurch auch wieder die verschiedenen Kontinente und Länder einander an. Also Europa hat mehr Ähnlichkeiten mit Kanada, also Berlin mit Toronto; und auch in anderen Städten, wie beispielsweise in Singapur, wo vier, fünf, sechs verschiedenen Ethnien nebeneinander Leben, und auch eine neue Form des Asienseins definieren. (...) Und das war eigentlich „Born in Europe“: was passiert mit einem Kind, das hier aufwächst? Welche Chancen hat es? Welche Möglichkeiten und welche Risiken entstehen für eine Familie, die teilweise keine Aufenthaltsgenehmigung hat, für eine Familie, die noch in Asylbewerberheim wohnt, für eine

Familie, die kein Bleiberecht hat? (...) Und das zu erfahren und zu lernen, was das bedeutet, ist auch ein wichtiger Bestandteil, um zu verstehen, was in Europa passiert. (Interview, May 2010).

In this passage, Europe is depicted as a place of “creolization”. I will explain this briefly. Formally speaking, créoles were, first of all, Spanish people born in the Americas during Spanish colonization; children from Spanish ancestry who grew up to become creoles in the new territories. Afterwards, “créolisation” (in the sense of Martiniquean poet and writer Édouard Glissant) came to describe the process through which people from “elsewhere” (i.e. victims of the transatlantic slave-trade) gave birth in a new place (*Poétique de la relation*, Glissant, 1990), thus creating new forms of cultural mixture and relation (i.e. languages and cultural practices). It is in this sense that I interpret “Born in Europe”, for the exhibition represents Europe as a new place, the place of arrival and birth (similar to the USA and Canada; as the main curator mentions in the interview passage, he sees Europe as “North-Americanizing”⁴⁸), and so it portrays a creolization in reverse, in the sense that children from non-European descent are the active witnesses of the creation of a “new World” – this time, the European Union. Children are born in Europe; but they are not identical to the receiving society and they will not be identical to their parents. These children will grow to become something else. Thus, newborn babies signal the new era of a territory where new forms of cultural relation will co-form a new region of diversity. In the interview passage it is also explicit how the curator’s interest lies in explaining the structural solidity of Europe. This means: pictures of non-Europeans in Europe are the key to depict the essence of Europe – its culture, its laws, its members and – finally - its geographical contours.

Further I argue that, to exhibit “migration”, “mobility” and “otherness” (within Europe) means to exhibit Europe. This could be a reason for many people to feel that the EU naturally offers the space for debate about migration, and for European institutions to offer financial support for those projects. The European particularity of all of these projects is that they can happen without the burden of border controls in a safe EU space of flow and creativity where those designated to be Europeans can cross Schengen borders and stay in Schengen countries as long as they please - without asking any kind of permission. It is a free transit zone where people holding a European passport can cross. If we compare this free crossing of Europeans with the tightening of restrictions which has been imposed on non-Europeans from the “global

⁴⁸ This view is not exclusive to the main curator of this exhibition. I also heard similar statements from other actors / curators, who named the influence of museums and of social movements in the USA (like for example the *Anacostia Community Museum* in Washington D.C. and social movements like “back to the roots” (Martin Luther King Movement or “empowerment”) on organizations like the Neighborhood Museums (*Nachbarschaftsmuseen*).

South”, then we could say that European passport holders have been moving - for some time now - within a European space and shaping a community. This space is cultural and juridical, as it is based on experiences and cultural exchanges which are made possible by a common passport and access to welfare states. This combination makes up the European space of diversity – a diversity of people who are nevertheless bound by a myth of European descent (i.e. same religious background, same political principles of democracy, rational thinking, light skin color) and the right of contemporary mobility. A space which has been researched by historian Hartmut Kaelble (Kaelble, 2001).

If we depart from this fact, this is, that there is a lived space called the European Community, we are talking about a restricted space for the integration of diversity. Here, diversity means the differences between the official members of “Europe”. Although this zone is constituted by differences, all European members inhabit a zone of visibility, of legal and human existence. This means that, although there are differences within European people, there is a space of commonality which makes them equal and puts a limit to the differences between them – this limit begins where the “others of Europe” begin⁴⁹.

But it is also important to point out that there is a hierarchy within European member states and therefore differences within members of the European Union. Southern and eastern states stand below northern states, and so discrimination does exist inside this zone. For example, Spaniards and Portuguese are discriminated against in Germany and France. In a conversation with a French woman in Paris, I was astonished to hear that, in her milieu, a “Portuguese woman” always referred either to a cleaning lady or to a house maid. Also, seen from the standpoint of France and Germany - the axis of the EU - members of ex-communist countries are seen as the people who have been ‘saved’ by the modern West and who have started to enjoy material possessions not so long ago (since 1989). In Berlin I often talked to people who had lived in the GDR; even if they had been teenagers (i.e. 12 years old) when the wall fell, they felt deeply different from the “wessies” (people from Western Germany) and complained about them. For example, people who identified with the GDR found it annoying that they were not considered as “the west”. In a conversation with one person whose family came from the GDR, I said that, from an “outside” perspective (i.e. from the standpoint of the global South, of indigeous populations outside Europe as well as of Muslim societies), communist countries and real socialism were considered to be part of the West. The West –

⁴⁹ I would extend this in the terms of Grosfoguel, in that he states that, in the zones of legality, conflicts are resolved through peaceful means while in the racialized zones of illegality conflicts are resolved through violence and appropriation. This may be applied to the field of border control.

East divide (Washington – Moscow) was, for many, an artificial divide between two versions of western modernity. My conversation partner said: “Yes! Exacly! And this is how the “Wesies” (West Germans) should see it too!”⁵⁰ During my years of research I often visited exhibitions about the topic “Poland “(in Berlin and Paris), and I always had the feeling that “Poland” was presented as something which had been “the other” but “was not the other anymore”. In a way, exhibitions about Poland had the effect of “integrating” Poland into the European club. Poland was “less other” than “other real others” (i.e. the Ukraine). This shows a process of border making (and space-making) through time, politics and images. This process builds up the internal (European) space I am trying to describe. I describe it because it is within this space that I will show the differences in museological representations of migration, which I found in both Paris and Berlin.

Following these observations, the European space would mean the fact that some groups are expected to integrate into a certain space of “similarity” in a way other groups are not. I will illustrate this in the following example, where the limits of “European” difference are marked by the non-European, namely by those people lying beyond the borders of Europe, not sharing European ancestry or Christianity and/or not thinking in terms of the European enlightenment (Bouteldja, 2011a). These groups of people are not expected to “become similar”, or to integrate as such into the European space (an example is the case of the Roma and Sinti in Europe who, despite belonging geographically to Europe, are perceived as “others” by hegemonic discourse). To depict this, I will share three experiences: a first one in a neighborhood museum, a second one in a debate with museum staff, and a third one in a large event about “Migration and Modernity” at the *Haus der Kulturen der Welt*, (House of World Cutlures) in Berlin. All three experiences gave me insights into how integration works only for some specific groups.

The first experience occurred at the neighborhood museum *Jugendmuseum-Schöneberg*, in Berlin. As I have already meantioned, I visited this museum repeatedly during my fieldwork. This museum represents a house with rooms of people from all over the world; it displays aspects of the daily lives of people from different cultures who live in the neighborhood of Schöneberg. Schöneberg is a neighborhood located in what used to be West-Berlin. In my first visits in 2007), I visited many of the rooms; these were from people from Turkey, Persia, Syria, the US... and, to my astonishment, a room made by someone from the former GDR!

⁵⁰ See Franziska Becker’s article about shrinking east-German cities, where she gives the example of Görlitz, a town in the Polish-German border (Becker, 2005: 175 - 183).

This GDR room depicted a style, which was typical for communist Germany. It represented a person who had “migrated” to the “Western” part of Berlin/Germany and was thus perceived to be different. On one of the walls hung a poster about sports from the GDR. Here a certain kind of aesthetics related to sports became visible. This poster struck me particularly because it reminded me of other rooms of friends of mine – also from the former GDR – who had this style at home (this is a paradox, because although this home aesthetics is real in the present time, some museums in Berlin display it as part of the past!). The room at the museum depicted a life-style from the times “before the fall of the Wall” for the eyes of West-Germany. Surprisingly, on my last visit to the *Jugendmuseum-Schöneberg* (in the summer of 2011), the GDR room was missing (!); someone else from some other country had ‘moved into’ the room. On that day, I had led a group of international students from the United States through the museum and hoped to show them the GDR room. It was a pity for me to see that the room was gone. Fortunately, the museum’s director Petra Zwacka was there and I could ask her (in front of the students) what had happened with the GDR room: Had the GDR neighbour wanted to leave the exhibition himself or had the museum preferred to put someone in else instead? The director’s response was astonishing. She said: “actually we decided to take this room out because former east-Germans have now integrated into west-German society. So this person is no longer an immigrant and does not belong in this museum anymore. The former GDR person had been an immigrant but, by now (after 22 years!), integration for this person was complete. At the *Jugendmuseum-Schöneberg* there were no representations of people belonging to the European Union. The ex-GDR room was the only room depicting someone from a European country (and an ethnic German at that!). This example shows that it is relevant to see how, in time, the GDR was officially integrated into hegemonic discourse to the extent that both this person and his/her room disappeared from the museum. They became part of the larger community and disappeared as a particularity.

Now I will move on to the second example, this time about an experience of a discussion, which took place at another neighborhood museum: the *Kreuzberg Museum Berlin*. This discussion took place long before the previous experience (it might have been between 2008 and 2010), but it was not until I saw the GDR room disappear that I could make sense of it. This time, I was with a group of museum staff (from many small museums and projects), and we were discussing the permanent exhibition of the *Kreuzberg Museum Berlin* (which no longer exists as it was replaced by a new one around the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012). The usual question came up: “What is an immigrant?” After the first comments, I remember someone saying: “Well, at the Kreuzberg Museum the staff does not know what to

do with the tiny little room depicting “German displaced persons” (Flucht und Vertreibung). What should they do with it? Are they still immigrants? Should the staff not take this room out of the exhibition on the grounds that the represented group has already integrated fully into Germany? Is it still relevant to have it there? The room is so tiny and badly placed, that not many people get to see it.” In that moment, I had to ask about the whereabouts of the tiny room. I even had to confess that I had never visited it! It was so hidden in the exhibition that I had not seen it, despite my many visits (and many of them guided!) to the museum.

Now I will share a third experience. This one took place at an event about “Migration and Modernity” at the *House of World Cultures* in Berlin, in June of 2009. I visited the event as part of the general public to listen to the speakers who came (mainly) from European countries. After a few hours, I realized that, as usual, the event was confusing the audience about what migration might be. I say “as usual” because, in my experience, such events, seminars, workshops etc. about migration (in Berlin and Paris) did not clarify things, but quite the opposite: they confused students and visitors. Further, it made many of them angry. Unfortunately, this event was no exception. During the whole event, I sat beside one of my German colleagues, a European anthropologist who had a migration background; as the event went on, we were both annoyed to the point that we decided to leave. But it was before we left that a talk took place – a talk which annoyed my colleague so much, that he said “I hate this events because it is always the same!”. The speaker had been a non-German woman who spoke perfect German (without accent or mistakes) and was conducting research in a project with migration expert Steven Vertovec - who had just presented his newest concept: “super-diversity”. The woman did not look foreign; she could have been German. But she was not. In her presentation, she showed statistics of integration of immigrants into Germany and had a very condescending way of speaking about certain ethnic groups (i.e. Turks) which showed the lowest level of integration and high ‘school failure’. Her statistics annoyed the public and, during the debate, people threw angry questions at her. At some point, someone from the public asked her about the use of her statistics. Another person asked: “who exactly are the immigrants?” The woman gave an answer by saying something biographical about herself: “well, immigrants are... for example, NOT me”. She explained that herself and her family came from Eastern Europe but had integrated so well, that she would not count herself as an immigrant. She was well integrated, and so she had been speaking about “other” groups, which showed bad levels of integration. Although she had a migration background herself, she was not an immigrant (!). At this point, members of the public were outraged, the debate was over and here my colleague and I decided to leave immediately. We were both confused

and angry, and we agreed that “it was always the same”. Questions such as “who is the other?” and “who is not” were always uncanny and unclear.

The point in all three examples is that - although there are big differences concerning European countries as well as populations of i.e. ethnic Germans inside Germany - in the context of European integration (as well as in the example of German re-unification) Europeans are expected to become similar despite their differences. They should integrate into a common space; or, said otherwise, they should stop belonging to the marginalized sections of migration. People considered to be part of the community are taken out of these peripheral zones and put into the European zone of integration. This is a juridical zone, from which (new) non-European members are excluded. It is important to say that, following these three examples, in the context of Europeanization “migration” becomes slowly projected onto non-Europeans, who are called “immigrants”. Immigrants share some or all of the following characteristics: they do not hold an EU passport, do not have European descent (this can be partly recognized in the people’s names and lastnames), their skin color is not considered to be white, they are not Christians or Protestants or and they may or may not speak a European language as a mother tongue⁵¹.

The last example I gave about the woman from Eastern Europe who had migration background but “was not an immigrant” is an example of this. It is a process by which groups of people are re-organized in the context of larger global transformations. In this way, “migration” is projected onto the new borders of Europe and those bodies who lie beyond those borders. People / bodies representing this border begin to appear in the media and in exhibitions. While Europeanization integrates those ethnic Europeans who were at the peripheries (and thus producing new images of the European), in a parallel process, it also makes new images of migration. In the context of Europeanization, “migration” is made up of those new “others” who are located at or beyond the borders of Europe. In other words, “immigrants” are those new “non-Europeans” who exist in the hegemonic collective imaginary and demarcate the limits of European geography, identity and belonging⁵². Here it is important to point out the two zones of representation which open up. First, the zone where

⁵¹ This according to Bouteldja (2011a), as she explains the process through which people (i.e. Muslims from Algeria) are segregated even though they might be fully integrated, culturally speaking, into French society. This also explains how newcomers who have never lived in Europe might be considered to belong to Europe at the time of their arrival (i.e. people from North America, Canada or Australia), and this due to their ancestry, skin color, religious affiliation, name and mother tongue. This gives testimony of a community building up in relation to a notion of “the West”.

⁵² And this, even when many of these “others/immigrants” might have lived their entire lives inside a European country and be fully integrated into the society they grew in.

differences within the European zone are visible; second, the zone where the non-European zone becomes so visible, that the differences from within Europe become invisible.

2.3.- Images of “Others” Within Europe: the Case of the Franco-German Project for a Museum Exhibition: “Fremde. Bilder von den “Anderen” in Deutschland und Frankreich seit 1871” (*Cité nationale*, Paris / *DHM*, Berlin)

Exhibitions on migration should not be seen as isolated from re-orderings in the field of ethnographical collections. The new placing of ethnographical objects at the *musée du quai Branly* in Paris and at the *Humboldt Forum* in Berlin is one of the backbones of the making of images of Europe. The second backbone is made through contemporary images of the “other”. These usually emerge as images of “immigrants”. In this way, past and present of Europe are chronologically reasserted in the museum landscape. Following Gisela Welz’s *Inzenierung kultureller Vielfalt: Frankfurt am Main und New York City* (Representation of Cultural Diversity: Frankfurt am Main and New York City) (1996) and Caroline Bretell’s *Anthropology and Migration. Essays on Transnationalism, Ethnicity and Identity* (2003), I argue that the European museum landscape concerning migration is also made up of a knowledge transfer from (classical) anthropology to migration studies, which is also palpable at French and German universities – with the boom of research on migration and migration studies. Here, it is also important to observe debates about a “crisis of representation” in the West, as these debates are the basis for Franco-German projects to research this crisis. Also in this case, these debates about a “crisis of representation / crisis of modernity“ are contextualized within the topic of migration. Further, and following the doctoral research of Mary Stevens (2007, University of London), who states that the role of the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration* has been to “Re-member the nation” (in the case of France), I argue that exhibitions of migration are also a way to re-member Europe - beyond remembering national discourses. A good example are exhibitions about migration which stem from Franco-German projects.

In the following, I will describe a Franco-German exhibition: “Fremde. Bilder von den “Anderen” in Deutschland und Frankreich seit 1871” (“Strangers. Images of “others” in Germany and France since 1871”). This exhibit was the German version of an exhibition, which had been inaugurated at the *Cité nationale* in Paris and then travelled to the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in Berlin from October 16th 2009 to January 31st 2010. It was a joint-venture initiated by the directors of both the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* and the *Cité nationale*, namely Hans Ottomeyer and Jaques Toubon. First, I will refer to the exhibition in Berlin and later come to the one in Paris.

In Berlin, this large exhibition depicted differences between France and Germany during the nation-building processes. Further, it showed the different ethnic groups of non-Europeans who had migrated into each country. From outside the European zone, France had received work migration mainly from its former colony Algeria while Germany had received mainly guest workers from Turkey (after having recruited Southern Europeans). At the exhibition, each country was depicted with its “others”. My observation here is that, despite the differences shown at the exhibition, when it came to guest workers, both nations were presented as similar: both were guest worker “containers”. Both had foreign populations; and both had a similar “problem”, which went in the direction of thinking about Islam as part of the national landscape. In this way, the exhibition displayed a narrative in which differences between France and Germany were blurred in time (with EU integration) and similarities in the national structure and concerning guest workers and religion were appearing. Algerian and Turkish diasporas belonged each to a nation; they represented the particularity of each nation: French-Algerians and German-Turks referred both to questions of “otherness” within national contexts. As a result, Algerian and Turkish diasporas in Europe also became similar through the subalternization process implied by this representation. The kinship question (according to prof. Emmanuel Desvèaux): who belongs in the house of whom?, ended in a representation where Algerians belonged to France and Turks to Germany. Both nations (France and Germany) became similar because they ‘have’ others inside their national borders. Otherness became in these cases part of discourses of national borders and security. The European zone emerged through the curator’s engagement in representing these “others”. And, through this process, the exhibition also hinted at the question of how the same phenomenon could be seen in two countries, which allegedly had very different histories.

During the time in which the exhibition was shown in Berlin, I took many tours of it. In one of them I was accompanied by one of the exhibition’s curators, Jan Werquet. We talked extensively about how the exhibition depicted the making of others in the history of both France and Germany; the exhibition engaged in bringing the history of both countries together. Here, and from the point of view of the “othered” people, both countries did not seem to have such different histories. This is my own point of view, and it contrasted with the perspective of the exhibition’s curator. During our walk through the exhibition (on December 7, 2009) I kept on seeing similarities between the national histories of France and Germany, while Werquet kept on explaining that – despite this effect of “finding similarities” – the history of both countries was *completely* different. It was as if my reading of the exhibition contradicted the work, which Werquet and his team had done. In the recording I made of our

conversation during our long tour, my comments and questions contrasted with Werquet's remarks and narrative. They are expressions of two very different epistemic landscapes.

A point of discrepancy came out when I mentioned that both nations were "guest worker containers"; to this comment, Werquet replied that the history of both guest worker agreements had absolutely nothing to do with each other⁵³. Also, when I asked about the meaning of the year 1871 in the exhibition's title, Werquet explained that this year was chosen because it was the perfect historical date to represent two nations which had two completely different national histories:

1871 ist ein Jahr (...), das kann man ganz klar erklären. Also, es gibt diesen Deutsch-Französischen Krieg von 1870-71, und aus diesem Krieg gehen verschiedenen Veränderungen hervor. Es gibt ja die Gründung des Deutschen Reiches durch Bismark, also dadurch hat Deutschland einen Nationalstaat zum ersten Mal – im modernen Sinne. Und in Frankreich setzt sich eben mit der Gründung der dritten Republik die Republik als Staatsform durch. Das heißt, es ist eine wichtige Zäsur, und da haben wir eben gedacht, wenn wir eine Zäsur machen, (...) dann am Besten da, wo die beide Nationalstaaten als Akteure - als komplett unterschiedlich verfasste Akteure - überhaupt erst auftreten. Wie gesagt, wenn wir 1860 gewählt hätten, hätten wir eben auf der einen Seite mehrere deutsche Staaten gehabt, die eine Monarchie waren, und auf der anderen Seite das Französische Kaiserreich Napoleons des Dritten, das eben auch eine Monarchie war. Insofern gab es verschiedene innenpolitische Entwicklungen, also der Antisemitismus in Deutschland in den 70'er Jahren nimmt stark zu; in Frankreich nimmt die Arbeitsmigration stark zu. Dann ist die Frage, warum haben wir nicht 1870 genommen, warum 1871, und das ist der Grund warum, weil der Krieg selbst 1870 begonnen hat. Bei uns in der Ausstellung spielt das Ende der Ergebnisse des Krieges (eine wichtige Rolle), deswegen haben wir 1871 genommen. (Interview with Jan Werquet on December 7, 2009).

According with my view, one section of the exhibition engaged with the history of anti-semitism against Jews in both countries: here, France and Germany became similar through anti-semitism against Jews. In another section, the exhibition showed the developing of racist theories in the context of colonialism and the rise of the science of anthropology; the practice of scientific racism - which divided humankind - also made both countries similar. Concerning this particular topic, it was clear how images of the "other / primitive" were the basis for the emergence of images of migration. The exhibition also showed more examples, from the fate of black people in France and Germany (during the World Wars) all the way to social movements related to migration and asylum politics in both countries from the 1980's to today (i.e. the Sans Papiers movement in Paris and Kanak Attak in Germany). Again, these sections strengthened the image of Franco-German similarity from 1871 up to the present day.

⁵³ Although here I will not explore this topic further, it would be important to explore both historiographies in future research. One historiography links guest worker agreements on a global scale (work migrations to the USA, France, UK, the Netherlands and Germany after 1945) while the other one stresses the differences between agreements relying on the fact that French colonial presence in north Africa did not happen in Turkey. Here, the Turkish state and Germany are delinked from colonial history.

On another occasion I visited the exhibition with the social scientist Dr. Anabelle Contreras, from Costa Rica (Central America). Anabelle commented that she could clearly observe the history of colonial relations between both countries and non-European others. She commented that both countries were starting to get into the identity trouble of *mixité*, a phenomenon which until now had been observed only in colonized territories⁵⁴. In her eyes, both countries were similar from the standpoint that they were experiencing colonial relations within social structures which were not made for colonial contexts. Anabelle Contrera's insight was very important because it pointed to the fact that, in exhibitions about migration (in France and Germany), what came out was the drama and conflict of the colonial encounter which, in Europe, has not been theorized as long as in former colonial territories like for example Latin American countries (an exception would be Serge Gruzinsky's *La pensée métisse* from 1999)). Further, this drama was translated into the "European" drama of the colonial encounter expressed as "Europe and its borders" (and also as "Europe and Islam"). Again, representations of questions concerning "colonial otherness" gave – as a result – images of the European and its borders.

An example of this drama (of "defending Europe") was the inauguration of the exhibition in Berlin, which was called "Fremde. Bilder von den "Anderen" in Deutschland und Frankreich seit 1871" ("Strangers. Images of "others" in Germany and France since 1871"). Unfortunately, I could not attend the opening. But, afterwards, I talked to a few museum researchers who had attended it and also with curators of the exhibition. The museum researchers told me that there had been a lot of big turbulence during the opening ceremony. The trouble had started as the topic of Europeanization came up and critical voices stepped in. Critique about Europe was silenced by politicians who, openly, censored any kind of "bad talk" about Europe. Afterwards, as I talked to the curators, I found out that the exhibition originally contained a critical sentence about asylum seekers and Frontex (this was one sentence below one of the boards at the museum). The sentence criticized "fortress Europe" and specially asylum policies and treatment of immigrants who arrived at the shores of Europe (maily coming by sea from the African continent). Before the exhibition's opening, this sentence had been taken out (and the board replaced) influenced by politicians who had pressured the museum directors not to display any negative messages about Europe. The curators could not do anything to stop this. On the day of the exhibition, instead of a critique

⁵⁴ *Mixité* refers to *metissage* or, in other words, to the children product of sexual relations between colonizers and colonized.

of border patrolling there was a sentence praising Germany for its successful integration policies. The curators and many researchers had been shocked by this.

This example shows how members of the EU fight among themselves for a correct representation of the EU. Even when the exhibition portrayed “migration”, the main conflict was about the topic of “Europe”. This exemplifies the drama of the colonial encounter as lived by members who are located within the EU: should Europe be represented as a fortress or as a humanitarian project?⁵⁵ Curator Jan Werquet encouraged me to read a newspaper article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* from November 30th of 2010, “Ein diffuses Bild vom Fremden” (“A Diffuse Image of Foreigners”), by Regina Mönch. I was actually very shocked when I read it. In this article, the author criticized the exhibition severely, stating that the exhibition’s narrative had no structure and, in general, devastated the work of the curators. This example shows how, although there is a European community in the making (where differences become similar), there are also differences within this space and tensions between actors who feel either French or German and belong to Europe. In this case, the tension is between museum staff and politicians in a museum space (the *Deutsches Historisches Museum*), which has important symbolic value. Werquet found it strange that such a dispute had taken place in a museum and around a temporary exhibition and not somewhere else. This means that the museum and the representation of contemporary history have become an important arena for political debate. Migration is a topic right at the center of the debate on how to represent the history of the present time. I took this exhibition as an example of an inner European discussion because, as it became clear in my interview with Werquet, there never was a plan to ask representatives of immigrant organizations to participate in the conception of this exhibition (the new museology’s concept, practiced for decades elsewhere, of “participation” was not even envisioned). This has clear repercussions in the contents of the exhibition. I will give an example: according to Werquet, the curator had debated, at some point, if concentration camps in the 1930’s should be shown and compared to contemporary refugee camps in France and Germany. The outcome was a consensus (from all parts) that these two phenomena could not and should not be compared – so the proposal was immediately dropped. Years later, as I talked to representatives of organizations such as the *Sans papiers* movement or activists working for the rights of people in refugee camps, it became clear that the notion of a continuity of exclusionary practices is an embedded element in the work of such organizations. Had the *Sans papiers* been invited to co-curate the exhibition, they would

⁵⁵ This question is expressed by the irony of the European Union winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012 – and the debate which took place after the prize was announced.

have defended the representation of the relation between exclusionary practices in past and present.

2.4.- On Further Internal Differences and Tensions from Within the European Zone

In the following I want to develop this point about the differences within these similar spaces. There is, of course, much critique of this exhibition coming from immigrant people themselves, but this is another topic, which I will explore further in later in chapters three through five. In the present section, I will focus on internal differences within the European zone. The example I gave above depicts conflicts between German actors in Berlin. In the following example I will describe a conflict between French and German actors during the making of this exhibition, which was the first joint-venture between the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration (CNHI)* (Paris) and the *Deutsches Historisches Museum (DHM)* (Berlin). For this project, both museums engaged in the making of an exhibition about migration in both countries; an early result of this team-work was in Paris at the *CNHI*; later it was shown in Berlin at the *DHM* although it was modified considerably.

I first knew about the exhibition in 2007, through the announcement of a large colloquium which took place in Straßbourg, the aim of which was to bring together researchers from both countries for a brain-storming session to develop a concept. After a time, I saw that the exhibition had been staged. As soon as I could, I travelled to Paris to visit it at the *CNHI*. Some months later, I could visit it in Berlin. At first, I had no idea about the conflicts that went on behind the scenes during the making of this exhibition. It was, however, clear that something had not worked out well because the exhibition at the *DHM* was considerably different from the one at the *CNHI*.

The outcomes of these conflicts were many: first, the exhibition had different names. At the *CNHI* it was called “A chacun ses étrangers? France-Allemagne de 1871 à aujourd’hui” (Each one its own foreigners ? France and Germany from 1871 until now.). While at the *DHM* the exhibition was called “Fremde. Bilder von den “Anderen” in Deutschland und Frankreich seit 1871” (“Strangers. Images of “others” in Germany and France since 1871”). Second, the exhibition in Paris was shown in one museum, namely the *CNHI*. In Berlin, the exhibition was shown at the *DHM* but also at the district museum in *Kreuzberg*. Further, the exhibitions were not identical. They had different structures and different historical sequences. Also, while the *CNHI* combined historical documents with art works and installations, the *DHM* refused to show works of art. This is important. The *DHM* argued that, as a historical museum

it could only exhibit historical documents. Art-works and art video-sound installations were out of the question (the exhibition did, however, show art works – photography, portraits at the very end of the exhibition space). This marks an important difference between the scientific landscapes in both countries but also between the *DHM* and projects like “Projekt Migration”, where art works were a constitutive and essential part of the main concept. Further, the exhibition at the *CNHI* included a section made by art students in one of the rooms in the first floor (at the *Cité’s* foyer). At the *DHM*, this section by art students was not included at all. It had to find its place at the *Kreuzberg Museum*, a neighborhood museum located in another district of Berlin (the *DHM* is located in Mitte)⁵⁶. Here it is clear that not just disciplines but the conception of urban space transformed the initial project as it arrived in Berlin. From one museum located at the periphery of Paris (the *CNHI*), the exhibition was shown in two different museums (one national museum and one local museum) located in two central areas of Berlin.

