From *Rasse* to Race: On the Problem of Difference in the Federal Republic of Germany

Rita Chin

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y talk today is a transitional think piece that considers the invisibility of race in German public discourse and think piece that considers the invisibility of race in **V** German public discourse and historical writing. It sits at the intersection of two overlapping projects. The first emerged out of my work on the guest worker question in postwar Germany. As I neared that book's end, I realized that in order to make sense of the place of Turks and other guest workers in West German society, it was necessary to be explicit about the fundamental, but unspoken ways that their presence has been marked by various forms of racialized exclusion. This led me to undertake a collaborative project with Heide Fehrenbach in order to address how race itself has been treated in the study of modern German history more generally. One of our main arguments was that there has been a notable silence on the issue in the post-1945 period, as if the problem of race largely disappeared with the collapse of the Third Reich. To the extent that the question has been taken up, scholars have focused almost entirely on the contexts of U.S. military occupation and Americanization. But even for earlier periods, the tendency has been to limit inquiries on race and difference to highly specific episodes—such as the colonial projects in Africa, or the Nazi state. This inclination to circumscribe the relevance of race as a category of analysis has made it difficult to grasp both the continuities and discontinuities in racial ideologies across modern German history.1

But the problem runs deeper than an ad hoc interest in various forms of racism. More fundamentally, in the German field there has been a conceptual inability to differentiate racism or racial subjugation from what scholars in other fields now refer to as "racial formation" or "racialization." I suspect these distinctions will be familiar to many of you, but let me be clear about what I mean. "Race," in this framework, is a socially-constructed, historically-contingent category of essential difference. "The meaning of race," as Michael Omi and Howard Winant suggested over 20 years ago, "is defined and contested in both collective action and personal practice." In the process, they argue, "racial categories themselves are formed, transformed, destroyed and reformed." Racial formation, then, refers to the investment of meaning in racial categories—"the extension of racial meaning to relationships, social practices, or groups" previously understood in non-racial terms. One key component of my work has been to argue for this notion of race as crucial for understanding German identity and belonging.

More recently, I have begun work on a comparative project that examines how European leftists (especially in Germany, Britain, and France) grappled with questions of difference that emerged with the arrival of millions of migrants after 1945. This book is a critical history of leftist political and intellectual engagement with race, which traces the

ways the postwar Left has alternately rejected, absorbed, inscribed, and reinvented the category of race as part of its shifting projects. An important goal is to explain why so many European leftists have come to doubt the viability of multiethnic coexistence and, in particular, now see long-time Muslim residents as fundamentally incompatible with European norms and ways of life.

My talk today, though, focuses on Germany and considers how to think about the category of race in postwar Germany. It represents a first stab at bringing together the two projects I've outlined—insofar as it takes seriously the ways that "difference" has structured conceptions of German belonging through a specific analysis of the West German Left's engagement with postwar labor migrants. This is a somewhat tricky proposition because the most striking feature of the German Left's thinking about guest workers (at least until the early 1970s) is its absence. Thus, a large part of what I'm going to try to do is explain this absence, to trace the effects of something that's missing.

In terms of organization, I've structured my talk in three sections. First, I want to say a very brief word about the problem of "race" in post-1945 German historiography. Then I'll turn to the specific case of West German 1968ers. Here, I want to unpack the ideological conditions that made guest workers largely invisible within the terms of the New Left's social critique, focusing on three major preoccupations—the project of democratization, the parameters of the guest worker program, and the legacy of Nazism. The specific assumptions and priorities that emerged from these frameworks, I argue, shaped 68ers' ideas about race and racism. Finally, I'll end with a recent example of racial confrontation in the German soccer leagues to draw some conclusions about the analytical utility—indeed necessity—of "race" for understanding contemporary German society—and the place of Muslims within it. I should say at the outset that what I'm doing is quite schematic; I traverse a number of examples and move quickly across time in order to establish some broader patterns and analytical touchstones.

In contrast to the current tendency of Third Reich scholarship to stress the ubiquity of racial ideology in the regime's policies and practices, work on the postwar period has paid scant attention to the ways that race thinking shaped society in the two Germanys. To the extent that historians take their cues from their subjects, this pattern is not particularly surprising. The term "Rasse" quickly became taboo in both new states, and the language of race was largely expunged from postwar public discourse. After 1945, that is, race ceased to be an explicit or widely invoked frame of reference for most Germans. This seeming rupture between the pre- and post-1945 periods does not mean that racial ideology simply disappeared with the demise of Hitler's regime. But silence on the problem of race in both postwar German public debate and historical scholarship does compel us to approach the issue in a more roundabout way. We might, for instance, probe how and why race was increasingly rejected as a key concept for thinking about difference within postwar German society. Or we might explore the social, political, and epistemological effects of the category's invisibility.

I want to begin addressing the issue by looking at West German leftists who came of age in the 1960s. In March 1966, a remarkable article entitled "Are We Unfair to Guest Workers?" appeared in the conservative weekly Welt am Sonntag: "Germans who work through their past by being outraged about apartheid in South Africa or race riots in America, obviously do not have anything against the apartheid of alien workers [Fremdarbeiter] in the Federal Republic, against their social boycott and their displacement into ghettos." This early observation captured a central paradox in the West German New Left's political activism and approach to social injustice: young leftists often condemned racial oppression abroad, yet generally missed the fundamental ways that racialized notions of difference structured social relations at home. A quick survey of the central groups and figures in the West German New Left-Rudi Dutschke, Bernd Rabehl, Tilman Fichter, the German Socialist Student League (SDS)—reveals students carrying suitcases for the National Liberation Front during the Algerian War, public solidarity campaigns with anti-colonial movements in the so-called Third World, and highly visible protests against the Vietnam War, but hardly a word about the Federal Republic's massive importation of foreign labor. 11 Unlike their counterparts in the United States and Great Britain who actively condemned the subjugation of blacks in their respective societies, West German '68ers did not collectively raise questions about the place or treatment of guest workers. My question is why? Why didn't domestic discrimination and prejudice become central targets of the New Left's social criticism? What, in other words, were the conditions of impossibility, the ideological assumptions and contexts that made it so difficult for young leftists to recognize the plight of foreign laborers as crucial to their larger critique of West German society?

