



Humanwissenschaftliche Fakultät

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Suggested citation referring to the original publication:

Space and Culture 16(3) (2013), pp. 261–273

DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1206331213487051>

ISSN (online) 1552-8308

ISSN (print) 1206-3312

Postprint archived at the Institutional Repository of the Potsdam University in:

Postprints der Universität Potsdam

Humanwissenschaftliche Reihe ; 375

ISSN 1866-8364

<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:kobv:517-opus4-403655>



# “Parallel Societies” of the Past? Articulations of Citizenship’s Commemorative Dimension in Berlin’s Cityscape

Space and Culture  
16(3) 261–273  
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sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav  
DOI: 10.1177/1206331213487051  
sac.sagepub.com  


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## Abstract

Historical narratives play an important role in constructing contemporary notions of citizenship. They are sites on which ideas of the nation are not only reaffirmed but also contested and reframed. In contemporary Germany, dominant narratives of the country’s modern history habitually focus on the legacy of the Third Reich and tend to marginalize the country’s rich and highly complex histories of immigration. The article addresses this commemorative void in relation to Berlin’s urban landscape. It explores how the city’s multilayered architecture provides locations for the articulation of marginal memories—and hence sites of urban citizenship—that are often denied to immigrant communities on a national scale. Through a detailed examination of a small celebration in 1965 that marked the anniversary of the founding of the modern Turkish republic, the article engages with the layers of history that coalesce around such sites in Berlin.

## Keywords

Berlin, commemorative acts of citizenship, migration, multidirectional memory

German narratives about the nation’s past leave little room for the articulation of migrant histories. This, at least, was Claudia Koonz’s impression when, in June 2006, she visited the new permanent exhibition at the German Historical Museum in Berlin. The professor of history at Duke University was scandalized to find how—apart from the single picture of a Berlin mosque—the exhibition remains silent on the country’s rich immigration history. This commemorative void, Koonz felt, relates directly to the manner in which contemporary German society engages with the past. She argued,

Germans have over the past decades spent a lot of energy on “coming to terms” with their difficult history. It is about time they applied the lessons learned to the present. They need to erase the last remnants of *ius sanguinis* from the field of German self-representation. (Koonz, 2006; translation by author)<sup>1</sup>

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With the term *ius sanguinis*, Koonz referred to the by now outmoded concept of German citizenship that defined nationality along principles of descent and notions of inherent and homogeneous nationhood rather than place of birth or country of permanent residence. Different from Australia, Germany's citizenship laws had until the late 1990s virtually barred immigrants and their descendents from access to German nationality. The new citizenship law adopted in May 1999 now grants citizenship on birth to all individuals born on German territory if at least one parent has legally lived in the country for 8 years and has for 3 years had an unlimited right to remain. It does so on the condition that these children, by their 24th birthday, give up all other citizenships that they might possess (Nathans, 2004, p. 249).

Koonz's observations suggest, however, that there is more to citizenship than the rights granted to an individual by naturalization, and a number of authors have over the past decade suggested supplementary aspects that expand the concept's mere legal definition. Legal rights, in the words of Stuart Hall and David Held (1990), are "mere paper claims unless they can be practically enacted and realised, through actual participation in the community" (p. 175; see also Winer, 1997, p. 535). New formulations of citizenship, Engin Isin and Patricia Wood (1999) agree, should focus on the "practices through which individuals and groups formulate and claim new rights or struggle to expand or maintain existing rights" (p. 4). Without paying attention to such factors, we would indeed be hard-pressed to explain why the recent reforms in German citizenship law—celebrated as a "seismic shift"—have failed to elicit significantly higher naturalization rates among Germany's immigrant population (Klimt, 2003, p. 268).