At the level of content, the *DHM* had taken out (or rather “cornered”) the aesthetic dimension (art works) but it had enlarged historical aspects concerning scientific racism. It also included a comparative section about social movements of migration and also a section on mosque-building and Islam in the German landscape (i.e. in the Rhine area). At the level of structure, the fact that the section made by students (which was shown as a separate exhibition in Berlin, but as part of the project in Paris) was shown in a neighborhood museum in Berlin (the *Kreuzberg Museum*), is very important to see the differences in the museum landscapes of both countries. In a conversation with museum expert Cristina Castellano (in 2009, in Paris), she stated that neighborhood museums in Paris (*musées des arrondissements*) only show local urban history. They do not show the history of migration. For this reason, everything related to migration has to be presented in the national migration museum – the *CNHI*, especially built to contain this topic. This explains why in Paris the exhibition “A chacun ses étrangers? France-Allemagne de 1871 à aujourd’hui” could only be located at the *CNHI*, while in Berlin the exhibition could be divided and thus show one part at the *DHM* (“Fremde”, which only showed material considered historically relevant) and another part at the *Kreuzberg Museum* (with material considered to be less serious and non-historical).

Beyond these differences, which I observed myself at the exhibitions, I want to document a conflict, which was described to me in November 2009 by a German curator who had been

⁵⁶ Here I just want to make clear that “Mitte” is a central and touristic area of Berlin while “Kreuzberg” is rather at the periphery. The status of an exhibition in Mitte (in a national museum such as the *DHM*) is much higher than one at a small, local museum in the Kreuzberg district.

involved in the discussions and conception of the joint-venture since the very beginning. During a lengthy conversation, the curator told me that a big problem for the joint-venture had been the differences in the structures of both museological landscapes, and mainly the location and overall concept of the French migration museum. But, at some point in our conversation, the curator stated that the negation of French colonial history (in France) had been another general major problem – a blind spot which created a kind of epistemic border. This is very important, because this curator described the situation in France from the perspective of Germany. I must point out that, while my German conversation partners did think about the problems of representation within France, my French conversation partners did not lose much time thinking about what Germany did wrong. Seldom did they think about what Germany did. For the “French side”, the French context stood in the centre of the debate and it was sometimes assumed that the decisions taken about France could automatically be applied to Germany (this led, of course, to many problems and discussions⁵⁷).

During our conversation, the curator from Germany stated that the *Cité* did not position itself clearly in regard to a definition of “migration” and he thought about the epistemic problems which this implied. First, he stated that it was not clear if the museum was talking about migration “into” France or “out of” France. If they only talked about the French territory, then the topic was not “migration” but rather “immigration into France”. His critique was that the museum spoke a little bit about every phenomenon but without delimitating (epistemically speaking) a main topic. For example, the *CNHI* deals with “global migrations” at the entrance to the exhibition. At the exhibition itself, they deal with specific groups of migration inside France but they do not represent all groups (i.e. migration of Canadians into France, migration of French people from Algeria to France (pieds noirs, after the Algerian revolution) the migration of French people to the United States (to give some examples) were not represented there). According to my conversation partner, it was very difficult to know what the museum was talking about, even when, as I showed in chapter one, it seemed that the historical department of the *Cité* had a clear definition of what it wanted to show – namely, “juridical” foreigners. This would include i.e. Canadian or immigrants from the United States (who are, of course, not represented at the exhibition).

Another key point which my conversation partner pointed out was that the museum did not deal with colonial history. This irritated my German conversation partner, who proposed that

⁵⁷ An example is Étienne Françoise’s project to apply Pierre Nora’s concept “lieu de mémoire” in Germany (as if it were France).

the topic should be dealt with in some way. He complained that, during the work with the *Cité*, he was constantly stopped on the grounds that he was crossing to the terrain of colonial history. Migration and colonial history were considered subjects apart. There was a general critique concerning the *Cité nationale*'s location at the Palais de Colonies; this subjected the museum to an ongoing conflict regarding "with or without" colonial history:

(...) ich habe gerade auch in der Zusammenarbeit mit der *Cité* immer eine klare Konzeption im Sinne auch einer Positionierung vermisst. Für mich beginnt das Problem bereits damit, dass es „Migrationsmuseum“ heißt. Was bedeutet das dann? Reden wir von Emigration? Sprechen wir von Immigration? Und es ist von allem so ein bisschen... Was auch nicht geklärt ist, das ist z.B. das Verhältnis... (...) die Abgrenzung oder Verbindung – je nachdem wie man das denkt – zur Kolonialgeschichte. Es gibt auch ganz oft Punkte in der Zusammenarbeit, wo mir gesagt wurde: „Stopp! Das kannst du aber hier überhaupt nicht machen, weil das gehört zur Kolonialgeschichte, und das verhandeln wir hier nicht. Wir sind hier ein „Migrationsmuseum“. Dies fand ich irgendwie eine problematische Position, insofern, als sie noch nicht wirklich ausdifferenziert war. Also, mir wurde dann auch immer wieder so eine bestimmte Grenze aufgezeigt, ohne dass sie argumentiert wurde. Fand ich schwierig! Man kann nicht über alles sprechen, aber man muss darüber reden. (Interview passage with German Curator on November 2, 2009).

This statement is relevant because it explains the problem of dealing with migration without taking colonial history into consideration (I will come back to this topic on the next chapters). Also, this statement highlights the fact that questions regarding "what is migration?" and "who are the immigrants?" are not clear; and that this lack of clarity haunts the museum again and again. Further, this curator's statement shows that there is no way to deal with these topics in the French context, as there is a taboo implied in dealing with French colonial history. I think that this statement shows the source of many of the epistemological problems curators have to deal with. Also, it summarizes my interactions with the museum staff at the *Cité*, where I got unsatisfying answers about "what is migration?". It is interesting to see that the German curator is clear about the problems caused by the taboo of colonial history in France. Also, I want to refer to this problem as a problem from within the community of "French" belonging; had the German curator engaged in discussions of this type with people living in the Parisian suburbs (*banlieues*), the curator would have dealt with colonial history automatically.

In addition to this curator I could also speak to two other German curators / researchers who lived in Paris and were around the *CNHI*. In my conversations with them, I could see how they shared the following points of critique: first, they were annoyed with the *CNHI* for not recognizing the colonial history implied in the "Palais des colonies" – actually, a structural problem which came out again and again in the debates; second, the colonial way to display migrations was never questioned; third, all German curators / researchers were told that they

were “too negative”. They were too radical and went too far (it is important to point out that these German curators were also immigrants, even if they lived close to their country of origin). Through these statements, their opinions were constantly dismissed within the French context. The three German curators (who had university degrees and careers as authors or curators), are considered to be critical thinkers in the German context; they were, nevertheless, dismissed in France on the grounds of being “too negative”.

On the other hand, it is also important to say that, while German researchers and curators living in France / Paris knew the French context well and were critical of it, I encountered very few French researchers and curators who had moved to Berlin who knew the German context well and expressed critique. My experience with French researchers took place mostly in France. In all of my conversations, French researchers took little time to refer to Germany. When they did it was quick and there was also an immediate and assertive condemnation of Germany’s past: “well, Germany has such a past...”. There was an image and knowledge about what Germany is / was, but no actual debate with the German museological field. My French conversation partners liked to talk about France and explain the context within French history. Most conversation partners felt that in France people knew more about migration, while Germans could not know much about it. At this point, I once remembered a conference I visited at the *Centre Marc Bloch*, where a researcher was sharing her findings about young people’s opinions about the EU in France and Germany. One of her conclusions was: “well, in the case of the French participants, when I asked them to discuss Europe they discussed “France”. For them, Europe equals France; its internal problems, and nothing else”. Her findings in this sense matched experiences during my research about images of the European space. I witnessed how participants from other countries did discuss the EU as the coming together of different countries in different periods of time (growth and development of the EU), while French participants did not.

3.- Zones of Contact and Conflict in Museums

In this chapter, I will apply James Clifford's concept of "museums as contact zones" to describe the encounter between two perspectives on migration – a perspective from within Europe and a perspective from outside of Europe. In his text "Museums as Contact Zones" (1997) (in *Routes. Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*) Clifford introduced the term "contact zone" precisely with the example of the museum as an "agora" of encounter. Clifford wrote this chapter through a description of a scene at the museum during the early stages of the making of the *Museum of the American Indian* (later materialized in Washington, D.C.). Thus, the term is related to the contact between representatives of indigenous groups which, normally excluded from modern museological institutions, were invited on this occasion to look closely at the collection of their (!) objects and discuss possible ways to represent them, beyond the known curatorial projects. In "Museums as Contact Zones" Clifford describes differences and turbulences between two zones, namely indigenous and modern cosmologies at the museum. In general, the museum is shown as a place of encounter between the indigenous (tradition) and modernity. Here, the indigenous takes on the role of the "other" of modernity.

After concluding my fieldwork in museums and exhibitions on migration, I observed that the same contact zone is visible in migration museums and exhibitions about migration in France (Paris) and Germany. Here, I will describe situations in France (Paris) and Germany (Berlin, Cologne) where actors from the majority societies and the (colonial) "others" (inside of Europe), which the term "immigrant" embodies, come into contact in the museum and exhibitions. I will use the metaphor of representations of indigenous communities at the *Museum of the American Indian* to describe this "contact zone". In some cases "immigrants" are invited to participate in the projects, but in other cases they are not. And sometimes they appear as members of the general public criticizing the way images of the immigrant are produced and contextualized. In this chapter, I will show how these actors' perspectives (or ontologies) collide with each other, thus producing major conflicts. It is important to point out that these conflicts are of a different nature than those between European actors, which I described in the previous chapter. In the type of conflicts in chapter two, solutions can be envisaged and negotiated – despite differences. In the examples that I will show in this

chapater (between European and non-european actors / identities) there seems to be no solution to the conflicts, but rather a situation of perpetual confrontation⁵⁸.

In these cases, “contact” means the prelude to conflict. “Contact” brings together different understandings of history, of modernity and colonialism, which collide with each other. These different views, coming from different zones, make the conflict more complex. In this chapter I will only describe the zones of contact / conflict and leave the analysis of epistemological dimensions (history writing, modernity, colonial history) for the fourth and fifth chapters.

My arguments rely on Clifford’s concept of the “museum as contact zone”, because the genealogy of this concept takes colonial history into account. Clifford did not coin this concept in isolation but developed it from the work of Marie Louise Pratt who, for her part, elaborated her theories of imperialism, representation and transculturation (*Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 1992) based on the work of Fernando Ortiz. In her text “The Arts of the Contact Zone” (1991) (where Pratt originally coined the term), Pratt argues that the contact zone is a place where cultures meet and clash often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power such as colonialism and slavery (Pratt, 1991). Pratt brings to the fore the dimension of asymmetries of power, thus sharpening Ortiz’s argumentations.

As early as 1940, Fernando Ortiz wrote his book *Cuban Counterpoint. Tobacco and Sugar*. Later, he developed the concept of transculturation to transcend the concept of acculturation (dominant in his time) and also to continue his intellectual dialogue with Bronislaw Malinowski. Ortiz had been engaged in analyzing Cuban society and its two main components since 1904. According to Ortiz : the “white/European” and the “black/African” were themselves related to the processes of global expansion (colonialism) and slavery. Further, they were related to the production of the two products, which were the pillars of Cuban economy and social life: tobacco and sugar. On the island of Cuba, tobacco, a “brown” product made by “white” hands, coexisted with sugar, a “white” product elaborated by “black” hands (slavery) – and its profits were owned by “whites”. In the processes described by Ortiz, where all these elements meet, collide and experience transformation, he looks at the formation of “Cuban” culture. He looks at Cuba as the “pot” where these elements interact

⁵⁸ I took this reflection from one of Grosfoguel’s seminars on racism (in Berlin, 2011), in which he explained the differences between the “zone of being” and “zone of non-being” (as coined by Franz Fanon). Grosfoguel explained this as follows: while in the “zone of being” human rights are recognized and conflicts regulated through instances (such as the law), in the racialized “zone of non-being” violence and appropriation are the means through which conflicts are solved. In the “zone of non-being”, the humanity of racialized individuals is not recognized as such, and so violence is enacted. On the contrary, in the “zone of being”, human rights (of those considered to belong to this zone) are respected up to some point; this allows peaceful solutions to be envisaged.

and mix (“counterpart” as the metaphor for interaction) and give “Cuban” culture (or “cubanness”) as its result. Ortiz began to develop his theory as early as 1904, where he analyzed Afro-cuban (Spanish) language: “afro-cubanismos”; afterwards, in 1940, he developed the concept of transculturation (a notion which has travelled all the way to the present research with Nina Glick Schiller’s concept of “trans-national migration”).

It is interesting to see how Ortiz’s ideas might have had an echo elsewhere. In her book *Europa Backstage*, anthropologist Kerstin Poehls analyses processes of the making of Europe and Europeans through elite European Universities. In her ethnography of these colleges in i.e. Belgium and Poland, she describes how Jean Monnet’s idea of the European Union forms the basis of these institutions: Europe (as a region) would be a “broth / boullion” of diverse elements coexisting in the same space/pot” (Poehls, 2009). Ortiz had described “cubanness” as the result of the mixture of different elements which cooked in the pot (ajiaco), thus producing a new broth of cultural richness and diversity. Here, the pot is a metaphor for the island of Cuba. Nevertheless, Ortiz was always referring to colonial history as the background of diversity (colonialism and slavery) and encounter, and this is the idea I want to retain (this is also the idea that Pratt develops sharply, and which Clifford takes in turn for his “contact zone”). The idea of an encounter of different cosmologies within asymmetrical relations of power also lies at the base of Clifford’s description of cultural encounter at the museum. While Ortiz refers to transculturation as situations of mutual understanding, Clifford refers to contact more in the sense of situations of permanent tension (encounter leading to conflict). I want to retain Clifford’s idea because he is describing a situation in the global north (the US), while Ortiz described a situation in the global South (the Caribbean island of Cuba). The context where Clifford is speaking might be a key one in order to understand situations of encounter in Europe (which is part of the global north). In the last decades, the debate on multiculturalism from the US and Canada has also been introduced into Europe, and here the idea of the “melting pot” (also like Ortiz’s pot/ajiaco) is also strong.

In Europe, the situation which Clifford describes (in the US) is also reproduced, but “in reverse”. In his book *The Predicament of Culture. Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art*, (1998), Clifford had already formulated a critique about the French museum landscape (in some of the essays in the book) which also moves in the direction of contextualizing the conflicts generating from colonial history. Afterwards, Clifford’s critique of ethnographical and anthropological museums – and specially referring to the *musée du quai Branly* (Clifford, 2007), as well as other critiques of western ethnological museums (such as

Lothar Baumgarten's critique of the *Pitt River's Museum* in Oxford) are key to understanding the contact zones in museums and exhibitions about migration. Although this research perspective developed by Clifford and Baumgarten is extremely relevant as it moves in the direction of developing a field of study, which combines art, representation studies and ethnographic writing (see Alex Coles's *Site-Specificity in Art: the Ethnographic Turn* (2001), Arnt Schneider's *Between Art and Anthropology: Contemporary Ethnographic Practice* (2010) and Hal Foster's *Art since 1900: Modernism, Anti-modernism, Postmodernism* (2004)), I will argue more in the sense of Robin Boast's Text "Neocolonial Collaboration: Museum as Contact Zone Revisited" (Boast, 2011). In this text, Boast takes Clifford's and Pratt's contribution and applies it to the contemporary field of museums, thus contextualizing the museum as a place of power relations where the indigenous is displayed and incorporated to representational practices stemming from modernity.

Boast (2011) makes an important point by differentiating two notions about the contact zones: one notion defining the contact zone as a creative place (which is staged by power structures themselves as a post-colonial space of the avant-garde) and another zone, which opens in the moment when the "others of modernity" openly contest museum representations, thus making a political claim to decolonize the Museum. I take this point because, in this chapter, I will refer to the second kind of contact zone. I will not refer to the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary spaces of history, ethnography and art which open at migration museums and exhibitions about migration (I already documented some of these spaces in the first chapter), but rather the spaces where voices "outside" of the discourse of modernity contest the authority of the modern subjects (who make representations). In an attempt to represent what is being misrepresented by modernity, these subaltern voices question even the most critically elaborated standpoints from within the modern project. This is important because it explains why sometimes even when museums design avant-garde projects (i.e. new museology, ecomusées, etc.), these projects will still receive angry critique from the outside (from the "others" of modernity), no matter how elaborated and critical these projects are. This is also a point of misunderstanding, where people making avant-garde efforts do not understand what "more can they do" to satisfy post-colonial and / or decolonial critique.

Following Boast (2011), I argue that the immigrant takes the place of the "other" of modernity (the place that the so-called primitive people had before becoming "avant-garde" (according to Tony Bennett, in his text "Exhibition, difference and the logic of culture", Bennett, 2006: 54). In this way, the context matches with Clifford's concept and image of the

contact zone; but in reverse. I say “in reverse”, because it is not about indigenous people (i.e. American indigenous populations, the colonized) being invited into the modern structure of the museum (in their own territory – the American continent). It is about immigrants (the others of modernity and non-ethnic French or German populations) encountering representations about themselves (in museums), made by Europeans (who play the role of the subjects of modernity).

This can be confusing because discourses exist, which define contemporary Europeans as “indigenous peoples of Europe”. Europeans have inhabited the continent for longer, but they are not “indigenous” in the settler colony sense in that they are not systematically oppressed populations; quite to the contrary. It is rather non-Europeans or “immigrants” who take this subaltern place in European society (in the terms of Spivak’s *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, 1988). This is why, to avoid this confusion with the terms “locals” or “indigenous”, in this chapter I will call Europeans the “subjects of modernity” and immigrants the “others of modernity”. Thus, the contact zone in the museum is the space of turbulent encounter between a) people belonging to and identifying with modernity and b) those not belonging to or not identifying with the modern project. The background of this encounter is the context of colonial history⁵⁹ (I will deepen on this subject in Chapter Four).

But, before I go on to describe these moments of turbulent encounter in spaces characterized by asymmetric power relations, I will explain briefly the process of transformation I went through myself (as an anthropologist). This is a process, which led me to look more closely at the contact zones and value them as relevant zones for any research about migration museums and exhibitions on migration.

3.1.- My Role as an Anthropologist in Museums: Changing Methodologies

My personal shift of focus has to do with an experience of “knowing myself” throughout my research and fieldwork. It took approximately four years. During those years, a series of experiences transformed me completely. At the beginning of my PhD, I felt like an “ordinary” anthropologist researching migration museums. Afterwards, my identity (and consciousness)

⁵⁹ Here, it is important to mention Noa Ha’s article “Perspektiven urbane Dekolonisierung” (2014), where the author applies the concept of the contact zone (following Marie Louise Pratt) and the notion of a colonial continuum to the structure of the city. Here, Ha contextualizes these concepts also in the context of the contemporary European city and migration processes. In doing so, Ha gives an account of the perpetual conflicts which arise due to the continuation of racism and racist practices. These conflicts - like in the case of the museum - are visible in the form of political struggles and contestations of People of Color within urban spaces.

became more and more that of a Mexican woman and an immigrant woman living in Europe. Beyond these internal transformations, I began to engage more and more in conversations with people who felt misrepresented in Europe. If at first I was skeptical of their critiques regarding the representation of migration in the museums I was visiting (as I always wanted to see the positive side of things), after four years of research I began to understand their complaints (and I was critical of my “positive” attitude at the beginning).

I remember that, on one particular day (I was in Paris and it was summer), I suddenly realized that I had entered the field of my study – for real. I was “inside”. On that day I had also realized that I had conducted many conversations with museum staff at the *Cité nationale*. At some point, I knew that I was not the observer I used to be. Because, before that particular day, I always felt that I passed through like a phantom in the museums, like a ghost or a type of faceless actor who nobody knew. On that summer day, I realized that people at the museum recognized me. They all knew me. And, most importantly, they judged my activities and my work. My conversation partners and museum staff began to talk with me, and about me. They came very close to me. The space between myself, the project and my conversation partners suddenly narrowed. I was appearing as an actor myself; my body began to have an effect. Beyond that (and this might be the proof that I was ‘inside’), I began to appear more and more in my fieldnotes and also in small ethnographies, which I wrote periodically. Everytime I wrote about my experience at the exhibitions, I wrote about people talking with me and about me.

At some point, I realized that my interview partners in Paris began to tell me to hurry up with my dissertation. They said that I was taking too long. This hurt me deeply. I felt that some of them were trying to say to me: “well, we have worked for you, but you don’t seem to give back any results”. I began to feel judged and misunderstood. I felt the pressure that my conversation partners themselves (in France) feel in their everyday lives (to achieve things quickly – while they are “still young”). Through this pressure, I began to transform myself before their eyes; and this in turn transformed my writing. I started to get nervous because I began to feel exposed. Whenever I returned to the museum, I noticed that the staff knew me: the staff from the entrance, those working in the cafeteria, the shop and the médiathèque. They all knew me, and they all knew I had come again.

On that summer day, I encountered one of my former conversation partners in the cafeteria. It was the director of the network of social organizations at the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration*, who had engaged in extensive conversations with me. On that day, she said to

me: “*toujours ici?*” (do you come here everyday?). Her comment hurt me, but then I thought it might be normal. It was true. I had visited the museum again and again to try to see as many exhibits as possible, as well as many aspects of the museum. The museum seemed very complex and a kind of labyrinth because its mysteries never seemed to end. The staff knew that I could spend ages and ages just photographing and thinking there, at the museum, talking to people, staff, visitors, and going deeper into the questions that troubled and interested me. In their view, I was wasting my time or doing nonsense work. This might have been one of the most difficult phases of my field work, the point where I felt “out of place” within my own field of research. At some point, I had no language to tell them that what I was doing had some importance. I felt vulnerable.

Also during this period I came to realize that I was a “non-European” person. Through the endless conversations I conducted with museum directors, curators and staff in Paris and Berlin – with those actors who perceived themselves to be part of the national landscapes as Europeans and not as the “others” – I came to realize that I was different from them (and maybe too different). I realized that, on many occasions, I was the “other” that they had talked about. I was not sure if they saw me as the “other” or if they knew I was the other, but I knew that I was, actually, this “other”. At this point, I could also see how, at the beginning of my research, I had unconsciously thought of myself as part of this Franco-German or European community. I never doubted that I could fit in the field because, from the point of view of my education, I filled all the requisites to be a European: I had lived more than ten years in Germany, I spoke five European languages (Spanish, English, German, French and Portuguese) and also a bit of Turkish (as many Germans do); I had experienced many European countries and had travelled extensively. I stood for gender and queer theories. But, as I went on with the fieldwork and with the research in archives, the conversations and the publications, I distanced myself gradually from this identity at the point of returning to the national identity I had since I was born: a Mexican woman, a woman from the global South. At some point, I stopped identifying with the actors I had interviewed and started to talk more and more to people who felt “out of place” either in Germany, France or Europe. Here, I shifted my attention to people affected by immigration laws, everyday racism and, in general, to people who shared the same problems as I did. For example, I talked to people who felt uneasy at airports because they did not have a European passport. Also, at this point, I felt different at congresses and seminars. I felt culturally different than the rest. And there was also an epistemic and historical dimension, which I could not explain, but which separated me from the vast majority of my university colleagues in Paris and Berlin. From a personal point

of view, I began to see myself as located within the non-European zone. This made me see conflicts about representation from another perspective and I also started to write ethnographies from this new space where I had landed.

In Chapters Four and Five, I will describe in more detail my interaction with actors not identifying with the European zone. But, before going into this topic, I will begin by describing the contact zone of turbulence between the European and the non-European zones. My above description about my transformation during fieldwork is relevant here, because it led me to see and depict this contact / conflict zone in more detail. This zone of conflict, the famous “contact-zone” of Clifford, was no myth – it was actually there. In this chapter, I intend to describe turbulences generated by differences (in surface and background) between the actors involved: those with a European identity and those without (or not identifying with) a European identity. The contact-zone is the place where those two types of actors meet and (usually) come into conflict. A conflict with no apparent solution.

3.2.- Contact Zone No. 1: Gérard Noiriel vs. The Theatre Play “Vive la France!” & Gérard Noiriel vs. The Archive *Génériques*

My first encounter with this “contact zone” was an article I read in a French magazine I had bought at the museum shop of the *Cité nationale*. This magazine, *Agone*, contained a piece by a (famous) historian of migration in France, namely, Gérard Noiriel. The article was his reaction to the theatre play “Vive la France!”. This play was created between 2007 and 2008 by regisseur Mohamed Rouabhi, the son of an Algerian worker in France. “Vive la France!” had been produced by various institutions, among them the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration*. The play consisted of two parts, and I was told (by staff of the *Cité nationale*) that the first part was staged at the *Cité nationale* but that the second part was never staged (or finished) due to conflicts which arose after the premiere. I never saw the play myself.

In the French magazine *Agone*, I read Noiriel’s critique of the play entitled “Le retour des théâtres identitaires” (Noiriel, 2009: 129 - 154). I was very shocked, as Noiriel criticized the play heavily by naming it “identitarian” and “segregationist”. This meant that the play expressed a message “against” French values. This article struck me not because it was the first of its kind, but because it was one of numerous articles which expressed a repudiation of any subject or group position, which criticized the basis of French republicanism. It began to be clear to me that any critique of French republicanism was considered a taboo topic in France. What struck me the most is that Noiriel, a key initiator of the migration museum, a

museum which aims to give immigrants a decent place in the French museological landscape, was criticizing a representation by a person with immigrant background himself. My question was: how could Noiriél undertake such censorship of such an actor at the migration museum? For example, during our conversation in the summer of 2010 Noiriél had stated the following:

Moi, je crois que pour concevoir - sur tout dans un lieu comme la *Cité nationale*, que à une dimension civique, comme un lieu de participation. C'est-à-dire, de donner la possibilité à des gens que sont exclues de s'investir, de se réaliser, de réaliser des choses. Que c'est soit au niveau artistique, où que c'est soit au niveau scientifique. Moi, j'aurais voulu que la *Cité* devienne un lieu de formation à la recherche historique, pour des gens que ne peut pas avoir accès à l'université en passant dont par la vie culturelle, dont par la vie associatif. Il y a beaucoup des gens que ont des associations d'histoire, de leurs communautés, etc. que on leur donne un lien avec la *Cité de l'immigration* et que on leur apprenne quelque chose. Parce que moi, je crois à l'apprentissage, on progresse quand on apprend. (Interview with Gérard Noiriél on June 21, 2010)

Contradicting this statement, in his article about the play Noiriél was claiming the right to know how to (and how not to) represent "otherness". I thought: which identitarian position does Noiriél embody? Is he defending French republican values and universal knowledge at all costs? At last, I concluded that, although Noiriél was discrediting a position (which came from a non-European background) as identitarian, Noiriél's position was also identitarian. This struck me, because it gave proof of the existence of two fields. The proof of one of the fields is the vast number of articles (including Noiriél's) which have been written against any positioning which criticizes universalism. This position is positive of integration to republican values and acceptance of the "Mission civilisatrice" (the colonial / civilizing mission). The other field is the vast number of performances, plays, and various types of manifestations of (i.e. non-French) people expressing or stressing non-European ethnicities or identities within Europe (France).

Some time after I had read Noiriél's article, a day in the summer of 2010, I was visiting the *Cité nationale*, again (it was the time in which I felt the transformation I described in this chapter). I remember sitting in the cafeteria of the *Cité nationale* with a member of staff whom I had already interviewed. This person seemed annoyed by many things which had happened at the *Cité nationale*. Suddenly, the topic of the play "Vive la France" came up. I suggested to my conversation partner that the *Cité nationale* had been courageous in staging a play which had been criticized by Noiriél himself. In this moment my conversation partner said: "Oh no! The board of directors of the *Cité* was in complete shock when they saw the play. The play had been co-financed by the *Cité nationale* and consisted of two parts. When the first one came out and the board saw it, they immediately cancelled the permission and

financing of the second part. The play was a kind of “loose canon”, something which had slipped into the *Cité nationale*.”