One answer can be found in the different notions of democratization that were in play immediately after the war. These ideas about democracy, I want to suggest, influenced how race and racism would be understood and debated in subsequent years. In the wake of the Third Reich's collapse, the Allies (and international community more generally) pressured Germans to make a clean break from the Nazi regime by "disavow[ing] state-sponsored racism" and publicly embracing democratization. 12 Part of this process involved reeducation and denazification policies introduced by the Allies during occupation. Reeducation aimed at weaning Germans from undue respect for authority, while denazification sought to eliminate Nazis from public life and civil service. Both programs had significant limitations—above all, the fact that they were administered haphazardly from zone to zone. But they did push postwar Germans to reformulate the social and ideological parameters of their national identity. In particular, these policies underscored the fact that the Third Reich's national ideal of an Aryan Volksgemeinschaft had been powerfully discredited by the Nazi defeat. Privileging of an Aryan master race, efforts to destroy the Jews, and the belief in biologically based, essential differences between peoples were now firmly attached to the discredited notion of "Rasse." The concept itself thus had to be officially repudiated in order to transform West Germany into a democratic nation. 13

Beyond these formalized programs, the occupation—and the presence of the U.S. Army in particular—greatly affected how West Germans thought about the relationship between "race" and nation. For one thing, the multiethnic composition of the occupation armies meant that former racial subordinates—including Jews, Slavs, North Africans, and African-Americans—now held positions of authority over Germans as members of the Allied forces. The U.S. Army's practice of racial segregation and anti-black racism, moreover, taught West Germans that "democratic forms and values" could be "consistent with racialist, even racist, ideology and social organization." In this way, military occupation reinforced ideas of white supremacy across American and German cultures, thereby encouraging West Germans to reframe their conceptions of difference through a black/white lens. As they rejected the idea of "Rasse" and its attendant associations, then, West Germans gradually became conversant with and absorbed alternative modes of racial distinction.

1968ers, whose formative years coincided with the occupation and founding period of the Federal Republic, grew up in society that was developing a complex, even schizophrenic posture towards race and difference. The category of "Rasse" was irrevocably tainted by the Nazi legacy, linked permanently to racial science, eugenics, and genocide. Yet West German authorities did not espouse a uniform or consistent policy against more immediate forms of racism. Different strands of racism were treated differently: it became increasingly *impossible*, for example, to invoke "Rasse" publicly in relation to Jewish Holocaust survivors who remained in Germany, ¹⁶ yet it *was* possible to accommodate the racialist binary of black/white in thinking about the "problem" of Afro-German children (the product of African-American GIs and German women). ¹⁷ These two racial taxonomies were always understood as separate and discrete, in no way part of a related set of ideas about difference. While West Germans roundly condemned one taxonomy as racist, they unself-consciously relied on the other to develop social policy.

The emergence of the Cold War mandate took the project of democratization in a distinctly different direction. As divisions hardened between the Allies, the U.S. and Britain prioritized economic revival and integrating their zones into the Western security alliance. The primary tasks of democratization thus shifted away from purging the remnants of Nazi influence and now lay in building a strong capitalist economy, shoring up democratic political institutions, and forging close economic and military relations with the Western powers. ¹⁸ For most West Germans, government ministers and ordinary citizens alike, economic prosperity quickly became the key index of successful democratization.

The economic miracle, of course, also served as the crucial catalyst for bringing millions of foreigners back onto German soil. The economic take-off that began in the 1950s created an urgent demand for manpower, which the native population was ill-equipped to provide. As a result of the high casualty rate among German men during the war and official efforts to encourage women in the wartime workforce to return to

the home, authorities faced a massive labor shortage. Their solution was to inaugurate a guest worker program, signing a labor recruitment treaty with Italy in December 1955, and concluding subsequent agreements with Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia throughout the 1960s. By the fall of 1964, the number of foreign workers in West Germany surpassed one million; five years later, the figure had nearly doubled.

At the same time, the basic parameters of the guest worker program played a critical role in shaping the way West Germans-including young leftists-perceived foreign laborers and the problem of "difference" in their society. The program's central premise was that migrants would come to the Federal Republic to work on a temporary, short-term basis. Political authorities and industrial leaders agreed on a system in which recruited laborers would rotate in and out of the German labor force based on production demands. Accordingly, labor treaties stipulated 2-year work and residence permits in order to enforce the expectation of return to the country of origin. Citizenship law, moreover, reserved citizen status for those with German ancestry based on the principle of jus sanguinis. In this view, guest workers were always and by definition foreigners. The postwar labor recruitment program presumed that the Federal Republic, at its core, was not an "immigration country." Guest workers were recruited not to become permanent additions to German society, but to provide labor for a limited period and leave.

Political leaders, furthermore, clung to the original conception and legal parameters of guest worker recruitment long after shifting economic conditions had undermined the initial logic of short-term residence and rotation. By the early 1960s, firms employing foreigners realized that it cost more money to import new workers every couple of years than to keep the trained ones and absorb the fluctuations in production As rotation proved increasingly unprofitable, the government ceased enforcing the rule of quick return: that is, it almost always granted extensions for residence and work permits, effectively allowing Turkish and other labor migrants to remain in Germany indefinitely. Guest workers, in turn, stretched their stays into years and even decades; many sent for their spouses and children, especially after 1973 when the Federal Republic halted further recruitment. 19 By the mid-1970s, moreover, Turks had surpassed Italians and all other nationalities as the largest community of foreigners in West Germany. Despite the fact that permanent settlement belied the rhetoric of temporary residence, authorities regularly intoned the same basic mantra on the question of pluralism: "the Federal Republic is not a country of immigration."

