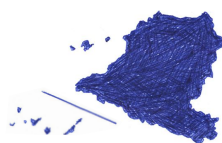


REMIXING EUROPE

migrants media representation imagery

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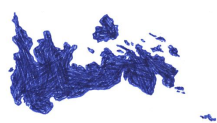
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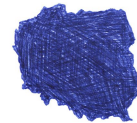
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Editors’ Note

Throughout the publication are quotes, marked in blue, from interviews with young media-makers, most of whom have a migrant background. The interviews were conducted during the course of 2013 within the framework of “Remapping Europe – A Remix Project Highlighting the Migrant’s Perspective”. This project by Doc Next Network involved these young media-makers in remixing media conversations around migration in Poland, Spain, Turkey and the UK. A number of stills from media works that were originally produced within the project have also been used. The full interviews, media works and all other material deriving from the project, are available online at www.remappingeurope.eu.

“If they were able to conceive or dream another time, perhaps they would be able to live in it.”

Chris Marker

“All creative works are derivative.”

Nina Paley

PREFACE

Remixing Europe

Migrants, Media, Representation, Imagery

VIVIAN PAULISSEN,
EUROPEAN CULTURAL FOUNDATION

mi-grant (mi'grənt): n. Someone or something that moves from one region to another by chance or plan.

How are migrants portrayed in mainstream media in Europe? How does this affect the imagery of what a migrant is, or of the Europe we live in or the Europe we're heading towards? What are the perspectives of migrants? *Remixing Europe* is a challenging publication in its attempt to answer some of these questions. It is part of *Remapping Europe*, a programme by the Doc Next Network that investigates the tools and concepts of remixing media as a method of re-viewing, re-investigating and re-considering prevailing imageries of migrants in European societies.

“One must be as wary of images as of words” as one of Europe’s great film directors Harun Farocki has put it. There is no such thing as an aseptic or pure image: every image provokes a multiplicity of imageries, gestures, thoughts, ideas, prejudices, and ways of looking. Both in form and in content, this publication is unconventional in its approach to deconstructing and debating some prevailing imageries of migrants across Europe and specifically in Spain, the UK, Turkey and Poland.

In this publication, four individual case studies of incidents that occurred recently in the media provide the starting points for an analysis of country-specific, cultural and historical contexts that influence public perception of, and general attitudes to, migrants and migration. An eclectic mix of images from mainstream media sources – footage “found” and introduced by the cultural organisations of the Doc Next Network – represent how migrants are portrayed, or in some cases, made invisible in each country. The images are snapshots of the representation of migrants in media: they show how migrants are stereotyped, criminalised, racially categorised, objectified and subjected to hate speech, all of which serves to deny their individual voices and agency. The images have been taken out of their original contexts;

in this publication they are framed by and juxtaposed with each other. They are further remixed with facts from different sources and with in-depth reflections from journalists, academic researchers, artists and activists. These authors unravel how the migrant condition is primarily represented as something problematic in mainstream media, and thereby challenge existing prejudices and assumptions.

In Spain, the publication considers the compelling case of the Ecuadorian activist Aída Quinatoa, who is a prominent leader of social movements in the wake of the country's sub-prime mortgage crisis. In an interview with Juan Luis Sánchez, she argues that the mainstream media has never really been interested in the precarious condition of migrants in the Spanish housing crisis. Carlos Delclós confronts the unpleasant spectres of representation, race and post-colonialism in Spanish media, while Sami Nair redefines the migrant condition in relation to identity and mixture.

In the UK, the government's Home Office caused a public scandal with the launch in 2013 of a media campaign targeting illegal migrants with mobile billboards that read: "go home or face arrest". Sarita Malik deconstructs the portrayal of migrants and minorities on British television and how the idea of "home" has come to accrue racist overtones. Jamie Bartlett examines the public perception of migrants in social media, in relation to more mainstream news sources within the migration debate. David Somerset zooms in on the migrant's perspective in the country's history of cinema with iconic films from the archives of the British Film Institute.

The Turkish case focuses on how internal migrants in Istanbul, who are forced to move due to urban transformation processes in the city, are criminalised and dehumanised in public opinion. The country's recent Gezi Protests brought an enormous amount of press attention to "right to the city" movements in Turkey. The question of how urban transformation affects internal migrants is explored in an essay by Imre Azem based on the footage of his film *Ekümenopolis* (2011). Sırrı Süreyya Önder considers migration and media within the wider context of post-Gezi politics in Turkey. Tahribad-ı Isyan, a group of young hip-hop artists from areas affected by urban transformation, voice their personal experiences and their right to the city.

In Poland, Ukrainian female domestic workers have been pilloried as submissive, and sexualised in the media. Michał Bilewicz has engaged in a public polemic around these issues on a political news blog. In this publication, Bilewicz further explores the phenomenon of hate speech in Polish media and addresses the social implications of such language. Krzysztof Czyżewski tests the boundaries of borders, which, particularly in Poland, symbolise the contradiction of being torn between Eastern and Western Europe.

Beyond these country-specific cases, broader notions of migration, race, representation and borders are deepened in an overarching chapter. Fatima El-Tayeb provokes confronting insights on the European attitude towards "otherness". Daniella Berghahn routes us through the evolution of diasporic cinema and migrant

representations of film in Europe, and finally, Abu Ali imagines possible imageries of borders and migration.

This publication certainly does not pretend to set out one definitive viewpoint or conclusion regarding the imagery of migrants in Europe and the European media. Imagery is a complex phenomenon that is always under construction. It is strongly rooted in public opinion, which both shapes, and is shaped, by an ever-changing media landscape in which consumers of media have become its producers as well. At the same time, within and beyond the physical borders of the continent, there is no shared notion of what "Europe" means.

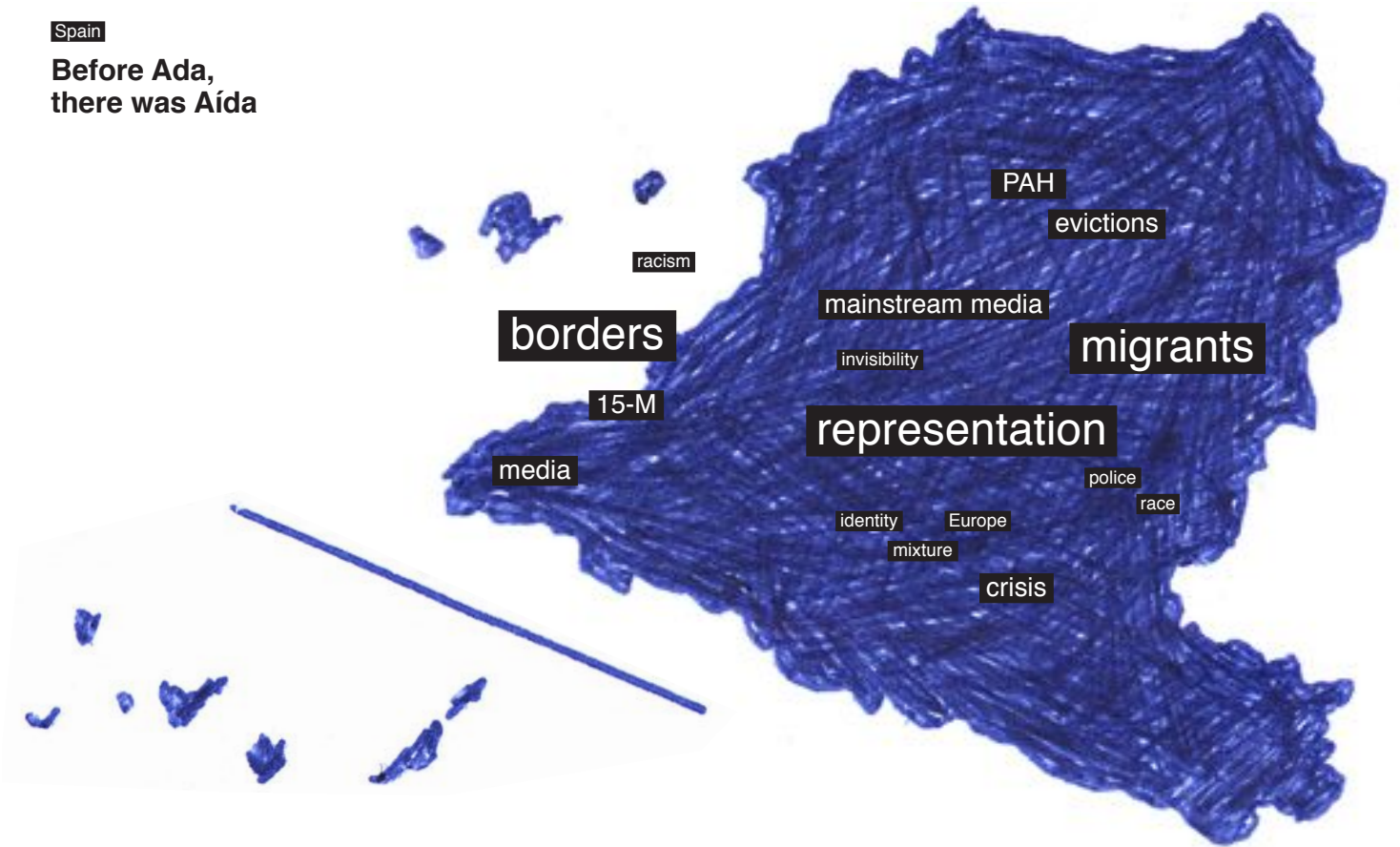
The act of migration is a blank space on the map: it is tied to no place and it is rooted only in movement and in the transgression of borders. That a border is a constructed entity, drawn on a map, has to be taken for granted. However, to at least mentally reshape and re-investigate notions of the border – to remap – we must acknowledge different interpretations of "locality", of "region" or of "home". We must include the personal perspectives of people who migrate and we should not shy away from the realities of Europe's legacy of complex migration and colonialism. Only then can we approach the border, not as a fixed line, but as a shifting entity that is produced by our imagination and that produces its own imagery.

Throughout this publication, quotes of young migrants in Europe, with whom the Doc Next Network works, provide a proof of this: thought-provoking individual comments on the issues raised in this publication, they raise a counter-perspective to common generalisations about migrants in mainstream European media.

In its attempt to remix prevailing imagery of migrants with new perspectives, does this publication reveal a new perspective on Europe itself? Perhaps. More importantly, however, *Remixing Europe* is a document that contributes to the living archive that is Europe. It is significant as a landmark within the larger discourses of contemporary Europe, its inhabitants, travellers and its media. It is significant not just as a merely journalistic document, academic, nor creative publication, but as a remix of all of these approaches. And it is significant, as a remix, in that it highlights diverse and inclusive perspectives on migrants, migration and Europe.

Spain

Before Ada,
there was Aída



Before Ada, there was Aída



Image: Olmo Calvo

Aída Quinatoa, President of the National Committee of Ecuadorians in Spain (CONADEE) and spokeswoman in Madrid for *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH, the Platform of Mortgage Victims). Born in the community of Santa Teresita, Ecuador, Aída Quinatoa has campaigned for the rights of peasants and indigenous people since she was an adolescent. Following the 1998 financial crisis in Ecuador, Aída, like many other Ecuadorians, was forced to leave her country in search of a better life for herself and her family. The destination for most of them was Spain, but many also moved to France, Italy, the United Kingdom and Germany. By the 2007/2008 financial crisis, there were 800,000 registered Ecuadorian citizens in Spain, and probably even more unregistered.

“For more than a decade, many of us have taken the toughest jobs: we have worked in construction, in cleaning, in transport, in agriculture, cared for children and older people... we have clearly contributed to the enrichment of this country while, at great sacrifice, we sent most of our income to our country, also contributing to and strengthening its economy. Banks, always eager for new clients, realised that the size of immigrant community offered a new sector to augment their income, and began the aggressive acquisition of new clients for their usurious loans: the first essential aim was the acquisition of property.” – Aída Quinatoa



Ada Colau, the principle spokesperson for PAH in front of a “Stop Evictions” sign that became the movement’s symbol. Ada Colau’s name has become well-known in Spain; she regularly appears in the Spanish media.

On 5 February 2013, Ada Colau personally defended the proposals contained in PAH’s People’s Legislative Initiative to the Committee on Economy of Congress. Besides lawmakers, this committee included a senior member of the Spanish banking association. “This man is a criminal, and should be treated like one,” Ada Colau commented. “It is so obvious that the behavior of the banks in this country has been criminal,” she later told the *Financial Times* in an interview. “Housing is the principal reason for the precarious situation of Spanish families. When the money stops, when there is no work, the first problem for families is their house”, she added. On 14 March 2013, the European Court of Justice ruled that Spanish laws on evictions did not guarantee citizens sufficient protection against unfair terms in mortgages, and infringed Community Law.

El Mono Político interviewed Aída on 15 March 2013 and wrote: “Evictions: the problem of immigrants has turned into the problem of everyone. (...) a British newspaper correspondent told *El Mono Político* that he was surprised by the low public profile of immigrants in the debate around forced evictions, given that they had been the first to stand their ground individually and to form groups to resist evictions, for the simple reason that their vulnerability placed them in the frontline. It was a silent, harsh and invisible battle until they secured the support of the 15-M movement and other platforms, and of lawyers and even judges who believed in their cause, as happened with Mohamed Aziz, the Moroccan whose case recently turned the Spanish mortgage system upside down thanks to a ruling from the European Court.”

Ecuadorian migrant Aída Quinatoa, president of the National Committee of Ecuadorians in Spain and spokeswoman in Madrid for the Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH), describes (...) the origins of that struggle and the problems faced by thousands of Spaniards and foreigners who cannot afford their mortgage repayments. An unflinching testimony of the injustices and abuses of a system that has proved incapable of limiting financial powers.”

El Mono Político is an independent digital platform that claims to be the first independent Spanish newsblog with information and analysis of the economic and political sphere.
www.elmonopolitico.com



Images: www.simonopolitico.com

The case of Aída Quinatoa described in this chapter is another example of the invisible representation of migrants in social movements and the lack of media discussion about this in Spain. According to Sami Nair: “The case of Quinatoa is not about a migrants’ social movement in which she is acting as a migrant, but a Spanish civil society movement in which she is acting as a Spanish citizen.”

Introduction (ES)

LUCAS TELLO, ZEMOS98

Aída Quinatoa was one of the many migrants who came to Spain following the massive economic crisis in Ecuador between 1998 and 2002. An activist in her home country, she worked as a cleaner in Madrid, but also became involved with the Ecuadorian National Association in Spain (CONADEE).

Living in Madrid, Aída was determined to find a decent home. Approaching a bank she was told that if she bought a house, she could obtain a profit of 120 per cent from its value, and could bring her family to live with her in Spain. Aída found a flat, signed a mortgage and put down a large sum of money as a deposit. She was told that she had to offer her home as collateral to another Ecuadorian family, in a system of cross-guarantees. Then the Spanish economy went into crisis, and one day in 2008, the bank called Aída, without notice, to repossess her home: the people who had cross-guaranteed her had stopped paying the mortgage deed.

Aída led a march on the offices of *Caja de Ahorros del Mediterráneo* (CAM), the bank that had given her and many other

migrants their loans. “Banks don’t like people protesting at their doors, so they accepted the keys to the other flat in return for cancelling the debt.”

From then on, CONADEE developed its aims. From an association preoccupied with the promotion of Ecuadorian values and culture in Spain they became directly involved with the Spanish housing crisis. In 2010 CONADEE tried to stop the eviction of Julio César Rodríguez, an Ecuadorian who had bought two properties, encouraged by the bank Caja Madrid.

In 2008, at the height of the crisis, Julio César lost his job, and two years later he received an eviction order. He tried to pay off his debt by selling some land in Ecuador and borrowing some money, but his debt kept increasing. His initial mortgage loan in 2010 had been for €260,000, but his debt had reached €315,000. Eventually he went to the bank to offer them his flat in return for his debt, but the bank would not accept it.

This was the first eviction Aída’s association tried to stop, but they were unsuccessful. There were too few people in-

involved, and although the association tried to involve the media, press, radio and television, no one showed up to a protest that seemed only to be the concern of the Ecuadorian community.

Today Aída Quinatoa is also a spokesperson for *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* or PAH (the Platform of Mortgage Victims) in Madrid. PAH is a movement that began in 2009 and campaigns for the right to a decent home. PAH grew in strength with the eruption of popular activism awoken by the 15-M movement, also known as the *Indignados* movement.

The 15-M movement began when, on 15 May 2011, a group of people gathered at the Plaza del Sol in Madrid, to demonstrate against the Law of Sustainable Economy. This demonstration was dissolved by the police, but over the following days people started to camp in the main squares of the cities of Spain in an explosion of protest and social unrest against the government's politics. 15-M is a grassroots movement that has developed since 2011 in many heterogeneous ways, inspiring other movements: the *Marea Verde* (Green Wave) standing up for the quality of public education, the *Marea Blanca* (White Wave) in defence of the health service and finally PAH's campaign for housing rights.

PAH has been successful in gaining the attention of the mass media (although this has not been an easy task), particularly in the last year. PAH has effectively managed to change public opinion on the housing situation, highlighting its injustice.

Ada Colau is a Spanish activist and campaigner against housing evictions who

is the organisation's principal and charismatic spokesperson. She takes part in prime-time TV debates, writes a column in one of the main celebrity magazines, has been interviewed by national newspapers and is a well-respected voice following her appearance in the Spanish Congress. Her important work has made a huge difference to the visibility of PAH in mainstream media and discourses in Spain.

Aída is a much less prominent spokesperson. In her view, "If I had been the only PAH spokesperson, the media would have paid much less attention to us. Although Ecuadorians have been taken into account in all the internal debates of the movement, we continued to be left out of the debate in the media."