Koonz's comments on the German Historical Museum imply that historical narratives are among those factors that have a particular role to play in constructing contemporary notions of citizenship. Calls to engage with or take responsibility for past events in which one has not been directly involved, Ghassan Hage (2001) has remarked accordingly, "advocate forms of national participation and belonging that go beyond the more instrumental conceptions of citizenship usually made available in the public arena" (p. 335). Although often strengthening participation and a sense of belonging, the commemorative void in the German Historical Museum is suggestive of how such narratives might work equally well to keep certain groups from laying claims to citizenship. And it is by no means the only site to produce such exclusions. A vast range of historical writing enforces notions of ethnic purity in the field of German self-representation and, as the authors of a 2006 volume on *German History From the Margins* (Gregor, Roemer, & Roseman, 2006) insinuate, often ignores the "multitude of foreigners, minorities, and discriminated outsiders living among and alongside the German people" (p. 4). Etienne François and Hagen Schulze's (2001) much-debated *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* (German sites of memory; 2001) is a case in point. Despite the multifaceted nature of their approach to commemoration and remembrance, sites of migration history did not make it into their study's stocktaking of German *lieux de mémoire*. Addressing this absence in their introduction, François and Schulze argue that the "collective memory of young Turkish-Germans, ethnic German immigrants, war refugees and asylum seekers necessarily goes beyond our focus"<sup>2</sup> (translation by author; p. 22) but fail to address what constitutes this necessity. In order to redress this "collective forgetting of immigration history" (Pleinen, 2005) in the German historical imagination, migrant lobbies and immigration historians have in recent years repeatedly called for an adequate commemorative representation of this past in a new German Immigration Museum (Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung & DOMiT 2002, p. 3; DOMiT, 2002; DOMiT & Netzwerk Migration in Europa e. V. 2003, p. 5).<sup>3</sup>

Germany's historical narrative, that is, its formulation and commemoration, thus constitute an important site of struggle over citizenship's symbolic dimensions. The notion of "parallel societies of the past" evoked in this essay's title seeks to capture this struggle by referring to a statement made by conservative politician Jörg Schönbohm, who, after visiting the Berlin suburb of Kreuzberg as the city's senator of the interior in 1998, claimed to have felt "not in Germany" there, therefore fearing the development of "parallel societies" within the nation-state. In this

context, Schönbohm (interview, June 2, 1998, *Berliner Zeitung*) spoke of “parallel societies” (*Parallelgesellschaften*), which, he argued, constituted a threat to social and cultural cohesion.<sup>4</sup> I am taking the term coined by Schönbohm here to gesture more specifically toward a mechanism of what Bob Hodge and John O’Carroll (2006), in an Australian discourse on multiculturalism, have called “borderwork.” Narratives of Germany’s history perform such borderwork in imaginatively locating those with a migrant background in an imagined community parallel to or outside that of Germany’s past. Although these exclusions develop compelling force on the national level, Berlin’s urban spaces, I argue, provide locations for the articulations of an alternative historiography.

How can migrants immerse themselves and their past into the history of a city not yet their own? What happens to their pasts if they make Berlin’s history theirs? And what happens to Berlin’s spaces if migrants add their historical narratives to the urban landscape? In contrast to the extant liberal notion of citizenship, which bestows equal rights to all citizens of the nation-state while often excluding immigrants, the notion of urban citizenship that is evoked in these questions gestures to those narratives of identity associated with residency in the city. Within the nexus of Germany’s restrictive immigration regime, Berlin has repeatedly figured as an “open city,” offering immigrant groups the opportunity to express a sense of belonging that is withheld from them on the national scale (Amin, 2002; Isin, 2000, p. 6; Rossi, Uitermark, & van Houtum, 2004, p. 7) as well as to articulate their own understanding of its past. In these practices, Berlin’s historical landscape no longer renders unequivocal narratives of nationhood, nor is it the mere stage on which claims to the past and belonging are made. Rather, as Engin Isin (2002) has influentially argued, it is more radically “the battleground *through which* groups define their identities, stake their claims, wage their battles and articulate citizenship rights and obligations” (p. 50). In what follows, this essay first investigates the ways in which narratives of Germany’s past have worked to exclude immigrants from claims of belonging to the nation. Subsequently, and drawing on recent scholarly writing on the “haunted” nature of Berlin’s cityscape, it turns to the transformative power of migrant histories in the city’s commemorative landscape.