For members of the New Left, not to mention less critical segments of the West German population, the federal government's approach to the labor migration made it difficult to apprehend guest workers as a significant or legitimate part of the social fabric. Everyday slights such as serving fellow Germans first, telling off-color jokes about Italians and Greeks, refusing to rent an apartment to Yugoslavs, or using derogatory phrases such as "türken Tüte" to describe the cheap plastic grocery bags favored by Turks seemed like excusable, minor infractions against transient populations, rather than examples of systematic discrimination or prejudice that evidenced an endemic social problem. But even the decision to house guest workers in barracks on the outskirts of town, or city ordinances restricting Turks from living in certain neighborhoods, or the disproportionate number of foreigners concentrated in the dirtiest, harshest, and most unpleasant kinds of work generally did not register as something called racism because guest workers were not understood as members of West German society. Racism, in this view, could only be present if prejudice and discrimination were directed against a portion of one's own population. And once ideas about race and difference were redefined around a black/white binary over the course of the 1950s, the possibilities for recognizing racialized or even racist attitudes and behaviors beyond this horizon decreased substantially.

But perhaps the most immediate reason for young leftists' general neglect of guest workers has to do with their preoccupation with the Nazi legacy. Germany's recent past served as this generation's primary touchstone, so much so that many New Leftists claimed retrospectively to have inaugurated the process of Vergangenheitsbewältigung or This bold claim has been tempered somewhat by recent overcoming the past. scholarship, which now suggests that serious public debate about the Nazi past revived in the late 1950s and gained momentum during the first half of the 1960s.²⁰ Nonetheless, young Left activists did intensify this discussion, setting for themselves the task of purging postwar society of what they saw as the lingering effects of Nazi fascism. In 1960, for instance, 3,000 demonstrators publicly demanded the resignation of the federal minister for refugees who had served in the Nazi Party. 21 This novel outspokenness grew out of the fact that these young people had been born during or just after the war (roughly 1938-1948). Thus, they had no direct knowledge of and bore no direct responsibility for the crimes committed during the Third Reich. As they came of age in the 1960s, many of the younger generation became increasingly dissatisfied with the short and vague descriptions of the Nazi era in their schoolbooks. They began to pose more pointed questions to their parents, and the most radical among them openly "condemned their parents' generation both for its complicity with Nazism and its conspicuous silence about the Nazi period."22

The critique leveled by young leftists was intimately bound up with the West German version of liberal democracy built and embraced by their parents. According to members of the New Left, the "Auschwitz generation" of their elders had blindly pursued capitalist prosperity and embraced anti-communism at the expense of taking responsibility for Nazi crimes. The failure to deal with the past, 1968ers reasoned, meant that fascism had not been fully rooted out of German society. Its lurking was evident in the reintegration of Nazi party members into civil life by the 1950s, the Bundestag's 1965 passage of the Emergency Laws, and the wave of political terror inaugurated by the murder of Benno Ohnesorg. "Far from viewing the Federal Republic as democratic in any meaningful sense, the students viewed its political institutions as totally corrupt, and as themselves facilitating an imminent reconstitution of fascism in

West Germany."²⁵ This sense of continuity, moreover, was bolstered by the New Left's theoretical understanding of Nazism, which interpreted fascism as a product of the highest stage of capitalism.

The historical continuum between capitalism and fascism, according to 1968ers, was evident not just in developments within the Federal Republic, but also in the actions of its closest ally, the United States. The Vietnam War, in particular, shattered any illusion of America as "democracy's international helpmate." For the West German New Left, the escalation of the U.S. military campaign against the Viet Cong exposed the capitalist and imperialist exploitation at the heart of American foreign policy. Young leftists similarly condemned Jim Crow segregation as the most egregious example of the deep racism of American society. For these reasons, 1968ers vociferously attacked the Federal Republic's "ideological alignment with the United States" and denounced both West Germany and the U.S. as "fascist."²⁷

If fascism and capitalism were integrally related, a pressing question for the New Left was how to resist West German state power and radically transform capitalist society through revolution. By the early 1960s, many had abandoned hope in Marx's traditional revolutionary agent—the working class—whose critical perspective they believed had been co-opted by postwar prosperity. Influenced by the work of Herbert Marcuse as well as their interactions with Third World foreign students, young activists like Rudi Dutschke and Bernd Rabehl began to look for a new revolutionary vanguard of "outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and colors," as offering an alternative challenge to capitalism from the outside. These socially marginalized groups, according to Dutschke echoing Marcuse, represented the "living negation of the system."28

Yet the New Left's preoccupation with capitalism and fascism had a number of unintended consequences. Looking outward, West German leftists such as Dutschke and Rabehl surveyed the international scene through Latin American, Haitian, and African students whom they encountered and collaborated with at university. Among these contacts, it was easy to identify "exemplary political actors" whose campaigns against political and racial subjugation in their home countries presented a serious challenge to the fascist-capitalist system. Members of the SDS thus readily and enthusiastically championed Third World foreign students, the Viet Cong, and the Black Panthers, each group engaged in distant, but critical efforts to fight U.S. imperialism's exploitation, genocide, and racial oppression.

But turning inward, this theoretical position unwittingly led radical critics to disregard the impacts of both systems within the Federal Republic itself. First and foremost, it "subsumed the singularity of the Nazis' annihilation of the Jews under the generic term and structural concept of fascism." 30 The effect was to obscure the distinctive aspects of National Socialism as it had developed in Germany (as opposed to Italy), downplaying the anti-Semitic nature of Nazism and ignoring its Jewish victims.³¹ But the fixation on capitalism and fascism also made it difficult for most 1968ers to grasp the growing importance of race and difference within West German society. To be sure, a handful of leftist artists and intellectuals did extend their criticism to the guest worker program. The filmmaker Rainer Werner Fassbinder, the social activist Günter Walraff, and the national committee of Young Socialists all questioned the treatment of guest workers in the Federal Republic. In each case, though, self-congratulatory economic prosperity, capitalist exploitation, social conformity, and ideological complacency emerged as the primary targets of critique. The importation of foreign labor simply represented the most extreme example of West Germany's indifference to the human costs of the unbridled pursuit of capitalism.