Aída Quinatoa remarked in an interview with *El Mono Político*: "The housing problem has become collectivised," but there are still problems that only affect migrant collectives, invisible problems produced by government policies. These problems are invisible because they occur at the margins, margins where there is carte blanche for abuse. Socio-economic conditions force migrants to group together in communities, in ghettos where there is no contact with society.

Detention centres (and the private security companies that work for the government without any official regulation) keep on piling people in, up to the 60 day maximum. Migrants continue to take cheap labour jobs in subhuman conditions; migrant women continue to work as domestic workers. Considering migrants' problems as our own problems requires us to avert our gaze from the mass media, looking instead at the holes in the system,

fighting against the escalation of indifference, assuming the obligation of spotlighting the processes of marginalisation that takes place day after day.

Despite her position at the forefront of the fight against housing evictions since 2007, why has Aída's story not been heard by the media? Why do migrants still have so little media visibility in the demands against evictions, taking into account that they are one of the most exposed social groups due to their economic fragility?

What started as a migrant's problem has become everyone's problem. The media covers the social unrest, the uprisings, the protests. In this chapter, we only aim to highlight another perspective, that of the migrants and the battle against discrimination, social injustice and for recognition – not *as opposed to* the important work of Ada Colau, and the many other prominent figures of the social movements in Spain, but as a means of revealing the importance of the migrant's continuing struggle to be seen and heard in public discourse.

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blogs.20minutos.es; www.theguardian.com;
www.elmonopolitico.com



Image: Barrio Canino

Aída Quinatoa, interviewed on the radio show *Barrio Canino, Ágora Sol*, an independent radio station in Madrid that is affiliated with 15-M.

Before Ada Colau, there was Aída Quinatoa

JUAN LUIS SÁNCHEZ

“If Spain wasn’t racist, people would have listened to what we migrants were saying, and avoided everything that came later with the evictions,” says Aída Quinatoa in her soft-spoken and calm way, but without mincing her words. This Ecuadorian woman in her forties has been fighting against the injustice of forced evictions since 2007, when it was still an invisible social problem for the majority of Spaniards but a harsh reality for thousands of immigrants.

In a few short months, Aída Quinatoa went from being on an electoral list for the indigenous movement in her municipality in the Ecuadorian mountains, where she also worked as a legal adviser, to cleaning houses in Spain. She arrived in Madrid in 2000 and quickly managed to secure a decent income, first as a temporary worker and then with a home help company. From the outset she was actively involved in the National Committee of Ecuadorians in Spain (CONADEE), of which she is the current president, and which became the seed for the Madrid chapter of the *Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca* (PAH). In 2008, the crisis had already hit

the weakest link of the social chain. In the case of immigrants, they had nobody to support them, and barely any family or social networks to help in bridging the gap that began to widen into a crater. Quinatoa remembers how the CONADEE office began to fill up with people who were desperate about their mortgages, and how the three lawyers working there were swamped by the demand for even the most basic legal assistance: writing letters to the banks, translating documents, accompanying people to their branches... A major bottleneck had formed that they could not get around.

A date to remember: on 20 December 2008, the eight Ecuadorian associations that existed in Madrid at the time – of which only one still survives today – organised a demonstration. It was the first demonstration against foreclosure evictions. “On that day five years ago, we were making exactly the same demands that were later set out in the Citizen’s Legislative Initiative (ILP) that was submitted to Parliament in 2013: stop foreclosures, create affordable public rental housing, and apply non-recourse debt retroactively,” Quinatoa remembers.

They drafted a letter to the President of the Spanish Government and another to the President of Ecuador, Rafael Correa.

None of the major media outlets paid attention to the demonstration. Nobody listened to the warning voice of the Ecuadorians. “The media have never showed any interest in us. The racism is obvious.”

“Communities of migrants are badly represented in TV, some of them do not even appear and, of course, we never see how they work to improve their tough reality, because for the media it seems they do not have any rights.”

Lucas Tello (Seville, Spain)

There is a video on YouTube that captures this protest by a few hundred people affected by the mortgage crisis; five years later, after a great deal of public debate about forced evictions, it has been viewed less than 500 times, and the only comment, dated soon after the video was posted, says: “I doubt that anybody forced you to sign a mortgage. If your lack of realism and common sense got you into this, now you’ll have to grin and bear it like everybody else.” This was the majority attitude from the start of the crisis until 2011, and in particular 2012, when public opinion began to soften and accept that when a system breaks down, the blame must fall mostly on those who generate the rules and conditions of use.

The Ecuadorian protest was not a desperate call for charity; it was a premonition of what was to come. “Huge Demonstration Against Mortgage Fraud” was the title on the posters and emails sent by the organisers of another protest in 2009, along with a text that included the words “cross guarantees”, “margins on the Euribor” and “irregularities”. And another premonition: “a problem for all nationalities”. The banner displayed at Puerta del Sol alluded to the fact that Spaniards could also fall victim to “the scam”.

A blogpost written by an Ecuadorian and an Argentinean on the website of the newspaper *20minutos.es* was the only spot anywhere near the media production hubs that has a record of any reference to the action. The 20 comments posted in response to the item run along the lines of: “fraud? Nobody held a gun to your head to make you sign the mortgages”.

Ecuadorians, along with Moroccans, make up the largest migrant group in Spain. The common language makes their integration a little easier, and the majority have settled in Madrid, Barcelona and Murcia. The first working groups at the incipient platform known as the *Plataforma del Problema de las Hipotecas* (which later became PAH) in Madrid were made up of some 50 people, and the big meetings, which brought together up to 1,500 people affected by the mortgage crisis, were held in the function room at the headquarters of the *Unión General de Trabajadores* (UGT, General Union of Workers, a major trade union historically affiliated with the Spanish Socialist Workers’ Party). “UGT didn’t use its media capacity to support our cause, even though we asked them to,” says Quinatoa, biting her tongue.

This was not the only divide. There was a huge gap between the Ecuadorians’ actions against evictions and the mobilisations organised by housing activist movements such as *V de Vivienda* (H for Housing, a housing organisation that preceded PAH). For years, large and small demonstrations and sit-ins had been held in Barcelona, Seville, Madrid, Valencia and Zaragoza to protest against a property bubble that the elites were still refusing to acknowledge, and the excessive escalation of property prices that made it extremely difficult for a whole generation of young people to enter the housing market.

A generational demand for access to housing was disconnected from the protests of their neighbours who were losing theirs. So much so that Aída Quinatoa, who has been living in Spain since 2002, with housing problems since 2005, and involved

in studying the situation since 2007, only found out about those mobilisations in this interview.

In 2009 and 2010, CONADEE tried to stop ten of the evictions that had been detected by gathering at the doors of the houses and protesting at the branches of the banks. They did not manage to stop a single one. “Our numbers were few and there were always a lot of police around,” says Quinatoa. These days, 50 people are enough to stop an eviction.

They were lacking something else: legitimacy. “The first time that the mainstream media paid attention to us was in 2010.” A journalist working for *El País*, Pablo X. Sandoval, wanted to hear some cases first-hand after the president of Ecuador, Rafael Correa, publicly complained about the “mortgage drama” that was affecting his countrymen in Spain. The cases were reported in such a way that the problem appeared limited only to migrants, and almost exclusively to Ecuadorians. Not as a problem that affects society as a whole. “Evicted from a Future in Spain” was the headline for the main article in the report. That same year, 2010, a journalist from private TV network Telecinco attended a meeting of people affected by the mortgage crisis, with her property deeds in her hand. “She came along that day, asked for information, told us that she had the same problem herself, that she was going to be evicted, and then she never came back,” Aída remembers. In 2010, it was shameful to be the victim of an eviction.

The first forced eviction stopped in Madrid
It was 9.30 am and warm enough to wear short sleeves. Aída Quinatoa arrived at



Image: PAH Málaga

Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH) is a Spanish grassroots organisation that campaigns for the right to a home. PAH, composed of people affected by subprime mortgages, is a social movement struggling for decent housing, which emerged in Barcelona in February 2009 and now exists throughout Spain. It surged in response to the real estate crisis of 2008 that triggered the bursting of the Spanish housing bubble and became a strong part of the movements that later formed to contest austerity politics in the context of the sovereign debt crisis. As such, PAH also came to constitute a part of the 15-M movement that emerged in May 2011.

In June, 2013, PAH was awarded the European Citizen's prize by the European Parliament. In March and April, 2013, this social platform carried out a campaign of *escraches*, a type of direct action in which a group of activists goes to the homes or workplaces of politicians, banks or party headquarters in order to publicly condemn their political and economic decisions. These peaceful actions were strongly criticised by the Spanish Government and the ruling conservative People's Party (PP). They occurred while the mortgages law was being debated in Parliament. María Dolores de Cospedal, the PP's national secretary accused PAH of being "pure Nazi" and a violent threat to the rules of democratic representation. The government's delegate in Madrid, Cristina Cifuentes, also from the PP, accused PAH of being "pro-ETA" (an armed Basque nationalist and separatist organisation); in April 2013 Cifuentes stated that *escraches* are "incompatible with democracy" and establish "threats and intimidation as well as organised coercion." In January 2013, PAH was awarded with the 2012 National Human Rights Award, which is given every year by the Human Rights Association of Spain.

Sources: www.eldiario.es on 16 January 2013, *El País*, 13 April 2013 and *Público*, 26 March 2013.

number 14, Naranjo Street in Madrid to try to stop an eviction, as she had done a dozen times before at different addresses, without success. But that morning would be different. That morning, three years after the first gathering of Ecuadorians, the vulnerable were no longer alone.

It was 15 June 2011 and the Occupy camp at Puerta del Sol had just been taken down after almost a month as the main physical symbol of the 15-M movement. The feeling of being fed up and having become slaves to the camp was transformed into a terrible vertigo, a fear of the void. Now that we have left the square, how do we continue in order to stay together? A message on Twitter pointed the way: number 14, Naranjo Street, 9.30 am.

"I doubt the media could get any closer to our reality and survive financially. So, we have to create our own local media, working with collectives and associations,

producing contents from bottom to top, in small groups, rather than looking for it in big corporations."

David Gallardo (Seville, Spain)

The eviction of Lebanese man Anuar Jalil and Bulgarian woman Tatyana Roevo became a media event. Hundreds of people and dozens of journalists squeezed into the kind of village-like street that is typical in neighbourhoods like Tetuán in Madrid. Anuar waved from the balcony, moved and grateful. Tatyana remained in the background, overwhelmed. Before midday, the judicial committee and the police turned up. It was impossible for them to get through. And they didn't. The eviction was stopped. PAH had stopped its first eviction in Madrid.

Aída Quinatoa's soft, somewhat emotional voice could hardly make itself heard over the shouts in the background – "Go on, go on, not a single step back!" – in her first interviews. "We are going to stop all evictions from now on," she told me that day on the corner of Cactus and Naranjo Streets. PAH went on to become a social phenomenon, with the support of more than 70 per cent of Spanish society, according to official figures, and made its way into the



Image: V de Vivienda

"No vas a tener casa en la puta vida" (which roughly translates as, "you'll never have a house in your fucking life") was a 2006/2007 poster campaign developed by various anti-gentrification movements in Barcelona. Other slogans were "Stop Speculation" or "Housing is a right, not a business". Movements like *V de Vivienda* (H for Housing) confronted the actions of Barcelona's government in setting tourism above the basic welfare of citizens and the role of arts and culture in facilitating gentrification. The movement for decent housing in Spain is formed of various social groups that have been a part of the demonstrations for more than ten years. The first organisation that had an impact on this problem was the Platform for Decent Housing, established in 2003. PAH originated from this background.

Source: www.sindominio.net

heart of popular culture. To give some idea of this: in the first week of March 2013, the free gift that gossip magazine *Pronto* offered to lure readers was "11 stickers so you can join the *Stop Desahucios* campaign," that is, stickers with the anti-eviction logo. Before this, the ILP had been a license to take the debate into the media and the Parliament, where activist Ada Colau called the bankers "criminals" and the major parties "accomplices".

The media were also accomplices. "Journalism has been complicit in an unfair and perverse system, covering up a great injustice", Aída says. "Their eyes were shut and 15-M has been the awakening." But Aída did not become well-known. The names of the usual media spokespersons were the Spanish-sounding Chema, Rafa, Ada, Feli, Iván. "If I had been the only PAH spokesperson, the media would have paid much less attention to us", Quinotoa argues. "Although Ecuadorians have been taken into account in all the internal debates of the movement, we continued to be left out of the debate in the media."

Using this fact strategically in its favour, PAH has never contemplated differences of nationality in its profile of people affected by the mortgage crisis: "When people talk about evictions now they do not distinguish between Spaniards and immigrants. It is an overall social problem, not just because it affects a lot of Spaniards, but because the faces of people affected by the mortgage crisis that are shown in the media are no longer just the faces of migrants."

*This text is the result of a conversation between Juan Luis Sánchez and Aída Quinotoa for both Sánchez's book *The 10 Waves of Change and Remixing Europe*. They met each other in Madrid in 2013.*

The Profile, the Reality and the Barrier

The incident was not reported in the media

CARLOS DELCLÓS

On 24 July 2013, the Catalan *Mossos d'Esquadra* (the police force of Catalonia) evicted a squat from a factory in Barcelona's Besòs neighbourhood. For two years, the space had been home to a community of over 300 scrap-metal collectors, artists, musicians and other informal sector workers, mostly West African men. The eviction was an agonising affair, as dejected men and women stepped out into homelessness, crying hot tears, wearing bootlegged Spanish football jerseys or hats bearing the F.C. Barcelona logo. Fearing a rehash of a contested eviction in the same neighbourhood months earlier, during which the police used teargas against the inhabitants, they had decided to pack their things and leave without confronting the *Mossos*. Yet the headline on the website of Catalonia's main newspaper *La Vanguardia* reads: "Eviction in Poblenou: 'I will enter that factory even if they kill me'".¹ The video accompanying the story shows one man shouting at onlookers to stop filming what is happening, accusing them of voyeurism. Another yells angrily

at a man off-camera, complaining that they are being treated like animals. What the video does not show is the instant before that, when the off-camera man had berated him with racist insults as he gathered his belongings into a shopping cart. Nor does it show the man's fascist tattoos.

Nearly three weeks later, I am at a small bar in the increasingly gentrified Raval neighbourhood with my girlfriend, my sister and my friends, the Gambian dancehall/reggae artists Ghetto Solja, Original T SB, P-Izzy and their crew. Original T is leading the small crowd through a breathless tour of hits and original dubplates, and a dance crew of teenage girls is giggling in the corner as they prepare to perform with Ghetto Solja. Suddenly, the music cuts off. Several municipal police officers walk into the bar, telling everyone to leave. As we do so, they stop all of the black men present and start frisking them. I approach one of the officers and ask him why they are intervening, expecting him to cite a noise complaint, since that is not unusual in a

city as densely populated as Barcelona. To my surprise, he tells me that it is a routine inspection, which seems strange at 1:30 AM. Then I ask him if the searches they are carrying out are random, since I only see them frisking people with black skin. "What do you care?" he responds. All of the African men have their documents in order and no drugs in their possession. The incident was not reported in the media.

Independent of the party holding office, the Spanish government has denied the existence of racial profiling for years. Yet the country's main police agency, the *Dirección General de la Policía*, saw the need to expressly prohibit all racial profiling on 21 May 2012. And despite this ban, on 8 July 2013 in the Majorcan municipality of Calvià, Lt. Commander of the Civil Guard Francisca Puerto instructed officers to treat people "of the black race" differently than any other group, "regardless of their nationality, origin and the reason for their detention". Their differential treatment involved not being read their rights and not being allowed to contact their families until the unit's chief officer arrived, which in many cases could be one or several days after the detention. While the leaked memo that broke the story is currently the only formal institutional evidence of such extreme differential treatment, a recent study by the Human Rights Institute at the Universitat de València and Oxford University confirms that there is, in fact, clear evidence of racial profiling being carried out by police throughout Spain and that black men and women were up to six and a half times more likely to be stopped by police than white Europeans. This impression complements that of the

Human Rights Watch Neighbourhood Brigades in Madrid, whose most recent report indicates a 300 per cent increase in racially motivated police raids between 2011 and 2012.²

Francisca Puerto is hardly the first person in Spain to steamroll over details like nationality, origin or reason during the construction of an explicitly racial profile. In May of 1888, Barcelona was host to Spain's first World's Fair. It was a coming-out party of sorts for both the recently restored Spanish monarchy and the practitioners of the "modernism" favoured by the Catalan bourgeoisie, an aesthetic noteworthy for the Darwinist overtones of its fixation with natural forms.

At a pavilion beside the Cafè Novedades, wealthy veterinarian and taxidermist Francesc Darder exhibited his personal collection. Its highlight was a superlatively gruesome example of the European construction of alterity: a 135 cm tall young black man mounted on a wooden base, dressed in the style associated with the African Bushmen. His body had been eviscerated, his muscles, testicles and bone structure removed. All of his cavities were filled with vegetable fibre, except for his penis, which had been filled with more substantial materials. His modelled, painted lips were unnaturally red and his skin unnaturally black. It had been discoloured by the arsenic in the products used to prevent the body's decomposition, and a layer of stucco was later applied and painted in the same unnatural colour. He would remain on display in the Catalan town of Banyoles until the 1990s known simply as *El Negro de Banyoles*, the Black from Banyoles.

The broad strokes that transformed this Tswana man's originally coppery skin into the distorted, leathery tone of *El Negro* are the same as the strokes through which Francisca Puerto's memo outlined a racial profile which, according to the internal investigation, was intended to be used to combat drug-related crime. In both the popular and media imaginaries, the borders between the drug trade, informal work, mafias and black men are blurry at best.

“I want an unbiased, impartial media. I think there is too much censorship going on. And the news arrives too late.”