At this moment, I knew I had found something important because it described the coming together of two phenomena belonging to different epistemic foundations – and in the same space: the museum. The *Cité nationale* emerged as the meeting place of these two ideologies which, normally, do not meet. The *Cité nationale* is then a space of contact. And a space of contact (contact-zone) is not just a space where “anything meets”; it is a place where things which should be apart meet. Why? Because it opens a kind of space which is normally closed and non-contested in everyday life; this special space attracts discourses which have opposite intentions but nevertheless feel that they belong to the same space. It is a space of confrontation. The *Cité nationale* was the meeting place for discourses about otherness (created by members of majority society) and a play made by an Algerian director, which thematized French colonial history and linked it to contemporary racism in France. The director might have thought that his play was perfect for the migration museum while in reality it was the opposite case. This is an example where the museum becomes a “contact / conflict zone”.

This episode gave me very much to think about, because it seemed that Noiriél was defending a project for the representation of migration made by French people. So: why did it give the impression of wanting immigrants themselves to stage something there? The *Cité nationale* is a project about the representation of the “others” (immigrants) but *without*⁶⁰ wanting a real engagement from them – without wanting to show what *mattered* to those “others” (the only reason the museum exists). The museum (in its overall function) defends a project of integration of immigrants into the French nation and Noiriél’s articulation can be contextualized within this space, which serves the interests of those identifying as “French”. From within this space, the project of the *Cité nationale* is courageous and it contests xenophobic positions in politics, as well as in cultural and social life in France. But this position seems completely detached from the space of enunciation of i.e. the maker of “Vive la France”, a play in which the director Mohamed Rouabhi openly criticizes the French Republic from the point of view of an Algerian (colonial) subject. The play coexisted in the space opened by the project of the *Cité nationale*, but it could not become a structural part of

⁶⁰ This problem is addressed directly by Kwame Nimako in his article “About them but without them. Race and Ethnic Relations Studies in Dutch Universities” (2011). Although Nimako documents this problem in the Netherlands, his observations also describe the exclusion processes visible in French institutions.

it as opposed to other epistemologies (represented by i.e. Amar, Noiriel, Toubon, Grognet), which build up the foundations of the museum.

This case shows the limits of the *Cité nationale*. Although it works with the immigrants (or those who understand themselves as such), it could not welcome “Vive la France” for long. But why? The play could have been *the* attraction of the museum. But the fact that the *Cité nationale* did not welcome the play shows the limits of the institution. These limits mark the point where the “contact-zone” begins. For the hegemonic discourse, the theatre play belonged to the “wrong side” and so had to be taken out on the ground of promoting essentialism and segregation. And here, Noiriel’s work was to deem it epistemically irrelevant. This is the first zone of conflict and exclusion that I spotted.

Another experience regarding this contact zone also involves historian and migration expert Gérard Noiriel and curators / historians of North African (i.e. Moroccan, Algerian) descent who, at the time of my research, were part of the archive *Génériques*. Since its beginnings, the *Cité nationale* has worked very closely with the archive *Génériques*. *Générique*’s mission is to safeguard historical material concerning migration, especially from North Africa (and Algeria) to France⁶¹. It does not focus only on North Africa (the Maghreb) but it also produces exhibitions about migration. *Génériques* produces exhibitions on its own, but also in cooperation with other institutions in and outside of France (i.e. they have cooperated with German curators to produce exhibitions on migration at the *Goethe Institut*).

Génériques has always played a crucial role in the making and the opening of the *Cité nationale*. Driss El Yazami, the director of *Génériques* (at the time of my research), had written (together with Remy Schwarz) the necessary report for a migration museum in France: the “Rapport pour la creation d’un centre national de l’histoire et des cultures de l’immigration” (Report for the creation of a national centre of the history and cultures of immigration), which appeared in the magazine *Migrance* in 2001. This report is regarded as the foundational document of the *Cité nationale* because it gave the project for a migration museum a defined structure and it also ensured the participation of *Génériques* – thus lending credibility to the project by ensuring a dialogue with immigrant populations and the participation of a centre created and run by immigrants themselves.

⁶¹ The webpage of *Génériques*. Histoire et mémoire de l’immigration : <http://www.generiques.org/> (consulted on June 25, 2013).

As the *Cité nationale* opened its doors, *Génériques* played an important role as a key partner by organizing congresses and seminars (about i.e. Algerian music, culture and sports) as well as temporary exhibitions like “Générations”, about the cultural history of Algerians in France, on the premises of the *Cité nationale*. The general public could view this work as a joint-venture between a committee built up by French professors, intellectuals and curators (*the Cité*) and an archive (*Génériques*) made up by people with migration background (mainly from North Africa and with university degrees). Nevertheless, through conversations with members of *Génériques*, I found out that this joint venture did not work as well as it seemed. In fact, it did not work at all (it turned out to be a kind of “mask” for the outside world). The partnership between both counterparts was only an image. In reality, it embodies a very interesting contact zone of perpetual conflict.

This point about the partnership came out during my conversation with Driss El Yazami on May 31, 2010. During the interview, I did not ask about this subject. It was Mr. El Yazami who brought the topic to my attention himself, by stating that *Génériques* had always worked separately from the *Cité nationale* because both institutions could not work together. He explained that the institutions appeared to be together, but, in practice, there was a clear demarcating line between the concept and aims and exhibitions of the *Cité nationale* and the concept and aims of *Générique’s* exhibitions. According to El Yazami, I (myself) would be able to notice this separation, if I looked closely. For example: *Génériques* had never been involved in an exhibition produced by the staff of the *Cité nationale* – neither in the permanent exhibition (“Répères”) nor in temporary exhibitions.

Further, El Yazami pointed out something else as I asked about the contents of the catalogue of the exhibition “Générations”. I was interested in this catalogue because it was theoretically based on Pascal Ory’s cultural history and history of representations (*L’histoire culturelle*, Ory, 2004) and contained articles about racism in France (i.e. about colonial exhibitions by Pascal Blanchard) as well as Anglo-Saxon cultural studies (i.e. about cultural hybridity by Alec Hargreaves). From what I had seen in French libraries, this was a rare publication. At this point, El Yazami suddenly said that Gerard Noiriel had publicly criticized the catalogue by stating that “it was not history”. Again, I was shocked. Then: what does he mean by history? What was wrong with another perspective on French colonial history and / or migration processes? Again, as in the case of the theatre play “Vive la France”, there was an epistemic un-recognition of work, which was actually co-produced by the *Cité nationale*. I had seen the exhibition “Générations” as a visitor, and I actually thought that the contents of

both the museum, the permanent exhibition “Répères” and the temporary one “Généralités” had complemented each other. In reality, visitors stepped into a contact zone.

To complement these statements, I interviewed Gérard Noiriel one month later, on June 21st 2010. I wanted to hear Noiriel’s version of the facts. In the conversation we had, he explicitly stated memory and history are different things and that people should not confuse them:

Je crois que les gens qui sont dans des logiques mémorielles, ils sont fermés dans leur « nous », dans leur particularisme. On le voit avec tous ces débats sur les victimes, etc. Et donc je pense que la démarche scientifique c’est ouvrir une petite fenêtre sur l’universelle, c’est-à-dire, pour se raccrocher à des autres causes, à des autres problèmes, etc. Est-ce que dans le domaine de l’immigration c’est particulièrement important. Moi, je suis frappé chaque fois que je fais des entretiens, des enquêtes orales. Chaque communauté croit toujours que ça que ça arrive c’est ça qui a elle est arrivé. C’est cette enfermement. Plus que les gens sont stigmatisés, plus c’est forte, c’est l’idée (...). Et vous avez des porte-paroles de communautés qui gèrent ça, évidemment, ils ont des intérêts... on les appelle les entrepreneurs de mémoires. Donc, voilà, notre travail à nous c’est ça, c’est un travail critique par rapport à ces gens-là, ces gens qui parlent au nom des autres. Ça ne peut pas dire de tout qu’il ne faut pas faire des projets culturels... Mais, je dirai, ce n’est pas notre job à nous... de parler à la place des gens qui sont dans les communautés. Mais je trouve que c’est inadmissible qu’on confonde les deux. Parce que la démocratie ne gagne rien à diminuer... moi je crois au pluralisme, donc la voie du savant c’est aussi une dimension du pluralisme. Et donc le problème de la *Cité de l’immigration* c’est, évidemment, d’articuler les deux niveaux. Comment faire, à la fois, une place à la dimension mémorielle ? Et comment faire une place à la dimension scientifique ? Voilà. C’est pas simple, mais c’est un problème intéressant qu’il faut passer. Et il n’est pas passé, même pour les historiennes, souvent. (...) Il y a une définition d’histoire qui est très – je trouve, moi, d’expertise historique, il y a des historiennes qui prétendent avoir la vérité sur le passé (...). Moi, ce n’est pas mon profil. Moi, je mets au même niveau l’histoire et la mémoire. Je ne hiérarchise pas. J’ai dit pas que des gens qui font un travail mémoriel se trompent, mais je dirais, ils sont dans un autre registre de vérité. Et on a besoin des deux. (...) Donc, moi, j’ai toujours conçu l’articulation entre les deux et, dans mon propre avis, j’ai toujours été, à la fois, dans le monde de la recherche et dans le monde associatif. Mais il faut pas confondre les deux rôles. C’est là que il y a un problème, quand on confond les deux rôles. (Interview with Gérard Noiriel on June 21, 2010)

At this point, the contact zone became clearer. From the standpoint of *Généralités*, Noiriel was blind to recognize history when it was not told by himself. Noiriel had placed *Généralités* in the field of those who do work with memory, but do not produce history. From the standpoint of Noiriel, “some people” (he did not mention anyone in particular) would be fashioning themselves as victims.

Here we can see two opposing narratives, which confront each other. This contact / conflict zone gives account not just of historical narratives and their representations, but also of the conflicts, which are projected onto the fields of collective memory and public memorials. This conflict zone is the field of what Jewish-Algerian-French author Benjamin Stora calls a “war of memories / memorials” (*La guerre des mémoires. La France face à son passé colonial*, 2007). Stora describes how the French memorial landscape is characterized by opposing

views on history: plans for different memorials show a pluriversality of historical narratives. A memorial for slavery, a memorial for the fallen French soldiers in Algeria; a Holocaust memorial, a memorial for the massacres in Algeria, to name some examples. These conflicts demand the question: whose memory is being staged as collective? Also: what do different versions of history within a nation tell us? Can memorials from different perspectives fit inside a nation? Or, rather: does a nation demand that there be only one memory, one narrative for all – despite knowing that this cannot work at a collective level? This contact / conflict zone regarding history writing and memory will define the debate on collective memory. While Noiriél writes from the perspective of a republican, French collective, *Génériques* works for the memory / history of i.e. post-colonial Morocco and Algeria. While both narratives are particular, the stronger narrative (the French one, referring to the “universal”) invalidates the less powerful one (the North African one, referring to colonial history). This zone of conflict shows the line between a historical narrative from the perspective of French geography and another narrative, which has a perspective rooted somewhere else (i.e. Algeria, Morocco, former colonized territories). Also, this contact zone shows how there is a zone of validated epistemology (which is called history and is described as having “universal” value) and, on the other hand, discourses that get invalidated on the grounds of being “identitarian” and “essentialist”⁶². While one form of history is taught in schools as “official”, the other one is silenced or labelled as tradition, culture or memory⁶³. In my view, both perspectives are particular and the difference between them concerns a question of power⁶⁴. The difference is that Noiriél’s is framed on a discourse of objectivity (power) and *Générique’s* is framed as a particular (powerless) narrative. Both zones come into conflict and coexist in conflict within the same territory.

To end this description of the first contact zone, I will give another example involving *Génériques* and the *Cité nationale*. This is based on an interview with a member from the archive *Génériques* and a curator of the exhibition “Générations”. During our conversation, she stated that she had had a difficult situation at the *Cité nationale*. She had curated the exhibition “Générations”, and she had therefore instructed the tour guides (*conférenciers* in French) to explain the exhibition to the general public. According to her, she had given extensive courses to the assigned guides and she had learned afterwards that some of them

⁶² For a description of the dividing line from an epistemological perspective, see Bouteldja’s article (2011b), « Au-delà de la frontière BBF (Benbassa, Blanchard, Fassin(s)) ».

⁶³ For the case of France and a critique of universalism as a particular ideology, see Grosfoguel (2010): « Vers une décolonisation des « uni-versalsmes » occidentaux ».

⁶⁴ I will go briefly into this question in the conclusion.

had actually refused to give the guided-tours after she had left, despite the (quite large) number of visitor groups which showed up:

On avait beaucoup plus de groupes que de conférenciers. On a eu un problème pour trouver suffisent conférencières - pour la visite guidée - pour le nombre de groupes que voulait visiter notre exposition. On a eu un problème avec le nombre des salariés pour la visite guidée parce que les salariés habituels ont refusé. Et je ne comprends pas pour quoi (...) parce que j'ai les ai formé pour faire le visite, personnellement. (...) Ensuite, j'ai formé tout le personnel de la *Cité* à l'exposition. J'ai formé les professeurs détachés qui travaillaient à la pédagogie de la *Cité*... je les ai formé pour travailler sur les contenus de l'exposition. Donc j'ai formé beaucoup du monde là bas. (...) Donc voilà, la difficulté que j'ai rencontrée. Pour le reste, aucune difficulté, ils ont mis de budget, on a échangé, on a travaillé. (Interview on June 03, 2010).

Also, the *Cité* would have profited from the exhibition (from *Génériques* and *Générique's* partners) to magnify their visual identity:

Mais il a eu un dernier problème, et... c'est pas un secret (...) il avait un problème de visibilité de notre logo et de la visibilité de nos partenaires. La *Cité* a écrasée la visibilité de nos partenaires et la nôtre avec leur propre identité visuelle. Donc c'était peut-être évident que nous étions à l'origine de cette exposition ; pour les gens c'était une exposition de la *Cité*. (Interview on June 03, 2010).

The curator was quite upset by these experiences. Between the lines, I understood that the guide's refusal was directly related with the contents of the exhibition (for example, the massacre of peaceful Algerian demonstrators in October 17, 1961 was condemned on the exhibition). Here, the dividing line between two institutions, which are supposed to work closely together, is clear. Nevertheless, it is astonishing that regardless of actual conflicts, visitors could have the impression that both institutions tolerate and even complement each other. This is also shown in the curator's statement, where he explains how the *Cité* profited from *Génériques* and their partners to magnify the visual identity of the French migration museum. In general, it can be said that this contact zone is directly related with the history of the colonization of North Africa by the French Empire (around 1830) and the decolonization struggle through which i.e. Algeria gained independence (in 1962). Also, with the history of Algerian workers in Paris / France which is the frame of (French) post-colonial migration history. I will not go in depth into this episode in colonial history; it is nevertheless important to mention that it frames the background against which the contact zone (this particular example) can be understood.

3.3.- Germany : Discourses on “Beyond Ethnicity” and “Postmigration” Meet the Turbulent Critique of Structural Racism (People of Color)

This next example describes a contact zone within Germany. This “contact zone” does not articulate itself in the same way as the example of France because there is no national

migration museum where opposites meet and create turbulence. Nevertheless, turbulence is manifested in different spaces, normally in exhibitions on migration, which tend to be temporary and travel from one place to another. For this reason, “conflict” is not so much concentrated in one institution. There are many examples (i.e. the conflict I described at the inauguration of the exhibition “Fremde” *Cité / DHM* in chapter two), but here I will describe a particular curatorial concept. This example is also about a contact zone where one side rejects essentialisms (from a poststructuralist background) and the other which departs from identity politics, denounces structural racism and criticizes non-essentialist (poststructuralist) thinking. With time, these two understandings of migration and discrimination have come in conflict.

I will describe the example of the exhibition “Crossing Munich. Beiträge zur Migration aus Kunst, Wissenschaft und Aktivismus” (Crossing Munich. Contributions on migration from the perspectives of art, science and activism), co-curated by European anthropologist Dr. Sabine Hess. The avant-garde character of the exhibition is already visible in the title. It strives to represent migration from a scientific point of view, but it stretches its scope to visual arts and political activism. This concept is representative of critical thinking in Germany. It is very critical of nationalism and, at the same time, deconstructs mainstream racialized images of “others” within Europe in favour of constructive and complex representations of the phenomenon of migration. The title also makes clear that it does not include racism as a main topic.

This exhibition (as an example of critical thinking) differs from those made from the standpoint of immigrant groups or communities in that it does not depart from personal or group memories. “Crossing Munich” avoids ethnic or cultural locations. This is more clear in the title of a conference given by Sabine Hess - which she gave at the congress “Stadt – Museum – Migration / Stadtmuseum” (“City – Museum – Migration / City-Museum”) in 2009: “Migration ausstellen: jenseits von Integration und Ethnizität” (“Exhibiting Migration: Beyond Integration and Ethnicity”). In this conference, Hess talked about the making of “Crossing Munich” and expressed the wish to go beyond the mainstream project of integration but also from the particular project of ethnicity and identity. This project tries to keep a democratic balance, an objective point of view. Nevertheless, taking a closer look, this standpoint negates essentialisms and, with it, it negates the cultural identity through which immigrants articulate their own lives. And here lies the point of conflict. Here, a paradox appears which resembles the one in France but, nevertheless, it is more difficult to locate because it involves a critique of essentialism which is associated with National-socialism. In

Germany, essentialism is viewed as the core of Nazi identity and therefore any attempt from immigrants to articulate particular (or national) identities is seen as dangerous. In this sense, there is a critical self-perspective about history which is reproduced by German intellectuals; but, taken to the extreme, it also denies the possibility for particular identities (people with particular histories from outside of Germany and Europe) to tell valid stories. Because in contexts outside of Germany, identity, ethnicity and nationalism do not necessarily have to mean oppression and fascism – an example of this are countries which became nations through gaining their independence / emancipation like Haiti (as told by Georges Fouron in: Schiller, Nina Glick; Fouron Georges Eugene (2001). *Georges Woke up Laughing. Long-Distance Nationalism and the Search for Home*).

The confrontation here can be read as a postmodern tradition of thought (deconstructivism) which goes beyond essentialism and identities (on the one hand) against an affirmation of identity and ethnicity by individuals and groups who associate themselves with immigration (on the other hand)⁶⁵. There is a frontier between both articulations, and this frontier shapes the “contact zone”, because both expressions meet constantly in the same field of debate. From the perspective of a non-essentialist discourse, all people are equal and able to transcend their bodily differences as active members of society. Individuals can achieve equality not by essentializing themselves, but by developing an identity beyond particularism. From the perspective which affirms identity, the argument is that people are not equal due to structural racism and this situation creates even different forms of practicing citizenship. Equality would not exist, and so particular identities would have the right to denounce this fact by affirming themselves with the aim of strengthening their struggle against racism.

This contact zone is shaped by postmodern critical thinking (on the one side) and situated knowledge and ethnicity which denounces structural racism (on the other side). Both sides are located within the political left and declare themselves anti-racist. This is a very important confrontation because it has become more critical in recent years - mostly in 2013, where there was an open fight between both fronts at the anti-racist summer camp in Cologne⁶⁶. Like in the case of the *Cité nationale* (where *Génériques* coexists with this national project), in Germany different actors cohabitate in the same field: an example is the publication *No Integration! Kulturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Integrationsdebatte in Europa* (No

⁶⁵ This struggle goes all the way back to black feminists, the civil rights movement and the theoretical foundations of the decolonial turn, as they make a hard critique of westerner's applications of postmodernist theorists into situations where these theories dilute the political struggles of racialized people.

⁶⁶ Reports about this conflict appeared in German newspapers such as the TAZ and Jungle World: <http://jungle-world.com/artikel/2012/30/45919.html>

integration! Contributions from cultural studies about the integration debate in Europe) (edited by Sabine Hess, Jana Binder and Johannes Moser, 2009), which contains a contribution by Kien Nghi Ha, who is a representative voice of the discourse of People of Color and Decolonial Thought in Germany.

With time, both discourses have come to distance themselves from each other more and more, although their thematic field remains the same. In the line of “beyond ethnicity” there is also the discourse of “post-migration”, which stresses the “beyond” and criticizes the “self-essentialization” of discourses of People of Color (or the group which stresses identity and denounces structural racism). While performances and plays on post-migration stress the quest of transcending ethnic and sexual identities (i.e. at the *Ballhaus Naunyn*, in Kreuzberg), immigrant organizations like i.e. *KorIENTATION* or the “Afro-German initiative” stress particular histories of particular groups and, unlike the “beyond”, stress the impossibility of transcending one’s own body and therefore stress racist structures, which oppress people who are considered to be ‘inferior’ in Europe. This last group stresses the history of oppression and struggle, thus going against the ideology of the “beyond”, which has been supported by post-colonial authors like Homi K. Bhabha in his widely read book *The Location of Culture* (1994). This shapes the zone of epistemic conflict, which has a more clear expression in the field of political activism (a topic which I will not go into in more detail in this dissertation).

The dividing line (zone of conflict) is clearly visible with the split within the left anti-racist movements. Here, the line of conflict is clear, as People of Color have been breaking away from what they describe as “the white left”. This is important for exhibitions on migration because these also inscribe themselves in either one stream of thought or the other. Depending on the side, topics like “modernity”, “colonial history”, “racism” and “citizenship” can be depicted in completely different ways. Actors of both sides participate in debates and here the contact / conflict zone emerges in image and theory-making.

At a personal level, curiously, in Germany the same happened to me as in France. But it just took a little bit longer. After approximately five years of research, I began to change my focus regarding France. It took me even more time to start listening to those people who said they were in conflict with “German” hegemonic identity and values – even if this also meant a conflict with the field of critical thinking from the left. As a result, my methods began to change significantly. From this point onwards, I met people in informal situations and I did not record any of these conversations. Conversations happened spontaneously rather than planned. I never took out my recording device or even asked anyone if I could record our talk

(as I was sure that this would ruin the conversations). I never took notes in front of my conversation partners. This was an important transformation as I always had written e-mails to plan the appointments and waited sometimes a very long time to get an interview. For example, in the case of Marianne Amar (from the *Cité nationale*), I had to wait a whole year to get the interview; to interview Gérard Noiriel, I had to make several trips to Paris and leave many notes outside his office; one interview with activist Patrick Weil never materialized despite trips to Paris, e-mails, phone calls and appointments - due to misunderstandings. My encounter with historian Nancy Green turned out to be a flop, as she got confused and thought I was seeking academic counseling and / or advice (and refused to be interviewed although I was already at her office in Paris). With these researchers, I always had a recording device at hand, as well as a small lap-top (I always carried it with me) and a notepad. I always wrote extensive notes in front of them. In contrast with these examples, my conversations with people who expressed a critique from the perspective of colonial history were emotional. Another contrast was that, while the first group of people was known and had published / copyrighted their ideas, the second group did not. It was useless to hide the identities of the first group of people, i.e. Noiriel has published extensively and in the interview he just repeated what he had already published. If I had anonymized the “French anthropologist who worked at the *Cité* and who was in charge of collecting objects”, anybody interested enough (and with access to Google) would know that I meant Fabrice Grognet. I had already discussed the problem of anonymizing people who are famous with European anthropologist Sandra Grüner-Domic. Once, Grüner-Domic gave a talk at the *Institut für Europäische Ethnologie* where she talked about a famous woman (an art curator) whom she anonymized - although it was clear who she was referring to. From that day on, I decided not to anonymize intellectuals who have published; people who have curated exhibitions or public figures in culture and / or politics. On the other hand, I did anonymize people I encountered in the non-European zone (and who nobody knew). Their testimonies were important, but I was not sure if they would have liked to see their names in “ethnographic” publications.

3.4.- Mainstream Images of “Guest workers” in Germany vs. the Archive *DOMID*

From the point of view of these examples, I will give an ethnographic approach to representations of guest workers both from the side of majority society and also from the point of view of the archive *DOMID* (Dokumentationszentrum für die Migration in Deutschland / Documentation Centre of Migration in Germany). While mainstream

exhibitions on this topic proliferate, smaller initiatives (i.e. from former guest workers themselves) have almost no media impact. *DOMID* is an archive whose headquarters are located in the city of Cologne. The director is Mr. Aytac Eryilmaz. This archive has some resemblance with the archive *Génériques*, in Paris, in that it collects objects from immigrants, organizes exhibitions about migration (both on its own and joint-ventures) and publishes exhibition catalogues. It has produced small exhibitions about i.e. Greek guest workers. It was also engaged in the larger “Projekt Migration” and staged the exhibition “Geteilte Heimat” at the *DHM* for the 50th anniversary of the guest worker contract with Turkey (these are just a few examples). At the beginning, *DOMID* had another name: *DOMIT* (Dokumentationszentrum der Migration aus der Türkei), which meant “Documentation Centre of Migration from Turkey”. The focus relied on Turkey until it was decided that the archive would as well encompass migrations from other countries. People from countries that signed guest worker agreements with Germany – in West as well as in East Germany – became part of *DOMID*: examples are migrants / workers from Angola, Cuba and Vietnam. In this way, while mainstream (large) exhibitions represent guest workers as the “others of Germany” (“those who came and never went back” thus producing images of second-class citizens), *DOMID* strives to represent guest workers as people who have struggled to settle, work and lead an every-day existence in Germany, despite the difficulties they have faced. Further, they have contributed to the rebuilding of the post-war German nation. From the point of view of this recognition of differences (class and ancestry as well as second-class citizenship status), it is clear that these representations differ from mainstream discourses on integration, which view guest workers (as well as their families and descendants) as predestined to forget their culture and integrate – or go back to where they came from.

This is the third example of a “contact zone”. This is a zone of struggle in the sense of Mary Louise Pratt’s description, because the making of images of guest workers in Germany is entangled with power asymmetries (at a structural level) in Europe. What is not visible – but I will try to make visible in this part – is how colonial contexts (which result in representing the “others” as inferior) are also entangled with these representations. Colonial differences and power asymmetries are the basis of this contact / conflict zone in which actors (representing the mainstream (hegemonic discourse) or representing particular identities of guest workers) fight against each other’s representations perpetually.

To begin describing this zone, I will refer to an anecdote from a summer school I took part in the Summer-Fall of 2011 with *Netzwerk Migration*. As part of the programme, our summer-

school group (made up by students from Germany, France and Turkey) visited exhibitions about guest workers in Bonn and Dortmund in museums and industrial heritage sites. These places showed mainstream representations in which guest workers were the “others”. The group members from Turkey were irritated by this. Afterwards, our group visited the archive *DOMID* in Cologne, where Mr. Aytac Eriylmaz gave us an introduction and a tour as well as answered our questions. During the tour we could see that the archive had another perspective on representing guest workers. The collection consisted of everyday life objects (such as sewing machines, pots and pans, bags), documents (passports, papers from the migration office), press (newspapers, magazines) and small valuables (i.e. pictures, toys, jewellery) which were safeguarded to represent history from the perspective of the immigrant’s everyday life context. This collection also reminded me of objects at German neighbourhood / district museums (where everyday life is at the foreground). During our tour, Eriylmaz talked about the autonomous character of the archive and, toward the end, he stated that the work with members of the majority society was very difficult and that money / funding was short. The reason? He ended his presentation with the following sentence: “wir sind ja Kanaken” (“because we are Kanaken”). After he said this, everybody remained silent for a while.

“Kanaken” is a pejorative term which was / is used to name Turkish guest workers in Germany (Loentz, 2006)⁶⁷. The “K” word has been used in such a way by majority society in Germany that, for example, the activist anti-racist group *Kanak Attack* (many of its members attached to the history of guest workers in Germany) inverted the meaning of this word by transforming it into a term of struggle – with attack! (see also Zaimoglu, 1995).

By referring to himself as “Kanake”, Aytac Eriylmaz drew the line between himself and majority society. His statement implied that Turks are the others, the racialized people of Germany; non-wanted populations; and, as such their projects and ideas do not get as much funding (as other projects do). Just after Eriylmaz had said this closing remark, I remember one of our German female colleagues in the group saying to us in a low voice: “This is outrageous. He can’t possibly say “wir sind ja Kanaken” (“because we are Kanaken”) in

⁶⁷ Anyhow, it has also been argued that the term was not invented for guest workers in Germany but is rather a racist term which means “non-white foreigner” and stems from Germany’s colonial presence overseas. This would mean that the term “Kanacke” was used in occupied territories to refer to the “colonial others” – for example the indigenous peoples from the Pacific Islands (i.e. Samoa). In her article “Colonial Exhibitions, ‘Völkerschauen’ and the Display of the ‘Other’” Anne Dreesbach mentions Carl Hagenbeck’s human exhibit (or *Völkerschau*) “Kanaks of the South Pacific”, which was staged during the Oktoberfest Munich, in 1931 (Dreesbach, 2012), thus giving account of the use of the term “Kanak” as early as 1931 and as related to the South Pacific.

public! It is very wrong of Eryilmaz to say this!”. Our German colleague was very upset, then: “how could Eryilmaz reproduce racism like that, at the archive?”