### **Exclusive Interpretative Landscapes: The Nonplace of Immigration in German Historiography**

In recent years, a number of scholars have argued that the center stage taken by debates over the Third Reich and the Holocaust in Germany’s commemorative discourse leaves little room for the engagement with other aspects of the nation’s past (Düspohl, 2004; Georgi, 2003; Harjes, 2005; Motte & Ohliger, 2004). In a comment on literary engagements with Germany’s history, Leslie Adelson (2000) has characterized this historical discourse as an exclusive “interpretive landscape in which one customarily expects representational figures of Germans and Jews to meet in ghastly and ghostly ways. Immigrants, in contrast, have only indirectly peopled this landscape, if it all” (p. 95).

Hanno Loewy, founding director of the Fritz Bauer Institute, a research and documentation centre on the history and impact of the Holocaust, even goes so far as to label the Third Reich’s commemoration a mechanism designed to actively exclude postwar migrants from notions of German-ness. Loewy (2002) points out that the Holocaust became “central to the popular (even if negative) founding myths of post-war Germany,” as different immigrant groups moved to “claim recognition for their own culture and their own view of history as an integrated part of German public discourse” (p. 3). Polemically, Loewy thus speaks of a “Germanization of the Holocaust” actively engaged in the borderwork of delineating clear-cut definitions of “Us and Them” (pp. 4, 10). In order to illustrate this mechanism, he quotes Hamburg’s CDU politician Klaus von Dohnanyi, who had argued in 1998 that “German identity cannot be defined today any more precisely than through our common descent from those who did it, who welcomed it or at

least permitted it" (translation by H. Loewy). Although Loewy (2002) grants that this might sound like a "thoughtful" argument and a responsible approach to Germany's past, he is nevertheless appalled by Dohnanyi's commemorative exclusivity, which denies German-ness to those of "Turkish, Yugoslavian, Bosnian, Moroccan, Polish, Ukrainian, Greek, or for that matter Jewish origins on their way to being German citizens." Exemplary of those "remnants of *ius sanguinis*" in German historical discourse observed by Koonz (2006), the commemorative position offered in Dohnanyi's (1998) statement defines German identity "by what irreversibly happened and not by common values, by descent and not by a Constitution, by blood and not by citizenship" (Loewy, 2002, p. 11). In agreement with Loewy, Kirsten Harjes (2005) has more recently commented on the "bitter irony" that "[e]fforts to memorialize the Holocaust have tended to assume a relatively homogenous German populace" (p. 140).

In the context of this volume's dual interest in Australia and Germany, Loewy's criticism of Dohnanyi's statement is reminiscent of critical reactions to a speech given by Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating on December 10, 1992, to mark the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples. In his passionate comment on Australian history, Keating had vehemently argued that reconciliation entailed an act of recognition with regard to Australia's past: "Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the disasters. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers [. . .]." Although applauding the moral impulse behind Keating's speech, Ien Ang and Ghassan Hage have both commented on the problematic commemorative subject interpellated in this recourse to Australia's past. Referring to the speech in her Annual History Lecture 2001 for the History Council of New South Wales, Ien Ang questioned the manner in which Australia's discourse on reconciliation forgets about the position of migrants who do not belong to the White majority, criticizing how "quickly talk about relations between Indigenous and non-indigenous generally reduces to that between 'black' and 'white,' the latter referring implicitly and explicitly to 'Anglo-Celtic' Australians" (pp. 32-33). If migrants are considered in these discourses at all, Ghassan Hage (2001) makes a similar point, they are often subjected to a kind of pedagogy that assumes that they are to identify with the "White" side of the equation. This, according to Hage, would be a mistake not only because it remains insensitive to the multiplicity of positions that migrants can occupy vis-à-vis Australia's colonial past. It is flawed also for assuming that the "traumas of the colonised" constitute the only "Australian" past available to immigrants, thereby continuing the "process of marginalising the history of the colonised; that is, the process of colonisation itself" (pp. 351-352).

Similarly to this Australian debate, recent work by German sociologists and historians has started to address the varied ways in which residents with a migrant background relate to the dominant theme of the Holocaust in German history. Viola Georgi's (2003) study of young migrants' views on German history shows these positions to range from an outright rejection of the relevance of Germany's past, or the identification with its victims, to membership in the hegemonic "moral commemorative community" committed to making sure "it never happens again" (see also Leggewie, 2004). Similar to Ang's (2001) and Hage's (2001) emphasis on the surprising commemorative positions of recent migrants in Australian discourses on the colonial past, the clear-cut binary of victims and perpetrators that structures German historical discourse as well as the commemorative positions ensuing from this divide become more complex when paying attention to the perspectives of immigrants vis-à-vis this past. This ambivalent commemorative position comes to the fore in migrants' interactions with Berlin's historical cityscape.