Hülya Mete (Istanbul, Turkey)

Media representations of immigrants—and black men in particular—are normally limited to reports on either the “problem” or the “opportunity” of immigration, and it was not until the PAH (the Platform of Mortgage Victims) took the stage that one encountered men and women with names like Samba or Fatima in the news talking

about the same issues as locals (in this case, housing). Instead, media accounts emphasise the role of shadowy “mafias” who trick migrants into paying thousands of euros to risk their lives, as grainy helicopter footage of indistinguishable “sub-Saharan” “marching” in an “organised single-file line” towards the border cuts to images of shivering black or Maghrebi Africans wrapped in blankets bearing the Red Cross logo.³ The Civil Guard's shield is often superimposed on the corner of the screen.

In the Spanish media landscape, the encounter with immigrants through a news story most often occurs at the borders of Europe. Stories involving immigrant members of our communities are rare and mostly centre on “cultural” difference. Thus, media reports mitigate the barriers that exist between migrants and locals, whether these exist in the physical space of geography or the more aesthetic space of distinction. Both are spaces that threaten national identities with *transgression* and *overflow*, for they are the site of what anthropologist Michael Taussig refers to as “the magic of the state”.

In his work on transgression, he writes that we must “consider that the barrier crossed by transgression does not so much exist in its own right as erupt into being on account of its being transgressed”, and suggests we “try to understand that this barrier is one of repulsion and attraction, open and closed at the same time... It is in this charged space thus opened up by transgression that we encounter empowering and sacred ritual caused by and causative of this space”.⁴ At the border city of Melilla, this “empowering and sacred

ritual” invokes the deadly razor-wire that lines the top of the six meter high fence separating Europe from Africa. But in cities like Barcelona, it is manifest in urban dislocations. The once-abandoned factories that remind neighbourhoods beyond the gentrifying gaze of global capital of their industrial past are now home to hundreds of informal migrant workers.

Four months after the eviction of the Besòs squat, Catalonia's public television station ran a report on the lives of some of the people who lived there. Without any reference to the political and social conflict that created the situation, the report was a purely emotional depiction of a tragedy that, without context, seemed inexplicable.

Yet the images and *voices* of educated West Africans with a firm grasp of the Spanish language, forced by the economic crisis to make a living by sifting through trash, were powerful enough to shake viewers. The reality overwhelmed the profile, but it was not enough to generate pressure for a resolution of the conflict because the public had no idea who was responsible for it (in this case, a wealthy family famed for their philanthropy in Africa and a judge's ruling, which stated that their right to private property took precedence over what she called “a humanitarian crisis”).⁵

Thus, a media praxis that is concerned with overcoming the barriers between people cannot content itself with simply representing honestly those who are oppressed. Independent media makers must stand for human rights and common decency as much as for fairness and accuracy, and this requires that we be critical, autonomous

and disruptive towards official narratives and the mainstream media for as long as they exclude the voices of the dispossessed.

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5 ia601901.us.archive.org



Image: Sandro Gerardo

Migrants in Spanish media are often portrayed next to state symbols and forces. Emmanuel Benning was an English teacher before the crisis. Now he is pushing what is left of his belongings in a shopping cart as police evict the squatted factory he and over 300 informal workers called home.

Identity as a Pathway

SAMI NAÏR

Identity and mixture

The concepts of identity and mixture are not easily defined, given that there can be definitions from the fields of mathematics, philosophy, psychology, and even literature. First and foremost, identity is a border in the sense that it is defined in relation to the other: the other is the border that delimits each of us. It is in relation to the other – what we can call “inter-subjectivity” – that we get to know ourselves and learn to look at the other based on what we see and perceive of ourselves.

This definition is philosophically limited and can be considered a kind of negative identity, in that it consists of self-definition in relation to the other. The development of individual personality is strongly influenced by this negative identity process. Meanwhile, positive identity refers to attempts to define oneself through the eyes of the other. This means placing myself in the shoes of the other, finding out how he sees me, and using it as a base for the construction of my personal identity.

Every individual has his or her own identity (professional, national, personal, etc.), and

every society has its own symbols of identity. But when it comes to migration, we are dealing with a very specific circumstance: a human phenomenon in which identity is necessarily evolving, because it travels from one circle of identity (the origin) to another circle of identity (the host). This means that a migrant’s real identity is a pathway, a transition, a rupture, away from the origin and towards the values, cultures, mores and customs of the host society. And this pathway is full of suffering, difficult to assimilate and to manage, and perhaps even dangerous, because it can lead to situations of harsh confrontation or subjugation. Or in other words, it can lead to the construction of a negative identity (against them: the others).

Mixture is always present in human beings, although some mixtures are accepted while others are rejected. Mixture is rejected by societies that see their own culture as superior to all the rest, and consider the other to be first and foremost a threat. Meanwhile, mixture is accepted and embraced by societies that place human beings above cultural differences and consider human values to prevail over everything else. In these

cases, openness to cultural differences is a progressive element in the development of identity. At the global level, there is no doubt that a hybrid culture is developing around the world. As we can clearly see in Europe, the globalisation process that we are in the midst of is creating a new cultural model based on mixture. This does not entail the disappearance of national or local cultures, because human diversity is based precisely on respecting these cultural differences. They are the very basis of the richness of humanity. Mixture means the universalisation of national or specific cultures. A culture is great if it is able to open up to the world so that everybody can recognise themselves in it.

Media representation

The media attempt to show the migrant's path to assimilation in the host country, and the mutation that is inherent to the migrant condition. It is embodied in songs, films, television shows, and news reports. The media serves up this conflict as something humorous, as a tragic fact, or as something that is either accepted or prohibited. But the media are never neutral and there is always a point of view, an intention. This point of view creates an image of migrants as problematic, troubled people whose lives are full of (negative) identity problems, even though the majority of migrants don't actually have this problem of adaptation.

For example, in France in 1999 there was a student demonstration against the implementation of a government measure (it was a left-wing government in which I was an Interministerial Delegate at the time). Meanwhile, on the same day, young people from the suburbs on the outskirts of Paris

also organised a demonstration. These young people demanded jobs. The others, the students, were protesting against legislation introduced by the government, and demanding different legislation that was more favourable to them. The media covered the two demonstrations. In the suburbs they showed the children of migrants burning and destroying everything that crossed their path. In the student protest they showed an orderly demonstration of French students in the centre of Paris. It is surprising to discover that while the union leaders in the demonstration in the suburbs were the children of migrants, the great majority of the workers were French. And there is another enlightening fact about the university demonstration: the student representatives were four children of high-level migrants. This is how the media perspective works. This is the kind of image construction work that they do: they do not show what is, but an account constructed on the basis of what must be.

Borders: East/West versus North/South

We should begin by mapping out the mental route of the North-South border. From the point of view of Spain, the border is the Mediterranean; for the Germans, the South begins in the middle of France, in Lyon. Germany sees Spain as part of Africa, to say nothing of Greece and southern Italy, with all the social and cultural prejudices that this entails.

This mental representation of borders is subject to change. For example: we are in the midst of a crisis of the Eurozone, of the European economy. The explanation? The countries of the South caused it through their exorbitant expenditure and their



Arrested without Papers

directed by Dennis Huarachi. Produced by ZEMOS98 in collaboration with ODS (Spain, 2013) for Remapping Europe

Dennis Huarachi (Bolivia, 1987) travelled from Cochabamba, Bolivia, to Seville, Spain, when he was 19 years old to join his parents, who had already been living in Spain for six years. He always thought he would just stay for a year, but he stayed in Spain ever since. In his media work *Arrested without Papers* he tells the story of an incident with the police a few days after arriving in Spain. "They made me sign a deportation letter, I signed it."

The Office of Social Rights (ODS) supports migrants in the south of Spain in denouncing and opposing the immigration laws that condemn thousands of immigrants to lives of hiding and exploitation. This organisation campaigns against the CIEs (immigration detention centres) and against the repression of immigrants. Other lines of action include the struggle for decent housing, against speculation and against gentrification. ODS in Seville is a collective of people from different social movements and neighbourhoods of the city including trade unions, community centers and immigrant organisations.

ODS is a Seville-based collective formed to create new forms of struggle against precariousness, for the defence of social rights.

indebted lives. While this may not be true, it is the explanation that has been given by the North to the South. The blame is placed on Southern Europe: Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece, to the point of questioning whether it was a good idea to let countries such as Greece form part of the European Union. This is the discourse that you will find in the German and Dutch media. So as we can see, this concept of North-South is very flexible. And when we speak of the big North-South categories (such as Europe-Africa), the South has always been seen as a threat that is actually a product of “chauvinism” of prosperity (“the people from the South will steal our food” and other similar clichés). Historically, the South has been a differentiating factor.

“Borders are constructed. The perception of migration is constructed.”

Enes Uysal (Istanbul, Turkey)

In the case of Eastern European countries, the rejection cuts even deeper: Romanians, Russians, Ukrainians and Bulgarians are often seen as a threat to the European welfare state. In the debate on the European

Constitution in 2005, for instance, there were populist and right-wing campaigns against migration: the Polish plumber or the Bulgarian hairdresser, they said, are going to come and work for very low wages and steal our jobs.

But we should bear in mind that these representations of the other are always influenced by, and tied to, the historical context and the economic, political and social conditions of a particular society at a specific moment in time. In the sixties, when the French talked about immigration, they meant Spaniards and Italians. And when I came across a magazine about immigration in Barcelona in the late sixties with the following headline on the cover: “What is to be done about immigration?” it was talking about immigration from Andalusia: what should be done with Andalusian migrants, how they would adapt, how to avoid the deflation of wages, and so on.

15-M: Common representation versus individual identity

The 15-M movement is a consequence of the Arab Spring. The leitmotif of dignity was initiated in 2011 by the Tunisian people, who fought their revolution and their struggle in the name of dignity and against vile dictatorships. In Tunisia we were able to witness a backlash against the dictatorship and the traditional political parties. The 15-M movement emerged with a similar spirit, but this time as a direct consequence of the social cutbacks and austerity policies that had begun in 2008.

Although these collective and social representation movements sprung up in response



Image: Julio Albarán

The 15-M Movement (Spanish: *Movimiento 15-M*), the *Indignados* Movement, and Take the Square *#spanishrevolution*, are a series of ongoing demonstrations in Spain whose origin can be traced to social networks. The demonstrations started on 15 May 2011 in 58 Spanish cities. The series of protests demand a radical change in Spanish politics, as protesters do not consider themselves to be represented by any traditional party nor favoured by the measures approved by politicians. Even though protesters form a heterogeneous and ambiguous group, they share a strong rejection of unemployment, welfare cuts, Spanish politicians, and the current two-party system in Spain between the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party and the People's Party. This also includes a rejection of the current political system, capitalism, banks and political corruption. Many call for basic rights, which consist of home, work, culture, health and education rights.

Source: en.wikipedia.org

to policies that destroyed social rights, they did not directly address the migrant condition. Migrants living in Spain played a very minor role in the mobilisations.

In this sense, it should be noted that immigrants are not a revolutionary force, and can often be much more reactionary than the population as a whole. Immigrants want to integrate into the host society. Immigrants don't try to bring about social change through revolution. They do not seek to change the political and social conditions of the country they have arrived in: they accept low wages, they live in very harsh conditions that would be unacceptable to citizens of the host country.

Immigrants are not outraged by these conditioning factors because they are not in their own countries and they prefer to accept them because they have no other option. Migration is a conservative force: migrants want to become part of society and participate in social mobility; in other words, they want to change their social status. An immigrant's future is to stop being an immigrant. His challenge is to become an "ordinary" citizen, to change, to disappear as a migrant. This explains why migrants did not generally play a significant role in movements such as 15-M, except in the case of highly educated migrants who have been excluded in the same way as other citizens – those who found themselves hit by unemployment and the economic crisis.

This text is the result of a conversation between Sami Nair and Rubén Díaz at the Andalusian Mediterranean Centre of the University Pablo de Olavide (Seville) on 18 November 2013.

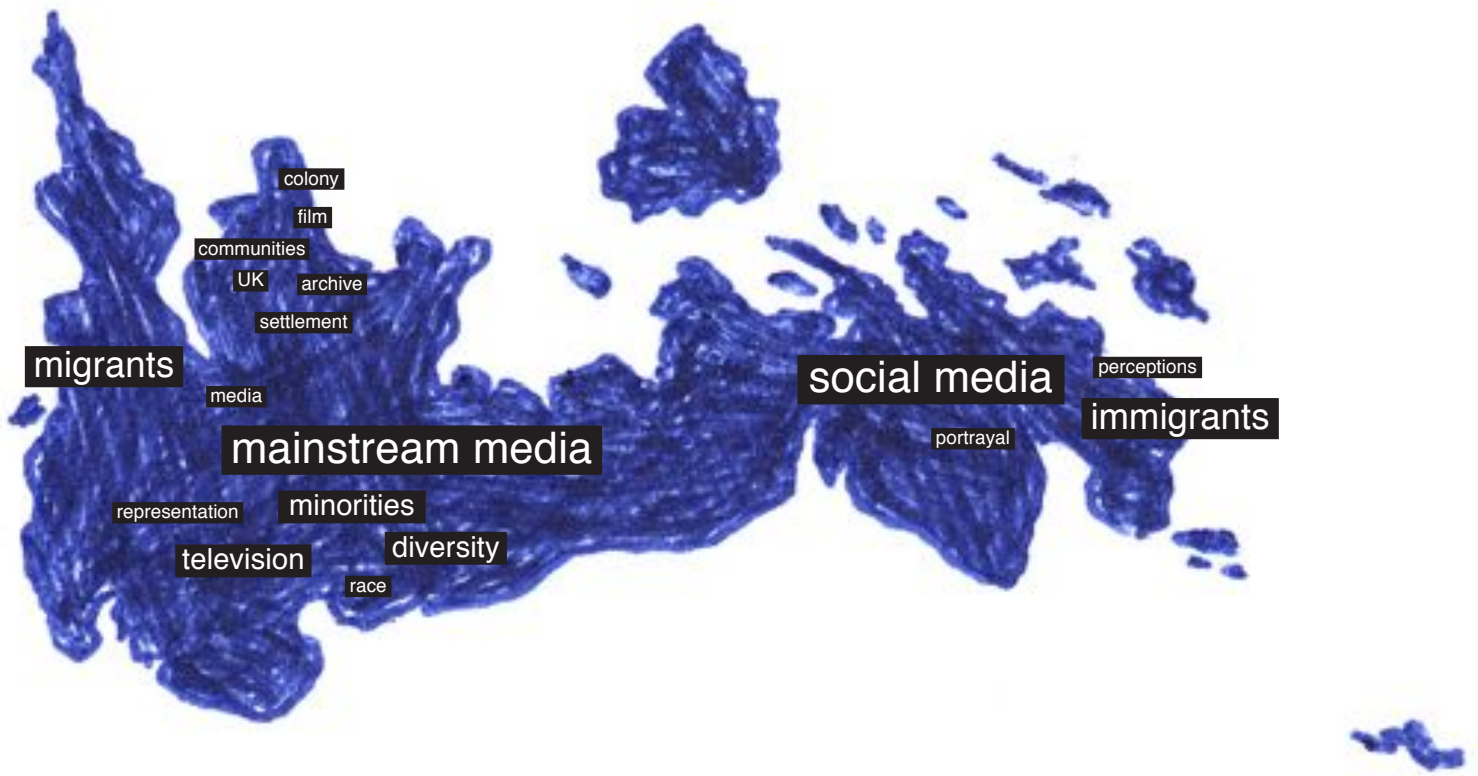


Image: Barrio Canino

"If I had been the only PAH spokesperson, the media would have paid much less attention to us", Quinatoa claims. "Although Ecuadorians have been taken into account in all the internal debates of the movement, we continued to be left out of the debate in the media... None of the major media outlets paid attention to the alarm being raised. Nobody listened to the warning voice of the Ecuadorians.... The media have never showed any interest in us. The racism is obvious."

United Kingdom

#immigrationoffenders
#racistvan



#immigrationoffenders #racistvan



Image: UK Home Office

During July 2013 the UK Home Office launched Operation Vaken. As part of this operation, the adjacent van drove around areas of London, encouraging "illegal immigrants" to "go home or face arrest". The van was profoundly controversial, and widely criticised and mocked in the press and on social media.

The Home Office @ukhomeoffice

The Home Office is the UK government's department for policing, crime, counter-terrorism and immigration.
United Kingdom · gov.uk/home-office

2,163 TWEETS 83 FOLLOWING 95,519 FOLLOWERS

The Home Office @ukhomeoffice 1h
A total of 139 suspected #immigrationoffenders have been arrested in raids across the UK today bit.ly/13y0CvT

The Home Office @ukhomeoffice 4h
A total of 101 suspected #immigrationoffenders have been arrested in raids across the UK today bit.ly/13y0CvT

The Home Office @ukhomeoffice 5h
A suspected visa overstayer arrested at Swansea nail bar – 94 suspected #immigrationoffenders arrested across UK pic.twitter.com/aoBAXAHVJB

At the same time as Operation Vaken, the UK Home Office launched a Twitter hashtag: #immigrationoffenders, and began to tweet images of immigrants arrests across the UK.

Source: www.twitter.com

Owen Jones @OwenJones84

If you're a bit down about the political atmosphere, do a search for @ukhomeoffice and find hundreds of people as disgusted as you are

12:46 AM - 2 Aug 2013

140 RETWEETS 52 FAVORITES

The Home Office @ukhomeoffice

62 suspected #immigrationoffenders arrested across UK - 2 arrested in Brentwood following Home Office operations pic.twitter.com/Fl2dJaCjAz

← Reply ↻ Retweet ★ Favorite ⋮ More

A three stage communications strategy was developed and deployed in each of the six London Boroughs:

STAGE 1 - Improve awareness of local immigration enforcement activity to make immigration offenders aware that there is a real and present danger of being arrested (via Ad-Vans showing the number of arrests in the most recent week);

STAGE 2 - Inform immigration offenders that a voluntary departure route is possible (via targeted newspaper adverts, adverts in shops, money bureaux etc and leaflets/posters in the local community); and

STAGE 3 - Inform immigration offenders of safe routes to approach the Home Office without fear of arrest (via posters advertising increased immigration surgeries in local faith/charity groups and a new dedicated phone line).