This is exactly the point where I identify the contact zone: although, in fact, a colonial link has been made between “Kanaken” as colonial subjects⁶⁸ of German domination and Turkish guest workers, it is also visible how, in mainstream discourse, this link is suppressed. The contact zone of struggle consists, on the one hand, on racialized subjects (i.e. Eryilmaz) trying to make hegemonic discourse recognize its own racism. On the other hand, it consists of representatives of hegemonic discourse trying to delink guest workers from colonial history – arguing that this is nonsense and that one thing does not have anything to do with the other. This situation is what I would describe as the contact / conflict zone which arises from power asymmetries specific to the German context, and connects to the struggle around the issue of colonial history. To describe this zone, I will first describe mainstream representations of guest workers. These are often found in large museums where guest workers are located at the periphery of German history. Afterwards, I will come back to *DOMID*.

I will start by referring to a very famous image: the picture of a Portuguese guest worker, Rodrigues de Sáa with a motorcycle. This image has been immortalized at the *Haus der Geschichte* (House of History) in Bonn. In this quite large museum, which has the character of showing German official history (if we keep in mind that Bonn was the capital of Germany before the wall came down in 1989), “guest worker” Rodrigues de Sáa is objectified and infantilized. Rodrigues de Sáa was photographed just after receiving a motorcycle, a prize for being the one-millionth guest worker to arrive in Germany. He was photographed just after receiving the gift of modernity (the motorcycle symbolizing modern technology) and so he takes the form of an alien (to modernity) and therefore also as the “other” of modernity. At the museum, we can also see the motorcycle (as a museum object) beside Rodrigues de Sáa’s

⁶⁸ I take the term “colonial subjects” from Ramón Grosfoguel (2003 and 2008). Grosfoguel departs from the case of Puerto Rican workers in the United States but also refers to Chicanos and other minorities who live with an inferior status (and racialized) within the United States – i.e. Asians, African Americans, Native Americans. This concept (like Clifford’s concept of the “contact zone”) is also useful to describe situations regarding immigrant “guest-workers” in the global north - and especially in Europe, as it refers to a situation of discrimination which produces segregation and social conflicts:

‘Colonial/racial subjects of empire’ are those subjects that are inside the empire as part of a long colonial history – African-Americans, Native-Americans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Pacific Islanders, Chinese Americans, etc. The metropolitan colonial imaginary, racial/ethnic hierarchy and racist discourses are frequently constructed in relation to these subjects. There is a long history of racialization and inferiorization towards ‘colonial racial subjects of empire’ that informs, constitutes and determines the present power relations. The ‘coloniality of power’ of the metropolitan country is organized around and against these colonial subjects with a long history inside the empire. They are frequently at the bottom of the racial/ethnic hierarchy. (Grosfoguel 2008, 608).

picture. This image - and installation arrangement of picture and object / motorcycle - is representative of other depictions of guest workers in German museums (i.e. representations of Turkish guest workers at the history museum in Frankfurt, where guest workers have been museumized as gigantic and caricaturesque wax puppets).

The question here is: what does this representation (Rodríguez de Saa) show? At a first glance, the picture shows an image of “backwardness” (the guest worker from Portugal) juxtaposed to an image of “progress/technological development” (the motorcycle from the receiving land - Germany). The Portuguese guest worker is receiving the gift of progress; a gift for having entered the land of technology (the land of the industrial revolution). This image is very important not only because it is shown at the *Haus der Geschichte* in Bonn, but also, because it says much about internal European relations at the time of the guest worker agreements with Southern countries like Portugal. It was a time well before Portugal entered into the EU. At this time, guest worker European citizenship for the Portuguese did not exist.

What strikes me about this picture and what it stands for, is another relevant point: the history of Portugal as a former (colonial) empire is not visible at all. This is key because, as I will show in the next pages, the same minimizing effect has taken place in relation to images of Spanish guest workers (in which the past of the Spanish colonial empire is erased), Turkish guest workers (where the glorious times of the Ottoman Sultanate are also absent) and Greek guest workers (where the Greeks of today are detached from the Greeks of the past). And this also happens with images of Italian guest workers, where images of their “home country” (in this case Italy) are either absent or, when they appear, they do it as proofs of a poor, grey and desolated place. I will give an example of this by the means of another anecdote from the Summer School in 2011.

During a visit to the coal mine *Zecke Zollverein*, in Hannover, we saw the museumization of an industrial zone which had been turned into a memorial for exhibitions of industrial heritage. This was closely related with migration because the work force had consisted of Polish and Italian workers; first the Poles, then the Italians, each one describing a different historical episode. Thus, the *Zecke Zollverein* had held exhibitions about Polish and Italian guest workers. The place was carefully arranged as a memorial; also, the catalogues of the previous exhibitions were shown on a table at the entrance. These catalogues interested me and what I could grasp from this visit (and the catalogues), was that Polish workers were depicted as colonial / subaltern subjects of the Prussian empire. This is important because this was the same in other museums of the area where Poles appeared as the religious, linguistic

and cultural others within the Prussian empire – and subsequently, as the others within Germany. Regarding Italian guest workers, it is important to point out that, at the *Zecke Zollverein*, they were represented as being “in the place of the Poles” but with a plus of exoticism and without the burden of Prussia’s imperial past. Italians – it was explained to us by our guide – had come to replace Poles at the coal mine. So they were automatically associated with the images that the previous workers (Poles) had left. What would be the result of such an association?

The result was that images of Italians were similar to those of other workers of the “South of Europe” but at the same time their images were associated to images of Polish workers. Italians appeared also as backward, like Portuguese and Spanish guest workers, but they also inherited (grey) stereotypes of representations of the oppressed Polish workers in Germany. This point was made clear by our guide. He also told us something very interesting: namely, that former Italian guest workers had actually seen some of the exhibitions at the *Zecke Zollverein* and they had complained that the images of Italy were too grey. For this reason, the *Zecke Zollverein* decided to produce an exhibition with the former Italian workers. The exhibition’s aim was to show things differently. The *Zecke Zollverein* included the points of critique of the former Italian guest workers and worked with them in this subsequent exhibition. The result of this joint venture was the following: Italian guest workers had been so disappointed by the greyness and backwardness expressed in images about Italy, that they decided to show utopic images of Italy: Italian ice cream and Italian pizza, as well as extremely beautiful, sunny images of Italy.

When our group was shown pictures of this exhibition, some members asked why these images were so exaggerated (Italy was portrayed as a kind of ice-cream paradise). Our guide answered that, in his opinion, former Italian workers had wanted to counteract the grey images they had seen. Also, he stated that: “the Italian workers we cooperated with said that they did not see themselves in previous exhibitions about guest workers. As Italy had been always depicted as something sad, negative and grey, they wanted to portray something different. Namely, what they had in mind about their home-country; the things they remembered, which were positive and glorious.”

This example is important because it gives insight into the “erasure” of the past of guest workers in Germany. In the case of Italy, it is clear how former guest workers wanted to repair a grey image, which had been manufactured in Germany and which did not match their own memories. They brought their memories to the fore, as they felt that these images had

been erased from a representation which was becoming part of the collective memory in Germany. They had wanted to “save” images which had been erased / suppressed; but, by saving them, former Italian workers also exaggerated them. In the case of the representation of countries of the “South of Europe” like Spain and Portugal, the point is also the erasure of history and, here, more concretely about their imperial histories. By staging triste images of backwardness and economic disadvantage - which are also true, in part - a “part” of reality is elevated as a “whole” in mainstream museological exhibitions. In this way, images of poverty from Spain and Portugal come to replace a much richer history – which is then erased in the context of exhibitions in Germany. This is what the Italian guest workers (of the above anecdote) wanted to counteract: a negative part which stood for the “whole”. But in this case – and as it often happens in the context of representing places which people left – the former Italian guest workers made another mistake: they inverted this reality by presenting images which show a “happy and beautiful Italy” as if it were the “whole”. A glorification of the past which comes to counteract grey images, and which is well explained in the book *Georges Woke up Laughing. Long Distance Nationalism & the Search for Home* (Schiller and Fouron, 2001), where author, Geroges Fouron, gives an example of the Haiti of his dreams, which did not match with the “real Haiti” he had left behind (before migrating to the United States):

I

“At First I Was Laughing”

Georges woke up laughing.

In my dream I was young and in Haiti with my friends, laughing, joking, and having a wonderful time. I was walking down the main street of my hometown of Aux Cayes. The sun was shining, the streets were clean, and the port was bustling with ships. At first I was laughing because of the feeling of happiness that stayed with me, even after I woke up. I tried to explain my wonderful dream to my wife, Rolande. Then I laughed again, but this time not from joy. I had been dreaming of a Haiti that never was.

Georges stopped in his recollection, trying to come to terms with the sadness that had accompanied the joy of his dream. His dreams would be familiar to immigrants from around the world whose days as well as nights are filled with memories of things past. In the pain of resettling in a new country, memory is often replaced by nostalgia. The economic deprivation or political repression that prompted migration frequently are put aside. In George’s case, the dull ache of lifelong homesickness has become part of him, although he had not confronted it fully until we began to write this book.

But for Georges and millions of contemporary immigrants, the longed-for homeland is not just a site of nostalgia; it is a location of ongoing experience. These immigrants live their lives across borders in a social world that includes not only the daily difficulties they encounter in their new land but also the often harsh realities of their homeland. Yet many immigrants continue, as does Georges, to dream of a homeland in which “the sun was shining, the streets were clean” (Schiller and Fouron, 2001: 1-2)

Coming back to Rodríguez de Súa. The picture at the *Haus der Geschichte* (House of History) in Bonn depicts Portuguese backwardness against German technological development. But this representation of backwardness can only be achieved by erasing the image of Portugal as a former colonial empire. Now, this process of erasure is also quite complex, because it has to do with processes that happened outside of Germany. For example, the history of Portuguese colonial territories was actually erased because other colonial powers, especially England, took possession of Portuguese territories in i.e. Africa (Santos, 2009)⁶⁹. In this way, Portugal ended up being peripheralized within Europe – and, later, within the European Union. This is why Portugal can be represented as a backward / rural country whose workers can be given the gift of technology and progress once they arrive in Germany. This picture is reminiscent of colonial exhibits (i.e. the Congo exhibition in Tervuren, Belgium), where the non-European (the colonial other) and the countryside (i.e. Eugene Weber's *From Peasants into Frenchmen*) are both juxtaposed to technology and progress⁷⁰. As Boaventura de Souza Santos clearly puts it, Portugal is considered a backward country within Europe (Santos, 2009: 1 - 12). By erasing Portugal's colonial zone, Portugal's imperial history is erased. De Súa's picture expresses the abyss between Portugal and Germany: tradition vs modernity, countryside versus motorcycle. But it also expresses Portugal's representational problem within the EU. While Portuguese people are considered imperial subjects in a country like Brazil (Portugal's biggest former colony), in Germany, Portuguese guest workers are considered to be poor, dark-skinned, speaking bad German, without education or university degrees and dependant on the German welfare system.

I take this image, this example of a Portuguese guest worker because we can find the same representation in other examples. I found a proof of these representational transfers also during the summer school, as I was working and exchanging with the other students. This time I found a key aspect for this chapter during a presentation by a student of European anthropology. I was shocked when she showed the picture of the one-millionth guest worker in Bavaria, this time a Turkish guest worker, who was photographed with a TV at the moment of his arrival in Munich. In this example, the motorcycle had been replaced by a TV; and the Portuguese guest worker had been replaced by a Turkish guest worker. Again, the image of backwardness was juxtaposed to the newest technology. The TV was the prize of having

⁶⁹ In "Tales of Being and non-being" (2009), Boaventura de Souza Santos explains the complex representations of Portugal within the EU and in the context of colonial history.

⁷⁰ I will explain this in more detail in the next chapter.

arrived in a modern territory. The picture shows the guest worker in front of a TV which had been covered by a blanket. He is surrounded by men, and one of them is holding a microphone as if to record what the guest worker was saying (or was about to say).

Further, I also found other relevant pictures. For example, pictures of newborn babies from guest worker couples have also been taken as objects of migration and for museum exhibitions (recall the exhibition “Born in Europe”, conceived and curated by Udo Gößwald). A very impressive picture is one where the first child of a guest worker couple is photographed; a small baby who is being carried not by his / her parents but by a German man in a traditional Bavarian costume. As in the case of Portugal, Turkey is here misrepresented by the very same techniques which were applied to Portugal and Italy: erasure of history, encapsulation as “traditional” versus modern and framed in the logic of a narrative in which Germany is the land of progress. In the case of Turkey, the history of the Ottoman Sultanate is erased but, so too is Turkey’s process of radical modernization, which took place during Atatürk’s regime. Since the 1920’s, Turkey’s population (especially in the urban contexts) experienced a process of radical modernization. In such museological representations of Turkish guest workers in Germany, the image of the “Turk” is thus reduced to the image of rural, impoverished areas. This image is then taken to be representative for “the whole of Turkey” (thus excluding modernization and urban processes in i.e. Istanbul or Ankara).

What I want to point out in these examples is the fact that backgrounds can be transferred from one group of people to another. Italian workers were put in a Polish context; Turkish workers were also put in the context where the Portuguese were framed. Thus, images of geographies (like the “South of Europe”) seem to prevail even while people rotate. It would be relevant to ask further questions in future investigations (here I will not be able to go into these topics): for example, the extent to which the images of guest workers in Germany are related to the place of Polish or Jewish populations within the Prussian Empire. How were images of Jews in the workplace transferred to Poles, Southern Europeans and Turks in the workplace? How did the workplace (i.e. the mines at the *Zecke Zollverein*) - as a “*lieue de mémoire*” (Nora, 1992) - influence representations of non-German subjects? Have these places become part of German national cultural memory (Assmann, 2007) and what does this tell us about contemporary power asymmetries in Germany? These remain open questions which can be explored in future research⁷¹.

⁷¹ These observations and questions stem from my reading of Grosfoguel’s texts on racism and immigration (Grosfoguel 2008, 2004, 1999), where he describes exactly this process of inheriting images from one group to

To come to an end, I will now describe another example: images of Greek guest workers. This case is a paradox because, although the position of Greek guest workers (and their descendants) in German society is not more privileged than that of other guest workers from the South of Europe, Greece's past is actually magnified in the collective memory in Germany (but also in other countries like Great Britain). The paradox is: while Greek people are discriminated against in the present, the symbolic value of Greek history, art and philosophy in Northern Europe is very high. The social value of Greek people in i.e. Germany does not correspond to the image of the Greek culture of the past. This case is extremely important because it tells of a case where people labeled as "immigrants" (in this case Greek guest workers) could argue that objects related to their culture are actually "better treated than themselves"⁷².

Here, I want to make the same point concerning Greek guest workers. But, first of all, I want to point out that this judgement is the only one in this work which is not based on interviews or conversations. It is but a personal reflection of mine. I have no empirical evidence that Greek people in Germany feel like this, but I have observed a framework which is very peculiar. For example, the role of Greek sculptures in Great Britain, France or Germany exceeds the importance of the presence of Greek people in either country. While Greece is at the periphery of the European Union (like Portugal) and Greeks do not have a key place in the production of contemporary epistemologies concerning Greek history (Shaw, 2003), at the same time, Hellenic history, sculpture, art and philosophy are considered to be the pillars of Europe. Paradoxically, contemporary Greeks have been "left out" while "their" past has been incorporated as the genesis of populations in Northern Europe. "The Greeks of today are not the Greeks of the past" – this is a phrase one hears often (mostly in a very pejorative way). Images of Greek guest workers are also inferiorized in mainstream representations (like Portuguese, Spanish, Italian or Turkish guest workers) while their past, although magnified, is "not theirs". Greeks thus have a historical past they do not actually benefit from (socially speaking).

An interesting example concerning this point is the controversial *New Acropolis Museum* in Athens, built by architects Bernard Tschumi and Michalis Fotiadis, and inaugurated in 2009. Both architects built spaces for sculptures which are not present in Greece but are part of the

another. In this dissertation, I do not go into depth into the process of showing how this transfer happens but this topic regarding the cases of guest-workers in Europe should be explored from a historical perspective in future research.

⁷² Anyway, I will explain more cases about people complaining that "objects are better treated than they are" at the end of the next chapter.

British Museum in London or the *Pergamon Museum* in Berlin. They left the places empty and, instead, hung photographs behind each empty space – thus alluding to the pieces which should be shown in Athens. The *New Acropolis Museum* is a statement on the part of Greece, shouting: “give us (back) our past / heritage”! The contradiction between a “splendid past” and a “miserable present” is what distinguishes images of the Greeks from other guest workers. Michael Herzfeld would go so far as to describe the situation of contemporary Greece as a case of “Crypto-Colonialism” (Herzfeld, 2002).

Summarizing: the anecdote of Eryilmaz’s remark at *DOMID* speaks of racialized subjects complaining about racism. It must be said that *DOMID* has been engaged (over many years) in a project to build a migration museum in Germany which has never materialized. This is also proof of the contact zone: a zone where actors engage in perpetual discussions and conflicts with no resolutions in sight. Other than in France, a common ground for a common project (in a common place) could never be reached. Mainstream representations of guest workers show that a main national narrative exposes guest workers at its periphery; mainstream representations do not give the impression that the phenomenon of guest workers and its contextualization in the history should be given a bigger place. A small place suffices. The contact zone is thus a struggle between minimization and magnification of particular histories against the backdrop of a dominant national / hegemonic narrative⁷³.

The archive *DOMID* thus strives to encourage the writing of a history through objects and subjective / particular memories. The knowledge production stemming from *DOMID* comes naturally into conflict with an official version of history and collective memory. As in the case of *Génériques* and the conflict with Noiriel, history and memory are contested concepts. What is official national history and who writes it? Who makes the emblems of collective memory? Who is represented by this memory? Who is being left out? These questions shape the contact / conflict zone.

Archives like *Génériques* and *DOMID* actually embody a frontal confrontation to Noiriel’s conceptualization of “histoire et mémoire” or to Aleida Assmann’s notion of a cultural memory in Germany (referring what people inside Germany should remember, and mainly about the Holocaust). Both *Génériques* and *DOMID* encourage the writing of history from other standpoints, that is, from the perspective of the memories, stories and objects of people who do not normally participate in official history writing (according to Noiriel, these would

⁷³ Also, “Généérations” (an exhibition made by *Génériques* at the *Cité nationale*) showed gigantic pictures of people which reminded me of this rather peculiar effect.

be trained historians). This way of making history comes naturally into conflict with official history (for example what is thought at schools). Epistemically speaking, this draws a dividing line. The representations by these archives also show the existence of other cultural practices and memories within Europe. The very fact that these identities exist, questions official history and (national) collective memorial formations.

4.- On Images of Europe from an Entangled Perspective: Imperial / Colonial History as a Genealogy to Trace Archives, Museums and the Museumization of Migration

In this chapter I will contextualize the project for the musealization of migration in Paris, the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration*, from the perspective of European colonial history. This perspective proves fruitful due to the fact that the project of the *Cité nationale*, which was inaugurated in October of 2007, landed at the “palace of the colonies” at Porte Dorée in Paris. The ‘Palais des colonies’ was especially built for the colonial exhibition of 1931. Further, I will describe the main exhibition of the *Cité nationale*, “Rèperes”, and look at the making of representations of “migration” from within. Finally, I will reflect on to what extent “immigrants” (colonial/racial subjects of empire (Grosfoguel, 2008)) participate in the making of these arenas and, further, intervene in the museums. I will reflect on the role of the body as a crucial place of knowledge production, from which meanings and practices are subverted. This chapter aims to describe colonial power relations in representations of migration, which emerge in relation to the geopolitical context of Europeanization. The inspiration to write this chapter came from conversations which I held with people who live in Europe but do not identify with hegemonic discourse.

To begin with: to locate the “Palace of the colonies” and the permanent exhibition on migration of the *Cité nationale* (“Repères”) in the context of colonial history, I will describe three situations: first, an archive in Seville; second, a museum in Amsterdam; third, a colonial exhibition in Tervuren (Belgium). I will trace a genealogy of the colonial enterprise through these locations, for they are testimonies of western civilization/colonization and had an influence on the making of the ‘Palais des colonies’. These museums and archives are located at the intersection between art (aesthetics), history (archives), nation building and the European colonial enterprise, as they are invested with huge collections of historical documents and objects of ethnography/art. The genealogy Seville – Amsterdam – Tervuren gives insight into the making of internal and external representations of European borders and European nations, which preceeded the colonial exhibition of 1931 in Paris. Further, a chronological depiction of the emergence of these buildings contributes to the visibility of the making of images of Europe, as a South / North divide that shapes the European Union. Today these buildings / archives / museums are entangled with the processes and discourses

on migration. Therefore, I will show an entanglement of representations of: European nations, Europe, “migration” and colonial history.

4.1.- The Archivo General de Indias in Seville, Spain (18th Century)

My first example is an archive that emerged in the 18th century in the city of Seville, Spain: the “Archivo General de Indias”. This archive gathered documents of what was called the “Indias” – the then colonial possessions of the Spanish Empire on the American Continent. The archive was set up in 1785, in the building “Casa Lonja”, which had been formerly built to host the “Casa de la Contratación” (commerce house) in 1646, the place hosting all commerce of goods and slavery with “Las Indias”. Built in Andalucía, an area in present-day southern Spain which had been populated by Jews and Arabs before their expulsion in 1492 – the formal beginning of the colonial expansion to the Americas. The “Archivo General de Indias” is a monumental document of this period in trans-Atlantic history.

In 1781, during a period of political and commercial decadence of the Spanish Empire, King Carlos III of Spain planned to ground the “Archivo General de Indias” in the former building of the “casa de la contratación”, which had stood empty since 1717⁷⁴. In 1785, King Carlos III ordered:

“(…) that there be gathered in this building, from throughout the country, all decrees, government and court records, correspondence, maps and architectural drawings, having to do with the Spanish conquest of the Americas. Collected under one roof, these eighty-six million handwritten pages, among them the supply manifest for one of Columbus’s ships, have made the General Archive of the Indies one of the great repositories of the world.” (Hochschild, 1998: 36 - 37).

The “Archivo General de Indias” came to gather all information about the colonial possessions of the Spanish Empire and aimed to embody a positive representation of the colonial enterprise⁷⁵. The result was the creation of an image of simultaneous representations: first, the archive represented the territorial and religious borders demarcating the Spanish Empire; second, the external possessions of the Empire, which were geopolitically located on the other side of the Atlantic; finally it produced an image of a region (Europe) which constituted itself as superior to its colonial possessions overseas.

⁷⁴ The centre of commerce had been displaced from Seville to the port of Cádiz, leaving the building of the “Casa lonja” empty.

⁷⁵ To counteract the critiques of the time.

The “Archivo General de Indias” depicts a complex process of conquest, expulsion, domination and enslavement, which started in the year 1492, the year of the conquest of the Americas. The following passage is an example of this complex image:

“The year 1492 is a crucial foundational year for the understanding of the present system. In this year, the Christian Spanish monarchy re-conquered Islamic Spain expelling Jews and Arabs from the Spanish peninsula while simultaneously “discovering” the Americas and colonizing indigenous peoples. These “internal” and “external” conquests of territories and people not only created an international division of labor of core and periphery, but also constituted the internal and external imagined boundaries of Europe related to the global racial/ethnic hierarchy of the world-system, privileging populations of European origin over the rest. Jews and Arabs became the subaltern internal “Others” within Europe, while indigenous people became the external “Others” of Europe (Mignolo 2000).” (Grosfoguel and Mielants, 2006: 2)

The “Archivo General de Indias” is a representation of this foundational event, as it gathers “otherness” (the colonial possessions in plural) in a building which represents a Catholic empire. I call it foundational because it is emblematic of Walter Benjamin’s “passage”, where he sees the world in miniature (Benjamin, 1982). Although Benjamin will refer to other cases which happened much later, like the universal exhibition in Paris, the central point from where Benjamin sees everything (a colonial space of representation where “the rest” can be seen) emerged probably with the Archivo General de Indias and re-emerged, later, in the context of other empire-formations. This point of view from the center, which is also part of colonial exhibitions (which show the colonial zone from a metropolitan point of view) is what Santiago Castro-Gómez refers to as “the point-zero of enunciation”, a concept I will explain also in this chapter. The colonial space of representation at the Archivo General de Indias is a foundational spatial event, which will repeat itself in the colonial exhibitions in Belgium, France, and Germany and in universal exhibitions i.e. in London, Paris and New York. Originating in the “South of Europe”, this foundational space of representation will shift north.

Nevertheless, the planning of the Archivo General de Indias in 1785 will, paradoxically, mark the end of an era in colonial history. At the time when the “Archivo General de Indias” emerged (at the end of the 18th century), the centre of the economic world-system was already relocated in Amsterdam, Holland. This shift had already begun in the 17th century (Grosfoguel, 2009: 123). If we look at the other side of the Atlantic, the “Archivo General de

Indias” emerged less than three decades before the independence of Mexico (in 1810) – one of the most important colonies of the Spanish Empire.

In the present day, the “Archivo General de Indias” stands imposingly between the cathedral and the castle in Seville. Since 1972, it has hosted exhibitions of contemporary art⁷⁶ and it serves currently as a historical archive, which is visited by researchers, many of them who travelling all the way from Latin America. I visited the archive in the summer of 2009, after many researchers from countries like Colombia, Peru, Mexico, Cuba and Argentina – the erstwhile colonial territories of “Las Indias” – had told me about it. Once there, I realized that we, migrant researchers from Latin American countries, constitute a bodily presence, which is part of a display itself is un-detachable from colonial history.

4.2.- The *Tropenmuseum* in Amsterdam (19th century)

Now I will move on to my second example: a colonial archive / museum the contents and location of which also show images of the internal / external borders of an empire, and, of Europe (which I described above): the “Tropenmuseum” in Amsterdam grounded between 1864 and 1871. The “Tropenmuseum” embodies the fact that a shift of the centre of the world-system (from Spain/Portugal to Holland) had occurred in the 17th century. Unfortunately, not much has been said about this transition through which the cartography of power shifted north. Little has been said that René Descartes transferred knowledge from Spain’s Jesuit colleges to Amsterdam, elaborating the grounds for a “universal” thought, but without quoting his “Jesuit” sources (Dussel, 2009: 20 - 23) (Grosfoguel, 2009: 123). These silences concerning this knowledge-transfer and re-contextualization are part of a gradual marginalization of the history of the former empires like Spain, Portugal and Italy which have geopolitically become “the South of Europe” (Dussel, 2009: 13 - 14). Progressively and, until the present day, this “South” serves as the strategic border of contention for the core of the European Union (Mignolo, 2006: 204).

The “Tropenmuseum” signals the result of an ethnographic collecting, which had taken place at the time of emergence of an ego-politics of knowledge and “universal” thought (Grosfoguel, 2009: 122). With it, the epistemic power of the colonial enterprise will continue to be centered around the slave trade. If we look closely at the dates of the grounding of the “Tropenmuseum” (the year 1864) there is a similarity with the “Archivo General de Indias”.

⁷⁶ As I will show in various examples, other colonial buildings (i.e. the Palais des Colonies in Paris) have also suffered several “mutations” and have had different functions through time. In most cases, these buildings hosted projects of contemporary art (mostly avant-garde art like surrealism) during the 1970’s.

In 1864, the centre of the world system had already shifted from Holland to the empires of north-western Europe, particularly France, Germany and England (Grosfoguel, 2009: 124). The idea of the “Tropenmuseum” came after a progressive substitution of power had taken place. The planning / grounding of this memorial served to recall imperial times which had shifted away. Great sums of money were spent on the museum which was to contain a botanical and anthropological imperial research centre – a desperate act to have the monument.