### **Theodor-Heuss-Square, October 23, 1965**

The Kreuzberg Museum has in recent years specialized in collecting and exhibiting artifacts from Berlin's migration history (Düspohl, 2007). In its archives, the museum holds the photograph (Figure 1) of an event that occurred not in Kreuzberg but further to the city's west in



**Figure 1.** Theodor-Heuss-Square, October 23, 1965. Image courtesy of Filiz Yuriklik.

Theodor-Heuss-Square in 1965. Not much is known about this image and the event it records. It depicts members of a Turkish workers' club celebrating Turkey's national day, the anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on October 29, 1923. The group members are captured in commemorative pose, hats in their hands. Wreaths have been placed at the base of a memorial, and from the positioning of bodies we can infer that a speech is being made.

The clothing and hairstyles of those in this photograph disrupt notions commonly held in Germany about the early so-called guest workers as unskilled laborers from traditional villages in Turkey's south. Quite on the contrary, Berlin's first postwar migrants from Turkey were decisively modern. A secular and urban workforce recruited in Istanbul to work in West Berlin's then lucrative electronics industry, these skilled laborers were often appalled by the primitive living conditions they encountered in Berlin, which included coal heating and outdoor toilets (Düspohl, 2004, p. 163). The manner in which the group depicted in the photograph chose to celebrate October 29 confidently stages this modernity. Pairing two children in traditional dress with two young women with short, fashionable haircuts, wearing T-shirts and trousers, their commemorative performance enacted a nationalist teleological narrative of development from Turkey's rural beginnings to the modern, secular nation founded by Atatürk.

The location chosen for this celebration adds further layers of meaning to the image: The group poses in front of a memorial erected exactly 10 years earlier by the Federation of German Expellees, the *Vertriebenenverband*, a vociferous pressure group that, at the time, represented the interests of those close to 20% of the West German population who, in the aftermath of World War II, had lost their homes in today's Poland, Russia, and the Czech and Slovak Republics. In the 1950s and the early 1960s, these expellees possessed significant political power, promoting a discourse of German victimhood and suffering, as well as rallying to reclaim the "lost" home territories in the east, the *Heimat* (homeland), questioning time and again the validity of Germany's new eastern borders. When this photo was taken, the group was only just starting to lose its grip on West German society as more and more politicians, journalists, and public

intellectuals urged people to “accept the facts, even the painful ones,” as one journalist put it, and advocated for reconciliation with the state’s eastern neighbors (Ahonen, 2003, p. 249).

So why this memorial? Martin Düsphohl (2004), Director of the Kreuzberg Museum, suspects that it may have been the monument’s inscription *Freiheit, Recht, Friede* (freedom, justice, peace) as well as the eternal flame burning on top of the marble block that made it seem appropriately solemn and evocative of what the workers’ clubs associated with the birth of Turkey’s Republic (p. 177). At the same time, the memorial’s official dedication “to German unity,” as well as the tablet on its back, must have made this mapping of Turkish history onto the Berlin cityscape difficult. It read, “This flame shall burn until Germany’s unity is re-established and the right to homeland [*Heimat*] [has been] achieved.” In the context of this essay’s discussion of migrant engagements with Berlin’s commemorative landscape, it is significant that that we will probably never know. In these early years of the German–Turkish agreement on labor migration, “guest workers” usually returned to their respective countries after the fulfillment of their contracts. It is quite possible, therefore, that none of the people depicted still remain in Berlin. The memorial they posed in front of also no longer exists in its original form and dedication. Although it had initially been designed and funded by expellees and therefore expressed their reactionary political agenda, it has since undergone transformation. In 2000, partly a consequence of the move of the united German government to Berlin and expressive of a more general shift in the commemoration of World War II in the aftermath of the fall of the Berlin wall, the eternal flame on Theodor-Heuss-Square became Germany’s provisional national Memorial Against Flight and Expulsion pending the establishment of the much debated pan-European Centre against forced migration (Kulturausschuss, 2000). As a consequence, the provocative wording of the tablet was changed to the simple and less offensive warning: “Never again expulsions.”