From Operation Vaken – Evaluation Report (UK Home Office, October 2013). In the report, it emerged that only 11 illegal immigrants had returned home through the operation.

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Tweeting arrests of 'illegal immigrants' is a new low for the Home Office

Using #immigrationoffenders hashtag to show suspects arrested on the basis of racial profiling is wrong on so many counts



Alex Andreou
theguardian.com, Friday 2 August 2013 13.21 BST
[Jump to comments \(578\)](#)



Both the so-called racist van and the #immigrationoffenders Twitter campaign were widely pilloried in the press and social media. On Twitter many people responded to the Home Office's tweets with horror, satire and mockery.

Source: www.theguardian.com

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29 July 2013 Last updated at 16:29

Share f t e

Downing Street says 'go home' van ads are working

The use of vans with adverts urging illegal immigrants to "go home or face arrest" are working, No 10 says.

The PM's official spokesman said David Cameron disagreed with Lib Dem Business Secretary Vince Cable's view that the scheme was "stupid and offensive".

The spokesman said the Home Office was "clear that this is already working".

He did not give figures on levels of response but said the Home Office was "looking at what they can take forward" from the London pilot scheme.



The vans drove around Barnet, Hounslow, Barking and Dagenham, Ealing, Brent and Redbridge

Related Stories

EDITORIAL NOTE

On Saturday 8 February 2014, the UK's Immigration Minister, Mark Harper, resigned from his position, for employing an illegal immigrant as a cleaner. As Immigration Minister, Harper was responsible for Operation Vaken, the campaign described in this chapter that targeted racially mixed areas with mobile billboards that warned "illegal immigrants" to "go home or face arrest".

Introduction (UK)

MATT CUZNER, FUTURE FILM, BFI

In July 2013, the UK Home Office (responsible, amongst other areas, for immigration policy) launched Operation Vaken. This was a trial campaign aimed at persuading those who were in the country illegally to volunteer to "go home", with support from the government. The campaign deployed advertising vans in six boroughs of London. The billboard on the side of each van read: "In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest. Text Home to 78070 for free advice and help with travel documents," and a box noted the number of arrests in the area.

As well as the vans, printed materials were published in local papers and distributed in the targeted areas, which were known for their large populations of migrants. At the same time, although not strictly part of Operation Vaken itself, the UK Home Office began to tweet images of the arrest of migrants with the hashtag: #immigrationoffenders.

The vans created an immediate popular backlash. On the second day of the scheme, the #RacistVan hashtag appeared on Twitter, along with an image of the van featuring the

words "Stop the Racist Van! #RacistVan if you see it". By the end of the first week the hashtag had appeared over 8,000 times, with 3,339 occurrences in just 24 hours over 26-27 July. One popular trend among the Tweets were remixed images of the campaign vans, with the text and images edited to tackle other social issues, such as tax evasion, or to highlight frustrations with the campaign.

This debacle showed the way in which new and old media work together to shape the imagery of migrants in the UK. Yet the stakes were huge. Don Flynn, Director of the Migrants Rights Network, stated that the scheme had "huge potential to ramp up mistrust and suspicion in local areas". Yvette Cooper, shadow Home Secretary called it "an arms race of rhetoric on immigration...[using] immigration to play divide and rule".

Arguably, the underlying sentiments behind it were nothing new for the Conservative-led government. Recently in the UK there has been an increase in sympathy for far-right parties, with austerity leading people to be more critical of immigration. Support has

grown for the BNP (British National Party) and UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party), who hold strict stances when it comes to border control. The majority of these parties' new supporters were previously supporters of the Conservative Party, and so a common belief is that these immigration campaigns have been an attempt to regain some loyalty from these constituents, by pandering to their anti-immigration views.

At the heart of the campaign is the slogan "go home". Race issues in the UK have always been connected to ideas of home. In 1964, the Conservative Party ran a poster campaign stating "If you desire a coloured for your neighbour vote Labour, if you are already burdened with one, vote Tory". The racist National Front, meanwhile, have often used "go home" as a slogan.

As part of our work at the BFI we have numerous discussions with young migrants currently living in the UK. We hear about the experiences that caused them to leave the countries they grew up in, their journeys to the UK and the issues, hopes and fears they currently live with. A common theme throughout these conversations is the notion of "home" and what it means to them, if anything.

How does a young girl who travelled to the UK in 2011 to escape violence in Somalia feel towards Mogadishu? According to her, her family is no longer in the city, either killed in the violence, or they migrated with her. Is there a sense of safety that relates to Mogadishu that isn't felt in London?

Similarly, a young man from Iraq who fled when war broke out in 2005 no longer

has any immediate family in the country. It has been torn apart by war, the factory his father worked in has been levelled by bombing, and the entire country is completely different to the one in which he was raised. Can he find a sense of home through relations, familiarity or safety?

For someone whose family house, local ties and sense of safety are no longer linked to the geographical location they grew up in, the instruction, "go home" takes on a deeper meaning. For some it is offensive – they moved here on the understanding that this could be their new home, they completed the legal processes and did their best to settle into a different culture with a new language. Why are they now seeing the message "go home" in their local shops and being driven up their streets? For others it is hurtful; their memories of home are positive, with a prosperous family, peace and happiness. They had to leave home because it was compromised by violence, and now they see the phrase "go home", and they wish that they could, but their home no longer exists.

Operation Vaken had a direct influence on the media imagery of migration in the UK. The vans, together with the UK Home Office's tweets about #immigrationoffenders, which largely showed the arrest of non-white people, shaped the media discourse around immigration, portraying migrants as "offenders" who need to "go home".

For the 27,000 people who showed their outrage on Twitter with the "RacistVan" hashtag, this is what's wrong with the Home Office's "go home" campaign. It isn't just that it's an attempt to pander to voters, it

isn't just that it was funded through taxpayers money, it isn't just that it tackles policy that we don't agree with. The problem with the "go home" campaign is that it shows a fundamental lack of understanding, and disregard for a huge segment of our population, and whole communities living legally in our country. It uses age-old tropes about migrants and deploys them as a political tool, manipulating the imagery around migration for political ends, racialising and criminalising migration.



Ahmed Sheikh in
You Are Rich Because I Am Poor
directed by Shorsh. Produced by
the British Film Institute (UK, 2013)
for Remapping Europe

"I have lived in London my whole life, I have studied, worked, met my wife, got married and had kids in London. London is home. I was born in Somalia and I left aged one. My father came to London on a work visa for the BBC back in 1987. My mother, brother and baby sister followed a year later. Since I left my country at a very young age, the sad thing is I haven't returned and obviously have no memory of my country. When I tell people I'm from Somalia they assume I left because of the civil war, which is very typical but my story is not a typical one. My family left Somalia in 1988, the civil war hadn't started and we actually watched the events unfold at home in our living room in Greenwich, London.

I have seen the attitudes towards migrants change a few times, from being welcomed to being targeted, being made to feel like a drain on society, to being embraced as a good thing. My overriding feeling is that migrants are portrayed as a threat to our National Health Service, our schools, our public service and especially our welfare system. From this fear migrants are dehumanised; the very emotive language used in the media such as "illegal aliens"/"asylum seeker"/"undocumented"/"over-stayer"/"go home" creates

a false sense of crisis, which exacerbates the us against them feeling in communities around the world. This gives governments confidence and legitimacy to launch horrible campaigns such as the "go home" campaign in the UK.

The "go home" campaign in London is very distasteful, extremely insulting, and in absolute disregard for the Equality Act in the respect that this campaign targets particular communities and has no regard for the effects on this community. It also spits in the face of the image and values the UK has long established, as a place to come and set up home, work hard and be part of a society and as a place of shelter for people running away from persecution or war. This campaign has made me feel unwelcome, very ashamed and for the first time I feel like this is not my home."

Ahmed Sheikh is a 25 year old film-maker who took part in Remapping Europe, a project by Doc Next Network.

What the “go home” campaign tells us about the British media

SARITA MALIK

At the height of the 2013 tourist season, the UK Home Office launched its “go home” campaign against so-called illegal immigrants. Vans roamed Britain’s multicultural streets, featuring the slogan, “In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest”. The tone of the message and the method that the Government is now using to “crack-down” on “illegal immigrants” may appear antithetical to the popular global image of Britain as a liberal and inclusive society.

This article provides some historical and contemporary context, to help map how “the language of the van” fits into the wider mediascape of the portrayal of migrants and ethnic minorities in the UK. There are a number of overlapping concerns: the conflation of immigration with race; the dynamic between English and British identity; the idea that we are now “post-racial”; and the role of the media itself in reinforcing or countering dominant representations. These are all set against the backdrop of the “crisis of multiculturalism” that is reverberating across Europe.

The brazen “go home” message signals a return to former crude models of enunciation, reminiscent of 1970s overt British racism (led by extreme Right groups such as the National Front). These actively played on people’s fears, created divisions and sought to destroy connections between communities by emphasising the negative vectors of difference. Such public racisms have primarily been targeted at visibly different ethnic groups and especially non-white minorities such as blacks and Asians; regardless of their legal status or, indeed, whether they are UK citizens or not.

Britain as a pioneer of multiculturalism and public service broadcasting

In the 1920s, the UK pioneered a distinctive public service broadcasting framework based around core ideals including access, independence of thought, diversity of expression and programming, universality and accountability. The UK’s colonial legacy also forged a unique relationship with its immigrant communities.

The British Empire was the largest in history with parts of Asia, Africa and the Caribbean as its most important colonies; the mass migration of those from New Commonwealth countries in the years after the Second World War was a key historical moment in which “the West” interfaced with non-white people.

These dual post-imperial and broadcasting institutional histories have together produced a dynamic and complex set of responses to, and representations of, the theme of migration. Social change and the role of the state in how it manages real, lived multiculturalism, play a significant role in mediated communication. For example, it helps shape how programme-making and editorial policy is organised and framed, and how communities are represented on and off the screen.

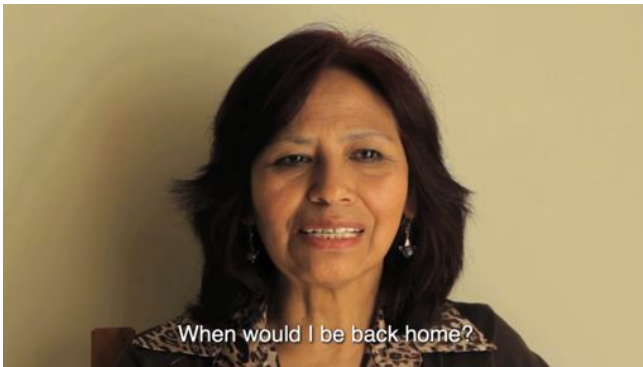
Patterns of immigration reporting

The late 1950s witnessed a spate of anti-immigration government legislation in the UK, marking a critical shift towards a sanctioned “official racism”. The overriding social consensus of the post-war years was interrupted by political and cultural pluralisation, creating a gap between UK public service television’s unifying project and the social, economic and cultural interests of an increasingly differentiated British nation. New modern forms of neo-conservative populist venting began to emerge, focused in particular on a politics of anti-immigration. In 1978, the soon-to-be-elected Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, echoed Enoch Powell’s infamous 1968 “Rivers of Blood” speech when she spoke of the threat of being “swamped by alien cultures”, a warning that was transmitted

on television screens across the nation.

A new tone of fear, particularly around the black and Asian presence, and a growing emphasis on the number of immigrants, began to dominate many documentary programmes in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The usual approach of these programmes was what Stuart Hall has called “inferential racism”: they always started from the premise of white superiority and tolerance and positioned blacks as “the problem”. For example, *Race – A Question of Numbers?* (BBCTV, 1969) discussed South Asians in Britain in terms of how many “offspring” they produced and how repatriation might be the only solution given the increase in population that they would inevitably bring. The BBC’s *Great Debate: The Question of Immigration* (BBCTV, 1969) focused on numbers and was based around Powell’s scare-mongering forecast of trouble. As Hall says in his analysis of these programmes, “The logic of the argument is *immigrants = blacks = too many of them = send them home*. That is a racist logic.”

We can rediscover clear iterations of such thinking in the “go home” campaign and in our present-day, right wing, tabloid press. One trend is how the media actively racialises the idea of “illegal” immigration. Whilst EU migrants from Bulgaria or Romania are the current source of much tabloid revulsion, these communities nonetheless have border rights that those from India or Africa do not. And so it is to the non-EU communities that the idea of “illegal immigration” and the message to “go home” is inextricably linked. This is how the question of immigration becomes racialised, and how racial profiling is used



Inmate
 directed by María Jesús Valenzuela. Produced
 by ZEMOS98 (Spain, 2013) for Remapping Europe

to bolster increasingly aggressive immigration controls and policies. “Racialisation” is a representational (as well as political and ideological) process in which the individual, group or cultural product becomes defined as “other”. This has real social effects.

A recently published book, *Bad News for Refugees*, looks at how asylum seekers and refugees have been stigmatised within media coverage, with a particular focus on the news media and the press. The study, conducted by the Glasgow Media Group, concludes that the media not only has an impact on political action but also on the lived experiences of refugees and established migrant communities. Research at the Migration Observatory at Oxford University (2013) analysed UK national newspapers and noted the widespread use of prejudicial language and the dominant association of the word “illegal” when discussing immigrants.

Screen representations of ethnic minorities

So how has public service television shaped our understanding of migration? On the one hand, the tabloid agenda routinely frames television’s coverage of these issues. Current representations of immigration, like those that came before, are still preoccupied with numbers and coincide with broader anti-immigration policy aims and present an omnipotent racialisation of thought and debate. On the other hand, television typically adopts a more nuanced approach, certainly than the press. It is its public remit that puts television in a rather complex position; a point that I will return to. Thinking more about these mixed

representations, even for more established ethnic minority communities (who may indeed not have migrated from anywhere), there is a dominance of images of “black gun crime”, the “clash of civilisations” and, most of all, “the war on terror”, producing new concerns around segregation, cultural difference and especially security. There has been an on-going criticism that national television has failed to deliver meaningful and culturally “in touch” representation for minority groups and displayed a particular fascination with certain kinds of topics and themes – asylum, difference, urban strife and migration.

The BBC’s most senior black executive, Pat Younge (Chief Creative Officer until his resignation in 2013) highlights significant structural problems sustained by a white commissioning elite stronghold. He also identifies problems with on-screen portrayal and storylines that tend not to resonate with black audiences. Off-screen, there has been a decline in black, Asian and minority ethnic representation in the creative industries workforce since 2006 (Creative Skillset Census, 2012) and a still unresolved “hideous whiteness” of organisational culture as identified by Greg Dyke in 2001 when he was Director General of the BBC.

And yet, whilst political discourse retracts from multiculturalism and towards “social cohesion” in policy-making across Europe, the public service broadcasters are also using the idea of “diversity” as a source of public value in order to deal with market predicaments. Each of the UK’s national broadcasters, in an effort to attract monies in a digital age in which the era of

traditional public service broadcasting is fast eroding – and public value is being tested – are renewing their investment in diversity. Therefore, television fluctuates between two strategic positions: a conservative and risk-averse culture (most evident when discussing issues of immigration) in order not to alienate the sizeable Middle England demographic; and the mainstreaming of “diversity” when it has the potential to cement its public service brand.

On-screen, there has been a more common inclusion of ethnic minority representation in everyday output across genres in recent years. The general circuit of representation, from newsreaders to soap characters to participants in lifestyle shows, gives the appearance of a more diverse, multicultural UK. Notably, the phenomenal rise of reality television has been especially significant for facilitating a larger range of ethnic minority participation and representation; cast in order to be representative of the “real” lived diversity “out there”. Programmes such as the drama detective series *Luther* (2010 -) and the first Muslim sitcom, *Citizen Khan* (2012 -) also stand out as key examples of how the BBC are scheduling diverse ethnic representations in prime-time.

Ethnic minority groups, both those that migrated to the UK in the 1940s and 1950s, and the second and third generations born in the UK, far from being passive to these general structures and patterns, have generated self-representational media practices and a distinct theory/practice interface, particularly driven by black British cinema in the 1980s and 1990s. Running parallel to the intensifying Europe-wide retreat from

multiculturalism, ethnic minorities have correspondingly altered their response to public service television as a form of media governance, where a broader range of diverse representations can be downloaded or accessed through cable or satellite.

Final note

Cultural representations are of deep political consequence in how we understand others and ourselves. We are currently in a moment defined by a heavily politicised struggle for recognition with calls for cultural and other forms of expression. The rhetorical value of anti-immigration sentiment is constantly shifting, but the contemporary politics at work is also historically rooted. Although media coverage is typically presented as a “debate” about immigration, the tension is most acute when racial difference is involved; an anxiety that stems from Great Britain’s imperial history.

What is at stake is the effect on societal attitudes towards race and on the public vernacular of British racism itself. The use of populist and inflammatory language seductively touches on, releases and intensifies social fears and uncertainties related to “race”, cultural incompatibility and “otherness”; anxieties that remain highly charged.



Nowhere
directed by David Sypniewski. Produced by Association of Creative Initiatives “ę” (Poland, 2013) for Remapping Europe

The Reality-Perception Gap

Twitter and (Im)migration

JAMIE BARTLETT / LOUIS REYNOLDS

Over the last 15 years, immigration has become an increasingly important political issue in the United Kingdom – with growing concern about its economic and cultural impact. Over the same period there has been a transformation in the way people access and consume media: a shift away from mainstream media and toward Internet-based content and social media. In this essay we examine what effect this is having on how (im)migration is viewed in the UK, and whether it might impact on attitudes.