In the present day, the “Tropenmuseum” has a new look. It is an interactive museum, technologically equipped and showing displays of art (in the 1970’s it also hosted contemporary art exhibitions) and, although to a lesser extent, migration. The history of slavery, the history of Suriname and of Surinamese migration to the Netherlands are depicted here, although quite superficially. Before moving to my third example, I want to describe an impression I had during my visit to the Tropenmuseum in 2012: the Tropenmuseum’s exhibition concentrates on objects / regions / populations that had been Dutch colonies, such as Java and Suriname. It has other collections. It has a room with Mexican objects of ethnography and art, also other objects from South American countries – we must remember that today’s Brazilian nation became a Dutch colony from 1630 to 1654 (Dutch Brazil), a historical fact that attests the displacement of Portuguese colonial power to the Dutch Empire. The room of Mexican objects and art also gave me a lot to think about, because I asked myself: does this room at the Tropenmuseum symbolize the displacement of Spanish hegemony? The Dutch Empire was and is showing possessions from another (former) imperial zone: does this depict a displacement of colonial powers? The “shift to the North” described by Dussel? In her article “Diversité et nationalisme dans les musées américains” (Diversity and nationalism in American museums), Cristina Castellano writes about Mexican, Chinese and African community museums in Chicago (Castellano, 2011), museums which became national. Castellano asks: how can the cultural objects of a nation (i.e. Mexico) become the possession of another nation (the United States)? This is a symbolic act of US domination on the American continent. At the Tropenmuseum’s Mexican room I remembered Castellano’s text: possessions of an empire were displaced by another after the former’s displacement.

4.3.- King Leopold’s Colonial Exhibition at Tervuren (1897)

Now I move to my third example: the colonial exhibition at the Palace of the Colonies in Tervuren, Belgium (1897). This exhibition was to provide the inspiration for the French

colonial exhibition and for the building of the 'Palais des colonies' in Paris. Much of the conceptualization of the French exhibition⁷⁷ (which took place three decades later in 1931) was practically copied from this Belgian example.

To understand the colonial exhibition in Trevuren, we have to look at the historical context of the time. In 1830, after Belgium's independence from Holland, Leopold II became the King of Belgium. From that point on, he was to desperately strive to get a colony for this new European nation (Hochschild, 1998). After the Berlin Conference (1884 - 1885) – or the partition of Africa – he finally got the Congo, and presided over one of the cruelest colonial expansions (Küster, 2006: 96 - 97) and worst crimes against humanity. The colonizing process had been very quick and here I want to stress that this was possible precisely because a South-North transfer of knowledge and colonial practices had taken place: this time from Spain to Belgium. Following Hochschild's description in his book *King Leopold's Ghost*, King Leopold II had spent one month at the "Archivo Genral de Indias", in Seville, in 1862⁷⁸. During this month, he learned about the Spanish conquest of the Americas, looked at the documents and quantified the revenues gained by Spain – as well as examining the methods applied for that purpose (Hochschild, 1998: 36 - 40). This fact is of the outmost importance, because it shows how previous strategies employed in "Las Indias" were used in a new context (the Congo), and how the "Archivo General de Indias" served to support the continuation of the European colonial enterprise. The collected documents provided Leopold with the knowledge to invade a foreign territory, name it, declare it his own for the sake of making a fortune, and install a regime of slavery and terror. The Belgian king had actually learned at the archive about the colonial knowledge and methods, as well as the profits of the colonial enterprise. The Archivo General de Indias had aimed to give a "positive" depiction of colonialism against the protest of priests like Bartolomé de las Casas, who had denounced slavery and coerced labour and the mistreatment of indigenous peoples in the Americas. One should ask: positive for whom? It was certainly positive for the Belgian king. As we will see later, in France the same attempts to depict colonialism in positive ways will be made – a fact which is entangled with the original project of the *Cité nationale*: an archive to positively depict people coming from French former colonial possessions living in France. As we will see, there has been a shift from documents/objects to people. Here is where migration processes mark a turn in the history of representations.

⁷⁷ As well as art-deco.

⁷⁸ Almost parallel to the grounding of the "Tropenmuseum".

In 1897, at the peak of Leopold II's colonial enterprise (which also meant the peak of crimes against humanity in the Congo), the colonial exhibition of the Congo took place at the Palace of the Colonies, in Tervuren. It was the main attraction of the universal exhibition in Belgium. The colonial exhibition showed a Congolese town with 300 people from Congo (!), flora, fauna and ethnic objects, side by side with technological innovations like the tramway, monorail and cinema (Küster, 2006: 95). This was achieved in cooperation with Carl Hagenbeck's "ethno shows / human zoos", which had started in Hamburg in 1875 (Thode-Arora, 2002: 81 - 89) and had succeeded and expanded at the universal and colonial exhibitions of the time (Küster, 2006: 107). Also around this time, colonial exhibitions - or 'Völkerschauen' - were staged in Germany and Berlin (Dreesbach, 2012)⁷⁹.

Here, a shift from documents to colonial subjects had taken place (a step before the depiction of the process of migration referring to the geography of the colonies). The juxtaposition of technology (representing the West) and culture (representing racialized colonial subjects), which reinforced racism and legitimized colonization, also owed much to the history of universal exhibitions since 1851. Designed by famous *Art Nouveau* Belgian designers and architects of the time, the exhibition itself would be described as a "work of art". The colonial exhibition also paved the way for the *Musée royal de l'Afrique Centrale de Tervuren*, the first scientific institution for the ethnography of the Congo (Küster, 2006: 95 - 96). With this, the outcome of the colonial exhibition is an entanglement between art and design, ethnography, museology and the politics and propaganda of the colonial enterprise (Küster, 2006: 96). Three decades later, in the Parisian colonial exhibition of 1931, these entanglements will come to grow in sophistication, and to show what Walter Benjamin describes as "the world in miniature" in his "Passages" (in: Benjamin (1982), *Das Passagen-Werk*).

Before I move on to the Paris colonial exhibition of 1931 I want to make some general points clear. Leopold II's wishes to have a colony just after Belgium's independence from Holland is an example of how colonial possessions are entangled in the making of European nations. Unfortunately, the history of how Leopold II was imitating former empires / nations and what repercussions this had in the African continent was not internationally known until Hochschild's book (1998) and, more recently, Peruvian writer and Nobel Prize Winner Mario Vargas Llosa's novel *El sueño del Celta* (*The Celt's Dream*), which appeared in 2010 just

⁷⁹ In 1896, a colonial exhibition took place at the Berliner Treptower Park; in 1899, an African neighborhood was built in today's Berlin-Wedding; the "Einkaufsgenossenschaft der Kolonialwarenhändler im Halleschen Torbezirk zu Berlin" EDEKA (Commerce Community of Colonial Traders of Goods) was founded in 1898 (today a supermarket).

before winning the Nobel Prize. The novel depicts the brutality of Leopold II's enterprise in the Congo through the life of the Irish General Roger Casement. Again, the silence about this chapter in history is also part of the gradual minimization of former empires within Europe⁸⁰.

When I visited the *Musée royal de l'Afrique Centrale de Tervuren* in November of 2009, I could see how the main exhibition showed the racism with which the colony had been displayed and an enormous amount of objects (specially masks) which had been looted from the societies in the Congo. The museum did not hide the racism involved in the classification of people, their descriptions and their being displayed in the same fashion as animals and plants, all rooms, people, flora and fauna being positioned next to each other. During my visit I could also see a temporary exhibition at the museum, just beside the ethnographic rooms. The topics were: "African diaspora", migration and urban spaces in Africa. It relied heavily on technology (screens and media), as well as on art installations⁸¹. Although "migration" was neither a main nor a clear topic (instead, the exhibition stressed in the "African" diaspora), the narrative circled around the representation of racialized people – many of them Belgian citizens. The continuation of the colonial difference and power relations between curators and the represented was clearly visible.

4.4.- The *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* and "Immigrants" in the Context of Colonial History

The case of the colonial exhibition of 1931 shows that the French Empire had copied the Congo exhibition in Belgium, thus transferring a specific way of producing colonial representations to a new metropolitan center. The French project would end in a much larger exhibition, which would embody the internal/external borders of the French Empire. The exhibition stood for internal cohesion and homogenization in the French territory. But it also stood for the conquering spirit: its various colonial possessions, which included racialized peoples who, inferiorized, were the markers the borders – the outreach – of the French Empire. In comparison to the Congo exhibition, which showed one colonial possession (one region owned by one private man, King Leopold II), the colonial exhibition in Paris re-staged the innovations of the Belgian project, but with the challenge of staging a multiplicity of possessions in conquered territories in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Similar to the

⁸⁰ Hochschild also writes on how Joseph Conrad's novel "Heart of Darkness" (where Conrad describes what he witnessed in the Congo) has been de-contextualized and read only as a literary work, detached from the historical context (Hochschild, 1998: 140 – 149).

⁸¹ This shows the "entanglement" between colonial history, scientific racism (the ethnographical rooms), technology, design, art and migration.

“Archivo General de Indias”, the Palais des Colonies had the task of showing differences in plural, and on more than one continent.

Paradoxically, three years before the colonial exhibition in Paris, a world fair had taken place in 1929 in Seville, in which independent nations on the American continent – which had been former colonial possessions – had been invited to represent themselves. As I visited Seville in 2009, I could see the pavillons of Peru, Colombia, Uruguay and Mexico (among other countries) standing imposingly and sculpturally, representing independence wars and nation building processes mainly through indigenous iconography carved in stone. While independent nations in the Americas showed that creole elites had taken power over the territories, economies and representations, the French Empire was displaying, in 1931, not only its colonial territorial possessions and its commercial enterprises, but its colonial/racial subjects of empire. At the exhibition of 1931 in Paris, people from the colonial territories were depicted in what would be replicas of their natural habitats. Following the logic of former universal and colonial exhibitions, the colonial exhibit of 1931 showed a juxtaposition of “western” technological innovations and “traditional” objects (temples, houses, people). The former would stand for the splendor of western civilization while the former would stand for peoples labelled as “primitive”. Parallel to the modern / primitive divide, the divide city / countryside would favor the idea of modernity thus benefiting “la Plus grande France” (Lebovics, (2002): 371 – 372).

In contrast with Spain, a successful process of internal colonialism had taken place in France since the French Revolution. In the words of Quijano: “In France (...) social and political relations were democratized through the French Revolution, and ‘internal’ colonialism evolved into a ‘Frenchification’ of all peoples within the French territory, to an effective, though not total, extent.” (Quijano, 2000: 224). But: democratization was only in the French territory and it did not include racialized subjects. This will create a divide between those “inside” French territory and those “outside” of it.

The colonial exhibition would thus strengthen internal (national) and external (imperial) homogenization processes, a success which was also achieved through design. An imposing example is the building of the ‘Palais des colonies’, at Porte Dorée, which owed much to the avant-garde circles in Paris. For example, sculptor Auguste Janniot designed the stone façade of the building thus showing a very problematic entanglement between avant-garde techniques and colonial displays – just like in the case of the Congo exhibition. Janniot differed from artists of avant-garde circles like Picasso. Picasso – although enthroning himself

as a “white male” in the world of western art and aesthetics – “introduced” anonymous works of art from African people to European Art, thus opening the field of power of western art to a certain extent⁸². Contrary to this, Janniot made caricatural and grotesque designs of racialized people. If Paris surrealists like Éluard, Breton, Aragon and Tanguy had been politically anti-colonialist and had openly engaged in boycotting the colonial exhibition of 1931 (Lebovics, (2002): 368) (Murphy, 2007: 21), Janniot had adapted techniques of representing otherness to the colonial enterprise to create a colonial aesthetics. This created a political fracture in the field of art, between avant-garde and art deco⁸³; but the fracture went even further: if writers such as Alejo Carpentier had taken the avant-garde circles beyond Paris to design emancipatory, national imaginaries for Cuba (Meza Torres, 2006) or, as in the case of Colombian sculptor Rómulo Roza, design the idea of a Colombian nation based on the Chibcha tradition/symbol of the abachué (Gómez Londoño, 2011), artists like Janniot were creating images, which were actively complicit with the racist colonial structures⁸⁴. Janniots work – and this also applies to the makers of the Congo exhibit – actively served the inferiorization of colonial peoples and their “aesthetization” within the representational structures of colonial power.

These fractures within the Empire (avant-garde & art déco) and in trans-Atlantic context (national images in the Americas) still shape actual debates around the politics of multiculturalism and migration inside and outside of Europe. Here, “colonial/racial subjects of empire” are not named as such, but instead they are “immigrants” (as the living plural otherness) who are becoming the “national” possessions of each European country⁸⁵, and are therefore, on center-stage.

It is important to mention that, between 1934 and 2007, the ‘Palais de colonies in Paris’ went through many modifications. It hosted the “Musée permanent des colonies”, and, just after, the “Musée de la France d’outre-mer”. In 1969, just after the independence of Algeria, decolonization processes in Africa and départementalisation in the Caribbean Antilles, the museum became the “Musée national des Arts d’Afrique et d’Océanie”, which focused on art,

⁸² Nevertheless, Hochschild argues that it was the art of the Congo which influenced artists like Picasso, Braque and Matisse and, therefore cubism. Picasso would have encountered objects from the Congo in 1907, in Paris, and taken cubism from these art works. “Cubism” already existed in African art, and so it would only have been new to Europeans. (Hochschild, 1998: 73).

⁸³ Not just the stone façade, but the frescoes in the interior - from Pierre Ducos de la Halle - and the colonial salons in the style of art déco - by Louis Bouquet – showed a complicity between artistic creation and the colonial enterprise. This marked an internal political aesthetic rupture from within the Empire (Murphy, 2007: 33 – 37).

⁸⁴ This re-inforced a trans-Atlantic political/aesthetic divide.

⁸⁵ “Immigrants” only exist as attached to a European nation, i.e. German Turks, Algerians in France.

surrealism and the Avant-garde (Murphy, 2007: 41 – 49). With this, the museum came to represent the geographical borders of France (and subsequently Europe) in the Caribbean as well as the colonial cultural space of the “francophonie”⁸⁶.

It was in 2004 that the palace was chosen to host the project of the *Cité nationale*. African and Oceanic objects and art were displaced to the *musée du quai Branly* (under the category of “Arts premières”) and so the ‘Palais des colonies’ stood empty. The building, decorations, frescoes⁸⁷ and the tropical aquarium – which still has a “colonial” way of depicting fish and crocodiles – remained there, awaiting the arrival of “migration”. This arrival then meant that a complex entanglement between colonial history and its artistic and ethnographical legacies were taken a step further. Migration has come to designate the representation of living people (as images and biographies) in a period in which western nations live a “crisis of representation”. “Migration” is entangled with a new depiction of Europe and of the “otherness” which demarcates its borders.

As global orders have changed, the project of the *Cité nationale* takes place in the midst of a process of Europeanization, which renders the contextualization of migration as lying beyond the history of the formal colonial enterprise – the so called “post-colonial era”. With a shift in power relations on a global scale and the place of France in a new world order, “immigrants” are at the core of debates about the internal (racial) frontiers of “multicultural nations”, the “European Union”, governance discourses (i.e. security) and international development (Aderanti, et al, 2009). Nevertheless, seen from the perspective of museums as colonial institutions, we can see that complex images curated by members of the national majorities (i.e. in France) lead to a museumization of diverse groups of people. A phenomenon described by Tony Bennett in “Exhibition, difference and the logic of culture” (2006: 54; 62).

Departing from this point of view, it can be said that migration is being re-ordered through the following images: Jewish and African Diasporas (Holocaust and Slavery), the “South” of Europe (former guest workers from Spain, Portugal, Italy), the “East” of Europe (former communist countries, i.e. Poland), colonial/racial subjects of empire (Algeria, the Antilles or Mali) or from other empires (i.e. African-Americans, political refugees from Latin America or Polish immigrants⁸⁸) and, most recently, “Muslims” as targets of integration. Only non-racialized imperial subjects are exempt from being displayed at the French migration

⁸⁶ Which is similar to the literary space of the British Commonwealth.

⁸⁷ Which have been declared world heritage by UNESCO.

⁸⁸ Polish immigrants being historically the colonial/racial subjects of the German empire.

museum. This raises the question: where is migration depicted from? How can we locate the organizing principle of the representations?

To answer this question, we have to go back to the “point-zero of enunciation” (Castro-Gómez, 2007) which emerges with Descartes’s claim of universal knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2009: 123). By separating the soul from the body, Descartes claims rational, objective knowledge, which is disembodied and dislocated. But, if we give a body, a gender and a geopolitical location to Descartes – and the conditions of the possibility of producing this knowledge – we see a male, Jesuit body producing knowledge at the center of the world-system (Holland in the 17th century). This body would be the locus of enunciation of a knowledge which claims to speak as the “universal”.

If we see the *Cité nationale* from this perspective, then the ordering principle is also centered around a myth of modernity and universalism which locates its locus of enunciation in the French Revolution (thus museumizing 200 years of “migration” in France). This organizing principle is an entanglement between nationalism (La France), imperialism (the nation as entangled with the Empire) and racism (as the organizing principle within the colonial empire and today in the metropolis).

Nevertheless, if we shift the myth of modernity to the colonial enterprise since 1492, we can see how modernity and colonialism had been historically transferred from the South to the North of Europe. The matrix organizing images of “migration” in the *Cité nationale* is a power structure rooted in the French territory which erases this history. It places the Northern European axis (France, England, Germany) at the center of the narrative. “Migration” has come to replace the colonial vocabulary of the past. In the European (and also the North American) context, discourses on “migration” are entangled with a locating/centering of knowledge in the Northern Hemisphere⁸⁹.

Having said this, I move to the second part of this essay, to show how representations about migration are challenged at the *Cité nationale* and elsewhere.

⁸⁹ The roots of this location of knowledge could be found in Kant’s philosophy, who wrote in the 18th century in Germany, at the moment in which the French, British and German Empires were substituting Holland as the centre of the world system (Grosfoguel, 2009: 124). According to Grosfoguel, Kant argued that the “South” of Europe, Africa, indigenous populations and Asians lie outside reason. Reason would only be possible north of the Pyrenees.

4.5.- Challenging the Institutions and Representational Practices: Approaches from the Immigrant's Side

Before describing how people contest representations of migration and / or ethnographic objects through their own bodies and histories, I first want to stress that the project of the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* in Paris has its genesis at the “Marche pour l'égalité et contre le racisme” (or “marche des Beurs”) in 1983 (Khiari, 2009: 105 - 139), where activists and immigrants showed the wish to gain social representation. In this context, the archive *Génériques* has to be mentioned, as it has collected and conserved all materials concerning immigrant organizations. Later, historians and, afterwards, an interdisciplinary team took over the project. With this, the project of the *Cité nationale* distanced itself from the force of social movements “from below”. The project was then designed in relation to the *Ellis Island Immigration Museum*, in New York and the *Diaspora Museum*, in Tel Aviv⁹⁰. From a global point of view, the *Cité nationale* (now far removed from social movements) seems to have wanted to create an archive of migration in Paris. This idea, which implies the collecting of documents of “others” to put them in one place – this time under the umbrella of migration – recalls the enterprise of King Carlos III of Spain and his *Archivo General de Indias*.

Here, I will argue that the *Cité nationale*, as well as other projects to represent migration, have regained their contact with social struggles not because they have looked for it, but because they have been haunted by immigrants coming to the museums and contesting them. Thus raising the issues from outside. This is a very important arena of confrontation between the museum and society because, as I will show, it is not about people wanting to shut down the museum, but rather about people and groups who actually want to have a place in the museum. This is about wanting to occupy the museological space, interpret it and use it in the terms of the occupiers. It is about groups who actually question the institution to the extent of wanting to extend its scope.

But before describing what happened as the *Sans Papiers* took the *Cité nationale* with the help of the labour union (the *CGT*) from the 7th of October of 2010 to the 28th of January of 2011, I want to explore the role of the body and its different relations toward museum objects and exhibitions. What I have noticed during my research, is that, on the one hand, immigrants or colonial/racial subjects of empire and – on the other - exhibition makers from the national

⁹⁰ The report of this investigation was handed in by the commission in 1992.

societies have a completely different understanding of the history of objects and the meaning of exhibitions. Each one sees very differently the potential of a museum as a social space and their own potential to “intervene” in favor of impacting representations and legal situations. The question of participation is closely related to the bodily relation between immigrants / racialized people and objects – which is different from the one of the makers. This manifests itself in other demands and uses of the museum. To explain this, I will tell five anecdotes (experiences and conversations) which I gathered during my fieldwork in Berlin.

The first anecdote stems from an interview with the head of one of the departments at the *Ethnologisches Museum Dahlem*, in Berlin. My interview partner had stated not to be able to use migration to re-contextualize colonial collections, even when “immigrants” were staging themselves as such in an exhibition at his department. He preferred to use the word “diaspora” to link actual immigrants with the museum’s collections. Once, in one of the many activities organized by the museum, a woman from the continent from which the pieces came, suggested to the head of the department that the museum should host an event about the legality of immigrants from that continent. Why? The woman wanted to question why objects were allowed to stay while real people had to leave the country. She questioned the privileged status of objects and the illegal status of people from the same continent as the objects. Why do borders close for those people who are related with these objects? How could a country love objects and give them a place while throwing people away? The department director was annoyed, and told the woman that the museum was no place to raise such an issue. Why? The woman was angry. He convinced the woman to go away, and the woman went away, angry. The head of department said: Why did she want to bring these two topics (objects and real people) together?

Further, in a tour to an exhibition at that same department, our guide had also commented on “immigrants” and “post-colonial groups” making strange claims. The museum “could not work with these people”. According to our guide, these people were “impossible” and mentioned that the department had cooperated with embassies, who had been very helpful partners. This cooperation with autochthonous embassies was used to legitimize the work of the museum.

The second anecdote relates to a friend of mine, from Mexico, who had finished her PhD in Berlin and, at the time of our meeting, had been looking for a job. After months of applying, she had found nothing. When we met, she told me that, one day, she was at the library where she had spent months writing her PhD, namely the *Iberoamerikanisches Institut* (Ibero-

American Institute) in Berlin. This archive, located in Postdamer Platz, holds one of the biggest and most important collections of Ibero-American and Latin-American sources in the world. While she was there, my friend saw one of the directors passing by, and so my friend told her: “I want a job here”. The director said: “Well, there are no vacancies”. My friend replied again: “I should have a job here. Please hire me. Your institution holds the greatest archive about issues related to my country, history and continent. And only Germans have access to jobs here. I must get a job here. Why are books valued, but not us, who studied here, came all the way from Mexico and got a degree in social sciences by using this archive?” The director replied with “I’m sorry, I can’t”. My colleague insisted: “Give me a job. This is outrageous!”. The director went on her way and ignored my colleague, who was desperate.

I chose this anecdote because, as in the first story, my colleague had taken the role of a person with an immigrant background who had gone to an institution / museum / archive that had possession of her heritage (Latin American history and culture are also a Prussian “possession” – the *Preußischer Kulturbesitz*) to demand participation in the making of representations (as well as an official remuneration for the participation).

The third example comes from my interaction with a member of the archive *Génériques* at the *musée du quai Branly*, in Paris. We were visiting the *musée du quai Branly* with a group of researchers from a summer school, and a member from *Génériques* was accompanying our group. This person’s biography was related to Algeria. We had just finished a guided tour that had given a very shallow presentation. The majority of the group members were very disappointed. The tour guide had stated that all objects of the museum were property of the French state, and that this was good because the objects were kept in good conditions. Nobody from the group asked a question, since this explanation was too simplistic. As we left the museum, I noticed that the member of *Génériques* was very angry. As we climbed the stairs to exit, I approached her and commented on the tour. She replied to me: “you know, this is not funny. Because all of these furniture, objects and clothes you see hanging in these new magazines (glass cases: depots) of the *quai Branly*... they could be from my grandmother, you know? Or maybe they belong to my grandfather! For me, this is not a game. This is about objects which could have belonged to my family and were taken from them, maybe by force. I am not so much an academic, but an activist“. This anecdote is key, because it refers to the problem in a clear way. While hegemonic discourse of belonging to Europe sees these objects as European possessions (without French people having any real link to them) the people in these anecdotes relate personally to the objects and can claim a proximity to them. Objects are

part of people's identities. People with Algerian descent (like the member of *Génériques*) struggle because they are not allowed to possess and / or display their own property.

The fourth anecdote is of an episode which took place at the end of 2006, in Berlin, just as I had heard that a project for a migration museum in Paris existed. I became obsessed with the idea. Moreover, I was sure that I could find a similar project in Berlin and I was blind with determination to find this institution. I surfed in the internet and found the neighbourhood / district museum in the area of Neukölln. I looked at the webpage and the exhibitions, and noticed that it was showing exactly what I was looking for. I went out, determined to find the "migration museum", an absurd quest, for such a place has never existed. I went to Hermannplatz, in the Kreuzberg district, a part of Berlin called the "Turkish area". When I arrived, I realized that I had forgotten to write down the museum's address. It was getting late, and I was lost. In my desperation, I approached a man who was selling sandwiches in a shop inside the subway station (U-Bahn). I asked him: "Excuse me: could you tell me where the migration museum is?" The man, whom I imagined was Turkish (but I never asked), said to me: "Museum? No! Listen: get out of the metro station and walk in the direction of Rathaus Neukölln. You will see so many immigrants... just walk along, look at the people, look at the shops. You don't need a museum. If you want to see more immigrants, just go further, go through "Sonnenallee" and explore the area. You will see many, many immigrants and many immigrant's shops, right there on the street." I was shocked at his answer. I was not looking to see "immigrants" in a voyeuristic way – the way some tourists might. But this man gave me a lesson. Afterwards, as I thought upon what he had said and interpreted the situation, I came to the following conclusions: the man had told me that, from a touristic approach, the urban districts of Kreuzberg and Neukölln are actually perceived as living museums. He was suggesting that the streets were "glass cases", and that the immigrants were museum objects. This example also gave me insight about the self-perception of being racialized and gazed upon by tourists as a performing body. It also changed – completely – my perspective about the city and on areas defined through the adjective "migration".

The fifth anecdote comes from a long conversation I conducted with several board members of the *Aramean Cultural Foundation* in Germany. This community is, maybe, the clearest example of a minority group which defines itself as non-German (although Christians), which does not position itself in favor of integration and which seeks to create representations for themselves and about themselves. During our long conversation, members of the community board mentioned that, in their point of view, the library, the museum, the archive and the

regional institute (on Aramean Studies at the University) were key “containers” of their identity. Again in this case, their objectified memories were property of the *Preussisches Kulturbesitz*. My conversation partners seemed to have a very formal relationship with these institutions because they themselves did research on their own history. They needed access to objects and books; they cared deeply for the perpetuation of their language. They also knew that, simultaneously, these institutions objectified them as subjects from a particular community.

But this anecdote does not end here. There were many interesting points which came up during our conversation held on September 25 of 2009. An example is a key point regarding their notion of integration. The board members, who defined themselves as Aramean, were, alone by their professions (academic, medical), very much integrated into the modern / German society and economy. Also, the question of religion posed no problem for them in Europe because Arameans are Christians. Therefore they never faced the usual problems religious minorities (i.e. Muslims) face. The interesting point is the following: they explained to me that they had become so well assimilated into Germany, that – at one moment – they got scared:

Ja, die Entstehungsgeschichte der Stiftung. Da müssen wir ein bisschen weiter ausholen. Der Grund, warum sie entstanden ist, lag einfach in der Situation der Aramäer, wie sie sich in Deutschland befinden, wie sie sich in Deutschland fühlen und wie sie angekommen sind. Als wir ... uns Gedanken gemacht haben... ja, wir sind selber immigriert – damals – aus unserer Heimat hierher nach Deutschland, sind – kann man sagen - integriert und zur Stufe der Assimilation. Da haben wir zurückgeschreckt, wo wir gesagt haben „so was wollten wir eigentlich gar nicht“. So: Was sind die Möglichkeiten tatsächlich, unsere Identität zu erhalten? Da haben wir gesehen: es gibt nicht viel. Das bedeutet, wir können unseren Kindern nicht in den aramäischen Kindergarten schicken, wir können sie nicht in einer Schule unterbringen, wo Aramäisch als ein Fach unterrichtet wird. Das bedeutet, von klein bis ganz groß gibt es keine großartige Möglichkeit, die eingebettet ist in der Struktur des Gastgeberlandes, jetzt hier in Deutschland. Da haben wir die Notwendigkeit gesehen das wir, aus eigener Kraft, mit Unterstützung der Aramäer hier in Deutschland, in Berlin, dass wir eine Stiftung Gründen und von Aramäer für Aramäer. Was aber aufgeschlossen ist auch an anderen Interessierten, die sich mit dem Thema Aramäer beschäftigen, eine Plattform zu bieten, um Projekte zu realisieren, Gedanken einzubringen, zu initialisieren, zu fördern, umsetzen. Also, die gesamte Bandbreite dieses Forums wollten wir mit der Stiftung schaffen und seit 2005 ist sie offiziell als Stiftung registriert, eine deutsche Stiftung. Wir haben einige Projekte bereits realisiert, vieles ist konzeptionell fertig, vieles ist nicht möglich gewesen, und einiges – wie gesagt – haben wir auch erfolgreich konkretisiert und umgesetzt. (Interview with representatives of the Aramean Foundation on September 25, 2009)

The statement of not wanting to continue assimilation and their decision to live their own culture more deeply, by i.e. recovering their language, is key. In this example, assimilation is questioned by the group itself – a group with an economic stability, with access to the epistemic field and with no religious conflicts. From an “invisible” group of immigrants who

have access to certain privileges of mainstream society. The group expressed a wish to restore their “difference”. The effort is made to give their language and culture an existence and a status. In this way, they use libraries, universities, museums – institutions which gather documents relevant for the Aramean community – not to study the “other” but, rather, to recover themselves (their cultural identity and traditions). They explained to me that this would be the only path to recover their identity, precisely because Arameans have no country to go back to. They are a diaspora, and the only way to exist at a bigger level would be by organizing themselves at the European level. Here, two points come to the fore: Arameans use objects stored in libraries and museums to reconstitute themselves; further, they plan on having a European basis to give their diaspora an existence. Here, Europe is not just what I described in the first chapter, a project of the elites; it is also an umbrella that many migrant communities and ethnic groups refer to in order to achieve further levels of acceptance and existence at a higher level.⁹¹ With this, it can be said that non-Europeans are also creating “Europe”.