The photograph, therefore, tells of a relationship with Germany’s history positioned curiously outside the narratives of German nationhood: a story of loose ends, of threads not entirely tied up with the national narrative and located at the fraying seams of the nation’s fabric. It is evidence of a relationship to Germany’s past that no longer exists and that, maybe similar to one of Walter Benjamin’s (1999) lost futures of the past, always already could not be. Its historical ineffectiveness notwithstanding, the example of this photograph might, with Benjamin, nevertheless be taken to open out avenues into “imagining different possible futures for the present.” (Robinson, 2006, p. 30), giving us a glimpse of the commemorative position of those whose stories usually remain out of focus when we talk about Germany’s history and whose stories only come in and out of view at surprising moments.

## The Ghosts of Berlin

The photograph of Turkish workers on Theodor-Heuss-Square is suggestive of how, as places in which the processes of forgetting, remembering, and imagining the past are constituted in concrete form, cities reverberate with symbolic power. A range of authors have proposed reading Berlin’s urban landscape in this sense as a microcosm of 20th-century German history in which the built environment reminds residents and visitors alike of the layers of history embedded in the very fabric of the city (Ladd, 1998; Neill, 2005; Till, 2004). Brian Ladd’s (1998) much acclaimed *Ghosts of Berlin* is a prominent example of these meditations on the relationship of space, architecture, and memory, as they are lived out in the everyday life of the metropole. In a comment that could have easily been written with the 1965 commemoration of the founding of the Turkish Republic in mind, Ladd evocatively refers to Berlin as a “haunted city,” where the sheer number of diverging histories sedimented in one cityscape make “buildings, ruins, and voids groan under the burden of painful memories” (pp. 1, 3). However, despite this expressed interest in the relationship between national narratives and their physical embodiment in a local commemorative landscape, studies like Ladd’s repeat the exclusivist tale of German historical discourse criticized



by Koonz, Loewy, and others. Similar to this general discourse, the commemoration of the Third Reich and an interpretive perspective on this past conceived as ethnically German dominate their interpretation of Berlin's historical cityscape. David Liebeskind, the architect of the city's Jewish Museum, has suggestively referred to the Holocaust as "not just another event in the time line of Berlin" but as the city's "axial redefinition" (quoted in Neill, 2005). Postwar immigration, in contrast, is habitually denied its own lieux de mémoire in such narratives of Berlin. Ladd (1998), for instance, although identifying Berlin with five different temporal levels competing for commemorative acknowledgement—"as royal residence, as industrial and imperial powerhouse, as Nazi capital, as Cold War battleground [and] as newly reunified capital" (p. 5)—has nothing to say about the sedimented history of "guest worker" immigration from the 1960s and 1970s. This silence is all the more troubling when we remember that the migrant population of some of the areas Ladd is interested in, such as Kreuzberg and Neukölln, has not only lived in these suburbs for half a century. They are also, as we have seen on Theodor-Heuss-Square, actively engaged in producing and shaping those local stories from national narratives that Ladd's study is interested in.

How would our conception of Berlin's commemorative landscape have to change so as to make room for these narratives? Here, the work of cultural geographer Karen Till (2004) is helpful for insisting that cities are more than mere "texts from which the past can be easily read." Instead of representing a single narrative of nationhood, Till suggests, urban landscapes contain "moments of memory and metaphor [. . .] that create and mediate social spaces and temporalities" (p. 75). Like Ladd taking recourse to a vocabulary of haunting, she suggest understanding Berlin's commemorative landscape as offering "possible entrances and exits to numerous passages through which (and where) whispers from pasts, echoes from anticipated futures, and haunted presences momentarily hover" (p. 76).