Immigration has long been a source of public unease in the UK, but not always a pressing one. In 1999, less than five per cent of the public thought immigration or race relations was one of the most important issues facing Britain: by December 2007, this was 46 per cent.¹ Ever since, immigration has joined the National Health Service, crime and the economy on the roster of major public worries.² In 2012, 60 per cent of Britons viewed the rate of settlement of migrants in the United Kingdom negatively, and three quarters wanted an overall reduction in immigration levels – scores which are consistently among the

most negative in Europe.³ It is not our purpose to untangle the various reasons for these figures – they are numerous and complex. However, one consistent feature has been a tendency on the part of the public to hold views about immigration and immigrants that are at odds from reality (a problem sometimes called the “reality-perception gap”). For example, while 60 to 70 per cent of British people think immigration contributes to crime, damages local services and increases unemployment, only 10 to 20 per cent report it as a problem in their own area.⁴ In a 2011 survey, 62 per cent of respondents thought of “asylum seekers” when asked what they associate with immigrants. In fact, asylum seekers are only four per cent of the immigrant population.⁵ In a study from the same year, the public on average estimated that 32 per cent of the UK population is foreign born: the reality is just over ten per cent.⁶ Perceptions and reality part company: and usually for the worse.

Some research suggests that the way immigration is reported in the media is likely to play a role in creating this gap. The 2013 Oxford Migration Observatory report,

Migration in the News, found that the most common descriptor accompanying the word immigrant in the mainstream print media was “illegal”.⁷ Other common terms associated with immigration often had a dramatic quantity (“thousands”, “million”, “influx” and “flood”) or evoked security and legality, such as “terrorist”, “suspected” or “sham”.⁸ This tendency has consequences: a recent investigation into the portrayal of immigrants in the press found that the lack of clear factual information combined with the media’s predisposition towards negativity when reporting on immigration serves to hinder the development of constructive national dialogue.⁹

However, patterns of media consumption are changing. A new, dynamic and less hierarchical space has opened up for the public portrayal of immigration: social media.¹⁰ There are more than 30 million Facebook and ten million Twitter users in the UK.¹¹ In total, 37 million people – more than two thirds of the UK’s Internet users – use social media.^{12, 13} This is changing the way people get their news, because the public now considers the Internet to be the most reliable source of information.¹⁴ As a result, 77 per cent of British Internet users access the Internet in order to access news information, and more than half of social media users use social media sites to receive news and information.¹⁵

However, this dramatic transformation does not necessarily herald a more open public space where information flows freely across different groups or sustains an informed public debate. The ability to create and personalise our own media consumption can lead to what Eli Pariser calls the “the filter bubble”, which refers

to people surrounding themselves with information that corroborates their own worldview and reduces their exposure to conflicting information.¹⁶ Sustained exposure to a selective output can harden viewpoints and create a false body of evidence upon which an individual makes judgements about the wider world. This problem is made worse by the fact that too many Internet users do not critically evaluate the credibility of the information they digest online.¹⁷ Misinformation, inaccuracies and propaganda often live quite easily alongside accurate information online: and can flourish.

Metapedia is an online encyclopaedia aesthetically very similar to *Wikipedia*, ostensibly concerned with “culture, art, science, philosophy and politics”.¹⁸ The entry for “Immigration” reveals a series of conspiratorial avowals presented as fact, including the assertion that “most people don’t realise that Jews are the driving force behind mass immigration and demographic genocide”.¹⁹ Further scrutiny reveals that the website is run by far-right activists. In the context of a dialogue such as that concerning immigration, already characterised by political polarisation and emotive, sometimes poorly evidenced opinion, these specific problems can have a particularly corrosive influence.

On a collective level, there is some evidence that this might increase political polarisation and radicalise perspectives.²⁰ More broadly, social media also allows and facilitates the creation of social groups composed of people holding similar opinions, sharing stories that confirm existing views. This is sometimes called the “echo chamber”.²¹ It is no coincidence that many

anti-immigration parties and movements are extremely active on social media and have used it to extend their reach and effectiveness, such as the English Defence League. Equally, however, social media can be used to improve the factual basis of national dialogue, creating an alternative source of information to large media outlets and providing a voice to immigrants themselves. Third sector organisations like *fullfact.org* correct misconceptions and untruths that appear in news articles and political speeches or publications, and circulate these corrections through social media.²² Social media also allows alternative, high quality sources of information to circulate in a way impossible through traditional media. A case in point. On 5 November 2013, an indignant *Daily Mail* article concerning a “failed asylum seeker’s” taxpayer-funded flying lessons rapidly entered popular circulation, and was widely shared and retweeted.²³ The following day, however, an alternative story appeared, the *Independent*’s article, “Giving the other side: the story behind the asylum seeker’s flying lessons that caused fuss in the *Daily Mail*”, also enjoying wide circulation.²⁴ This type of contention of the dominant media narrative could not take place so rapidly or effectively without the use of social media.

Social media can also be used to humanise the debate, actively influencing dialogue or promoting the often under-represented voices of immigrants themselves. One example is the use of certain “hash-tags” (a tag which users employ to link to other conversations) such as #nohumanbeingillegal. Similarly, the *Open Society Foundation*’s “Meet the Somalis”

initiative, which artistically presents the stories of a number of Somali immigrants to Europe from their own perspective, has been republished more than 11,000 times on Facebook and 1,000 times on Twitter in less than a month.²⁵

Social media’s contribution – and relationship to existing media – is complex. In order to understand it in greater detail, we studied 1,000 random tweets that we collected following an article by Prime Minister Cameron in November 2013, in which he outlines planned migration restrictions under the government’s immigration bill. The broad popular dialogue related to this media event allowed an excellent opportunity to investigate both the opinion of British Twitter users and the dynamics of discussions regarding immigration on that social media platform.

The chief finding of our analysis was that over half of tweets regarding immigration in this period, 56 per cent, contained a link to an article, blog post or information resource related to immigration in general or government policy specifically. Of those, 55 per cent were to traditional new outlets, such as the *Guardian*, the *Daily Mail* or *BBC* websites, while 45 per cent were to new media resources, such as blogs, or contributory or special interest websites.

This suggests that, while the public sphere has become more accessible, with new media resources making a significant contribution, the traditional press still plays a predominant role in shaping and influencing the immigration debate. Although not an academically rigorous study, our manual analysis of these tweets suggested that the sentiment toward immigration and immigrants tended to be more positive

than polls usually reveal. Of those tweets that expressed a clearly discernible sentiment, 43 per cent expressed negative opinions towards immigration and immigrants, while 57 per cent were positive.

This is a simple analysis of a single site: social media is a vast expanse of varied and often confusing sites and platforms. The picture it reveals is a mixed one. It seems clear that traditional media outlets continue to dominate the provision of this information and to shape the debate. Nevertheless, social media does constitute an important tool for the dissemination of information outside of the bounds of the traditional media apparatus, and new media resources do now play an increasingly significant role in our national dialogue; this is potentially of great value. However, the ability of people to personalise their own media content and cluster into interest groups is not necessarily a positive development for these debates, and potentially undermines these positive developments. Whether these changes will help to create a more or less honest and factual debate about immigration in the country will depend on us.

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The Migrant's Perspective

Eight Films

DAVID SOMERSET

The following films are remarkable creative works with the potential to resonate with the migrant experience in the UK. They depict the shock on arrival in a new country, the struggle in the face of prejudice, and, at times, the considerable work involved in building and enriching the "community" in a new country. The films have all been programmed by the Adult Community Education programme at the BFI Southbank, in collaboration with communities. The films are listed chronologically, which reminds us of the continuing process of settlement, absorption and re-definition that has been continuing in the UK for many centuries. As a character in *The Colony* puts it, "up until about AD 33 the man who ruled this country was a negro, Septimus Severus was then Emperor of Rome and he was a full blooded negro who died in this country in York, organising its defences against the Scots, when they used to break across and beat the hell out of you cats".

All of the films incorporate authentic voices and capture a very specific lived experience by individuals and communities in the UK. Films such as Menelik Shabazz's *Story of*

Lovers Rock, Franco Rosso's *Babylon* and Horace Ové's *Pressure* have elicited praise for excellent film-making and heartfelt thanks from audiences for bringing to life unique multi-generational experiences that are rarely seen elsewhere.

Most, but not all of the films are from the National Film and Television Archive. The BFI National Archive holds a vast collection of film and television, from the birth of cinema to today. Some of the titles that have been chosen in this list have been incorporated in subsequent films, a form of "remix" that has given their voices a new life. Extracts from Philip Donellan's *The Colony* were included in *Handsworth Songs* where John Akomfrah's imaginative reinvention of image and sound creates complex and relevant associations. Indeed, so rich is the National Archive that it provided Julien Temple with source materials for his extraordinary film collage, *London: The Modern Babylon* – as well as inducing his nervous breakdown, such was the overwhelming task of distilling its myriad voices and images.



Image: BFI

Refuge England

UK, 1959. Dir. Robert Vas. 27 mins.

A work of documentary realism elevated to the poetic. Using a mixture of actors and real people it tells the story of a Hungarian migrant's first day in London. His experience is revealed through an inner monologue detailing his hopes and fears as he arrives in London and treads its unfamiliar city streets and suburbs. Vas's words and images came directly from his own experience as a refugee and convey both the uncertainties but also the civility of his new community. Vas went on to become one of the UK's leading documentary practitioners.



The Vanishing Street
UK, 1962. Dir. Robert Vas. 20 mins.

As a newcomer to England of Jewish background, documentary poet Vas chose the changing face of London's Jewish East End in Whitechapel as the subject for this independent BFI-produced experimental short. Non-synchronous sound and image are used to document the lives of the stall holders and shoppers as they go about their daily lives. But this is much more than reportage. Deeper notes are struck throughout the film, such as the song of a street-singer (*Eli, Eli Lamah Azavtani*, Oh God, why hast thou forsaken me) as evocation of the plight of a people in flight, relating to Vas's own experience of war and flight from Stalinist oppression after the Hungarian uprising.



The Colony
UK, 1964. Dir. Phillip Donellan. 57 mins.

Eschewing narration, this film is constructed around interviews with a series of West Indian workers in Birmingham, who discuss the contradictions and injustices of British history, of which many of us remain wilfully ignorant. As one man eloquently puts it, "we call England the *Mother Country*. We have been taught that it is the *Mother Country*, it has been drilled into us as the *Mother Country*, from the cradle, really, to the grave, because... Jamaica has been governed by the English for over three hundred years, and so everything about it is English." The film continues to be a revelation, despite its age, especially for African and Caribbean immigrants.



Image: BFI

Pressure
UK, 1973. Dir. Horace Ové.
BFI Production. 110 mins.

Trinidad born Horace Ové dramatises the tensions that exist between first, second and third generation West Indian immigrants in the Notting Hill area of London. Bringing an ambitious directorial flare that transcends genre, Ové collaborated with the novelist, Sam Selvon, whose novel, *Lonely Londoners*, had captured the poignant experiences of post-war West Indian arrivals. In *Pressure*, second generation migrants struggle for their civil rights and confront hostilities in the “mother country”, with youthful and righteous indignation, while at the same time attempting to find themselves as individuals.



Image: BFI

A Private Enterprise
UK, 1974. Dir. Peter Smith.
BFI Production. 78 mins.

Considered to be the first British-Asian film drama, this is a West Midlands-based tale about an unlikely anti-hero. Shiv Verma is a young South Asian migrant and entrepreneur, struggling to set up his own business and rejecting his social conscience as an exploited worker to pursue the “free market” capitalist dream. However, an uneasy relationship with both his peers and new-found hosts forces him to reconsider the deeper bonds of family and community.



Image: BFI

Babylon
UK, 1980. Dir. Franco Rosso. 95 mins.

Capturing the lived experience of post-war Caribbean migrants like no other fiction film, *Babylon* tells the story of Blue, a Reggae Sound System toaster in South East London. A child of post-war migrants, Blue shoulders the bitterness of a generation who were invited to work in post-war Britain but had their hopes and dreams dashed by racism, a systemic lack of opportunity and the hostility of those who believed their livelihoods were threatened. The film’s characters struggle to transcend the racial divide of Margaret Thatcher’s 1980s London with humour and youthful energy, embracing the vibrancy of the city’s Jamaican musical culture.



Image: Black Audio Film Collective

Handsworth Songs
UK, 1986. Dir. John Akomfrah.
Black Audio Film Collective. 61 mins.

Spanning Asian and African migrant communities in Birmingham, this film’s point of departure is the social insurrections of 1985. Yet its beautifully woven, complex and multi-layered montage of voice, archive, photography, writing, sound and music prompts a complex emotional and intellectual response. It also raises far-reaching questions about the experience of injustice felt by migrant people, their place in the UK and their historical role in the wider imperial project.



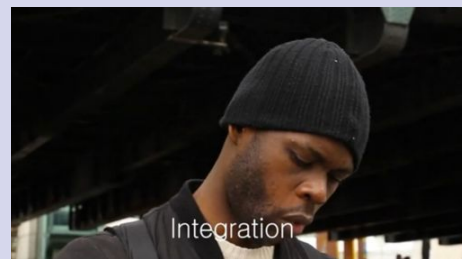
Image: BFI

London: The Modern Babylon
UK, 2013. Dir. Julien Temple. 125 mins.

A cinematic portrait of the director's hometown in an electrifying montage of archive film, narration and popular song that vividly captures London's ever-changing social and racial landscape. Voices of the street combine with those of actors, poets and statesmen; all underline the migrant's struggle and transformation and enrichment of the city's culture. An audience member remarked that the film provoked them to stand up and be counted and acted as a "call to arms" in their campaign to oppose the closure of their local hospital in South London.

All films are available for viewing in the BFI Mediatheque.

Becoming a Londoner



First Steps (Sorry + Please)
directed by Cedoux Kadima. Produced by the BFI
(UK, 2013) for Remapping Europe

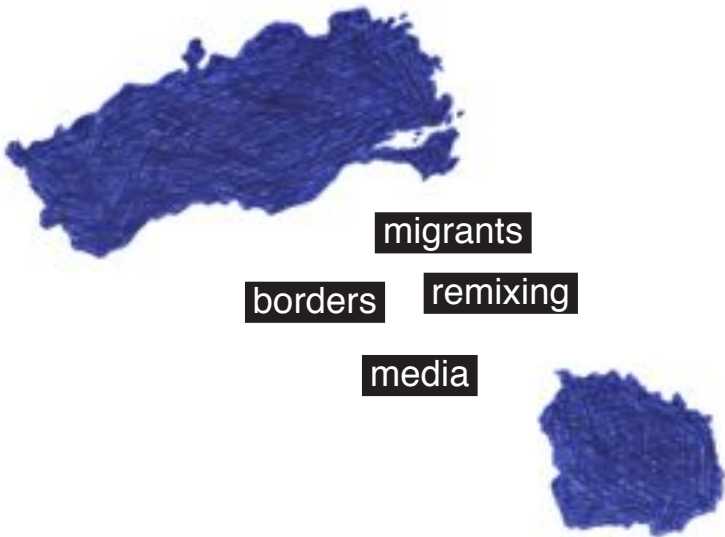
What is important to remember is that when we come here as children, whether alone or with our families, it is never our choice. We are here because someone decided it was what was best for us. We have so much to offer and share with the rest of the community but sometimes the context of our lives makes it difficult. Current asylum policy can have devastating effects on our lives, particularly for young people who come to the UK alone, unaccompanied by family. Many young people are living in limbo for years, waiting for decisions on cases. This time is characterised by uncertainty and fear. Very few young people get refugee status before turning 18, and so for many of us the prospect of turning 18 is full of fear rather than excitement. Quite simply some of us in this country are scared to grow up. The 3 "Ds" – dispersal, detention and deportation, are all frightening prospects.

"You can't speak to the police, can't access health care, can't access rights. You can't be a Londoner, because you are trying to be invisible." – "When I had a refusal I had to sign in every week [with the home office] and every time I thought they might detain me. I used to pack my bag with all my precious belongings just in case they deported me." – "I will feel like a Londoner when I get papers. I can study, work and have no fear to go anywhere." – "As soon as they find out I'm a refugee I'm dead in the class."

This is often the excuse for much of the bullying that we experience: "In my class, one guy tries to bully me saying *the Home Office is coming*. Much of the rhetoric used by certain branches of the media and certain politicians alienates and criminalises refugees and asylum seekers. As a result, most people don't even know what a refugee is!"

These are extracts from *Becoming a Londoner*, a Refugee Youth publication. *Refugee Youth* is a community of young people from around the world, now living in the UK, that uses the creative arts and participatory action research to build an inclusive community of friendship and belonging.