Thus, in considering the all-important question of who would spearhead the revolt against capitalism and fascism inside the Federal Republic, Dutschke surveyed the landscape for marginal groups that might fit the bill, but was unable to find a German counterpart to black minorities in the U.S. He seemed to acknowledge that Jews might have served this function (although he stopped short of articulating why they were no longer around to do so), yet he was unable to imagine guest workers in such a role. Remarkably, in the absence of a recognizably racialized and oppressed outcast, Dutschke turned to his own social milieu for a solution, championing radical students and intellectuals as West Germany's "missing minority." ³²

By framing their social critique through capitalism and fascism, New Leftists were highly conscious of the structural continuities between National Socialism and the Federal Republic, but surprisingly oblivious to the ways that social actors and conditions had changed. This was true of young activists' search for a revolutionary subject. It was also true of their response to the 1964 establishment of the National Democratic Party (NPD). Members of the student movement were deeply troubled by the emergence of a far-right party with ties to former Nazis. Thousands of radicals clashed with NPD rankand-file in the streets of Frankfurt, Nuremberg, and Düsseldorf in the run-up to federal elections in 1969.³³ The fact that the party remained legal despite its fascist overtones particularly galled them and only confirmed that "the Federal Republic had not yet fully shed its anti-democratic culture and Nazi past."³⁴ At the same time, young leftists failed to note that the targets of NPD prejudice and attack were not the same as those singled out under National Socialism. Guest workers, not Jews, were now identified as a threat to the nation's health, economy, and identity. In this way, the conceptual tools, ideological commitments, and political priorities of 1968ers conditioned the nature of their social critique.

The effects of such blind spots are especially clear when we consider the broader historical trajectory of anti-racism in West Germany. If young leftists failed to problematize the treatment of Turks and other guest workers in terms of race or racism, this did not mean that they neglected to organize against movements they perceived as racist. In June 1979, nearly 50,000 people gathered in Frankfurt for a "Rock gegen Rechts" concert to protest a large rally by the NPD taking place simultaneously in the city. Organizers—made up of a coalition of leftist activists, social democrats,

environmentalists, and trade unionists—modeled the event on the "Rock against Racism" festivals that had begun in Britain three years earlier. Intended as a counterdemonstration, the concert offered a peaceful means to combat the NPD, which for five previous years had held national meetings and bloody marches in Frankfurt as part of an effort to create the "first national-democratic city in Germany." One of the festival's musical participants explained: "We must stop the right-wing block heads, that's why we're here."36

Yet the ways in which this event was discussed and represented point to some of the unique features of anti-racism in West Germany. Most newspaper coverage of the event focused on the potential clash of right- and left-wing demonstrators, a specter that recalled the street battles between Communists and brown shirts during the Weimar Republic. The single article about the festival to appear in Die Zeit, for example, discussed preparations for a possible fight in the streets.³⁷ Such reports devoted more column space to previous NPD provocations than to the current leftist response, reading the increase in far-right activity in terms of an older Nazi template.³⁸

Just as in 1969, the ostensible targets of NPD activity and violence-guest workers-did not appear in any of the public discussion around the event: not in the press coverage of the far right rallies, not in the leftist response. Foreign laborers and their families, of course, provided a crucial touchstone for the NPD's political appeal and were often victims of right-wing attacks. From its very inception, the party blamed guest workers for German unemployment. Ridding the Federal Republic of foreigners was a key item on the NPD agenda.³⁹ Yet a curious silence about these seemingly obvious connections prevailed.

The specific name chosen for the event, moreover, illustrates how this elision operated in leftist thinking. What had been "Rock against Racism" in Britain became "Rock gegen Rechts" (Rock against the Right) in West Germany. The change seemed to send two messages. First, according to a racial taxonomy of black/white, West Germany did not have a problem with racism because—unlike Britain—it did not have a significant black population. Second, it was one thing to acknowledge and fight right-wing extremists ("Rechts"), but it was quite another to suggest the reemergence of widespread racism within the Federal Republic. Neo-Nazis, in other words, were viewed as a fringe group: they were divorced from mainstream society and condemned by the majority for hewing to a discredited racial taxonomy and representing an obvious historical evil. Racism, by contrast, pointed to a broader social malady, whose existence might raise questions about how well West Germans had learned from their troubled past. This semantic shift thus underscored the tendency among West German leftists to understand racism as something that happens in other countries or the past, or as a highly circumscribed problem of marginal neo-Nazis.

The name change also demonstrates a lingering pattern of ideological evasion because it assumed that racialized thinking was antithetical to the liberal democracy West Germany had become.⁴⁰ In this view, merely invoking the concept of race seemed like the first step to allowing racism to creep back into German society. Yet this also created confusion between aspiration and reality. It was easy to assume that just because Germans had eradicated the word from their lexicon, they had also purged racism from contemporary conditions and practices. Such taboos, of course, did not prevent the processes of racial formation—the development of social and economic hierarchies of differential rights based on ideologies of essentialism and absolute difference—from operating in postwar German society. Rather, they prevented racialization from being recognized as such.

Ultimately, an anti-racism movement explicitly engaged with Turks and other immigrants did not develop until the 1992-93 fire bombings of Turkish homes in Mölln and Solingen. The devastating attacks prompted a huge outcry in Germany, as tens of thousands of protestors took to the streets to reject racist violence. This observation takes nothing away from the citizens' initiatives and grassroots associations that worked throughout this period—and especially the 1980s—to fight racism and discrimination at the local level. But it seems important to acknowledge the ways in which Allied notions of democratization, the parameters of the guest worker program, and the Nazi legacy inadvertently produced a blindness to domestic racism and racialized exclusion that endured far longer among young West German leftists than among their counterparts in Britain and the United States.