The question here is: how can museums and archives be contextualized and used from the point of view of non-European perspectives? What is the role of non-Europeans in the context of migration museums? All of these anecdotes show a relation between the self / body and the museum objects which differs completely from what interview partners working in the museums have told me. Museum curators both in Paris and Berlin have turned out to be mostly members of majority societies. This means, they are carriers of a national and, sometimes, a European identity. They relate differently to the objects and topics, their bodies not being engaged with colonial or migration history, the contextual ground for the displacement of these objects. So, while “immigrants” see themselves and colonial history in the objects, museum staff and curators do not see this link in this way – they try to see the link between the “other” and the object. The question of “possession” is spoken of as a disembodied historical process. This difference of seeing or not seeing colonial history marks a “line of separation”, between two ways of understanding history and the body (self), as well as museums. This bodily relation to the objects is crucial to think about engaging in politics and enacting political interventions.

⁹¹ Also referring to this point: in his conference at the Institute for European Anthropology in May 2012, Kwame Nimako spoke of the need for black people in i.e. Germany and Holland to gather at a European level. Nimako directs a Summer School in Amsterdam named “Black Europe”. Here, Europe as an entity becomes resignified by those who feel excluded by a European identity and by hegemonic discourses in the nations of Europe.

These stories, but also my own experience as a Mexican woman in Paris and Berlin – an immigrant anthropologist in the field – reflect a relation with the body and with colonial history, which determines self-perceptions, ways of acting, of producing knowledge and of engaging politically – always through the body. And it is from here that I want to come back to an immigrant movement (which I introduced in the first chapter of this dissertation), which took the decision to act upon and occupy a museum, to intervene in it, to turn it into a political agora. As the *Sans Papiers* movement took the *Cité nationale* with support from the *CGT* from October 2010 until January 2011, they changed the role of the museum from a place of collection, conservation and the making of national representations to a place of political struggle. The *Sans Papiers* protested to achieve the legal status which had been promised to them. They took this space (in which historians had exposed the topic of “legality and the state”, as described in the previous section) to use it to prepare their applications (dossiers) for residence permits. The museum helped them, providing them with working rooms and materials; academics and activists also came to help and support their action. This was the first time that such a museum acted in solidarity with a social movement. The museum even took on the role of negotiating with the ministry of immigration, a negotiation that in the end proved quite unfruitful (and even negative).

During the occupation, the *Sans Papiers* organized themselves to live inside the museum. For example, they organized cleaning plans; they talked about respecting the heritage of the rooms they were occupying day and night. They ensured the well-being of the frescoes and the building. According to some witnesses, the museum had public events – plays, concerts, meetings to discuss the legal future of the occupants. For the first time since its opening, many visitors came. Also, the *Sans Papiers* made extended use of the médiathèque - which is usually empty, to read, watch films, conduct research.

While this action surprised many people, I think that the *Sans Papiers* actually occupied a space which had called them. The permanent exhibition “*Rèperes*” shows photographs of the *Sans Papiers* movement since its opening. There is documentation about the movement in the permanent exhibition of the museum. In the logic of the “colonial/racial subjects of empire”: why not struggle in the place, which has opened the space to contest illegality and recognition?” During the occupation, in which the museum organized tours of the permanent exhibition for the *Sans Papiers*, a member of the occupant group had found himself in a photograph that was part of a journalistic documentation of the migration process of people from Mali to France. This person, who was fighting to acquire a legal status, recognized

himself in the picture – when he was posing as he was still a child in Mali, his home country. From this perspective, there is no separation between colonial history, representations and the bodies of immigrants. Is it not, therefore, natural that the represented turn this space into their agora? That they want to change the meaning of the institution by contesting their illegality there (in situ)? The occupation of the museum by the *Sans Papiers* changed the perception of immigrant participation in museum work, which has always been characterized by being very limited. It showed an active way of engaging with the museum, of using the institution to demand rights of participation, inclusion and recognition, even if, as the occupation ended (after nearly 500 regularizations) the relations between the *Sans Papiers*, the CGT (workers union), and the *Cité nationale* were very tense.

The action of this movement has further implications that also impact ethnographic writing and the way knowledge is produced in anthropology and studies about migration. Since the beginning of my research and fieldwork in 2007, as time has passed, my self-understanding as a researcher has become that of a “colonial/racial subject of empire”, or “immigrant” – rather than a representative of a national society. In the field of museums and universities, my bodily experience seems to be detached from national (German or French) narratives as well as from constructions of a “new” sense of “being European”. As I think through my body, I question through my body which is attached to colonial history and constantly marked by migration – in demographic and legal terms. Here, the question of the body and knowledge opens new perspectives in anthropology and the social sciences: are there enough immigrants producing knowledge about migration and racism in Europe? What type of knowledge are they producing? And: is it taken into consideration?

5.- Epistemologies and Every-day Experiences Behind the Making of Representations: European and non-European Cosmologies on Modernity, Gender, Colonial History and Citizenship

In the previous chapters I described two different fields which I identified during my research as well as the zone where both fields come into contact and engage in conflict. In Chapter Two, I described the field of representations of migration created by members of the national (French or German) and European communities; representations which go in the direction of exhibiting Europe (and which, nevertheless, show internal conflicts in this respect). In Chapters One and Three, I described the contact zones (in Chapter One quite roughly and, in Chapter Two, in more detail). Here, “contact-zones” refers to the fields of turbulence, which emerge when European and non-European fields (defined by colonial history, according to Marie Louise Pratt and James Clifford) come into contact with each other – and the situations they create at the museums. In Chapter Four, I described the way in which people who do not identify with national identities in France and Germany contest mainstream representations and / or create their own representations (here, I could also witness representations holding on to Europe from the immigrant’s / non-European’s side). In General, the chapters give a description of the historical perspectives on the horizon, which could sustain different (and sometimes opposing) views about the meaning of migration, Europe, museums and collective memory(ies).

Following the content of the previous chapters, in this chapter I will focus on the topic of the epistemological background, which characterizes the narratives sustaining European identities (French or German, officially belonging to the European Community) and, second, non-European narratives (non-French and non-German actors who, although they live in one of these countries, have no sense of national belonging to these countries). I will engage in this topic following the conversations which I conducted during my fieldwork. I start from empirical material, which I then connected with theoretical debates. I will explain this more in detail.

After having interviewed a considerable number of experts, researchers and members of the general public in both France and Germany over a period of six years, I identified certain topics which seemed to lie at the heart of the contact / conflict zone. The following topics make up the terrain for situations where antagonistic narratives meet, thus opening arenas of turbulent debate and conflict. This includes first of all, the topic of “modernity” and the

question: “what is modernity?” Second, come notions about “citizenship” which make actors ask themselves if all people have equal chances and rights within European democracies like France and Germany. Third, the topic of “colonial history” became crucial, specifically the way people thought about it as playing either a minor or mayor role in world history. Fourth, come debates on gender and patriarchal systems and the role of feminism (among other gender perspectives) in achieving social transformation and equality within systems of power which have, structurally and historically, discriminated against women, homosexuals, transsexuals and queer people.

I have come to see that all four notions – modernity, citizenship, colonial history and gender – lie at the heart of how the people I interviewed actually understand their own bodies and selves, as well as their place in the world. This, in turn, defines the type of work these actors perform and the issues they engage with (and support). An understanding of these topics influences work on representation, meaning: the representation of (world) history, representations of individuals (i.e. as citizens or as carriers of sexual identities), and representations of groups (i.e. their political representations) as well as their collective memories.

Most of the contents in this chapter are based on oral material which I collected during my fieldwork, although I also relied heavily on theoretical, state-of-the-art, scholarship. Not every conversation was recorded, as not every meeting was planned as part of my field work. I am also including conversations which arose spontaneously and statements at debates which I audio recorded or noted in the countless, small, notebooks, which I used to write remarks and thoughts over many years. I also rely on short ethnographies, which I wrote periodically. Yet more conversations remained solely in my memory and “came out” unexpectedly during the last phase of my writing. In this way, a process of “remembering the fieldwork” also plays an important role for this chapter. Parallel to this, I also followed academic debates during the development of my fieldwork – debates which I contextualized after the fact, according to the content of my interviews and conversations.

What I realized is that all the people I talked to (or listened to) have a lived experience and interaction with modernity. They all relate to the modern process in some way by either reproducing modern ideals, by being critical of them (i.e. the patriarchal system) or by openly contesting them. Further, all conversation partners have a sense of belonging and all excercized what is called “citizenship”. Some were passport holders and some not (i. e. had limited residence permits) but, everyone constructed his / her identity around the legal and

economic possibilities to project a life plan. Everyone without exception was a carrier of a sexual identity in the public and private spheres. The experience of “having a citizenship” or “experiencing belonging” was different from person to person and it depended on the way in which each actor understood his / her rights as citizens. Some conversation partners did not raise the issue at all, namely because their juridical rights were in place. When they did it, it was by stressing gender issues or by showing solidarity with a problem “other people” faced. Other conversation partners would break their heads over the issue of why some European passport holders were discriminated against, to the point of not having equal rights as citizens (i.e. women, minorities like Roma People and racialized people like Afro-Germans). This group is made up of European passport holders who feel “out of place” in France or Germany due to issues of gender intertwined with issues of race / ethnicity. Other conversation partners (which are regarded as juridical foreigners by the state and by majority society) were conscious that they lived without the same rights (i.e. of life projection) due to restricted visa permits (compared to others who had a permanent juridical status and did not require permits to settle, study and / or work). Finally, during my conversation with an active member of the *Sans Papiers* movement in Paris, I could grasp another type of consciousness: an everyday existence, which is characterized by a constant political struggle to achieve a minimum juridical standard to avoid losing all rights and be thus subjected to violence, human trafficking or deportation.

I remarked that these notions were also entangled with issues concerning colonial history. The consciousness regarding colonial history as either a central or a marginal phenomenon in European and world history shaped notions of modernity, citizenship and gender. Perspectives on late modernity, multiple modernities, post-colonial studies or decolonial horizons all relate to modernity and colonial history differently. All these notions (modernity, citizenship, gender and colonial history) are entangled in each and every representation made in migration museums and exhibitions on migration, and thus influence image and discourse-making in museums.

5.1.- On Debates about Modernity (and Modernism)

I will begin by quoting the academic Klaus Bade, a researcher on migration in Osnabrück, Germany. In a debate between Bade and Barbara John (former *Integrationsbeauftragte* (person in charge of migration issues and policy) in Berlin) which took place at the *Institute for Cultural Diplomacy* Berlin (around the Spring of 2008), Bade conducted an intervention about migration from the perspective of integration. Integration is a key concept, because

through it, Bade expressed the support for the continuation of the modern project. During the event, Klaus Bade stated that “integration is directed to foreigners and non-foreigners. It plans to integrate many German people who do not fulfill the requirements of social and economic standards.” Integration tackles all people lagging behind in the modern project (in economic and social terms). Here, Bade stressed that integration was directed toward non-Germans but also toward Germans “lagging behind” the German living and educational standards. Here, people with migration background (even if they held German citizenship) were equated with ethnic Germans living under the official poverty line.

A view sharing this direction (although not identical) is expressed by French historians like Marianne Amar (from the *Cité nationale*), who openly support the idea of “universalism” as a social model for France. In France, “universalism” is mainstream discourse and it expresses “Frenchness”. It stands for a secular space (i.e. the territory of the French Republic) where all individuals are equal, regardless of differences related to gender, sexual orientation or ethnic origin. Citizenship rights in France are supposed to guarantee equality to all citizens. In this sense, people would group around intellectual issues (in i.e. literature and art), tastes (in cuisine, hobbies) and / or political ideals (i.e. socialism, communism, feminism). Within the French Republic citizens should not group around ethnic belonging (Interview Amar, February, 2010). Here, “universalism” equals integration in that it follows the principle that there is one modern project (which leads to the values of the French Republic) to which all national subjects (French and non-French) should be attached. Integration to that project is considered a priority to avoid social fragmentation, and for this reason ethnic belongings are suppressed in the name of maintaining social cohesion.

In the following I will quote Marianne Amar because she gives an interesting description of the tensions surrounding the debate about modernity within France. These tensions are important to mention because, while for many the French Republic is the symbol of the “modern” (the path to follow), others see modernity more in the sense of Anglo-Saxon tradition, this is, a model of multiculturalism, mobility and diversity – which would not match with republican / universal values. In the following statement, Amar explains how two different versions of what is considered “modern” coexist and collide within the French museum landscape. Here, the *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration* is an example of this paradoxal coexistence. The debate about “what is modernity?” in France, stretches from the defense of the republican model (in the name of modernity) to a will to change its rigidity

in favour of a model of diversity similar to the model of the United Kingdom or the United States:

C'est difficile parce que c'est toujours un débat, et il y a pas de réponse unique. Ce ça le problème. C'est que (...) vous aurais toujours de reponses différentes. Il y a certains que continuent à dire, bien sûr, a priori, dans le sens de l'histoire, dans la chronologie, la notion du multiculturalisme, de diversité, apparaisse comme quelque chose du moderne et qui serait venue secouée la vieille république monolitique, etc. Donc, a priori on penserait que c'est la France qui s'ouvre au monde, qui remettre en cause le modèle républicain au sens un peut rigide. Et que le multiculturalisme, la diversité, ça ira du pair avec le mot moderne - fait des circulations, des mobilités, des migrations, etc. Donc la, on dirait, la France s'ouvre au monde, c'est tres moderne. (Interview with Marianne Amar, February, 2010)

The project of the *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* is more attached to the multicultural model while at the same time recruiting staff (like Amar and the majority of my conversation partners) who would be much more invested in the Republican model. The staff of the *Cité nationale* is not at all close to supporting the conservative version of defending Frenchness (i.e. Sarkozy's government and the conception of national identity expressed during the "Debate on national identity" held in France between 2009 and 2010 or the project of the *Maison de l'histoire de France*). All staff at the *Cité nationale* (at least all people I interviewed) stand openly in opposition to such a model. What this statement from Amar shows, are internal fractures among people who follow the path of modernity.

The paradox is that, officially, the *Cité nationale* stands for diversity (conceptually speaking) while also staging images of modernity as a structure (the French Republic). In this way, museum visitors commonly encounter images of a "universalism" which is threatened by "diversity". I will give an example. The temporary exhibition "1931. Les étrangers au temps de l'Exposition coloniale" was held at the *Cité nationale* in May 2008 and it showed a critical perspective on French colonialism and the French "mission civilisatrice" (see de l'Estoile, 2008: 36 - 43). Despite all the critique about colonialism as attached to universalism and the treatment of colonial subjects, there was a peculiar hall / room at the exhibition. In this small hall, a pressure cooking pot (which looked like a time-bomb about to explode) stood at the center of the hall room. On the black walls of the hall, the chronology of the history of representations of colonial others in the French Empire (colonies and metropole) was written in white letters. Above this text, the words "et après..." ("and after...") was projected in red light along the walls, in gigantic typography; these words circled the whole hall. In my view, this hall / room stood for a crisis of modernity (the French Republic – the pressure cooking pot) and, further, post-colonial migration was shown as the source of the crisis. Too much diversity would be a too heavy burden for the modern, national project (this seemed to be the

message), thus putting pressure on the “pot” of modernity / universalism. French universalism is threatened by diversity and mobility (the Anglo-Saxon view of modernity) and also by the power of the presence of multiple alterities (post-colonial migration). Migration, as well as mobility and hybridity, represent the un-balancing of national / modern representations as well as its borders, a perception which had already been signaled by Papastergiadis in his book *The Turbulence of Migration* (Papastergiadis, 2000). From my point of view, the image of this hall expressed the paradox / ambivalence of the *Cité nationale*. In the words of Amar (here she is referring to the permanent exhibition of the *Cité nationale*, namely “Répères”):

Donc je voulais dire (...) il est sûr que, malgré tout, le musée, comme ça, dans un ensemble, il se situerait plutôt... du côté de la diversité, du multiculturalisme, de la modernité. Parce que faire reconnaître l’immigration (...) c’est forcément ouvrir et dire que ne peut qui s’enrichir de ses apports. Comme même je dirais que le musée il se met plutôt du côté de... si non du multiculturalisme (...) mais malgré tout de faire, parce que c’est à la fin de l’exposition, de faire de la diversité quelque chose de positive (...) parce que c’est à la fin de parcours, et vécu comme quelque chose de positif. Donc si vous me demandez (...) c’est du côté de la modernité. Au même temps, ça n’est pas définie comme modernité. Vous voyez ça que je vais dire ? Parce que c’est un musée d’histoire. (Interview with Marianne Amar, February, 2010)

A migration museum making history is the ambivalence expressed by the *Cité nationale*: two concepts of modernity (universalism and multiculturalism) inside one building. To argue against Mary Steven’s “re-membering the nation” (Stevens, 2007), my observation is that the *Cité nationale* is breaking up the nation from the perspective of French republicanism, thus opening the path for France to enter into an era of globalization and multiculturalism⁹².

Although the majority of staff expressed an affiliation to the “universal” project, I did encounter an exception to the rule. This was a member of staff of the art department (who wished not to be named). During our conversation on June of 2010, I was surprised to hear this person say that the problem in France is that “it lags behind”: “c’est le retard de la France”. But: lags behind what? The member of staff suggested that there was something more advanced than France, and that France had not caught up with it. Actually, this person was referring to England and the United States. From an Anglo-Saxon point of view, France “lags behind”. Not surprisingly, this perception is not new. It has been there for a long time. This comment from this conversation in 2010 came to my mind later, in 2012, when I was doing research at the library of the *Musée du quai Branly*. Here, I consulted Michael Leiris’s book *Miroir de l’Afrique* (“Mirror of Africa”, Leiris, 1996), which recounts “La Mission Ethnographique et Linguistique Dakar-Djibouti” (the Ethnographic and Linguistic Mission Dakar-Djibouti) which took place from 1931 to 1933, and in which Marcel Griaule (among

⁹² See also Jean Loup Amselle’s *L’ethnisation de la France* (2011).

other anthropologists) participated. The introduction to this book, which was written by Jean Jemain (signed in 1995), contextualizes this mission and, interestingly, describes this big enterprise as an effort on the part of France “to catch up” in anthropological research. In 1931, France wanted to “catch up” with anthropological expeditions which countries like Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands had conducted. Further, Jemain states that this “*rétard*” had already been expressed by Marcel Mauss himself as early as 1913 (Jemain, in: Leiris, 1996: 9 - 10). This “*rétard*” would be the reason for the “arrogant” character of the mission (Jemain, in: Leiris, 1996: 10), which focused on showing and proving that France was, scientifically speaking, at the same level as other empires of the time.

This image of “France lagging behind” is key to understand how the French Empire was overrun by the British Empire (in terms of colonial possessions and imperial / economic power). Today French departments at universities in the United States (i.e. departments of “French Studies”) also tend to look at France as something of the “past”⁹³. With this, diversity and multiculturalism (in its Anglo-Saxon tradition) are part of a “new modernity” while “universalism / French Republicanism” takes on the role of a modern project, which has been ‘left behind’.

A further field which enables further ambivalences (beyond “diversity / universalism”) is the field of modernism and artistic Avant-garde. The *Cité nationale*’s ambivalence in relation to others (or colonial subjects) is possible as part of a project which juxtaposes, combines and merges images of modernity with images of the “other”. Modernism and artistic Avant-garde lie at the heart of migration museums and exhibitions on migration. Colonialism and art-deco (the construction of the Palais des Colonies in 1931), parallel Avant-garde movements (i.e. Surrealism and Cubism) in Paris as they shaped a landscape of images of “modern / other”. This aesthetic tradition continued as a modern aesthetic project in the 1960’s (for example with the creation of the *Centre Georges Pompidou*), and has continued to this day in the form of migration exhibitions and museums. Modernism and the artistic Avant—garde are key because, if modernization is understood as the process or the path to achieve modernity (as an economic project), modernism would be the aesthetic project in the visual arts, film, literature and architecture adopted both in metropolises and once colonized places in order to achieve a westernized representation of “others”. In the case of Europe, it functions to integrate these images into modern art and the western cultural landscape (i.e. the art markets). In Europe,

⁹³ This image is also present in cinema, i.e. in Walt Disney’s movies, where French culture is represented through “cooking” (see *Ratatouille*) or metaphorically through animals like lobsters.

images of “others” have been appropriated as ornaments to suit images of the self, while in the former colonies, the reverse has taken place: images of indigenous peoples have been modernized / westernized to the point of making images of the “others” fit in the project of modernity (i.e. Latin American modernisms)⁹⁴. Today, migration museums and exhibitions on migration announce a new era of depicting the “other” which is an intrinsic part of European countries and European identity, and lies within the tradition of the European Avant-garde.

This aspect about the centrality of modernism and the artistic Avant-garde came to the fore during an interview with Luc Gruson (on September 28 of 2010), who had been appointed director of the *Cité nationale* in 2010 (after Jaques Toubon left). Here, I was surprised that Gruson himself stressed the topic of the foundations of the *Cité nationale*, which can also be traced back to the 1960’s and the creation of the *Centre Pompidou* (museum of modern / contemporary art in Paris). Gruson described the foundations of the *Cité nationale* as within a utopian, aesthetic project of modernism. The *Cité nationale* had been designed as a space of inclusion and participation – and not originally as a museum. But is it also within the tradition of French (modern) revolutionary museums in the sense that it safeguards heritage for the people (a tradition which comes from the French revolution). Further, it also follows the tradition of revolutionary Avant-garde (in the sense of surrealist movements in Paris but also in the political sense (see Bürger, 1974). This means that the *Cité nationale* is positioned in a space which opens the barriers between the “national” and “others” and negotiates a space of dialogue. In the words of Gruson:

Il y avait pas de loi pour créer la *Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration* (...) et il fallait trouver une catégorie d'établissement publique (...) finalement le truc c'était le centre *Georges Pompidou*, le plus proche, qui était un centre pluridisciplinaire qui est le seul musée national qui n'a pas un statut de musée, parce que c'est le *Centre National de Culture Georges Pompidou* (...). Au *Centre Georges Pompidou* il y avait un système d'un conseil d'orientation, on s'a un peu inspirée de ça (...) et finalement c'est la société civile qui est représentée (...) – 27 membres qui représentent les associations, les universités, les experts.

(...)

Quand le *Centre Pompidou* a été créé il avait la même volonté. (...) Les travaux pour le *Centre Pompidou* ont commencé à la fin des années 60 (...) L'idée était justement de rompre avec la

⁹⁴ Here, the reading of the wide debates in Latin America around “culturas híbridadas” (hybrid cultures) were very important for these reflections. I deeply thank Dr. Beatriz Pantin for sharing with me her research which led to her dissertation *Mestizaje, transculturación, hibridación. Perspectivas de historia conceptual, análisis del discurso y metaforología para los estudios y las teorías culturales en América Latina* (Pantin, 2008). The complex debates about “culturas híbridadas” have been unfortunately reduced (in the Global North, i.e. German universities) to a superficial reading of Néstor García-Canclini’s book “Culturas híbridadas. Estrategias para salir y entrar de la modernidad”, a book which is just one piece of a complex and rich debate about modernity and modernization. Representatives of these debates are intellectuals like the late Carlos Monsiváis, Jesús Martín-Barbero and Mirco Lauer, among many others.

tradition de musée que était à l'époque de lieux fermé, qui a été fait au *Centre Pompidou*, qui à été imité comme une espèce d'espace place publique - devant le musée; et l'entrée dedans sans payer le ticket - il y a une partie qui est libre. Le *Centre Pompidou* est à la fois un centre d'art moderne, mais aussi une bibliothèque permanente d'information, centre de design et de création industrielle, l'institut de musique (...) en fait c'est un ensemble de activités qui sont sous un ensemble qu'on appelait l'art moderne à l'époque, qui était pas de l'art contemporaine. L'idée du *Pompidou* était une institution que serait plus qu'un musée, un lieu ouverte, la création contemporaine, le monde industrielle, la musique. (...).

(...)

Je pense qu'il y a effectivement à la fois la tradition que on a hérité de (André) Malraux, de penser que les lieux culturels sont des lieux de transformation du monde, parce que il y a beaucoup des gens qui sont étonnés par le fait que en France, la politique culturelle était très portée par l'état. C'est un principe républicain, révolutionnaire.

(...)

Et en fait il y a finalement la position au moment de la révolution française, c'était de dire, on ne va pas détruire les biens des aristocrates - du roi et d'ancien régime - on va faire des musées nationaux, on va garder les trésors de la république au nom du peuple français, institution révolutionnaire, qui a pour le peuple les trésors de la nation. (...) En France les musées sont révolutionnaires. Donc quand on a dit un musée de l'immigration (...) si on veut que l'immigration soit reconnue comme un patrimoine en France, il faut faire un musée. Pour dire la république, c'est qui a une valeur commune, on va faire un musée. Donc tout la tradition des musées françaises, y compris le *Centre Pompidou* (...), qui est finalement un musée moderne (...). Donc Georges Pompidou, était un président de la république qui était très amateur de l'art contemporain, et justement son projet était de démocratiser l'art contemporain, un musée ouvert à tous, la tradition de démocratiser l'art et la culture pour tout le monde. (...) Aussi l'immigration c'est un patrimoine, une richesse pour tous les français. Le fait de faire un musée nationale, la richesse à partager, un trésor commun.

(...)

On voulait pas que ça soit seulement un musée, on voulait que ça soit un lieu de rencontre (...) (Interview with Luc Gruson on September 28 of 2010),

The link which Gruson establishes between the *Cité nationale* and the *Centre Georges Pompidou* stresses the relation between the *Cité nationale* and the artistic Avant-garde and also with the revolutionary project of the 1960's of transforming classical museums into interdisciplinary spaces of diversity. The *Centre Georges Pompidou* also stands for the 1960's, the revolutionary utopias of the time and the intellectual and artistic creation which was prompted during that decade (and which also continued during the 1970's). The *Cité nationale* was designed as a space of participation. This proved to be true at the beginning when the *Cité* actually brought in the social immigrant organizations to take on a leading role. It was also envisioned as a space of social encounter in the tradition of the revolutionary museums (1960's, and 1970's), and the work done in open air museums (ecomusées) and proposals from the "New museology" (see Vergo, 1989). As Gruson explains, the 1960's

revolution is also seen as attached to the French Revolution of 1789 and the declaration of royal heritage as a treasure of (and for) the people. In this sense, all museums in France have the status of being ‘revolutionary’. The *Cité nationale* is revolutionary in a double (or maybe triple) sense: 1798 (the French Revolution, where heritage is declared a treasure for the people), the 1920’s and the artistic Avant-garde (i.e. surrealist circles and anti-colonial movements) and the 1960’s (where the artistic Avant-garde was strongly attached to the revolutions and decolonization movements of the time, i.e. Cuba and Algeria).