Remapping



Europe

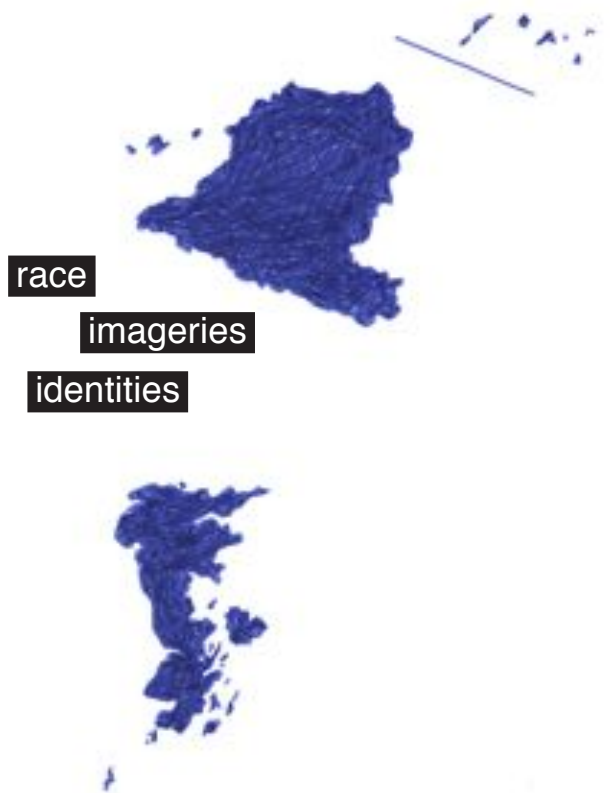
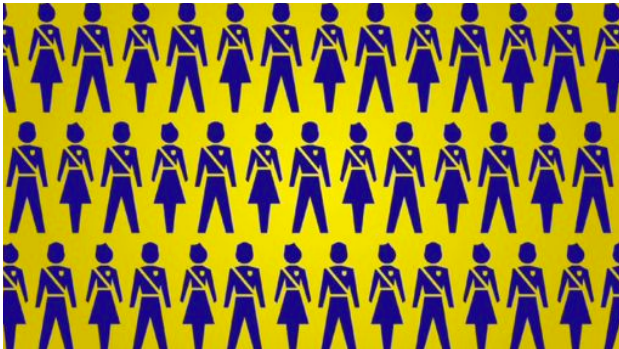




Image: Frontex, www.frontex.europa.eu/



175 000
border
guards

Image: Frontex, www.frontex.europa.eu

The visual narratives of borders that confront us every day – in the design of maps and signs, and their representation in the media – strongly shape the imagery of migration. The border functions as a tool of control: both the physical border a migrant crosses, as well as the personal, mental borders that create notions of “home”, “otherness” or for that matter “Europeanness”.

That a border is a constructed entity, drawn on a map, can be taken for granted. However, to be able to reshape, and re-investigate notions of the border – to remap – we must have an understanding of what we mean by locality, region and home; we must include the personal perspectives of people who migrate and not shy away from the realities of Europe’s colonial legacies. Only then can we approach the border as an attitude, rather than a fixed line, as a shifting entity that is produced by our imagination, and produces its own imagery.

“Nevertheless, they have to go through the filters and rituals of border control, and in doing so they automatically validate these devices, their logic and their practice. They cross borders, certainly, but do they actually go anywhere? Or do they move the borders with them, taking them into the societies that they visit?” *abu ali*

“Remapping is like putting an existing map together again, like creating new connections between people. It is drawing again on top of something already drawn and, hopefully, doing it without borders.”

Maria Jesús Valenzuela (Seville, Spain)

European Others

FATIMA EL-TAYEB

Being European without being white and Christian does not only put one in a strange place, but also in a strange temporality: Europeans who lack one or both of these qualities tend to be read as having just arrived or even as still being elsewhere – if not physically, then at least culturally. In European discourse (legally, culturally, socially, economically, academically...) the term “migrant” describes someone who moves across borders, but also includes all racialised European communities, which are reframed as non-European through their ascribed permanent status as migrating (from somewhere that is not Europe). This status is transmitted across generations and thus increasingly decoupled from the actual event of migration, shifting the meaning of “migrant” from a term indicating movement to one indicating a static, hereditary state. In other words, movement into Europeanness is impossible as long as racialised difference is still visible.

Racialised populations are thus positioned within a spatial and temporal paradox: they are permanently frozen in the moment of arrival – and the further away the actual moment/movement of migration, the stronger the paradox, i.e. the “queerness” of their presence in space and time. The current so-called third generation of post-war labour and post-colonial migrants is perceived to be more alien and out of place and time in Europe than their grandparents, the first generation of actual migrants, exactly because they are (made) impossible as an internal presence within (and by) the ideology of normalised colourblindness that places “race” and thus racialised populations necessarily outside of Europe.

While the European Union has been firmly established as a key political and economic player in the post-Cold War world, often appearing as the more humane, balanced alternative to militarised US domination (and as successfully having shed its imperialist past), the question of what exactly Europe is appears more unresolved than ever. Instead, there is an anxiety-ridden debate around threats to a European identity alternately defined as Christian, secular and Judeo-Christian and, at least

implicitly, as white – as if uncertainty about Europe’s economic and political future could be ended by expelling those embodying “non-Europeanness”, that is, communities of colour – in particular black, Roma and Muslim.

At the same time, when working on racism and Europe, one is often faced with the assumption that such prejudice is non-existent on the continent – many white Europeans go as far as to claim that they “do not understand race”, usually when referencing a supposed US American obsession with it. Europeans tend to see the relevance given to race as one of the differences, if not the central difference, between Europe and the United States, and attempts to point to the important role of race (and racism) in European identity formations are frequently framed as enforcing an Americanised “political correctness” without meaningful European context.

Instead they are framed as an attempt at silencing necessary critiques of migrant communities and their supposed innate sexism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia (the prominence of discourses around “migrant extremism” notwithstanding, there is an equally prominent assumption that it is taboo to criticise these communities). And indeed, at first glance it might seem as if Europe exists outside of the US American (post)racial temporality. While the latter is built on a narrative of having successfully overcome intolerance and discrimination, the myth of European colourblindness claims that Europe never was “racial” (anti-Semitism is still often analysed as both an exception to this and as clearly separable from racism). That is, despite the origin of the concept of race in Europe and the explicitly race-based policies of both its fascist regimes and its colonial empires, the dominant assumption is that this history had no impact on the continent and its internal structures.

The repression of the long history of race and racism in Europe in turn produces the continent’s contemporary “multicultural” state (associated with visual markers of non-Europeanness, be it dark skin or a headscarf) as a novelty, which requires adjustment in the best case and resistance in the worst, and which, most importantly, can simply be declared to have “failed”. Multiculturalism in this sense does not merely describe a reality (which cannot be undone at will), but represents a particular discursive means to manage and control this reality through a narrative of linear global advancement that places Europe/the West as the inevitable hub of progress and human rights. This narrative produces the need and requires the ability to constantly rewrite history in order to re-centre Europe, resulting in the repression of colonial and (state) socialist legacies in the production of hegemonic discourses of history and memory in the contemporary moment.

This spatio-temporal regime of knowledge management configures racialised populations as displaced and anachronistic: They are perceived as being in transit,

coming from elsewhere, momentarily here but without any roots in their “host nation”. Centring on the Enlightenment and the French Revolution but reaching back to the ancient Greek and Roman Empires, and forward to include the less celebratory realities of the Second World War, fascism, and Stalinism, a linear narrative of Europeanness has been constructed and is used as foundation for an identity that transcends national divisions but remains firmly within internal limits.

Such a narrative requires a clear separation between what is European and what is not – an impossible task that invariably produces tensions that threaten the coherence of the construct. Historically, these tensions have centred on race and religion as markers of non-Europeanness. The temporal suspension of racialised communities, as here but not really belonging, also produces an out-of-placeness: due to their precarious position within Europe, communities of colour are defined through an excess of movement while simultaneously experiencing an extreme lack of it. Their discursive framing as eternal migrants, permanently stuck in a temporary condition, justifies and produces the material conditions of their exclusion, while preventing the acquisition of rights associated with long term presence, since it does not place them within the larger space/time of the nation. The embodiment of seemingly incompatible spaces and identities is the source of their erasure, but also the source of resistance.

In response to the specific forms of exclusion and marginalisation they face, second and third generations of migrants frequently draw on and transform modes of resistance and analysis originating outside of Europe and circulated in transnational discourses of diaspora, ranging from hip-hop culture to women of colour feminism. Exclusionary spatio-temporal structures are remixed into alternative models that allow us to think the unthinkable: an identity that is both European and non-white/Christian.

This remixing takes place in the art and activism produced by racialised Europeans, beginning in the early 1980s with the experimental work of the Black Audio Film Collective – maybe best expressed in John Akomfrah’s *The Last Angel of History* (1996), which brilliantly links Afrofuturism, a vision of the contemporaneity of past and future borne of the fundamental displacement of transatlantic slavery, the hybrid origins of hip-hop and Walter Benjamin’s claim that the tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the state of exception is the rule. This activist remixing is continued by collectives like Kanak Attak, rejecting the logic that erases racialised Europeans between the binaries structuring progressive time and space – Orient/Occident, archaic/modern, rural/urban, fundamentalism/enlightenment, Islam/Europe, past/future – by offensively embodying the unstable relationship between these supposed opposites; and of course remixing is everywhere in Euro hip-hop, negating the spatial logic of the state through a trans-local and trans-ethnic counter-discourse.

In Europe, the particular histories of colonialism, racism and migration create intersections and overlaps between, in particular, black, Muslim and Roma communities, which result in shared spaces (including the outer city, prisons and detention centres, inner city), cultures (such as hip-hop), histories, and positionalities (as not properly European). These connections are suppressed in dominant (policy-producing) discourses that assign each group a distinct representational function: Muslims appear as the internal threat posed by migration, the “other” that is already here but remains eternally foreign; whereas “Africans” (including black Europeans) represent the masses not yet there, pushing at the borders, the demographic (and racial) Goliath threatening to run over the European David (the prevalence of metaphors along these lines helps to normalise the extremely high death toll the EU migration regime produces on its external borders, complemented by a rapidly growing and increasingly privatised regime of mass incarceration of undocumented migrants). The Roma, finally, the quintessential European minority of colour, with a 500-year-old continental history that includes slavery and genocide, continue to face extreme violence, poverty and exclusion, while being completely absent as a recognised presence in contemporary Europe. Instead, they are framed as not only coming from another, non-European, space, but also from another time, an idealised European past, as reflected in the centrality of “gypsies” in continental folklore.

The discursive separation of these groups is symptomatic for the ways in which *de facto* intersections of communities of colour – with each other and with white Europe – are negated within the ideology of colourblindness, which cannot allow for porous boundaries and instead has to continuously produce distinct and homogenous communities. The particular forms of exclusion produced by this system require methods of resistance that cannot always be direct, and instead have to use detours, disidentifications, and diversions in order to produce positionalities from which to break the silence around Europe’s deeply racialised sense of self. This strategy of “queering” ethnicity, practised across the continent by multi-ethnic hip-hop crews, black and Muslim feminists, queer performers, urban guerrilla video artists and many others, is grounded in the shared, peculiar experience of embodying an identity that is declared impossible, even though it is lived by millions, the experience of constantly being defined as foreign to everything one is most familiar with.



Peripeteia
directed by John Akomfrah, A Smoking Dogs
Films Production, co-commissioned by European
Cultural Foundation and Carroll/Fletcher (UK, 2012)
18 mins.

Akomfrah's short film takes as its starting point two drawings by the sixteenth-century artist Albrecht Dürer. The portraits are among the earliest Western representations of black people. Akomfrah uses these early black Europeans – their very existence, which is described by the film as being "lost to the winds of history" – to confront the heart of the strange temporality lived by Europeans of colour. John Akomfrah, visual artist, film-maker and laureate of the 2012 Princess Magriet Award of the European Cultural Foundation, has been working with themes of race and representation in film throughout his career.

Imagining Immigrant Identities in European Cinema

DANIELA BERGHAWN

Over the past 30 years European cinema has undergone a remarkable transformation as a result of the increased visibility of film-makers with a migratory background. These film-makers, their parents or grandparents, came to Europe as part of post-colonial migrations to the imperial “mother countries” or as part of labour migration, which affected virtually all of Northern and Western Europe, irrespective of their colonial past.¹ Others came after the end of the Cold War, when global migration, in particular, from east to west, intensified, and when other migratory flows, that followed a more random logic and direction, occurred. This chapter explores the representation of immigrant identities in Europe’s most established diasporic film cultures: Maghrebi French, Black and Asian British and Turkish German cinema. Unlike the relatively isolated earlier attempts of migrant and diasporic film-makers to capture their personal experiences or those of their ethnic constituencies on film, those film-makers who have come to the fore since the mid-1980s in Britain, France and Germany have predominantly made feature films, rather than shorts or documentaries, thereby enhancing the visibility and crossover appeal of their films.²

Admittedly, cinematic representations of immigrants preceded the arrival of second-generation immigrant film-makers on the scene. However, many of the films made by majority culture film-makers took a totalising and homogenising approach to representing ethnic minorities. For instance, *Sapphire* (Basil Dearden, 1959) and *Flame in the Streets* (Roy Baker, 1961) depict black-and-white interracial encounters by focusing on the “traumatised white [British] family facing the reality of *race* in their lives”. As Jim Pines convincingly argues, they are “race relations” films that voice “liberal humanist pleas for racial tolerance” in which black characters “tend to function primarily as catalysts for the expression of white characters’ anxieties”.³ Although made several decades later, the ideological position of *Yasemin* (1988),

written and directed by the German filmmaker Hark Bohm is not dissimilar. Bohm’s film, about a Turkish greengrocer’s daughter in Hamburg who yearns for the freedom and self-determination enjoyed by her German peers, takes a “social worker approach” to ethnic relations.⁴ It seeks to arouse a sense of moral indignation in majority culture viewers by stereotyping the Turkish father, who attempts to protect his daughter from what he perceives as the corrupting influence of liberal Western culture, as an oppressive patriarch. At the same time, the film’s narrative stance invites audiences to feel compassion for the teenage protagonist Yasemin because the archaic moral codes of Turkish patriarchy prevent her successful integration into German society. In the final scene, Yasemin escapes from her oppressive father on the back of her German boyfriend’s motorbike.

Though comparatively small in number, there are also some remarkable films made by first-generation immigrant film-makers. Prominent examples include *Pressure* (1975), written and directed by the Trinidadian filmmaker Horace Ové, and *Vierzig Quadratmeter Deutschland* (*Forty Square Metres of Germany*, 1986) by the Turkish German director Tevfik Başer. *Pressure* centres on a black British family from Trinidad whose youngest son, born and bred in Britain, tries to live like the British do. Yet when he encounters racism, he realises that he has to fight at the side of his older brother and joins the Black Power Movement. What distinguishes *Pressure* as well as *Forty Square Metres of Germany* – another narrative about a victimised Turkish woman – from films made by second-generation directors is their unequivocal political intent coupled with the moralising stance of the social problem film and a gritty documentary realist aesthetic.

Only when the children of postwar immigrants came of age in the mid-1980s and gained access to the means of film production in Britain, France and West Germany, did this change. According to Stuart Hall, at this moment “the most profound cultural revolution [came...] about as consequence of the margins coming into representation”.⁵ As these young diasporic film-makers gained control over their own images, they entered into the struggle over representing their identities by contesting negative and reductive images with positive or more complex and nuanced ones. *Le Thé au harem d’Archimède* (*Tea in the Harem*, 1985), written and directed by the Maghrebi French filmmaker Mehdi Charef, and *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985), based on a screenplay by British Asian writer Hanif Kureishi and directed by Stephen Frears, aptly illustrate this radically different vantage point. Widely regarded as landmarks of diasporic cinema, both films eschew overtly political messages in relation to immigration issues and portray ethnic minorities without foregrounding their alterity. They focus on the everyday experiences of immigrant protagonists and the irreversible hybridisation of cultures. Racial as well as sexual Otherness, once regarded as exceptional by dominant culture, are gradually normalised. Both films centre on close friendships between young men that transcend

ethnic divides – Majid of Algerian descent and the French boy Pat in *Tea in the Harem* and Omar, of Pakistani origin, and the white British Johnny in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. In fact, Kureishi and Frears take the symbolic racial reconciliation underpinning Omar and Johnny’s friendship one step further by portraying them as lovers. Imbued with a certain degree of sexual utopianism, the film identifies queer desire as a means through which barriers of race and class can be overcome. Whereas *Tea in the Harem* remained confined to an ethnic niche, its critical acclaim notwithstanding, *My Beautiful Laundrette* succeeded in crossing over to the mainstream. In British cinemas it achieved respectable box office figures and was celebrated as an art house hit. But its real broad-based appeal became evident when it was shown on Channel Four television and watched by over four million viewers.