This blindness—especially as it is informed by the Nazi past—has also shaped German ideas of race and racism more broadly. I want to conclude by considering a recent example that illustrates the larger pattern. On March 25, 2006, in the run-up to the World Cup in Germany, a remarkable incident took place during a match between fourth-division German soccer teams, FC Sachsen Leipzig and Halle FC, which captured national headlines. Throughout the game, Halle fans mocked Sachsen Leipzig's midfielder Adebowale Ogungbure from Nigeria, making "monkey noises" every time he touched the ball. Walking off the field at the end of the match, Ogungbure was accosted by hooligans who spat on him and used racist epithets. He initially ignored the taunts and kept walking. But as he passed the grandstand, endured more spitting, and heard a crescendo of jungle sounds, he decided he'd had enough. Turning to the crowd, he put two fingers above his mouth to simulate a Hitler mustache and thrust his right arm forward in a Nazi salute.

Ogungbure's gestures, of course, drew on a well-established repertoire of racialized signs that seems obvious or even predictable. They were certainly reflexive enough for him at a moment of humiliation, frustration, and anger. He met one form of racist stereotype with another, engaging in a kind of essentializing tit-for-tat. Yet in the context of a German society that has shied away from acknowledging the problem—much less the concept—of race itself, Ogungbure's response to the jeering and heckling was incisive. His symbolic choices astutely reframed the fans' behavior by drawing a clear connection between what must have seemed to the crowd like perfectly justified harassment of an African soccer player who did not belong on a German team and the

country's shameful legacy of Nazi racism. Ogungbure's actions, moreover, named the hecklers' racist ridicule in a language they could understand. At least some German commentators grasped the implicit critique in his mimicry. "Given their behavior," a reporter for *Der Spiegel* observed, "one might think that [the crowd] would have appreciated the gesture and even returned it." ⁴³

Some of the spectators, however, reacted more viscerally, attacking Ogungbure from behind with a corner flag and grabbing him in a stranglehold. He only managed to escape with the help of a teammate, who dragged him toward the tunnel and the safety of the locker room. The fans' actions bespoke an outrage at Ogungbure's defiance—his audacity for daring to answer their racial mockery. But it also communicated a more specific fury at the very notion of being caricatured as Nazis. And, to a certain extent, this was precisely the reaction Ogungbure had sought to provoke. As he later explained: "I was just so angry, I didn't care. I could have been killed but I had to do something. I thought to myself, what can I do to get them as angry as they have made me? Then when I lifted my arm I saw the anger in their faces and I started to laugh."

Tellingly, German authorities reacted to the incident not by identifying and detaining the spectators who assaulted Ogungbure. Instead the Halle police automatically investigated the Nigerian for "unconstitutional behavior" because he had made the Nazi salute. The sign is illegal in Germany under Paragraph 86a of the criminal code, which prohibits using the symbols of unconstitutional organizations, including and especially the Nazi party. Although the public prosecutor ultimately decided not to press charges (the case was not criminally relevant and Ogungbure had been provoked, a spokesman explained), the spontaneous response on the part of the authorities-to pursue and prosecute the public reference to Nazism-highlights the distinctive way that many Germans continue to understand the issue of race. At least for the police, as official enforcers of the public order, miming a "Nazi" gesture signaled a racist act in a way that the bodily attack of someone whose skin color marked him as "foreign" did not. Merely invoking Nazi signs indicated the presence of racism, regardless of the function or context of the reference. And in this respect, we might say that Nazi racism still holds a special status in Germany, eclipsing other forms of racism that are more ubiquitous and relevant to contemporary social relations.

While German authorities devoted enormous energy to Ogungbure's symbolic acts, they had relatively little to say about the Halle fans' spitting, taunts, and harassment. The president of Halle FC Michael Schädlich claimed not to have heard any "discriminatory expressions" within his earshot in the grand stand. "Otherwise," he explained to the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, "I would have intervened with security to move the stadium speaker." It's difficult to say precisely what Schädlich meant here. He seems to be implying that it was alright for the spectators to employ openly racist insults as long as no one could hear them. His counterpart for FC Sachsen Leipzig, Rolf Heller, also downplayed the incident. "This has nothing whatsoever to do with right wing extremism," he maintained to *Der Spiegel*, "it's just misguided fervor on the part of the

fans."⁴⁶ For his own part, Ogungbure had complained to Heller on multiple occasions about the hostile treatment he received during matches, but was told, "[The opposing fans] only want to wind you up."⁴⁷ No one, it seems, was willing to discuss what transpired in the stadium, much less racism as a broader societal problem.

My point here is not to suggest that Germans refuse to acknowledge forms of racism beyond Nazi racism—although they have been somewhat slow to do so. In the last decade, in fact, there has been a proliferation of government-sponsored panels, conferences, and neighborhood meetings to discuss the problem of racism in Germany. Rather, I want to underscore the ways in which the legacy of the Third Reich continues to haunt German understandings of race—and to identify some of the effects of that haunting in the broader patterns of public discourse. One basic consequence is that other forms of racism tend to get overshadowed and even minimized whenever Nazi references are in play. Any public invoking of Nazi signs, that is, whether employed to express approval of Nazism (as in the case of right-wing extremists targeted by *Rock gegen Rechts*) or employed to condemn its racist logics (as in the case of Ogungbure), trumps other articulations of racism operating simultaneously.

Another effect is that German ideas about race continue to be informed by the older notion of "Rasse," with its emphasis on biologically based conceptions of difference. Because "Rasse" and "race" are conjoined in this way, it has been relatively easy for Germans to recognize racisms in their most obvious guise (as acts of prejudice and bigotry driven by skin color or other somatic features). But it has been harder for them to grasp the broader, more open-ended conception of race: race as a mutable and capacious category of discourse, culture, and history that is always in formation, always absorbing and mobilizing different symbols, traits, or vocabularies to mark essential, To a certain extent, German insistence on this incommensurable difference. epistemological narrowness makes sense. A fluid conception of race, after all, contradicts the idea of "Rasse" as a specifically Nazi way of understanding human difference, a mode of thinking that Germans have spent the last sixty-five years trying to transcend. But the price of circumscribing race in this way is blindness to the racial assumptions that authorize the increasingly commonsense view of Muslim Turks as fundamentally incompatible with Germans. The oppression of Turkish women, the propensity of Turkish men for violence, the poor performance of Turkish children in the German educational system, in this framework, all remain uninterrogated "truths" that corroborate an inevitable conclusion-that Muslims simply cannot be integrated into German—and by extension, European—society.