### Entrances, Passages, and Trapdoors

Before returning to the events on Theodor-Heuss-Square in October 1965, I want to discuss this notion of possible entrances and passages with the help of a second example from Berlin's commemorative landscape. It concerns the commemoration of the Mölln pogrom, one of the most brutal instances of racist violence in Germany's recent history. In December 1992, neo-Nazis had set fire to a house in the north German city of Mölln, leaving three members of a Turkish family dead. Directly after the event, Turkish shop owners in Berlin closed down their businesses for an hour, with banners in their windows demanding safety and equal rights for immigrants in Germany. As Gökçe Yurdakul and Michael Bodemann (2006) have pointed out and on whose description of the event I am drawing here, in its aesthetic form this protest drew on the established mode of commemorating the so-called *Reichskristallnacht*, the Nazi pogroms of November 1938 (p. 53).

Representatives of immigrant groups again aligned Turkish and Jewish suffering 10 years later, when, in 2002, the Berlin-Brandenburg Turkish Federation (Türkischer Bund Berlin Brandenburg; TBB) publicly commemorated the attack in Berlin. Crucial to the event was a highly symbolic wreath-laying ceremony at the *Neue Wache*, the so-called new watchhouse, Germany's central memorial "to the victims of war and tyranny" (*den Opfern vom Kriege und Gewaltherrschaft*). In German commemorative debates, *Neue Wache* is a highly contentious monument (Pickford, 2005).<sup>5</sup> Part of this controversy stems from the memorial's "multipurpose" dedication. A tablet on the outside of *Neue Wache* spells out an extensive list of victims, grouping together German civilians, fallen soldiers, and expellees with Jews, Sinti, and Roma and political activists. Those opposed to this notion of universal suffering do so on two grounds: First, in mourning German victims, they feel it remains silent on German guilt and responsibility for the events of the Third Reich. Second, in addressing the diverse groups indiscriminately, they accuse it of glossing over the different positions that these commemorative communities might

have on the German past. This criticism notwithstanding, it was this site—burdened already with this plethora of dedications and political controversy—that the TBB chose for the articulation of new German–Turkish histories.

Those invited by the TBB included Lea Rosh, Chair of the Committee for the Establishment of a Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, as well as leaders of the Jewish Community and the Jewish Cultural Association. The presence of the Jewish community was no coincidence, as Safer Çinar, spokesman of the TBB, pointed out in his address, which drew on similarities between the Mölln tragedy and Germany's anti-Semitic past. In fact, as Yurdakul and Bodeman (2006) argue, this alignment of Jewish and Turkish positions has gained increasing prominence in recent years (p. 45). However, in Çinar's speech, it did not result in a simple assertion of equivalence of Turkish and Jewish suffering. Although he employed the "Jewish trope" in order to "assert that German Turks are Germans" (Yurdakul & Bodemann 2006, p. 53), Çinar's subsequent statement complicated this commemorative position. Far from drawing a simple equation, he referred to the victims of Nazi crimes that the site commemorates by drawing on another perspective available from German historical discourse:

As the residents of this country, we must share the responsibility for this past crime. [. . .] I would like to formulate it as the following: There can be no excuse of late birth [. . .] and there can be no excuse of another birthplace. (Quoted in Yurdakul & Bodemann, 2006, p. 54)

With this statement Çinar referred to the former Chancellor Kohl's claim that the new generation of Germans were not to be held responsible for the nation's anti-Semitic past, because they were not born at the time—his much quoted "grace of late birth" (*Gnade der späten Geburt*). Rejecting Kohl's reasoning, Çinar allied himself with a left-liberal position on German history while simultaneously formulating a migrant claim to this past, emphasizing that there can be no exemption from the past's claim on the present either on the basis of late birth or on that of having been born elsewhere.

Within hegemonic German discourse on the past, the commemorative subject interpellated by Çinar occupies an impossible position beyond the either/or divide of German perpetrators and their victims in that that it oscillates between both commemorative locales. Here, it seems, is a subject that profits from the indiscriminate openness of the victim list on the tablet outside *Neue Wache* by treating it, on one hand, as an opening for Turkish stories of suffering and, on the other, as the site for articulating a Turkish–German commemorative position on Germany's historical crimes against Jews. Çinar enunciates a commemorative subject intriguingly reminiscent of the "impossible" location of immigrants in Australian discourse on the country's colonial past formulated by Ghassan Hage. Although often called on to participate and take responsibility for the country's colonial history, these groups, Hage (2001) asserts, "have shared some important realities [i.e., racism] with Indigenous people, too." Thus, equally capable of relating to Australia's history from the imaginary "we" of the colonizers, who desire to "come to terms" with their nation's colonial past, or the "we" of the colonized and their struggle for sovereignty, these migrant groups occupy, in Hage's terms, a "contradictory colonial location" (p. 352). In statements such as Çinar's, an equally "contradictory location" is accorded to Turkish migrants, ultimately introducing a moment of change into the stories that can be told about Germans, Jews, and Turks (Huysen, 2003).