In the case of Berlin, something similar can be said. As I described in Chapter One with the example of an exhibition made by the immigrant association *KorIENTATION*, a space of artistic avant-garde is key in many exhibitions on migration in art galleries in Berlin. In Berlin, the Avant-garde is also very strongly attached to the visual arts and performance. Many non-commercial galleries stand for revolutionary places of artistic creation, which are attached to the tradition of creation by Joseph Beuys, Lothar Baumgarten and Rebecca Horn (1960’s and 1970’s). This tradition continues and it has been anchored at the *Arts University in Berlin* (UDK, *Universität der Künste Berlin*). For example, Baumgarten’s piece “Fragmento Brazil” (1995-2007) was part of the Triennale in Paris in 2012, which brought together art with the topics of “migration”, “mobility”, “decolonization” and ethnographic objects. Baumgarten’s graduate student (and independent artist) Gabriel Rossell Santillán developed an art project in Berlin with objects from the Huichol collection of the *Ethnologisches Museum Dahlem*. The Huicholes are a “pueblo originario” in Mexico. At the *Kunstraum Bethanien*, in Berlin, Gabriel Rossell showed a video and object installation about the visit of a Huichol shaman (Dionysio) to Berlin’s *Ethnologisches Museum Dahlem* and his interaction with objects which had belonged to his family (and now are property of the *Preussisches Kulturbesitz*). Also Rebecca Horn, a Jewish artist famous in the 1970’s for her performances and installations, has transmitted avant-garde practices. Her graduate student (and independent artist) Antonio González Paucar displays Peruvian (Andean) motives and knowledge (i.e. shamanism) in his art installations and performances. Further another graduate student of Horn and independent artist, Ali Kaaf, explores the topic of “Islam and modernity” in his visual creations. Looking at the art scene it could be said that Berlin (as well as other German cities such as Cologne) contains a space of artistic creation which is linked to science and shamanism (and to an extent to political activism) with embodies a contemporary Avant-garde. It is also no

coincidence that all mentioned artists fall – officially speaking – into the category of “having migration background”⁹⁵.

Artistic exhibitions on migration in urban contexts have proliferated. Here I will only give one example of a video-installation which I saw at one of the many exhibitions at the *NGBK Berlin (Neue Galerie für Bildende Kunst Berlin)* where migration was the main topic. In this video-installation, the viewer could see a non-German woman turned upside down. Her only support was a wall. Her (short) hair hung toward the floor. Below her head lay a plate of soup (noodle letter-soup). The woman held a spoon in her hand and ate the letter-soup literally upside down. She ate extremely slowly and with difficulty. As she ate, most of the soup fell back to the plate and all she could eat were small sips. From my perspective as a viewer, the video-installation was a metaphor for the experience of immigrants who feel that they are doing everything upside down. This installation showed the impact of migration on the body and on perception; and how a decontextualized body can do things “the other way around”. I describe this installation because it helps me explain that experimental, interdisciplinary work which most avant-garde migration exhibitions engage in: a hybrid (experimental, open) space, a space of artistic creation in a narrow relationship with migration, cultural otherness, and political activism. Other than in the French context, avant-garde spaces in German cities break the rigidity of modernity (in the sense of universalism), show modernity’s borders, and criticize nationalism frontally (in Germany, nationalism is directly associated to the Nazi period and the Holocaust).

5.2.- On Representations of Gender, Migration and Islam

Going a step further, strict notions of modernity such as integration and universalism are heavily contested from the standpoints of feminism(s) and different perspectives on gender. Feminism questions the patriarchal nature of power in modern / national societies and works to de-center male power in favor and empower and emancipate women. In this context, many projects and initiatives have introduced the “women only space” in the European context, as a

⁹⁵ Another important example is the work of Peruvian visual artist Fernando Bryce, who lives and works in Berlin. Bryce has displayed a critical view of the European colonial enterprise. One large solo exhibition, which was shown in art galleries in Berlin and in Mexico City at the *Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo (MUAC)*, shows colonial images from Belgian, French and German Empires (in the Congo, the Maghreb, and Samoa, respectively), thus connecting the colonial enterprises throughout Europe. Although the images he displays and the arrangements he makes evoke highly political emotions, his work has remained solely in the field of visual art.

way of strengthening women's contributions in the labour market, science and art, among other areas.

There is also a heated debate about who represents immigrant women. Who depicts immigrant / subaltern women? Who makes use of immigrant women's issues? These are the questions. Is it immigrant women themselves or is it women from majority societies? At this point, I will go back to Marianne Amar's (*Cité nationale*) statements, to an interview passage where Amar describes the debate on modernity from the perspective of women's emancipation, a question which today focuses on Islam and the question of the veil / burka. It is interesting to see how Amar describes that the burka / Islam are perceived as the border of tolerance and as a threat to modernity. Notions of multiculturalism and diversity are OK, but not if they support "retrograde ideas" which are incompatible with modernity:

Après il y a des autres que voudrait dire, si le multiculturalisme, ça consiste à accepter, par exemple – et c'est qu'on voit dans certains débats autour de l'islam – de conceptions extrêmement rétrogrades de la place de la femme dans la société, (...) de fermeture dans un certain nombre des gens, c'est pas de tout moderne. En gros, la bourka, (...) c'est pas de tout moderne. (...) Mais il y a ceux qui estiment que cette pénétration par exemple de la France laïque par des influences religieuses, le fait que la religion est devenue plus importante dans l'espace publique... c'est une régression, et donc, on veut un retour à l'ordre ancien plutôt que quelque chose de la modernité. (Interview with Marianne Amar, February, 2010)

If multicultural modernity is to bring religion into the public space, then the reaction in France would be to want to go back to the "old" universal, secular model. Amar's observation that the burka cannot be modern at all is a mainstream image today; but it can and must be contrasted with other perspectives. In France, Muslim women and women of Arab descent themselves oppose this view (like political activist Houria Bouteldja)⁹⁶, and in Germany other female authors show a reflexive position and thus question the centrality of European women and European feminism. They criticize the prerogative of European feminists to define the "unique" path toward modern society.

In her book *Wir und die Anderen* (Ourselves and the Others) (2004), Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim shows a reflexive perspective on feminism and its treatment of Muslim women (in Chapter Two of her book "Das traurige Lied von der armen Ausländerfrau" / "The sad song of the poor immigrant woman" (Beck-Gernsheim, 2004: 52 - 63)). Here, the author focuses on the debate about gender and power, but this time from the perspective of migration and Islam.

⁹⁶ See Bouteldja's article, « Les femmes blanches et le privilège de la solidarité » (White Feminists and the Privilege of Solidarity), (Bouteldja, 2011d).

Beck-Gernsheim raises the question of whether European feminists should judge the path taken by Muslim women who wear the veil. Should European feminists intervene at all? Are they to say what Muslim women should do or think? And: where are the limits of such an intervention? From this premise, the author also shows a reflexive perspective on secular modernity. The question of gender is key to see the complex aspects of this debate. This debate becomes ever more complex due to the fact that the secular critique of religious practice in public space (i.e. France) collides with the self-emancipation of Muslim women (European citizens) – as expressed by themselves and on their own terms. Beck-Gernsheim poses the question of whether the veil should be seen as a sign of the oppression of women; or if western feminists should listen to Muslim women wearing the veil (and living in Europe) and their reasons for doing so:

Das Kopftuch als Zeichen für die Unterdrückung der Frau? Am Kopftuch entzündeten sich viele Debatten, am Kopftuch scheiden sich die Gemüter. Am Kopftuch, so wurde hier sichtbar, hängen viele Bedeutungen. Das zu erkennen und anzuerkennen fällt der Mehrheitsgesellschaft nicht leicht. Es fällt erst recht den Frauen der Mehrheitsgesellschaft nicht leicht, die oft reflexartig mit Ablehnung reagieren. Das Kopftuch führt uns vor Augen, was wir uns immer noch kaum vorstellen können: Es gibt verschiedene Wege in die Moderne, nicht bloß den einen, den wir selbst kennen und meinen. Ebenso gibt es verschiedene Wege, als Frau selbstbewußt ein eigenes Leben zu leben – sei's mit Kopftuch, sei's ohne. (Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, 2004: 63 – 64).

From the perspective of these questions which lead to this chapter, the most important sentence of the above statement is: “there are many different paths which lead to modernity.” This sentence is key, because it leads us to ask the question: to which modern project is Beck-Gernsheim referring? The author is not referring to the same modern project as Marianne Amar: while universalism is unflexible (there is only one path to it), reflexive modernity makes room for “other” ways of existing to coexist with and adapt to European / Western modernity without falling into the pitfalls of a multiculturalism where (at least in its German version) stereotypes about others dominate and encapsulate groups, thus limiting their scope of social action. It is important to note that there are different notions / concepts of what modernity means.

Coined by the social scientist Ulrich Beck (Beck, 1986) (Beck, et al, 1996), reflexive modernity refers to a project relying on the consciousness of modern subjects who are aware of the dangers of a radical modern project, which has had devastating ecological, social and demographic effects. Here, the representation of modern societies as “aware” of issues, which put life at risk is the main point. This strand follows the idea of a late modernity, namely, the

notion that modernity is no longer at its peak but rather “in decay” or “in crisis”⁹⁷. Also in reflexive modernity, cosmopolitanism, globalization and mobility are perceived as positive. “Globalization from below”, coined by Arjun Appadurai (“Deep Democracy: Urban Governmentality and the Horizon of Politics”, Appadurai, 2001) refers to the mobility of those people who are deprived of rights and education. In the European context, the mobility of people coming into Europe from its borders (and who were not “officially” called upon to be part of the European project but nevertheless attach to it as well as they can) or “cosmopolitanism from below” (Römhild, 2007⁹⁸) is seen as a transformative power. From this perspective, the culture of migration is not seen as empty and gray, but it is rather valued as a space where many languages are spoken and diverse skills acquired.⁹⁹ In the terms of Hannerz, mobility would shape border spaces of flexibility and constant transformation, places of rich cultural transfers, of “double creolizations” between people migrating from the South as well as processes of Americanization (Hannerz, 1996¹⁰⁰). This space supercedes the transparent space of monolithic national cultures.

Different notions of modernity (i.e. universalism, diversity, reflexive modernity¹⁰¹) are also the reason for many misunderstandings between French and German curators. This also affects, in turn, representations of migration. As the example Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim

⁹⁷ Examples of ethnographic representations which assume an era of “late modernity” to depict ethnographic research are also important to mention: Beate Binder’s *Streitfall Stadtmitte. Der Berliner Schlossplatz* (2009) and Kerstin Poehl’s *Europa Backstage. Expertenwissen, Habitus und kulturelle Codes im Machtfeld der EU* (2009) start with the notion of late modernity as a point of view to write ethnographies (both make this clear in the respective introductions). Here, I have mentioned theoretical and ethnographic works because these works also find their way into visual representations. All works based on late modernity have a certain notion of modernity as something positive.

⁹⁸ See Römhild, Regina (2007): “Alte Träume, neue Praktiken: Migration und Kosmopolitismus an den Grenzen Europas” (“Old Dreams, new Practices: Migration and Cosmopolitanism at the European Borders”).

⁹⁹ Appadurai coined “cosmopolitanism from below” and explained this term in a conference at the *Haus der Kulturen der Welt* (in Berlin in 2009) where he talked about the context of India and especially Bombay. He described the work of prostitutes who needed to speak four or five languages to be able to interact with customers and talk to the police. In short: to survive.

¹⁰⁰ Hannerz (1996) coined an interesting concept of double creolization looking at the example of Sweden and analyzing the simultaneous processes of migration and Americanization.

¹⁰¹ For example, the publication *Sociologie du temps présent* (2005) gives a panorama of debates held between defenders of modernity (Habermas) and its critics (post-structuralists) or its radical opponents: i.e. Judith Butler’s critique of dichotomized identities or the post-colonial debate. The question is: is modernity’s normative structure positive or negative? And, if it is negative: what would be the way out of it? Some theories like Ulrich Beck’s “late modernity” proposed a reflexive modernity in which modernity can still work, but as a reflexive process. This view has permeated many intellectuals and professionals in Germany to the extent that “reflexivity” and “reflexive / late modernity” are even staged in museum exhibitions and are already part of mainstream discourse (see Beier de Hahn, 2005).

described, the representation of migration varies not just in relation to modernity, but also in its relation to approaches to gender: feminism, homosexuality, transgender and queer people. These all critique the modern project in its male version of producing power, technologies, and social inequalities. If we add, here, cultural and religious differences, (i.e. Islam), the debate grows in endless complexity.

In France, Maxime Cervulle and Nick Rees-Roberts (2010) as well as Marie Hélène Bourcier (2005) have elaborated a frontal critique against universalism from the point of view of queer identities and the post-colonial debate in France. Bourcier, Cervulle and Rees-Roberts have openly supported the movement of “Les Indigènes de la République” in France, a political party which denounces racial discrimination in France. The points of convergence between queer and anti-racist movements are made visible in the context of the representation of migration. Also scholars like Didier and Éric Fassin criticize racism. Key to Fassin’s publication of *Les nouvelles frontières de la société française* (2010) was scholar Judith Butler. Her publications, like *Bodies that Matter. On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (1993) or *Frames of War*, (2009) have been key for the development of these debates in the French context. This debate (in gender and queer studies) has become much more complex due to the interventions of homosexuals and queer people of color (racialized people in Europe), who position themselves as “of color” or “indigènes” and thus produce knowledge through denouncing “race” and “structural racism” (as a priority and before gender oppression). This has given rise to a complex debate in Germany and France, where the field of feminism, gender, homosexuality, trans and queer has been fragmented by the questions of “race” and racism.¹⁰² In France, one mayor exponent within this debate is political activist Houria Bouteldja (spokesperson of “Les Indigènes de la République”), who has developed a theoretical framework for a “decolonial feminism”, which expresses an emancipated thinking from the point of view of women of color (or indigènes) and thus contests ideas and critiques formulated by Western (or white) feminists – mainly the aggressive critiques against tradition, religion and Islam (see Bouteldja, 2011d).

5.3.- On Methodological Nationalism and Colonial History

Another important perspective is the critique of the representation of European nations without taking imperial / colonial history into account. The majority of research concentrates on how “nations” are transformed by migration processes and about the inclusion of otherness

¹⁰² In Germany, the movement “People of color” has distanced itself from the general approach from gender to stress everyday racism.

into the national narratives (Stevens, 2007 and Baur, 2009). This concern leads to what Nina-Glick Schiller and Andreas Wimmer have criticized as methodological nationalism in “Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation-state building, migration and the social sciences” (Schiller and Wimmer, 2002: 301 - 334). Here, Schiller and Wimmer challenge the notion that migrations can be regarded solely through the lens of the nation-state. Together with Basch and Szanton Blanc, Schiller also coined the paradigm of transnational migration (Basch, Schiller, Szanton Blanc, 1994)¹⁰³. Through this perspective, she proposes research of “in between” spaces of flow and transit, the “transnational paradigm”. Schiller’s proposal also poses a further problem. As Fouron and Schiller argued in *Georges Woke up Laughing (...)*, there is a methodological difficulty in assuming that all nations are the same (Schiller and Fouron, 2001). Following Fouron, not all nations and nationalisms can be compared, because, arguing from the perspective of Haitian nationalism, Fouron stresses that this form of nationalism resulted from the emancipation of French domination through the Haitian revolution. While nationalisms like the French, British or German are the result of colonial expansion and (later) imperial implosion, nations like Haiti, Mexico or Algeria are the result of independence wars against imperial domination (be it from Spain, France, or England, depending on the historical period). This critique was already expressed by Benedict Anderson in the chapter entitled “Créole pioneers”, from his book *Imagined Identities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983). In this chapter, Anderson analyses national formations which arose in Spanish America before the independence wars. It is actually the imagination of a community which legitimizes the wars of independence.

This means that not all nations have been grounded on identical terms and thus the frame for comparison is not an easy one. The source of each nationalism (imperial or emancipatory) as well as the relations between nations in this context has to be studied both deeply (locally) and also from a global perspective. Schiller’s transnational perspective, nevertheless, falls short in contextualizing colonial history for the study of migrations. By focusing on transnational spaces and cities / urban spaces (Schiller and Çalar, 2009), it does not give account of push-pull factors which are still related to colonial structures in the core nations (i.e. the US, European countries, the UK, Australia). This perspective on colonialism has been stressed by scholars Étienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (1997) in their studies about the entanglement of race, nation, and class. This perspective (emanating from world systems theory), although rich in a critique of structural racism as a process generating migration and

¹⁰³ Ludger Pries in *Transnationale Migration* (Pries (ed.), 1997) and Steven Vertovec in *Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism* (Vertovec and Cohen (eds.), 1999) have also worked in this direction.

marginalization, has given a marginal attention to gender issues. Regarding Benedict Anderson's book, it also can be said that it does not go deeply into the colonial question. In the following, I will describe initiatives in France and Germany which deal with colonial history, post-colonial studies or a decolonial perspective.

In France, professor Nancy Green has organized events and colloquia about colonial history at the *Cité nationale* (i.e. a major colloquium organized by Green and Poinot in September 2006: *Histoire de l'immigration et question coloniale en France*). Personalities such as Todd Shepard, Jim Cohen, Alec Hargreaves and Leure Pitti (all tied in some way to Anglo-Saxon academia) have enriched this debate which focuses on the colonial heritage of the Palais des Colonies, the location of the *Cité nationale*. This is a turbulent discussion field, as colonial history moves to a center stage, thus leaving the "nation" aside.

Another group of scholars has organized to produce knowledge about French colonial history and has also sharply criticized the location of the *Cité nationale* (the Palace of the Colonies, for having been part of the staging of "others" in 1931): Pascal Blanchard and Nicolas Bancel expressed the incompatibility of the migration museum inside the "sanctuary of French colonialism" (Bancel & Blanchard, 2007: 112 - 127) in an article in the magazine *Hommes et Migrations*, the official magazine of the *Cité nationale*, Blanchard, Bancel, and Lemaire (among others) have positioned themselves as critics of the *Cité nationale* and engaged in a heated academic and media debate about racism and the representation of colonial others with their publications *Zoos humains. XIXe et XXe siècles* (Human Zoos. 19th and 20th centuries) (2002), *Culture post-coloniale 1961 – 2006. Traces et mémoires coloniales en France* (Post-colonial Culture in France 1961 – 2006. Colonial Traces and Memories in France) (2005) and *La fracture coloniale* (The Colonial Fracture) (2006). From this perspective, nations like France and Germany would be the result of the implosion of empires (the French and the Prussian Empires) and, post-colonial migration, the result of colonial relations and continuities. These works are also linked to Étienne Balibar's and Immanuel Wallerstein's scientific approach to the entanglements between racism, nationalism and class struggle (1997).

In this sense, it is relevant to mention the museum project of scholar Françoise Vergès. Vergès project for the island of La Réunion (an island at the Indian Ocean, French overseas territory) is called *Museum of the present*. It engages with a post-colonial representation of history, this meaning that it begins with the geographic perspective of La Réunion itself, thus decentering the national (Franco-French) narrative. For this project, historical oral sources

narrate history from the standpoint of La Réunion, and not from France / Paris. Vergès also worked on developing participation processes to collect objects, thus making a museum display which corresponds to the local needs of the people of La Réunion rather than to those of collectors, the art market or hegemonic museum landscapes of the “global North”¹⁰⁴. In this regard, Vergès stressed the collection of objects with no artistic or market value (in the westernized sense), precisely to avoid the pricing of objects and / or testimonies. The museum’s narrative as well as architecture and design (the parcours) focus on events contained in oral local history and naturally speak about migration to and from the island. This leads to the locating of the history of French colonialism and emancipation struggles (Vergès is Reunionaise herself and the daughter of anti-colonialist activist Paul Vergès) at the centre of the narrative. Vergès’s project tells about an island, which is still French property long after the decolonization period (a département d’outre mer, like the Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique). It shows colonial continuities in a post-colonial epoch. Here, the term “post-colonial” refers to practices developed after the formal decolonization movements in Africa and Asia. (See also Vergès (2009), in: *Postkoloniales Ausstellen. Über das Project eines “Museums der Gegenwart” auf der Insel Réunion. Ein Interview mit Françoise Vergès / Postcolonial exhibiting. About the Project of a “Museum of the Present” on the Island of La Réunion*). This is key, because there is another version of post-colonialism coming from the geography of India and Bangladesh (from the Anglo-Saxon cultural space of debate), which differs completely from the French context. In the French context, the “post-colonial question” refers to the period after official decolonization movements (this means, when France removed itself from Africa). It only marks a historical epoch of historical change – a date in history. This meaning of “post-colonialism” is not used as a theoretical tool like in the Anglo-Saxon debate (i.e. Bhabha, 1994).

On the contrary, in the Anglo-Saxon context, the “post-colonial condition” refers to spaces of hybridity which also stem from decolonization processes, but these do not just describe a historical change in world history, but signal the existence of new, “third” and “hybrid” spaces (Bhabha’s, *The Location of Culture*, 1994), new concepts of being (of race, gender) and mutation, where migration is usually inscribed. Here, migration is conceptualized as a space of performance and epistemic transformation (Spivak, 2010). The difference between the

¹⁰⁴ I attended Françoise Vergès presentation of this project first in Berlin (in the context of the activist group *Alexander Technique* which works against the Humboldt Forum in Berlin) and later in Paris (Vergès offered a lecture for our summer school group in 2011). In both presentations, Vergès stressed these points.

French and Anglo-Saxon notions of the term “post-colonial” is key to grasp the epistemic starting points of the different projects and avoid conceptual confusions.

In Germany, the debate on the centrality or marginality of colonial history has also created a fracture within the museological debate. One perspective stresses that Germany had little involvement in the colonial enterprise, while other perspectives stress not just the occupation of parts of today’s Eastern Europe, but also the occupation of the African continent and Samoa (which was the basis from which ethnographical collections in Germany were made.). They also stress the framing of guest worker agreements and contemporary racism (i.e. around asylum) as the continuing of colonial relations characteristic of Germany’s imperial past (Zantop, 1997).

One important example is the anti-colonial initiative in Berlin, framed as “Berlin Postkolonial” and actively organized against the project for the reconstruction of an imperial castle (and the organizing of ethnographical collections) at the *Humboldt-Forum* in Berlin. This is important because it also contests notions of “Europe” as an imperial formation (a fortress) and proposes rather a reflexive notion of Europe, which is consistent with the discourse on human rights. In this anti-colonial debate, colonialism (its existence framed only since the 18th Century) is seen as the negative part of modernity. From this perspective, ethnographical collections in Germany (property of the Prussian cultural heritage) are seen as stemming from the colonial enterprise(s). “Berlin Postkolonial” engages also in the repatriation of these objects to its original owners - or (at least) calls for a critical and / or dignified display. In this sense, the presentation of ethnographical objects inside a castle (symbolizing imperial power) is out of the question. The ethnographical collections stand for colonized peoples and the display of ethnographical objects in the castle would stand for colonization, appropriation and abuse of the cultural heritage of other peoples in Africa, Oceania, Asia and Latin-America. The Anti-Humboldt Forum project, pushed by the group’s “Post-colonial Berlin” and Alexander-Technik, stresses the colonial plundering as the basis of museum collections and display. This movement is positioned against a re-membering of the “imperial” in the German museum landscape.

Another example, this time located in Austria, is depicted in the book *Das Unbehagen im Museum. Postkoloniale Museologien* (“The Uncanny Feeling at the Museum. Post-colonial Museologies”) (Kazeem, et al, 2009). Its opening text reads: , “ “... um die Leiche des verstorbenen M(...)en Soliman...” Strategien der Entherzhigung, Dekolonisation und Dekonstruktion österreichischer Neutralitäten” (“...about the corpse of the dead M(...)en

Soliman...”) (p. 11 – 42) written by Araba Evelyn Johnston-Arthur. In this piece, the author describes how a black person, Angelo Soliman, who had served Emperor Franz II, had been conserved, *post mortum*, in the Emperor’s cabinet. The body was stuffed and displayed in the cabinet. The question about colonialism, racism, and labour becomes more heated as Angelo Soliman’s daughter, Josephine Soliman, today demands the return of her father’s body to his family. And here lies the post-colonial question: whose property is this body? Who is the owner? Who has authority over a dead body: a nation / museum or the dead person’s relatives? This example shows how a mayor debate on the topic of restitution – dating back to colonial history – has been reopened.¹⁰⁵ Here, post-colonial refers to the continuing of colonial practices in the contemporary era (post: after the colonial period ended). These questions and claims make direct reference to the body and it is through the body that claims are elaborated.

These examples of proposals have been framed as “post-colonial” partly in the sense of Homi K. Bhaba (who has written critically about national narrations, a topic which projects itself directly on the question of heritage), Dipesh Chakrabarty (“Museums in late democracies”) and Edward Said (Orientalism as the exotization of the colonial other). These scholars are / were part of the “South Asian Subaltern Studies Group”. As I mentioned, these intellectual positions differ completely from French notions of the “post-colonial”. In the context of the Anglo-Saxon post-colonial tradition, colonialism began, historically speaking, in the 19th century with the British and French colonial enterprises (after the foundations of the modern project were already settled). I mention this because many post-colonial groups or individuals (i.e. Berlin Postkolonial) have started to take another perspective into consideration, namely the “decolonial perspective”, which has another view of modernity (which affects the representations of global history and migrations). The exponents of the decolonial perspective are mainly located in the Latin-American context or in the context of migration in the United States. The examples I will show next tend to be framed as “decolonial” rather than “post-colonial”. This also marks a shift in practices of representation of history, modernity, gender, and race.

But before I describe these examples, I will briefly explain some differences between the post-colonial and decolonial schools of thought in order to explain the particularities of

¹⁰⁵ An important fact is that Nelson Mandela reclaimed and successfully repatriated, in 2002, the remains of Sarah Baartman (The Hottentot), which were taken to and buried in South Africa. This repatriation triggered more claims on other objects all over Europe.

projects about representations of migration, which deal with colonial history. As framed by Grosfoguel (Grosfoguel, 2008), while the Anglo-Saxon post-colonial perspective praises modernity and condemns colonialism, a decolonial perspective looks at colonialism as the counterpart of modernity. Modernity here is located as beginning in the 15th century, with the expansion of the Spanish Empire (and subsequently the Portuguese, and the Dutch; later, the French, English and German Empires) into the Americas.

This perspective was explained in depth in Chapter Four. For a decolonial perspective, modernity and colonialism are two sides of the same coin and modernity is not to be spared harsh critique. Modernity is not independent from colonialism. Contrary to post-colonial studies who propose multiple modernities, a decolonial perspective proposes a decolonization of the horizons, with which modernity would be only one proposal among other traditions of thought in the context of a pluriversal (and not a universal) dialogue (Grosfoguel, 2008).

Although it might be common to frame post-colonial studies and the decolonial perspective as “the same thing” (as much literature does, according to Grosfoguel), there are differences between both schools of thought and representational practices. These differences have also produced the splitting of several groups working on colonial history, migration and / or engaged in anti-racist activism. In France and Germany, an identical dispute (conflict zone) has emerged within anti-racist movements. This can be framed as follows: groups of racialized people have begun to call themselves ‘Indigènes’ in France and ‘People of Color’ in Germany. They have slowly turned away from the anti-racist left scene by denouncing racist practices from within the left. These groups have been configuring, partly, as “decolonial”. Further, while the canon of post-colonial studies has now become mainstream in quite a few research institutes throughout Europe (mainly in departments of literature, at universities), the decolonial perspective remains rather marginal and favours political engagement over academic presence. This also produces different forms of interventions in the museum landscape.

Having said this, groups engaging in the making of representations from a decolonial perspective aim to critique structural racism, break with the modern colonial project (and the paradigm modernity/coloniality) and develop other representations that go beyond the reproduction of structural and everyday racism. “People of Color” stress on denouncing the continuity of colonial relations beyond colonial administrations and, from this perspective, an “integration” to modernity is out of the question. It is the modern project which ought to

change radically and allow epistemic diversity (not just in the field of representations, but also in everyday life) to exist.

Important scholars “of color” who have written decolonial scholarship and participated in exhibitions about migration in Germany are Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez (2012, with Hito Steyrl, 2010a; 2010b) *Kann der Subalterne Deutsch? (Can the subaltern speak German?)*, Fatima El-Tayeb (*European Others*, 2011) (2001), Kien Nghi Ha (2009), Grada Kilomba (*Plantation Memories*, 2008) and Joshua Kwesi Aikins (2010), to name a few. The work of these authors also positions German colonial history in the middle of the debate, thus showing another perspective on migrations into Germany. Joshua Kwesi Aikins, for example, engages in reconstructing German colonial history by making a tour of all those places, streets, etc. in Berlin-Wedding which make reference to the German colonial presence in Africa and also by demanding a renaming of those places. Fatima Al-Tayeb has worked on the German colonial imaginary, Grada Kilomba on contemporary racism and Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez on the colonality in the experience of guest workers (from i.e. Spain) and immigrants (from Latin America) in Germany.