In pursuit of mainstream audiences many diasporic film-makers living and working in Europe turned towards popular genres. For example, Rachid Bouchareb, a French filmmaker of Algerian origin, draws on generic templates to attract mainstream audiences. His historical imaginary *Indigènes (Days of Glory, 2006)* is a classic war film – albeit one with a twist inasmuch as it rewrites the dominant version of French history from the margins. Rather than commemorating the heroism of French soldiers who fought in World War II, Bouchareb pays tribute to the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of the War’s unsung heroes, namely the soldiers from France’s colonial empire who fought alongside French and Allied soldiers to liberate France and Europe from fascism. In a similar vein, Bouchareb’s *Hors la loi (Outside the Law, 2010)* reassesses French official accounts of the Algerian War by assuming the vantage point of three Algerian brothers who fight for their country’s independence, alongside other members of the National Liberation Front, right in the centre of Paris. The film stages the bloody battle between the Algerian liberation fighters and the Parisian police as a gangster movie, modelled on Francis Ford Coppola’s archetypal gangster trilogy *The Godfather (1972-90)*. Whereas *Days of Glory* was a resounding success in France, attracting three million spectators, *Outside the Law* sparked controversy and even public protests when it premiered – under police protection – at the Cannes Film Festival in 2010. The broad public resonance Bouchareb’s historical imaginaries achieved seems to suggest that the use of popular genres leads to precisely the kind of “de-centred cultural empowerment of the marginal”, which Stuart Hall advocated when he identified cinema as the most appropriate means of moving the margin to the centre.⁶

Ethnic comedies about sprawling immigrant families have proved the most successful genre in this respect, achieving remarkable box office figures. *East is East* (Damien O’Donnell, based on a screenplay by Ayub Khan-Din, 1999), about the racially mixed Khan family living in a white working-class neighbourhood in Salford during the 1970s, was watched by over 2.4 million Britons when it was released. *Bend It Like Beckham* (Gurinder Chadha, 2002), about a football-obsessed

teenage girl of Sikh Indian heritage, who wants to be able to bend the ball like her idol David Beckham, was equally popular in the UK and a huge box-office hit in the US, Australia and other countries. In a bid for mainstream audiences, Chadha’s film was marketed as “girl power film” rather than a British Asian comedy. In fact, both *Bend It Like Beckham* and *East is East* “have been credited as significant examples of national, i.e. unprefix British cinema”, which is in itself evidence of the “mainstreaming of a previously marginalised area of British cinema”.⁷ *Almanya – Willkommen in Deutschland (Almanya – Welcome to Germany, 2011)* about a multigenerational Turkish German family living in the industrial city of Dortmund, is another pertinent example of the popular appeal of comedies about immigrant families. Written and directed by the sisters Nesrin and Yasemin Şamdereli, the film attracted almost 1.5 million spectators in Germany alone and has been the commercially most successful Turkish German film to date, surpassing by far Fatih Akın’s critically acclaimed art house movies *Gegen die Wand (Head-On, 2004)* and *Auf der anderen Seite (The Edge of Heaven, 2007)*. Perhaps the popular appeal of comedies about immigrant families can be explained by the fact that they invite both majority and minority culture audiences to recognise that families, whether they come from Turkey, Pakistan, North Africa or some other far-flung place not charted on our Eurocentric maps, have a great deal in common. The experience of family life is one that unites humanity and that, therefore, has the capacity to build bridges across borders and different cultures.⁸

The growing trend to narrate stories about immigrant identities within established genres reinforces this sense of familiarity, since, like stereotypes, genres rely on cumulative iteration. In this way, the “genre film lures its audience into a seemingly familiar world”.⁹ The formulaic narrative process of film genres, their well-rehearsed iconography and predictable conflict resolutions offer a sense of reassurance that, according to Thomas Schatz, stabilises ideological conflicts in society through dramatic closure.¹⁰

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“If we are able to make a film about migrants that can alter the map of meaning in someone’s mind, that means we are able to remap by adding new meanings and refuting the old ones. We make remixes not to change our opinion of Europe but to change Europe’s opinions about us migrants.”

Fatih Bilgin (Istanbul, Turkey)

Migra Visions

ABU ALI

Migration is one of the key issues that most deeply questions contemporary culture and society. This questioning takes place on many levels, not just from political, social and economic perspectives, but also from cultural, symbolic and imaginary ones. It thus opens up the possibility of a far-reaching transformation: whether or not this comes about and the direction that it takes will determine the evolution of our culture as a whole. In an age that encourages mobility, tourists and businessmen can cross borders, and consider themselves privileged to do so. Nevertheless, they have to go through the filters and rituals of border control, and in doing so they automatically validate these devices, their logic and their practice. They cross borders, certainly, but do they actually go anywhere? Or do they move the borders with them, taking them into the societies that they visit?

Meanwhile, there are others who cannot cross borders and drift towards clandestine routes, where they sometimes meet their death and are often branded with the stigma of illegality. Even those who manage to get across will not have circumvented anything but rather entered into the state of invisibility and defencelessness that is required of them. The purpose of these devices of control is not to block their path so much as to issue an exclusion visa. The only thing that will be accepted from them is consumable labour that needs to be constantly renewed.

Fascism is born at borders

*"It's hard for me to explain how the supposedly civilised society that you have fled to for shelter could be so brutal!"*¹

Borders as nodes of power, as places that accumulate repression, control and selection, are undergoing an enormous change as they not only spread and grow stronger, but also implode into hundreds, thousands of internal devices: immigration detention centres, refugee centres, offices and agencies of all types are proliferating and operate as internal borders. Devices of control that sweep the interior of countries and cities like scanners infect society as a whole with their logic of repression.

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They are not just spaces in which migrants are detained: at their very core, they are the laboratory and spearhead of new totalitarian regimes.

"When I arrived security were waiting for me, they led me inside, they took my small bag, put on plastic gloves and inspected my things, the amount of money I was carrying, the numbers in my phone book, everything. It is intimidation, harassment and abuse all at once, that is the style of this system. Three days have gone by and I am no longer myself (...)."

"Yes, it is perfectly clear: they don't want us to organise and support each other; when they see you trying to give somebody a hand they separate you from the others and send you somewhere else. If you keep somebody apart, in ignorance, you can do whatever you want with them (...) They know that I don't have any intention of silently looking on while they do what they are doing. I see the hate in their eyes, I saw it the day they moved me here. And when I resisted, they called the police and they beat me up."

*"Our resistance is not confined to stopping them and improving our situation as refugees. No! We have a duty to this society, and the people who live in it have a duty to themselves. This is why we always tell the people and support groups who work with us: look, if you accept our problem as your problem then we can move forward."*²

A war of imaginaries

We often approach the issue of immigration from perspectives that have been shaped by our position in relation to the media imaginary, which is woven out of hundreds of thousands of images that are constantly renewed and repeated, sound bites that function as slogans, repetition devices that lay waste to political propaganda, the news industry, advertising, and often mainstream cinema. A web that gradually thickens to become a dense veil of images that hampers our ability to see and interrupts direct experience. So that on the streets, in stores and sometimes amongst our family and friends, we often sense fragments of this mainstream imaginary slipping into the conversation.

In *The Society of the Spectacle*, Guy Debord claimed that when reality is captured and transformed into mere images, these images become reality, a mechanism that solidifies into the unreal core of our reality.³ This leads us to surmise that, conversely, what is at stake in the creation and dissemination of images is reality itself. Hence the need to deepen an independent audio-visual discourse – independent of the logic of commissions, of what is studied and how, and particularly of norms and grammars prefabricated to meet the consumption and production criteria of the audio-visual industry. This entails a differential defence of the perception of reality.

Against the cloning mechanisms and the "monoform",⁴ we are seeing a constellation, a rhizome, of unique viewpoints in which the overlapping coincidences and

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disparities do not exclude contradiction but value it, as a mark of the real within the image. Fortunately, the same market-driven logic that has flooded the landscape with banal images and with devices that record, edit and spread images has also democratised access to the means of production and ended the audio-visual oligopoly, reducing the importance of mainstream channels. But we have to seize this opportunity, which has opened up for a period of time that may end up being shorter than we think. We have to push beyond the fog of compulsive images that flood the networks and we have to pierce the veil of media images – the master film that seeks to diminish reality to a representation and reduce individuals to a handful of stereotypes. This process of audiovisual resistance and dissidence has been, and continues to be, fundamental to the dissemination of the realities of immigration.

The mirror of representation has been smashed into thousands of pieces that reflect these realities and also cut deeply into them. We hear voices that have been silenced and hidden from view, stories of exclusion and violence that add a previously unknown dimension to the violence and sectarianism of political and economic powers in “Western” society, beneath the humanist veil in which this term is usually shrouded. We suddenly gain access to a complex rhizome of stories, in which we see, for example, how border protection is big business for a small group, where laws are not intended to prevent illegality but to manage it: to brand migrants that cross borders as non-existent and defenceless, rather than to stop them.⁵ But at the same time, we also become aware of the disparate forces that drive these migratory flows: the flight for survival, dreams, journeys of initiation, the desire for knowledge and experience. Stories of pain and humiliation superimposed onto tales of solidarity; ghettos and concentration camps that overlap with autonomous zones and experiences of self-management.

From the perspective of this rhizome of “other” visions, the criteria that the mass media serve up as objective realities prove to be partial constructions that serve “spectacular” interests on both sides of the border: as a media discharge of stimuli of fear or of desire, as a raw export of the global consumer model, against which all other forms are stigmatised as poverty and backwardness. So we could say that what we are up against is a war of imaginaries. On one hand, an omnipresent fantasy machine for the production and dissemination of prefabricated images, which generates, like any consumer product, a range of versions based on a single basic pattern: to maximise profits and ensure its own continuity. On the other, a kind of artisan patchwork made out of scraps of personal or collective experience, a patchwork full of remnants and of life.

Flows of knowledge

Media pressure insists on reducing the issue of migration to legal, economic and political parameters. Meanwhile, critical discourse tries to reintroduce the human aspect, to heighten awareness of the vulnerability and pain, the exploitation and contempt, and to warn against racism and the implementation of authoritarian

measures that could at any moment spill over into other areas and social groups. And at the same time, to encourage the creation and support of initiatives based on solidarity. Meanwhile, we often forget that migration flows bring with them an enormous flow of knowledge, which sometimes coincides with dominant Western conceptions, but often does not. And this makes migration even more interesting and necessary, because it links us to other perspectives that never developed here, or have been lost; it opens up other ideas of progress, other visions from which to perceive reality, to the point of radically changing our experience of it. Historically, these migration flows are also linked to social and cognitive enrichment, while the opposite process – isolation or emigration – is linked to impoverishment and authoritarianism.

Given the vision of multiculturalism as a space that is predefined with the blessings of power, in which the “other” is confined to a folkloric, picturesque niche – or simulated in a reflection of the dominant culture – there is a growing need for genuine contact; that is, for the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experiences in a way that contemplates a profound renewal of the conceptual underpinnings of our societies, allowing us to radically rethink our notions of time, work, culture and community. To end the persistence of the single model and its drift towards totalitarianism, in order to embark on a process of decolonisation that affects us all.

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Images: European Souvenirs, www.europeansouvenirs.eu

European Souvenirs: Travelling is Remixing

European Souvenirs (www.europeansouvenirs.eu) is a live remix performance and an international artists collective featuring Farah Rahman (The Netherlands), Malaventura (Spain), Noriko Okaku (UK), Karol Rakowski (Poland) and Baris Gürsel (Turkey). In October 2012, *European Souvenirs* premiered at the cultural venue De Balie in Amsterdam in the context of the European Cultural Foundation's festival *Imagining Europe*. Audiovisual material from leading European institutions opened up their archives for this project.

Nina Polak wrote in the weekly opinion magazine *De Groene Amsterdammer*: "In *European Souvenirs* the most divergent of archive materials are scrambled together to tell new, border-transcending stories. [...] "The archive both registers and creates the event," wrote Jacques Derrida in *Archive Fever*. He then goes on to defuse the concept of the archive being an objective historical source, arguing instead that archives are all about people, which makes them subjective. We choose what we keep, how we want to keep it and where to keep it, thereby creating history as we know it. With this knowledge, new archives, with new tales, can be created from existing ones. So given a contrasting context, every document can represent something completely different. The objective of the production is to charge the collective archive material with intentions that are different to what the original makers had in mind. The viewer plays an active role in the rendition of what's being told and is challenged to find new associations between different European landscapes, memories and concepts. [...] Borders are constantly shifting and changing, memories are always reinventing themselves and unity is taking refuge in being different, as if acknowledging the fact that no two stories are the same. Remixing, as the mission statement of the project stresses, is more than just the artistic heritage of an avant-garde concept of collage. It's also more than the DJs' sampling culture from the 1980s. Remixing is part of our culture and it influences the cross-fertilisation of areas such as education, communication, culture and politics. Borders are there to be visually crossed."

Source: *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 27 September 2012



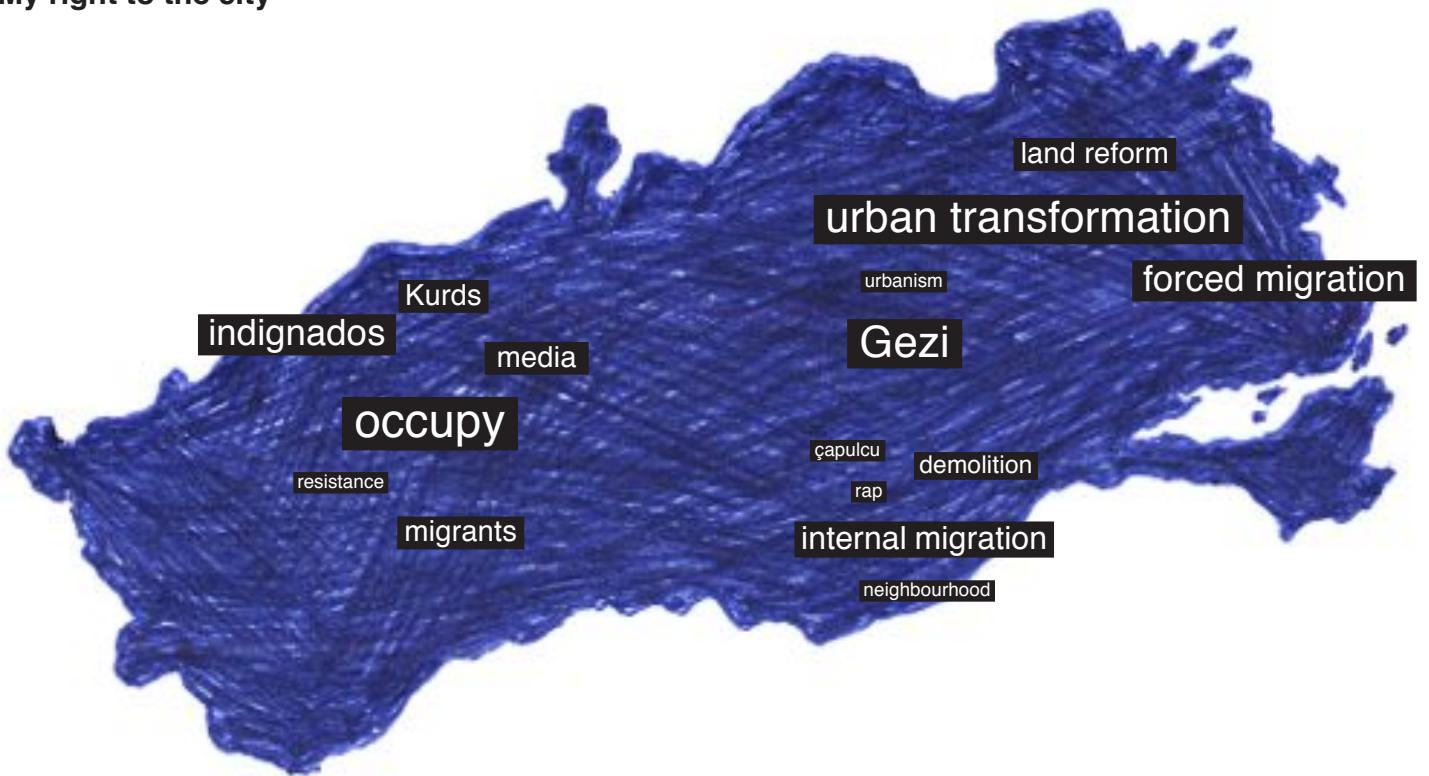
Latitude 36
directed by José Luis Tirado. Produced by ZAP
Producciones, Canal Sur Televisión (Spain, 2004)

On the southern tip of Europe, Tarifa is a Spanish fishing village as well as one of the windsurfing capitals of the world. It is also where hundreds of clandestine migrants are repulsed or arrested by the Spanish border forces, or find their final resting place, drowned or killed by cold and hunger.



Turkey

My right to the city



My right to the city



“Where are the humans?”: graffiti in a street in one of Istanbul’s so-called renewal areas, Tarlaözü. This graffiti appeared after the neighbourhood’s citizens were evicted, to make way for redevelopment.

Image: Ali Öz



"Can we make the Champs-Élysées out of Tarlabası?" The newspaper *Radikal* contrasts the "slums" of Tarlabası with the famous avenues of Paris.



How Do You Know Tarlabasi?
directed by Melis Göker. Produced by MODE
Istanbul (Turkey, 2013) for Remapping Europe



Wonderland (Harikalar Diyarı)
A music video directed by Halil Altındere
for Tahribad-ı İsyân (Turkey, 2013)

Although Tarlabası is the best known example of a “renewal area”, this phenomenon is widespread across Istanbul as this chapter aims to show: Ayazma, Küçükbakkalköy, Sulukule, Gülsuyu... – all neighbourhoods which were created by the influx of internal migrants to the city, now under threat of development. But the migrants of Istanbul are far from silent: Tahribad-ı İsyân, a hip-hop group of young internal migrants affected by urban renewal, find means of representation and a voice through their music.



Image: Mstyslav Chernov

Gezi Park protests
Istanbul, 16 June 2013

Introduction (TR)

GÖKÇE SU YOĞURTÇUOĞLU,
MODE ISTANBUL

“Where are the humans?” is written on the wall in a photograph taken in Tarlabası, a transformation neighbourhood in Istanbul – a “collapse” area, largely populated by migrants. It is “150 meters away from civilisation”, as one of its inhabitants put it, or one of the black holes of the city, as the mainstream media tends to portray it.

Thanks to this misrepresentation by the media, which for the most part works hand in hand with (and is owned by) the government and corporations responsible for the urban transformation and gentrification projects, we hear about the neighbourhood with an ever-increasing emphasis on marginality, criminality and collapse. We are made to perceive it as the centre of exclusion, crime, decay and irrationality, where the underclass, the dangerous classes, the modern pariahs, the “dark-skinned”, and the “-less” (homeless, property-less, jobless, rootless, etc), of society meet.

Such areas, identified with social problems and lawlessness, become stigmatised, stained, and dehumanised; and are therefore slated to be cleaned up – and cleaned of humans.

Transformation neighbourhoods in Istanbul are largely inhabited by internal migrants, who came to Istanbul as a result of the rural-to-urban migration that began in the 1950s due to industrialisation and urbanisation processes for the most part, and due to the forced eviction of villages in the southeast of Turkey that started in the 1990s. For example, the population of Tarlabası consists of migrants from different parts of Anatolia, including Kurdish and Roma people, as well as migrants from other countries. Sulukule, another transformation area in Istanbul, has been home to a Roma community for six centuries. Since 2006 the community has suffered irreversible corrosion as the area is “transformed” by urban development projects.