The events on Theodor-Heuss-Square in 1965 might be understood in similar terms. Although the commemorative alignment of the positions of "guest workers" and expellees seems highly improbable when seen against the backdrop of Germany's political landscape, both groups, in fact, share a range of experiences (Bade, 1996, 2005) and pursue an agenda for political recognition that lets the "contradictory location" of the Turkish workers' 1965 celebration ring true in a metaphorical sense. Institutionally this shared experience is reflected, for instance, in a place like

the Kreuzberg Museum. Now dedicated to postwar labor migration history, the museum was initially founded in 1951 with the aim of displaying artifacts from the *Heimat* of the suburb's resident expellees (Düspohl, 2004). Such alignments have prompted Rainer Ohliger (2003) to argue for the inclusion of expellee migration into the envisaged German Immigration Museum.

At the same time, we should not forget that these are by no means innocent associations. German expellees and their demands for commemoration have repeatedly upset Germany's relationship with its eastern neighbors, most recently with the debate over the aforementioned pan-European Centre Against Expulsions. In 2006, this debate prompted Jaroslaw Kaczynski, then Prime Minister of Poland, to remark that "nothing good will come out of it [the centre] for Poland, Germany or Europe" (quoted in Landler, 2006), expressing the fear that the Centre might suggest a moral equivalence between the woes those persecuted by the Nazis and those of the Germans in a war they started. Theodor-Heuss-Square is itself evocative of the danger carried by ghostly entrances and passages. Although opening out avenues for formulating new stories about the past, these might also be trapdoors that establish a copresence with past nightmares better left untouched. Built in 1902 as Reichskanzlerplatz (Reichs-Chancellor Square), when the city was extending westward, the square had been renamed Adolf Hitler Square in 1933. It was then part of Speer's colossal plan for the Aryan city of Germania and would have constituted the western end of the city's monumental east-west axis. Plans were made for a Mussolini Memorial of 40 meters height to be constructed here, in demonstration of Italo-German fascist brotherhood. However, only the pedestal of this monumental structure had been completed by the end of World War II; the very pedestal on which the Turkish workers clubs gathered in the 1960s and where the current Memorial Against Flight and Expulsion is now located. And not enough with this National Socialist past haunting the commemorations both of expellee and "guest worker" histories staged here, another unforeseen "entrance" is opened up by the demands for the right to homeland (*Heimat*) expressed on the expellee's memorial. It uncannily echoes the plight of those Armenians deported in 1915, as well as that of resident Greeks forced to leave Turkish territory in the early 1920s. Thus, in a final twist and another layer of meaning, the monument's demand for *Heimat* carries a message that, in 1965, seriously troubled the celebration of the founding of the Turkish Republic that was staged in front of it.

## Conclusion

According to Hanno Loewy (2002), "We have not even begun to discuss seriously what kind of social space is needed for an intercultural, inter-historical apprehension of history" (p. 13). Although there has been a heightened interest in the function of historiography in "constructing" or "engineering" a national fabric and in contributing to notions of citizenship, the position of migrants and their histories with regard to these narratives are hardly ever taken into account. More attention to their commemorative practices, however, would make available the opportunity of narrating history partly "against the telos of the centre" and thus opening up our historical imagination and the notions of citizenship it underpins for "much larger, more open but also more conflicting interpretations" (Motte & Ohliger, 2002). The fraught histories embedded in Berlin's cityscape, this essay has shown, might then become something of a metaphorical entrance for migrants to insert their own pasts—not as mere add-ons to the hegemonic narrative and not in terms of a simple exchange of position of, say, Jewish and Turkish or expellee and "guest worker" suffering but in ways that metaphorically draw on what Leslie Adelson (2000) calls "touching tales" between their diverse histories. Such touching tales bring into being new commemorative subjects and new narratives about the past.