It also seems important to acknowledge that this pattern has extended to scholarly debate. Although historians have begun to recognize the central place of guest workers in transforming West German society, many continue to resist the notion that Anglo-American conceptions of "race" might be applied usefully to Germany because of the country's unique history. In this respect, scholars of Germany have taken a position similar to that of many French scholars and intellectuals who dismiss the English-

language notion of race as "un-French." While it is necessary to remain cognizant of the historical specificity of "Rasse" and "race," there has been a lack of clarity about the divergent careers of the two concepts. In postwar Germany, "Rasse" was dismissed as bankrupt and repudiated precisely because of its vexed association with National Socialism. But in the United States, "race" has cycled through many different conceptual lives and political projects. Used initially to connote essentializing logics of difference in specific North American contexts (e.g., pro-slavery ideology in the antebellum South or the Jim Crow claim of separate but equal), the concept has more recently been wielded to deconstruct and historicize those older ways of thinking. Many U.S. scholars now see race as a mutable and historically contingent ideological construct, a flexible framework for apprehending ideas of difference in their particular contexts. In this sense, it seems to me, American efforts at demystifying race are eminently exportable. What they help us to see are the more localized ways of constructing difference—whether in relation to physical attributes, culture, nationality, or religion-that are never "real" in the older mode of scientific racism, but which nonetheless continue to have historical efficacy, especially when they are unmarked, unnamed, and largely undiscussed.

Thus, the refusal of many scholars to take seriously the key role of race in the Federal Republic has come at a high cost. This stance has made it extremely difficult to grasp the myriad ways that German assumptions of essential difference naturalized the legal and social exclusion of Turks—from the basic expectations inscribed in the term "guest worker" to the reluctance to revise Germany's outdated citizenship law based on blood and ancestry; from the vociferous insistence by many contemporary critics that Turks are inassimilable to the continuing struggle to imagine any notion of German national culture that might encompass different traditions, customs, values, and religions. Thinking through "race" in the sense of racial formation or racialization, then, is absolutely crucial for grasping the obvious and not-so-obvious ways that difference has continued to structure German society in the postwar period.

Finally, I want to suggest that race as an analytic category is especially critical for how we understand one of the most pressing issues facing contemporary Europe: namely, the growing sense among many Europeans that Muslims cannot be integrated into liberal democratic society. In various ways, many European countries followed Germany in retreating from the concept of race in their postwar public discourse. The British liberal/social-democratic consensus of the 1950s, for instance, rendered the category off-limits, while the French have maintained a fervently color-blind ideal of citizenship, which they root in the founding principles of republicanism. This silence has generally continued to predominate, even in our current conjuncture with the relentless public conflict over ethnic, religious, and cultural differences that seem to divide Europe from its Muslim minorities. In the last year alone, the Swiss banned the construction of minarets, the French passed a law forbidding the burqa, and the German Thilo Sarrazin published a book blaming Islam and Turkish immigrants for dumbing down German society. Particularly striking in so many of these cases is a troubling "elision": The tricky

"dilemmas of how best to preserve pluralism and civil liberties, or of how to secure the values of individual emancipation," as Geoff Eley has observed, "become translated discursively into emblems of ethnonational identity and the broader humanistic heritage of European civilization."50 In this way, such controversies feed a racialized narrative of the intractable clash between European society and Muslim difference. And for this reason, it seems especially urgent and necessary to be able to name the silence around race that has continued to inform this political discourse.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ These ideas about the role of race as an analytic category in post-1945 German historiography come from and are elaborated in Rita Chin and Heide Fehrenbach, "Introduction: What's Race Got To Do With It? Postwar German History in Context" in Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Ann Arbor, 2009), especially 9-11.
- ² Michael Omi and Howard Winant, Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1980s (New York, 1986), 61.
- ³ Omi and Winant, 64. For a more explicitly historical and updated discussion of race, racism, and racialization, see George M. Frederickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton, 2003).
- ⁴ My argument here builds upon a number of works that have increasingly brought the question of race and racism to the study of postwar Germany. See especially Heide Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler: Black Occupation Children in Germany and America* (Princeton, 2005), which analyzes the shift in German taxonomies of race from the Nazi era to the postwar period through the public responses of Germans to Afro-German mixed race children. Fehrenbach's study was among the very first to treat the question of racialization as a central problem in postwar German history. See also Uta Poiger, *Jazz*, *Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in Divided Germany* (Berkeley, 2000), which examines Germans' racialized reactions to American popular culture; Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill, 2001), which investigates the West German responses to sexual encounters between African American GIs and German women; and Timothy L. Schroer, *Recasting Race after World War II: Germans and African Americans in American-Occupied Germany* (Boulder, 2007), which considers ideas of blackness and whiteness that emerged in the interactions between German and American soldiers during the occupation period.
- ⁵ Fehrenbach and I previously argued for the analytical utility of race and for treating it as "an ongoing and constitutive question in the nation's development." See Chin and Fehrenbach, "Introduction," 11, 25.
- ⁶ Chin and Fehrenbach, "Introduction," 5-6.
- ⁷ Fehrenbach provides a more nuanced chronology, arguing that it was only in the 1960s, as Afro-German children "disappeared as a racialized object of social policy, the use of the word Rasse and references to things 'racial' were rendered taboo, at least as applied to contemporary German society." See Heide Fehrenbach, "Black Occupation Children and the Devolution of the Nazi Racial State" in Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Beyond* (Ann Arbor, 2009), 53.