It is important to mention that representations of gender, homosexuals, transsexual and queer people have also suffered a significant “turn” from this perspective because a considerable number of people in the movements “People of Color” in Germany or “Les Indigènes” in France have opted to stress “race” before “gender”. In this sense, queer people of color would fight, first of all, against racial discrimination and, then, against sexual discrimination. With this, the “gender” scene has also been split between actors focusing on group solidarity based on gender connections and other actors basing solidarity primarily on the questions of “race” and “racism”. This has had a big impact on representations of migration and gender. For the one group, phallogentric power (the male subject) is the main oppressor; for the other, structural racism and imperial subjects (male or female) are the main oppressors.

Recently, decolonial projects have also been articulated between members of majority society and “People of Color”. An example are pilot projects (which cannot be named as they are not yet made public) to depict the continuation of colonial relations in cities (i.e. Berlin) and in

nations, and on a larger scale than has been the case to date. New forms of participation, of distribution of power and resources, are now being discussed.¹⁰⁶

5.4.- On Second-Class Citizenship at the Museum

Having described the backgrounds of modernity / modernism, gender and colonial history, I will now describe how representations of migration are deeply entangled with the issue of citizenship. Debates on citizenship have always turned on the question of belonging. Further, “migration” always refers to issues of ‘not belonging’. Here, I will not give examples of representations of those people not belonging to the nation – people who migrated from one country to another or illegalized people like the *Sans Papiers* movement (described in the previous chapters). I will rather give two examples concerning what is called “second class citizenship”, which is part of the discourse of the movement “People of Color” (in Germany) and “Les Indigènes de la République” (in France). This relates directly to people born in Europe (i.e. France and Germany) but not considered to be part of it despite the fact that they might not have seen but Europe in their lives¹⁰⁷. As a result, the exercise of citizenship rights cannot be equally fulfilled. I will begin with an example in Paris and then turn to an example in Berlin.

I first encountered the phenomenon of ‘second class citizenship’ (or racism despite European passport holding) during my research at the *Cité nationale*. After having interviewed the members of staff (directors and the scientific committee), I decided to interview three male ‘médiateurs’ in the late Summer of 2010. ‘Médiateurs’ are those members of staff who are normally located at the entrance of the museum. Their tasks vary from giving guided tours and explaining the contents of the exhibitions checking the bags at the entrance door, giving out the audio-guides for the visitors in exchange of an ID and – as I came to know later – also participating in making contents and texts for the museum exhibitions, events and publications. I engaged in conversations with the mediateurs spontaneously. I did not make formal invitations via e-mail and I did not record these conversations. Everything arose ‘in the moment’¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁶ I know about such a project because I was asked (by members of majority society in Germany) to read and comment it. I was one among other non-Germans and / or German People of Color who were asked (by ethnic Germans working as curators) to share our opinions of such projects.

¹⁰⁷ As according to Nimako at his conference at the *HU-Berlin*, 2012.

¹⁰⁸ I published the ethnographic results of this inquiry in a decolonial ethnography: “Colonial/racial subjects of empire im Eingangsbereich der *Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration*“, which appeared in *Museum X. Zur Neuvermessung eines mehrdimensionalen Raumes*, in von Bose, et al, 2003.

All mediators I talked to were male and non-white. All held the French passport / citizenship and their families had migrated to France from former colonial territories: the Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, Mali or Algeria. During our conversations, my interview partners showed that they did not feel equal and they were not treated equally in their everyday lives in France. They all had academic degrees and were overqualified for the job as ‘médiateur’. They were all qualified to hold a position in the scientific department but were held outside of it, at the entrance, as if to sell exoticism to the visiting public. One of them was a PhD student in art history and worked (besides his job at the *Cité*) in a gallery project in Paris. He told me that he was often asked by the museum to write concepts and articles, even for the museum’s magazine, *Hommes et Migrations*; despite this recognition of his qualification, he was not given the opportunity to become a member of the scientific committee. Another conversation partner expressed that the only reason that he himself and his colleagues occupied those jobs was a result of structural racism, which relegated their bodies to the entrance of the museum (and not further into the scientific offices). He talked about everyday discrimination and stressed this situation at the French university. Although he had achieved a degree in political science and was passionate about social debates in France, he told me he would never dare to pursue an academic career because he was sure that structural racism would keep him at the margins (despite all the efforts he could make). This part of my fieldwork became an ethnography in which I made the effort to contextualize what I understood as the experience of the ‘médiateurs’. My conversation partners had expressed a feeling of subalternization, a feeling that the French passport and citizenship did not guarantee them the same opportunities and treatment before the law, the job market or the housing sector. What this ethnographic experiment revealed, is that some people – who are not seen as ‘white’ by the majority societies or the state – clearly express that they experience another kind of lived citizenship despite being holders of the French and / or German passport. Further, many conversation partners¹⁰⁹ stated clearly that the reason for this ‘second class citizenship’ was racism. I will go more deeply into this point by describing another case in Germany.

This second example refers to contemporary representations of male Muslim youth in Berlin, Germany. To frame this example, I will begin with a quote from Yasemin Soysal, who observes a plurality of forms of citizenship for immigrants:

¹⁰⁹ Including Turkish Taxi-drivers in Berlin.

As it is the case with post-war immigrants, the distribution of rights among various immigrant groups and citizens is not even. In the emerging European system, certain groups of migrants are more privileged than others; (...). Thus, what is increasingly in place is a plurality of membership forms (Soysal, (2001): 22 – 23).

Taking into consideration that there are different forms of exercising citizenship, I will describe an example, which is embedded in the debate on Islamophobia. This is a very tense discussion field in Germany because it crosses with the Israel / Palestine conflict and is key to Muslim German citizens and their everyday life experience.

In 2010, Damani Partridge published the results of his fieldwork about programmes dedicated to tackle anti-Semitism in young people of Muslim, Arab and Palestinian descent. The programs focused in taking these young people to memorial places related to the Holocaust. In his article “Holocaust Mahnmal (Memorial): Monumental Memory Amidst Contemporary Race”, Partridge describes cultural programmes which racialize these youth (although holders of / candidates for German citizenship) by presupposing that they are anti-Semitic by nature. A further study about the topic was made by Rothberg and Yildiz. In their article “Memory Citizenship: Migrant Archives of Holocaust Remembrance in Contemporary Germany”, the authors argue that:

(...) the singularity of the Holocaust is increasingly used to discipline non-Jewish minorities in Europe – especially those interpellated as Muslim – through the assertion of the complete incommensurability of anti-Semitism and other forms of racism and through the ascription of ‘new’ forms of anti-Semitism to Muslim minorities (Rothberg and Yildiz, 2011: 38).

Both Partridge and Rothberg and Yildiz frame an issue, which I had encountered during my fieldwork and which I am framing in the context of second class citizenship. I will describe two projects, which I encountered as part of my fieldwork. In the years between 2007 and 2009, I stepped into two social projects about “anti-Semitism” and “migration” in Berlin. It was, however, only much later that I would be able to make sense of the concepts behind these projects, as well as the fieldnotes I took.

The first project is *KIGA (Kreuzberger Initiative gegen Antisemitismus / Kreuzberger Initiative Against Antisemitism)* and it was actually one of the first projects I visited at the beginning of my research in 2007. I came into contact with it as part of a tour of “migration places in Kreuzberg” (which I visited with a group of social workers). Approximately two years later, in 2009, I encountered the second project, *AMIRA (Antisemitismus im Kontext von Migration und Rassismus / Antisemitism in the Context of Migration and Racism)* during a visit to an event at the *Kreuzberg Museum*. I had gone to the event to listen to Prof. Michal Bodemann, an expert on memory and migration from the *University of Toronto*. Bodemann

had published on migration and memory in Canada and Germany, as well as the Jewish question and the representation of the Holocaust in Germany (see Bodemann 1996: *Gedächtnistheater. Die jüdische Gemeinschaft und ihre deutsche Erfindung. / Memory-theatre. The Jewish Community and its German Invention.*) At this event, a debate began between Michael Bodemann and writer Zafer Senoçak. The moderator was Serhat Karakayali and he presented himself as the head of the project *AMIRA* – a project about Muslims and anti-Semitism (which much resembled *KIGA*).

It struck me that I did not look for any of these projects, but that both *KIGA* and *AMIRA* were ‘there’, in the museum field and in the midst of the topic of representation of migration in the urban landscape. General characteristics of the projects *KIGA* and *AMIRA* are that they focus on their goal to reach “Muslim males” (which they define as Arabs, Turks and Palestinians) who naturally show anti-Semitic behaviour to try and change their views about Israel. In the context of these projects, anti-Semitism is defined as aggression directed only against Jews and against the Israeli State. Here, the memory of the Shoa/Holocaust plays a central role in framing Arabs, Turks and Palestinians as natural aggressors (located within modern societies). These projects are financed in the context of migration. In the logic of both projects, Muslim youth must be re-educated, for they represent a danger: aggressions against “Jews” – which should never happen ever again on German soil. In the past, it was Neo-nazis and neo-Nazi youth who had been the main target of initiatives against anti-Semitism, but since 9/11 the mission to prevent anti-Semitism has been especially directed toward Muslim youth. The logic behind this type of project is to “integrate” Muslim youth into hegemonic history and discourse in Germany (which is defined by the memory of the Shoa/Holocaust). Following Rothberg and Yildiz, these youth are disciplined via the hegemonic discourse on collective memory of the nation they inhabit. Muslim youth are rejected by the same discourse which wants to discipline them. They have to integrate / incorporate to a national collective memory that they cannot relate to (as they do not share the same filiation as ethnic Germans). Further, they have to share responsibility in relation to that memory (which they cannot relate to in the same way ethnic German populations do). This explains how certain citizens – although formally having German / European citizenship – do not share the same rights and are treated as foreigners because of their ethnic and cultural belonging.

The main problem with this type of project is that the hegemonic discourse on German identity is absolutely exclusive in ethnic terms. This makes “integration” to it is practically impossible. The question is: how can Muslim youth be integrated into German national

collective memory if this ‘memory’ excludes them because of their bodies, skin color, cultural and familiar attachments? Second, these projects leave no room for these youth to participate and share their views. Muslim youth are seen as aggressors, from the perspective of a context in Germany which scholars like Claudia Bruns have criticized for separating anti-Semitism from colonial racism, thus isolating the Jewish experience (Bruns, 2011).

Muslim youth are also seen as socially and economically resented and, therefore, as potentially violent. Thus, by instrumentalizing the memory of the Shoa/Holocaust, these projects create fractures between racial/ethnic Germans and Muslim youth who live in Germany (some of them German citizens, and some of them candidates for German citizenship).

Both the example of the ‘médiateurs’ in France and Muslim youth in Germany are examples of second class citizenship or, in other words, of a citizenship which is “in decline”, as it is no more the cornerstone of national identity in Europe or the United States (Jacobson, 1997). Although holding German passports, Muslim youth do not have the same rights in everyday life in Germany to express themselves. They are forced to reproduce a discourse on guilt which they cannot attach to.¹¹⁰ With this, second-class citizenship filters through representations of migration: projects encouraging this type of image-making and othering are funded in the context of social, cultural and artistic projects engaging with people with “migration background.” Caught between left-wing and right-wing discourses, discriminated European citizens (i.e. Muslims and black Europeans) are excluded from participation, racialized through their skin color, religion, culture and their geopolitical ties. Representations are made which stereotype “immigrants”, and these stereotypes have, in turn, an effect on the everyday life experiences of these people both in the job market and the housing sector, and in other areas as well.

As I talked to the ‘médiateurs’ at the *Cité nationale*, it was clear that they felt caught in a clichéd representation which was the effect of second-class citizenship. In the case of my conversations with people actively working in *KIGA* and *AMIRA*, it was clear that a concept about Muslims (Arabs, Turks and Palestinians) was stronger than the fact that the youth themselves had German citizenship. This has had the effect that distorted representations of Muslim youth are visible in most of the exhibitions on migration.

¹¹⁰ Even Cem Özdemir, a representative of the European Parliament (born in the South of Germany of Turkish parents), encourages this view on all Turks – as he firmly states in his preface for the brochure of *KIGA* (Özdemir, 2011).

I will end this chapter with an anecdote which a colleague of mine experienced in a project for a migration exhibition in Berlin. My colleague (also an anthropologist of Europe) had participated in a project for a migration exhibition – but was critical of it. From the onset she had realized that the curators were pressuring Muslim children to portray things the curators themselves wanted to see (and which did not match with the children's wishes). My friend recalls how a Muslim girl was asked to come up with a topic to prepare for the exhibition. Her first choice was to describe and display images of her pet rabbit, which she had recently got as a present. But the head of the project did not like this choice and convinced her to change her topic. Later my friend asked the girl what she had chosen and she turned and said: "Ich wollte eigentlich Hase, aber ich mache Moschee" (I actually wanted to portray a rabbit but now I am making a Mosque). Consequently the young girl spent her time describing her mosque, Koranic school, and brought a prayer mat, which ended up in the exhibition. The descriptions of Islam and the mat got museumized¹¹¹.

In this example, participation was manipulated to show a constructed image of religious Muslim youth and to legitimate projects to integrate these children into hegemonic constructions of collective memory. Holders of second class citizenship are those citizens who are "othered" and misrepresented – despite holding a German passport. Curators make representations on behalf of those citizens who cannot exercise their rights fully. Curators who open up discursive space where voices of to second-class citizenship holders can be heard have to deal with claims of structural racism. Curators with second-class citizenship themselves tend to explore the topics of colonial history, as well as post-colonial and decolonial perspectives to make sense of their second-class existence despite, ostensibly having equal legal rights. Here, it is clear how notions about citizenship stemming from lived experiences affect representations on migration.

Here, the point is that the legal equality which should be acquired through citizenship does not erase the discrimination practices, which have been socially anchored over time. And this is visible in exhibitions of migration. Today, in the context of a crisis of representation and modernity, it is clear how notions of equality emanating from citizenship rights are also in crisis. The question here is about the validity of the European passport in contrast to the skin color, ethnic belonging and / or religious affiliation of the passport holder. Representations of

¹¹¹ Another important fact is that "Islam" as such has been already museumized to the point of embodying the "official" object of otherness. Examples are the huge Islam section in the exhibition "Fremde" at the *DHM*; also, the focus on Islam on the exhibition "Ortsgespräche" at the *Kreuzberg District Museum*. This last exhibit was a cooperation with the *Pergamon Museum* Berlin.

citizenship (which are entangled with political representations) permeate representations about migration in France as well as in Germany. Looking at the museum landscape in both countries, the crisis emanates from the imposition of national hegemonic discourses – which are taken to embody a ‘collective memory’ – on people with particular forms of remembrance who refuse to incorporate and reproduce memorial discourses which are not theirs. People can only attach to memories they can feel in / through their bodies (Connerton, 1989). Following this perspective, the question would be: is there a model of collective memory(ies) which would be adequate to make all European citizens experience belonging to the core nations (France and Germany) and to the region (Europe)?

6.- Conclusion: Collective vs. Particular Memories?

In this dissertation I described how museums and projects of museumization in nations of the global North and the European Union, namely France and Germany, are working toward an inclusion of migration into the national narratives. Monolithic narratives are opened in the direction of “multiculturalism”, “diversity” and “interculturality”. On the other hand, I described how European people with migration background (who do not feel that they are recognized by hegemonic discourses) also contest national memories from the standpoint of their own particular histories, which are based mainly on lived experiences of migration, and / or discrimination. This means, that the notions of national and / or collective memory are being contested and, that these contestations take place at migration museums and exhibitions on migration, and (sometimes) in the field of national museums. The capability of national museums to represent all inhabitants of France and / or Germany is limited. Particular groups with migration background (or people born in France and Germany but who feel that their actual citizenship rights are limited due to daily discrimination) have actively questioned national narratives from their particular lived contexts and thus questioned the ways in which these narratives are being re-fashioned for a new world era (where “multiculturalism”, “diversity” and “interculturality” are the dominant paradigms).

But, also in this new era, representations of migration are linked with new representations of Europe. Here, a field of tension emerges around the issues of: how should people living in the European space remember? How can different Europeans remember different (particular) histories simultaneously? How can they do this within the same national and regional space(s)? On the one hand, official narratives on the integration of migration try to re-contextualize the nations for the EU, and the EU itself through exhibiting migration (a new era on representations). On the other hand, minorities and racialized people in Europe tend to question official projects, demanding more participation and struggling against the way in which these official transformations are taking place (and also demanding their own representations as ‘Europeans’ – i.e. the project of “Black Europe”).

The tension emerges from power asymmetries concerning memorial cultures. This means, that some memorial cultures have more power of representation than others. As described by Maurice Halbwachs, collective memories stem from groups of people who develop a remembrance through an experience of ‘being together’ (Halbwachs, 1991). Here, rituals play a central role in memory-formation of social groups. Following Paul Connerton (Connerton, 1989) individuals remember a group through the collective experiences which are inscribed in

their bodies; in this sense, we (as individuals) would remember what we feel, in relation to a group or collectivity. Some memorial cultures have been framed in abstract terms and declared ‘national’, ‘official’ or ‘universal’. This means, that they have a power of representation which supercedes other collective memories which are not framed in abstract terms but rather in local or particular frames. The power of abstract memories also relies on what Jan Assmann calls ‘objectified’ or ‘cultural’ memory. This is, the inscription of memory onto objects and into places (i.e. museums as places of memory following Pierre Nora, 1996) which then have the quality of transmitting the abstract memory from generation to generation (Assmann 2007). Further, abstract memories with power of representation have been imposed onto groups and individuals (i.e. through national performances), who might not share or identify with the contents of these bigger narratives. Many of these individuals are not able to make a link to abstract memories, even if they perform the rituals to internalize these memories. Following Connerton’s argumentation that we remember through the body and through the history of our body’s performance, then: bodies remember differently and so the imposition of abstract (i.e. national) memories has a limit. When this limit is reached and individual and / or particular cognitive processes do not match (or are not compatible) with abstract memories and rituals of remembrance (or cannot be accommodated to them), then a representational crisis comes to the fore.

Hegemonic memories (which are often called national or “universal” and are further inscribed onto objects, buildings, public places and social practices), stem from particular groups of people with ties to a specific social class and education. Although these memories have local ties, they are framed in larger – national, regional or global – terms and, in this way, they tend to be imposed on all inhabitants in a specific geographical location. In the contemporary world landscape, citizenship has become a tool to define belonging – to define who belongs to which specific territory. Further, through citizenship, particular memories (framed as national) have been incorporated into the everyday lives of those people holding the citizenship of a specific nation. Individuals living within the territory of a certain nation and holding the corresponding citizenship (passport) thus tend to internalize (through rituals) the national memory which matches with their juridical belonging. These ‘national’ processes of defining public commemorations and “collective” remembrance have suppressed the value and impact of smaller or less powerful groups and their memorial cultures. In time, this difference between what should be remembered ‘outside’ and what is remembered at a smaller, local level, seems to have grown. A ‘weakening’ of the large narratives / memorial formations seems to have had the effect of showing the empowerment of particular memories which

openly contest the validity of bigger narratives. This is one of the effects of the crisis of representation (as seen from the perspective of national discourses).

During my research, it was visible that national / regional hegemonic narratives have been highly contested by groups of people who stress the right of other (particular) histories / memories to exist within the French, German or European memorial landscapes. Both ‘local’ populations (such as Basques¹¹²) and people seen as ‘outsiders’ (immigrants and racialized populations) have made such claims. The plea seems to be to achieve the right of having simultaneous memories exist (or coexist) in the same territory; and, also for the spatial transformation of the memorial landscape. The positioning (ideological and political) of the different memorial projects is so different and diverse, that the interests of some groups may frontally oppose the interests of others. In this way, a landscape of fragmentations, tensions and debates is on the rise.

This conflict has found expression in many layers. In Chapter Two, I showed an example where people who understand themselves as “European” and who enjoy full citizenship rights on an objective and subjective level (i.e. ethnic French and German people) actively question new narratives about Europe. My interview partners expressed a frontal disagreement with the premise that the European space “should not be criticized”. The tensions following the removal of a EU critical sentence from the exhibition “Fremde” shows how curators belonging to majority society (ethnic Germans) came directly into conflict with non-critical views (stemming from politicians), which were imposed on the museum and on the curatorial staff. Here, it is people with critical thinking who show (objectively) how the EU – beyond a space of integration and diversity – is also a place where new strategies of border making and exclusion take place. Here, people feeling that they belong to Germany and Europe openly contest and reject the internalization of non-critical European discourses, which glorify an idea of Europe and leave a critical position aside. Also, at the end of this chapter I showed how the forgetting of colonial history has also been contested on the part of academics and curators. Here, I showed the example of German curators living in Paris who felt that without a contextualization of French colonial history, the representation of migration is incomplete. These curators were showing an epistemic situation in which – scientifically speaking – they missed a broader discussion that would help to clarify the reality of contemporary migrations and the problems concerning representations at the museums. Here, the plea was to

¹¹² See Regina Bendix’s introduction in *Managing Ethnicity. Perspectives from Folklore Studies, History and Anthropology* (Bendix, 2005).

take colonial history into consideration to be able to make sense not just of the migration museum in Paris, but also of the museum landscape of the whole city, which includes anthropological museums (i.e., the *musée du quai Branly*) but also includes cultural / urban festivals such as “World music” festivals or carnivals (like the “Carneval tropicale de Paris”) and national projects proposed by politicians such as the *Maison de l’histoire de France* (Thiesse, 2010), initiated by president Nicolas Sarkozy. In this context, it is important to point out how major French historians have openly opposed Sarkozy’s museum project, which has the aim to re-member the national landscape in a very unilateral way. An example is researcher Pierre Nora (author of the anthology “Les lieux de mémoire”), who wrote an open letter in the French newspaper *Le Monde* in November 11 2010, criticizing the project of the *Maison de l’histoire de France* and describing it a negative way to manipulate the history of France (Nora, 2010). This chapter shows an overview of the conflicts taking place between people who feel they belong to Europe and who are recognized as Europeans by hegemonic discourses – but who do not agree with political representations of the last decade.

The ethnography in Chapter One shows that there is no collective memory in the sense that there is no consensus regarding what should be remembered and how it should be represented. This chapter shows rather a multiplicity of standpoints and a turbulent debate on the question of representation. Although I analyzed this debate through visits to museums, it is clear that this “crisis of representation / modernity” is visible beyond museums, in universities and the landscape of social movements (among other areas). This chapter shows how the national narratives appear as fragmented and contested. In Chapter Three I continued with this line of argumentation, but I gave a more detailed - or “thinner” (according to Beck 2000, 220) - account of the conflicts taking place in the contact zone. Here, I explained the epistemic background which defines the fracture between two fronts of cultural brokers. Here, critical thinkers and curators are being challenged by people with migration background who show that they have another understanding of society through their daily bodily experience. This bodily experience connects differently with social representations. The everyday experiences of both groups have led them to work differently. People born in Europe who do not feel recognized by hegemonic discourse (as “equals”), depict different (particular) histories and criticize critical thinkers who lack the bodily experience of every-day racism. Here, critical thinkers such as Gérard Noiriel or Sabine Hess are challenged from the standpoint of history told from North Africa (the archive *Génériques*) or by People of Color who stress structural racism (instead of anti-essentialism and / or western feminism). Further, in Germany the representations of guest workers show a painful ground of discussion where the fracture is so

visible that actors and narratives have little to do with each other. For example, on the guest worker topic (and from the perspective of former guest workers), colonial history comes to the fore as the source of guest worker mistreatment and misrepresentation. On the other hand, in mainstream representations this history is absent and the guest worker phenomenon is presented as particular to the history of Germany (here, a global perspective would be missing). This chapter shows how different historical genealogies (to clarify phenomena concerning discrimination) collide with each other to the point of fracture and hinder communication. This is relevant, because it touches directly on the topic of collective memories and commemorations. How can a fractured national collective commemorate together if the parties are engaged in perpetual conflict?

In Chapter Four I explored different historical genealogies and “routes” which non-European actors or European actors who feel discriminated against (i.e. “Black Europe”) take to contextualize their struggles. This chapter shows a historiography from the peripheries of Europe, which has recently been employed in discussions and project making. This perspective sustains the centrality of colonial history (i.e. post-colonial and decolonial perspectives, which have had an impact in European universities especially over the last decade, thus opening new discussions) to oppose the systematic erasure of colonialism in historical discourse. Post-colonial and decolonial perspectives stand closer to immigrant’s (and also people self-defined as Black European, People of Color or Indigènes) versions of how they understand history, ethnographic objects and their own bodies. The links which they make between their bodies, experiences and objects exposed in museums leads them to build up an alternative path for the interpretation of facts. Also, this chapter explores how colonial archives in the 18th century, colonial museums in the 19th century and migration museums since the end of the 20th century and in the first decade of the 21st century might recount narratives of colonial continuity – but also of decay. All of the archives and museums I describe in this chapter were built at the moment when empires were already in decay. This is the case with Spain and Holland, and might well be the case with France. We might ask: what does the museumization of migration and of Europe (the otherness it contains and the borders which limit it) actually indicate? This, linked together with contemporary discourse on the crisis of representation and modernity or reflexive modernity, could point to a narrative of decay of Europe and European modernity in the economic sense. The shifting of Europe from center to periphery (as finance markets center around China and other emerging economies) creates a will to museumize Europe, its migration flows and its borders in order for it to be remembered in time.

In Chapter Five, I gave an overview of the concepts / topics which – following my research – explain the source of the fragmentation of the national and European memorial landscape. Through my interview material, I realized that all people I had talked to were working from the perspective of ideas concerning modernity, feminism / gender, colonial history and citizenship. These four topics make up the background against which curators understand “migration” and work accordingly. These questions go all the way to theoretical debates about the four topics. These debates, and the different positions actors take, have a direct influence on how they make representations. The multiplicity of positionings (ideological, political, personal and social – which are all bound with modernity, feminism/gender, colonial history, and the debate on citizenship / political representation) determines the multiplicity of representations. This multiplicity makes up the turbulent field of debate because different perspectives on modernity will contest different ways to define (and depict) modernity. In addition, they will have an impact on how Europe and European history will be remembered. How is modernity to be remembered? This question is tied with the way in which the women’s liberation movement will be remembered. This, in turn, meets the question of how immigrant women in contemporary Europe are to be remembered. How modernity is defined and valued influences directly the way European imperial history is depicted. The same dynamic happens with debates about citizenship. Different lived experiences also determine how the history of democratic societies will be remembered. Does citizenship mean equality? Or is citizenship - as a tool to make unequal people equal (as according to Quijano, 2000) – in decay? Those who feel equal will celebrate social cohesion, while those who feel systematically oppressed will rather express the experience of living on the edge of social fragmentation. This chapter links how questions of memory and remembrance are linked with knowledge, theory-making, and scientific debates.

With modernity in crisis or in a late phase, national formations all around the world are beginning to explore multicultural and intercultural models of representations and relations in order for nations to continue to exist and look cosmopolitan. In Europe, the memorial landscape shows how various entangled histories like Nationalism, Slavery, the Holocaust, Colonialism and Imperialism dispute spaces for representation or, using Pierre Nora’s concept, dispute the ‘places of memory’.

In the context of universalism and particularism, this work rather gives evidence that what is called “universalism” is a question of power. All parties engaged in the debate which I analyzed express particular memories. Some particular narratives, however, are called

“universal” and are thus projected onto society as “collective memory” (i.e. nationalism is also the result of a memorial representation made by a certain group or collectivity). The peripheralization of Europe against new blocks of emerging economies has had the effect, on the one side, of making national narratives look fragmented and particular; on the other, of allowing particular narratives to reach center-stage and de-center established monolithic narratives.

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Erklärung über die selbstständige Abfassung meiner Dissertation

Hiermit erkläre ich,

dass ich die vorliegende Dissertation selbstständig und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe.

Die aus fremden Quellen direkt oder indirekt übernommenen Gedanken sind als solche kenntlich gemacht.

Die Dissertation wurde bisher in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form keiner anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt oder veröffentlicht.

Berlin, den 01. Juli, 2013.

Andrea Meza Torres