In recent years, the city has begun to actively engage with the entangled, intercultural narratives that shape its past. Berlin's integration policy from 2007 calls for a new memory culture that might help foster a sense of belonging among its migrant population. The report describes this

new memory culture as no longer solely concerned with “the commemorative celebration of the cultural traditions of the migrants’ homelands.” Rather, it also includes “the collective memory of immigration to Germany. The history of immigration is part and parcel of German history and of Berlin’s history and must be adequately reflected and represented as such” (author’s translation; Piening, 2011, p. 6).<sup>6</sup> One of the initiatives subsequently implemented by the senate’s commissioner for integration has been The Berlin Route of Migration. In 2011, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the labor recruitment agreement between Germany and Turkey, four “memory containers” were temporarily placed in locations relevant to the city’s multilayered migration history. As such, the installation formed part of a larger project that aims to identify migration’s sites of memory and make them visible in the cityscape (Raiser & Türk, 2011).

### Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: The author would like to acknowledge the financial support received from the Australian Research Council (Project ID: LX0668626) and the German Research Foundation (Project ID: 447 AUS-113/25/0-1).

### Notes

1. “Die Deutschen haben in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten viel Energie auf die schwierige Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit verwendet. Es ist an der Zeit, die Lehren jener Beschäftigung auf die Gegenwart anzuwenden und die letzten Spuren des jus sanguines aus dem Feld zu tilgen, in dem entschieden wird, wie Deutschland repräsentiert wird.”
2. “Das kollektive Gedächtnis der jungen Deutsch-Türken, der Spätaussiedler, der Kriegsflüchtlinge und der Asylanten [*sic*] entzieht sich notwendigerweise unserem Blick.”
3. Previous nonpermanent exhibitions on migration history include “Gastarbeiter—Fremdarbeiter” (1975, organized by the DAAD in Bochum); “Türkei—Heimat von Menschen in unserer Stadt” and “Türkische Mitbürger in Hamburg” (1976, Hamburg); “Morgens Deutschland—abends Türkei” (1980, the first of a number of projects undertaken by the Kreuzberg Museum, Berlin); “Fremde Heimat: Eine Geschichte der Einwanderung aus der Türkei” (1998, organized by DOMiT, Cologne); “40 Jahre Fremde Heimat” (2001, organized by DOMiT, Cologne); “Migrationen 1500-2005” (2005, organized by the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin); “Flucht, Vertreibung, Integration” (2005, exhibition on German expellees in Haus der Geschichte, Bonn); “Projekt Migration” (2005, exhibition, symposium, and film festival, Cologne) and “Das Bild des Fremden in Frankreich und Deutschland” (2009, Cité Nationale de l’Histoire de l’immigration and the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin).
4. “Es gibt heute schon Quartiere, die so sind, dass man sagen kann: Dort befindet man sich nicht in Deutschland.”
5. Henry Pickford (2005) describes, how, when opened in 1993 by then chancellor Helmut Kohl, the building’s outside was cordoned off by steel barricades and protected by 800 riot police in full body armor, with plastic shields and leather truncheons. The protestors gathered outside the building objected to the site’s militaristic origins: The building’s foundations date back to the late 18th century, when it housed the guards of the Prussian king. Since the late 19th century, the building’s function has been solely ceremonial, nevertheless with strong militaristic connotations. It became the national monument of honor to the dead of World War I in the Weimar Republic and was the site for celebrations of militarism and heroic death for Fatherland and *Führer* in the years of National Socialism. In German Democratic Republic times, it had been the memorial “to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism,” embedded yet again in militaristic traditions of commemorating fallen heroes (Pickford, 2005).
6. “Erinnerung ist jedoch nicht nur die Erinnerung an die kulturellen Traditionen der Herkunftsregionen, sondern umfasst auch das kollektive Gedächtnis der Einwanderungen nach Deutschland. Die

Einwanderungsgeschichte ist ein Teil der deutschen und der Berliner Geschichte und muss als solche angemessen reflektiert und dargestellt werden.”

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