- ⁸ Fehrenbach and I have argued elsewhere that the zero hour thesis, which has been challenged by political and social historians, should also be deconstructed in terms of the problem of race and difference. See Chin and Fehrenbach, "Introduction," 6.
- ⁹ Fehrenbach first pointed in these new directions in Chin and Fehrenbach, "Introduction," 5. She offers an initial set of arguments about the social and epistemic consequences of the "retreat from race" in terms of Afro-German "Mischlingskinder" in Fehrenbach, "Black Occupation Children," 52-4.
- ¹⁰ H. von Studnitz, "Sind wir unfair zu den Gastarbeitern?," Welt am Sonntag, 20 March 1966, quoted in Julia Woesthoff, "Ambiguities of Antiracism: Representations of Foreign Laborers and the West German Media, 1955-1990" (Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 2004), 61.
- For an early study of West German students' involvement in the Algerian War of Independence, see Claus Leggewie, Kofferträger: Das Algerien-Projekt der Linken im Adenauer-Deutschland (Berlin, 1989). For discussions of their engagements with Third World foreign students and campaigns, see Niels Seibert, Vergessene Proteste: Internationalismus und Antirassismus, 1964-1983 (Munster, 2008); Quinn Slobodian, "Radical Empathy: The Third World and the New Left in 1960s West Germany" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2008). The literature on the West German New Left's critique of the Vietnam war includes: Wilfried Mausbach, "Auschwitz and Vietnam: West German Protest Against America's War During the 1960s" in Andreas W. Daum, Lloyd C. Gardner, and Wilfried Mausbach, eds., America, the Vietnam War, and the World (Cambridge, 2003), 279-98; Nick Thomas, Protest Movements in 1960s West Germany: A Social History of Dissent and Democracy (Oxford, 2003), especially Chapter 4; Slobodian, especially Chapter 3; and Wilfried Mausbach, "America's Vietnam in Germany— Germany in America's Vietnam: On the Relocation of Spaces and the Appropriation of History" in Belinda Davis, Wilfried Mausbach, Martin Klimke, and Carla Macdougall, eds., Changing the World, Changing Oneself: Political Protest and Collective Identities in West Germany and the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s (New York, 2010), 41-64.
- ¹² Fehrenbach, Race after Hitler, 4.
- The discussion of the Allied policies of reeducation and denazification first appeared and is elaborated more fully in Rita Chin and Heide Fehrenbach, "German Democracy and the Question of Difference, 1955-1995" in Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Beyond (Ann Arbor, 2009), 104-5. Fehrenbach initially discussed the discrediting of the Aryan Volksgemeinschaft in Race after Hitler, 8. Fehrenbach first teased out the notions of race attached to the tainted concept of Rasse in Chin and Fehrenbach, "Introduction," 14.
- ¹⁴ Fehrenbach, "Black Occupation Children," 34. See also, Fehrenbach, *Race after Hitler*, especially Chapter 1.

- ¹⁵ On the argument about the U.S. occupation's influence on West German ideas about the relationship between "race" and nation, see Fehrenbach, Race after Hitler, 49-ff. On the multiethnic composition of the occupation armies, see Fehrenbach, "Black Occupation Children," 32; and Fehrenbach, Race after Hitler, 48-56. The idea of a shared white supremacy across German and American cultures was first elaborated by Fehrenbach in Race after Hitler, 45. See also, Chin and Fehrenbach, "Introduction," 20; Fehrenbach, "Black Occupation Children," 33-4.
- ¹⁶ Atina Grossmann has argued that despite the official public renunciation of anti-Semitism, the interregnum period (1945-1949) is full of many instances of anti-Jewish hostility expressed in interpersonal relations between Jewish DPs and the German population. See Grossmann, "From Victims to 'Homeless Foreigners': Jewish Survivors in Postwar Germany" in Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Beyond (Ann Arbor, 2009), 66-8.
- ¹⁷ Fehrenbach, Race after Hitler, Chapter 3; and indem, "Black Occupation Children," 37-42.
- ¹⁸ For a useful discussion of the efforts to deal with the Nazi past during the early Federal Republic, see Norbert Frei, Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past (New York, 2002).
- 19 The right of family reunion was initially established in international law through the right to found a family, prescribed in Article 16 paragraph 1 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This provision was further elaborated by Article 17 paragraph 1 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, stating that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his...family." A right to family reunification was explicitly established in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. See

http://www.iom.ch/jahia/lahia/about-migration/developing-migration-policy/migrationfamily/international-law-family-

reunification/cache/offonce/lang/en; jsessionid=FEC1CF963C56AAE17CF7183EBB77 BC31.worker02 (accessed 25 January 2011). These international covenants put pressure on the Federal Republic to grant guest workers such rights and allow family reunion, even though the government's stated policy repudiated immigration. Within the European Union, the EU Council of Ministers approved a directive on the "right of third country nationals legally established in a European Union member state to family reunification" on 22 September 2003. See http://ec.europa.eu/homeaffairs/policies/immigration/immigration family en.htm (accessed on 25 January 2011).

The increase in discussion was spurred by a number of events, big and small: a welter of anti-Semitic graffiti and especially the appearance of swastikas on the newly rebuilt Cologne synagogue on Christmas Eve 1959; the Adolph Eichmann trial in Jerusalem

that began in 1961; the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt between 1963 and 1965; and the mid-1960s parliamentary debate over extending the statute of limitations for Nazi war crimes. See Axel Schildt, Ankunft im West: Ein Essay zur Erfolgsgeschichte der Bundesrepublik (Frankfurt am Main, 1999); Detlef Siegfried, "Zwischen Aufarbeitung und Schlußstricht: Der Umgang mit der NS-Vergangenheit in den beiden deutschen Staaten" in Axel Schildt, Detlef Siegfried, and Karl Christian Lammers, eds., Dynamische Zeiten: Die 60er Jahre in den beiden deutschen Gesellschaften (Hamburg, 2000), 77-113; Michael Schmidtke, Der Aufbruch der jungen Intelligenz: Die 68er-Jahre in der Bundesrepublik und den USA, 2003; Friso Wielenga, "An Inability to Mourn? The German Federal Republic and the Nazi Past," European Review 11.4 (2003): 551-72; Jeremy Varon, Bringing the War Home: The Weather Underground, Red Army Faction, and Revolutionary Violence in the Sixties and Seventies (Berkeley, 2004), 31-2; and Philipp Gassert and Alan E. Steinweis, eds., Coping with the Nazi Past: West German Debates on Nazism and Generational Conflict, 1955-1975 (New York, 2006).

- ²¹ Wielenga, 562.
- ²² Varon, 31.
- ²³ Andrei Markovits and Philip Gorski, The German Left: Red, Green and Beyond (Oxford, 1993), 52.
- ²⁴ According to Jillian Becker, the phrase "Auschwitz generation" was first used by Gudrun Ensslin in response to the murder of Benno Ohnesorg, which took place during the demonstration against the visiting Shah of Iran near the Deutsche Oper on 2 June 1967. See Becker, Hitler's Children: The Story of the Baader-Meinhof Terrorist Gang (London, 1977).
- ²⁵ John Abromeit, "The Limits of Praxis" in Belinda Davis, Wilfried Mausbach, Martin Klimke, and Carla Macdougall, eds., Changing the World, Changing Oneself: Political Protest and Collective Identities in West Germany and the U.S. in the 1960s and 1970s (New York, 2010), 26.
- ²⁶ I borrow Fehrenbach's incisive phrase here. See Chin and Fehrenbach, "German Democracy and the Question of Difference," 110.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Rudi Dutschke, "Diskussionsbeitrag" in Frank Böckelmann and Herbert Nagel, Subversive Aktion: Die Sinn der Organisation ist ihr Scheitern (Frankfurt am Main, 1976), 323. Quoted in Slobodian, 93. These ideas and phrases are drawn from Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man (Boston, 1964), Chapter 10.
- ²⁹ Slobodian, 98.
- ³⁰ Andrei Markovits and Philip Gorski, *The German Left: Red*, Green and Beyond (Oxford, 1993), 52.
- ³¹ Hans Kundnani, *Utopia or Auschwitz: Germany's 1968 Generation and the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press), 17-19. As Fehrenbach has pointed out, the crucial role of the Holocaust for understanding National Socialism only began to be recognized

in the 1970s. In the late 1960s, then, the West German New Left "had not yet acknowledged the uniqueness of National Socialist crimes or the single-mindedness with which the Nazi regime pursued its Jewish victims." See Chin and Fehrenbach, "German Democracy and the Question of Difference," 110.

- ³² Slobodian, 93-4.
- ³³ Gerhard Bott, "Gebändigte NPD-Ordner," Die Zeit, 15 August 1969, p. 7.
- ³⁴ Markovits and Gorski, 52.
- ³⁵ N.a., "Rock-Musik gegen 'rechts'," Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18 June 1979, p. 9.
- N.a., "Ochsenköppe stoppen," 16 June 2004, http://www.wdr.de/themen/kultur/stichtag/2004/06/16.jhtml (accessed on 21 April 2011).
- ³⁷ Claudia Dillermann, "Angst vor dem Notstand," Die Zeit, 15 June 1979, p. 15.
- Dillermann, p. 15; see also, n.a., "Massenkrawalle in Frankfurt vermieden," Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18 June 1979, p. 6.
- ³⁹ Der Spiegel, Nr. 15, 1966, p. 42. Studies of the National Democratic Party proliferated in the years immediately following its founding in 1964. These include: Reinhardt Kühnl, Die NPD: Struktur, Programm und Ideologie einer neofaschistischen Partei (Frankfurt/Main, 1969); Lutz Niethammer, Angepasster Faschismus: politische Praxis der NPD (Frankfurt/Main, 1969); Erwin K. Scheuch, Hans D. Klingemann, Thomas A. Herz, eds., Die NPD in den Landtagswahlen 1966-1968 (Cologne, 1969); and John David Nagle, The National Democratic Party: Right Radicalism in the Federal Republic of Germany (Berkeley, 1970). Since then, however, scholarship has focused on other organs of the far-right, especially the Republikaner. For more on this phenomenon, see Gabriele Nandlinger, "Chronik der Gewalt" in Klaus Henning Rosen, ed., Die zweite Vertreibung: Fremde in Deutschland (Bonn, 1992), 119-58; Armin Pfahl-Traughber, Rechsextremismus: Eine kritische Bestandaufnahme nach der Wiedervereinigung (Bonn, 1993); and Claus Leggewie, Druck von rechts: Wohin treibt die Bundesrepublik? (Munich, 1993).
- ⁴⁰ The following paragraph comes from Rita Chin, "Guest Worker Migration and the Unexpected Return of Race" in Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Beyond* (Ann Arbor, 2009), 99, 101.
- ⁴¹ Fehrenbach discovered this incident in 2006 and developed an analysis of the event as the opening anecdote for our co-authored essay, Chin and Fehrenbach, "Introduction," 1-4. I build on her analysis here.
- ⁴² Der Spiegel Online, "Player Silences German Racists With Hitler Salute," 3 April 2006, http://www.spiegel.de/international/0,1518,druck-409517,00.html (accessed on 27 September 2010).

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

- ⁴⁵ Jürgen Ahäuser and Bernhard Hinnigfort, "Urwaldlaute und Nazigruß: Der nigerianische Oberligaspieler Ogungbure verliert wegen ständiger Provokationen die Fassung," Frankfurter Rundschau, 29 March 2006.
- ⁴⁶ Der Spiegel Online, "Player Silences German Racists With Hiter Saulte," 3 April 2006. ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ See the recent critique of the French pattern by Didier Fassin and Eric Fassin, *De la* question sociale à la question raciale?: Représenter la société française (Paris, 2006).
- ⁴⁹ Geoff Eley, "The Trouble With 'Race:' Migrancy, Cultural Difference, and the Remaking of Europe" in Rita Chin, Heide Fehrenbach, Geoff Eley, and Atina Grossmann, After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Beyond (Ann Arbor, 2009), 171-73.
- ⁵⁰ Geoff Eley, "The Trouble With 'Race," 180.