The migrants living in these transformation areas live in poverty as marginalised and alienated people, with no social security. Many continue to be subjected to further migration, as a result of these urban transformation and gentrification projects. “They are forced to migrate, for the third time, and under ever more difficult conditions, poorer and more vulnerable,” as İmre

Azem explains in the case of the Ayazma neighbourhood. In order to legitimise these gentrification processes, migrants living in these areas are systematically misrepresented in order to alienate them further from the rest of the society, preventing empathy from being developed towards them.

This chapter is an exploration of two processes that are used to misrepresent migrants: “dehumanisation” and “cleansing”. Mainstream media is one of the most important tools to put these processes into play by creating an imagery and perception of migrants that largely serves the interests of those who economically benefit from urban transformation projects.

Looking at the imagery used in the audio-visual and print media campaigns for the urban transformation projects, it is easy to see that the residents have been made invisible. In the case of Tarlabası, the municipality made a promotional video for the Tarlabası Renewal Project that is entirely made up of images of empty streets of garbage and derelict buildings, with no people in sight. The voiceover illustrates both processes well: “How do you know Tarlabası? Is it lonely, abandoned and isolated from life? Is it dark, dangerous and even devoid of any future? Whoever sees Tarlabası as the stepchild of the city is not wrong.”

According to Neşe Erdilek, director of the Istanbul Bilgi University Migration Research Center, “up until this point, this project has been assessed as a project without humans.” Indeed, the gentrification excludes most of the people living in these areas through “cleansing” the neighbourhood. As the buildings in the “rehabilitated” neighbourhood are sold to wealthy

people for much higher rates, the authorities benefit from taking the current residents, the migrants, out of the picture.

“In general the media in Turkey prefers to ignore migrants; if it does accept their existence, then it marginalises them. A migrant is either not represented by the media, or is represented as *the other*: an outsider, usually someone dangerous.”

Melis Göker (Istanbul, Turkey)

It is a fact that socio-economic conditions have paved the way to high rates of crime

and illegal activities in the transformation neighbourhoods, though only a small portion of the inhabitants are criminals. Nevertheless, mainstream media purposefully covers crime-related stories in order to portray migrants as criminals, in essence dehumanising them. This behaviour creates a situation in which criminality is the only way in which migrants become visible to mainstream society.

Near the end of the video, the voice-over continues: “of course, it is not only the buildings and streets that are being transformed by the Tarlabası Renewal Project. This large-scale human-oriented change is transforming the present and the future of the people of Tarlabası. Desperation turns into hope, deviance turns into elegance, loss turns into gain, and anxiety turns into trust in the neighbourhood.” The video shows architectural renderings of the planned transformation, showing the new, polished buildings, without any people in or around them.

Referring back to the question “Where are the people?”, “We are here,” say Tahribad-ı İsyân, the hip-hop group of Zen-G (Burak Kaçar), Slang (Asil Koç) and V.Z. (Veysi Özdemir), who started writing lyrics about urban transformation after reading an anonymous poem by a Sulukule resident. That is how they came up with their group name, which means “rebellion against destruction”.

They're at the gates to knock down our neighbourhood.

Today it's happening in Sulukule, tomorrow in Balat, Okmeydanı, Tarlabası, Gezi Park. Time is running out.

They're taking from the poor and giving it

to the rich.

They knocked down the shanties to build expensive apartments.

Let art and music be your armaments.

These lyrics belong to their song *Wonderland*. A video with the same title, made for the song in February 2013 by contemporary artist Halil Altındere, featured at the 13th Istanbul Biennial, which investigated the most contested urban public spaces in Istanbul, including neighbourhoods affected by urban transformation. The video and lyrics display Tahribad-ı İsyân's reaction to the destruction of vulnerable communities, and the way in which the media portrays these gentrification and “cleansing” processes. “They will clean out our houses. What they build anew will be clean; there will be no room for filthy people. We are filthy in their eyes,” says their friend Hasan. “Even if they don't exile us, we'll be like exiles,” said Asil in a 2012 interview.

Tahribad-ı İsyân's music has become particularly meaningful within the context of the Gezi protests of June 2013, during which urban transformation and opposition to it were widely pronounced as common concerns for the city and the country. The group has always been concerned with these issues, and after their *Wonderland* video was featured at the Istanbul Biennial they became influential in establishment circles, even appearing on CNN Turk. By way of self-representation, their lyrics and music, and indeed their presence provides a powerful corrective to the invisibility of young migrants in Turkish media.

Media only fools my mother

AN INTERVIEW WITH TAHRİBAD-I İSYAN

The members of Tahrîbad-ı İsyân migrated to Istanbul from different parts of Turkey, live in different neighbourhoods of Istanbul that are subjected to urban transformation, although they regularly meet at the Children's Art Atelier of Sulukule to practice and teach rap music.

Each of them comes from a different subculture, but they share a common goal that transcends their individual migrant identities: to call attention to the destruction of their homes and cultures, to play a role in the urban opposition movement, to exercise their right to the city by self-representation through their music and art. Their lyrics embody common universal codes and are relevant in the context of all transformation neighbourhoods in Istanbul, as well as in other big cities in Turkey and across the world.

Could you please introduce yourselves?

Asil: I'm Asil and my rap name is Slang! I like writing in slang. I am Roma on my mother's side and Laz on my father's side. I was born in Trabzon, northeast Turkey but I now live here, in Sulukule. I have lived here since I've known myself. I live in the midst of Roma culture.

Burak: I'm Zen-G. [Zen-G is Burak's rapper name, which is read as "Zenci" in Turkish, meaning black]. I am an alien. I live in Zeytinburnu. I just graduated from high school and I am preparing for the university entrance exam. I met Asil in 2008 while attending school at Topkapı and we have been on our rap adventure since then. **Asil:** Although Zen-G lives in Zeytinburnu, he would always come to Sulukule to meet us. He witnessed everything, every single demolition. Just like Veysi says in his lyrics: "I don't reside there but I live there". **Veysi:** I'm from Adana, originally from Siirt actually [southeast Turkey]. I came to Istanbul from Adana in 2006. We had to migrate due to economic circumstances, like many others. It was like hell over there, yet I would not trade it for here. I now live in Fatih but destiny also brought me to Sulukule. The neighbourhood was pretty much destroyed by the time we had migrated to Istanbul.

What was your experience of the area's demolition?

Asil: One day, when I was on my way to school with Zen-G, at six in the morning, we stopped by a friend's house. Later at



Tahrîbad-ı İsyân
being interviewed on CNN Turk,
3 October 2013

noon, on the way back from school, we saw that his house was no longer there! Everything happened just like that. One day one house is gone, another day three houses are gone. Finally they started to shut down whole streets. Everything happened at once, we were having a nervous breakdown. There were a thousand voices; everyone was saying something different. For instance one person said that the demolition would continue all the way to Fatih, another said that it would happen in phases. And then the demolitions stopped. **Veysi:** They were not legal.

What was the media's coverage of the demolitions like?

Veysi: Yo, "Media only fools my mother". [These are lyrics from one of their songs, *Gezizekaltlar*]. The media broadcasts penguins, what else is there to say!

Burak: Actually Funda Abla should know the answer to this, better than us.

Funda: What he means is that they were too young at the time of the demolition to remember the details.

Burak: We didn't watch the news back then. We watched cartoons.

Funda: The demolitions started in 2007 and finished in 2009. Sulukule was actually lucky in terms of media because it got a lot of coverage. The neighbourhood turned into a circus. First comes the media, then comes [well-known journalist] Mehmet Ali Birand, then come the bulldozers. At the end of the day, although there was a lot of coverage, it was not useful. It was not only the media. Tony Gatlif was here, Gogol Bordello was here, UNESCO was here, the European Council was here, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights was here... It is still mentioned in the EU

reports. It's like a joke. All that stopped nothing; it just postponed the demolition a little bit.

You are presented as the voice of Sulukule. Yet what you do goes beyond representing and embracing just one specific identity. What are your thoughts about this?

Asil: For instance, if you're Romani, your blood gets fires up, not only to Roma tunes, but also to hip-hop. This is who we are. It's a universal thing. If we are freeing ourselves from any previously established codes, that means we are accomplishing our goal.

Veysi: We also like to do rap that is fun, but these codes must be broken, too.

Asil: We say as Roma people, don't approach us with prejudice. [Referring to Veysi] He is Kurdish, but I don't look at him with prejudice, as he doesn't look at me with prejudice either. [Referring to Burak] This one is an alien, and I don't even approach him with prejudice.

[Asil laughs].

Burak: In terms of the demolitions, we all go through it. It is very widespread. It's not only happening in Sulukule. It's happening in Zeytinburnu, where I reside, and in other places, too. It is called urban transformation, not Sulukule transformation anyway. It's just that the incidents unravelled here differently, in a more concentrated way. More recently we went to a concert in Okmeydanı; they had prepared nice banners to welcome us. They made us feel like we were there to save them although we could not save Sulukule.

Asil: We tried to stand by them because even though the location is different, the problem is the same.

Burak: Obviously it's not nice for anyone's

house to be torn down.

Asil: People got fed up with it. And during the Gezi incidents, there was an explosion of these reactions.

What did the Gezi incidents mean to you?

Veysi: We gave a concert to a small crowd at Gezi Park in April [2013] to protect the trees before the incidents started. We took our loudspeakers and went there, our dancer friends and Funda Abla joined us.

Asil: And as the Gezi resistance started in full-scale, all we knew was that we had to be there. We all felt this need; I just could not name it.

Burak: We were all in there. There is a "marginal" group within all of us. Even people, who came from outside of Istanbul, even from outside of Turkey, were there. We all hung out together, resisted together, backed off together, went back to resist together.

You also made a statement on social media during the early days of Gezi against the attitude of the media...

Asil: When I was at Gezi Park, I shouted "damned media!" and a TOMA [an armoured water cannon designed for riot control] fired water at me, man. I lost my hat. Seriously, it was very strange; the media did not show anything about Gezi. My mom for instance, poor thing, she is so clueless. People are doing all sorts of great things there, but the media presents us as *çapulcu* [lit. looter], as terrorists, as people creating havoc. As if we could take down the government and replace them with our people... What the heck do we have to do with such things?

How do you see the fact that the media has mentioned you and your work more frequently since the 13th Istanbul Biennial? For example how did the TV shows you appeared on affect you?

Asil: Participating in the Istanbul Biennial was a completely different experience; you interact with a different, conscious crowd. And they took a genuine interest in our music. It is also significant in that it can help us develop rap with Turkish lyrics further. We took the media's interest positively, too, although we know that media is biased and we are watchful of it. Not many people used to ask us about our views as individuals. I think going forward they will pay attention to us. Also we could make use of their coverage when releasing our album. So media would serve as a means for us to deliver our music, which already contains what we want to say.

Veysi: No one can silence us! [Veysi laughs.]

Asil: We are rappers. Who else is going to speak if we don't!

This text is the result of an interview conducted by Gökçe Su Yoğurtçuoğlu and Nagehan Uskan. Tahrifat-ı İsyân was interviewed with Funda Oral, founder of the Children's Art Atelier in Sulukule.

Land and Labour

The Reality of Urban Transformation in Turkey

IMRE AZEM

When the police knocked violently on the door of her makeshift home on the outskirts of Istanbul at five o'clock on a cold and rainy November morning in 2008, seven year old Fatma was still half awake. She was dreading going to school, and not because of the four kilometre walk in the cold. That did not bother her. She liked her teachers, and the schoolwork did not scare her either. She had already learned to read and write. What she was dreading was the giggling of her classmates every time she walked into the classroom with her muddy shoes. She and the other kids who have to trek the four kilometre path to school every morning have to make their way through an industrial zone so large that it would add a few more kilometres to their journey to avoid it. Picking their way through huge trucks and forklifts, they head for the high grey-brick wall that separates the industrial zone from an open field that turns muddy when it rains. By the time they reach the highway they are soaked in mud up to their knees. This eight-lane highway, the busiest in Istanbul, is their last hurdle before they reach the school grounds. This is what Fatma was thinking on the morning the police came to her door.

The rain had poured all night, so the field would be even worse than it had been the day before. Should she tie plastic bags on her shoes as she sometimes did? They tear apart halfway, but it helps a little bit.

Outside people are shouting and screaming. The police have come to demolish the neighbourhood, which was declared a "project area" by a protocol signed by TOKİ (the Housing Development Administration, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, and the Küçükçekmece District Municipality six months earlier under an urban transformation law that the ruling AK Party passed in 2005. By nine am, tens of makeshift homes in Ayazma are demolished, and hundreds of people are left out in the cold rain trying helplessly to protect whatever belongings they have managed to save. A few days later these homeless Ayazma families were invited to the Esra Ceyhan Show on Kanal D. The show's focus was not the housing problem, why this was happening, or even urban transformation in general. The focus was solely the victimisation of these families. The emotional rhetoric said to the viewers, "Oh, look how sad this is, these poor people have been left on the streets."



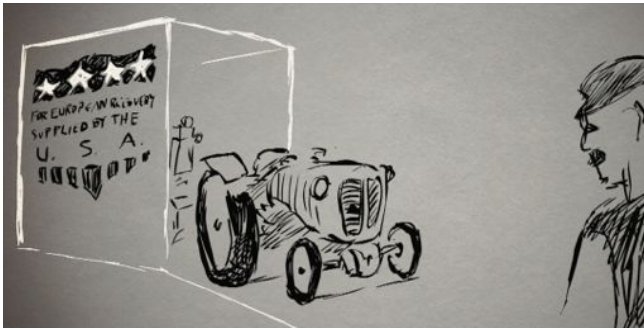
Of course with an approach this shallow, when the mayor of Küçükçekmece, Aziz Yeniay, joined the show via telephone and "promised" these poor families rent assistance for one year, the audience cheered and applauded.

Obviously it is necessary to look more deeply at the big picture, question the root causes, the economic and political dynamics, and how the story of the Ayazma family fits into a general trend where, in Istanbul alone, tens of thousands of people have faced similar attacks and millions currently live under the risk of being forcefully evicted from their homes.

To understand the dynamics of urbanism and migration, we have to go back to the first years of the Turkish Republic. The Republic was founded in 1923, after the War of Independence, which lasted for three years. The new nation's administration felt an urgent need to industrialise the

country in order to catch up with the rest of the world. Since there was no private capital to speak of, the state built factories in a centralised and planned manner. It built housing for the workers, outfitted with social amenities.

Under Prime Minister Menderes in the 1950s, there was a dramatic shift in this state policy of planned development. Certain families had accumulated enough wealth to make their own investments. However, these private investments were mostly made outside of a centralised plan, and thus concentrated around Istanbul and other big cities in western Turkey. Another significant policy shift in the 1950s concerned land reform, which was meant to break down the deeply entrenched feudal system in rural areas. At the same time as land reform was shelved, "village institutes", that had been designed to educate the people outside of the cities, were shut down. Together with the mechanisation



of agriculture, these policies had a push-and-pull effect, which triggered the first mass migrations in Turkey from the feudal eastern provinces to the more modern and industrialised western provinces. These migrant villagers became cheap labour for urban factories, primarily concentrated in Istanbul. Istanbul's population grew rapidly from one million in 1950 to more than five million by 1985. Today, more than 50 per cent of the people born in the eastern provinces have migrated.

However, private industry did not provide housing for workers in the way state factories had before the 1950s. They were looking to cut costs, to increase profitability, and establish a competitive advantage. The governments in power wanted to support this industrial growth but did not have the capital to do so. So there was an unspoken pact between capital and the state: workers would be allowed to build their own housing around the factories and industrial zones. These lands belonged to

the state treasury, but officials took bribes and looked the other way as migrant workers constructed entire neighbourhoods. In effect the state gave subsidies to industry bosses in the form of land.

The make-shift home where Fatma was born, seven years ago, was built by her parents in the early 1990s even though their neighbourhood had been established in the early 1970s by the first wave of migrants from the eastern provinces – regions such as Kars, Van, Ağrı and Tunceli.

Fatma's family migrated to Istanbul fleeing from war in 1991. In the early 1990s, during the government of Tansu Çiller, a western educated economist and the first female prime minister of Turkey, the state waged a dirty war against its Kurdish citizens. Entire villages were evacuated and sometimes burned under the guise of security precautions. Refugees from this war constitute a second wave of migration in Turkey, migrants who left their homes unprepared and thus more vulnerable to



exploitation by those who had previously established themselves in the big cities. They were often forced to pay huge bribes in order to protect their make-shift illegal homes from demolition. Those who could not afford the bribes became tenants, forced to pay rent. As labour, they were forced to work below the minimum wage and with no security.

With all their belongings left out in the rain as their homes were demolished, the families in Ayazma struggled to cover them with plastic sheets, pieces of wood and whatever else they could find in the rubble. TOKİ had sold their land to Ali Ağaoğlu, a billionaire developer, to build luxury residences. The land's value had gone up since the construction of the Olympic Stadium across the valley below.

Most residents were tricked into signing contracts for new houses in Bezirganbahçe, an isolated low-income social housing complex in the north of Istanbul. These

contracts commit them to a debt of about 40,000 TL, to be paid over 15 years, with instalments ranging from 220 to 350 TL. With heating, utilities, and the 40 TL service charge, they have to spend at least 450 TL on housing. Those who refused to sign were now being forced to do so, or face the coming winter homeless.

The families who could somehow put together the 10,000 TL down payment, signed contracts and moved to Bezirganbahçe. Those who could not pay disappeared into the chaos of Istanbul, perhaps surviving on the streets, or taking shelter in a relative's home. Those who still had a village to go back to left, not out of hope but out of desperation. Fatma's father, who works for minimum wage of 600 TL per month, is one of the lucky ones, as about 40 per cent of the 1,400 households forced to migrate from Ayazma to Bezirganbahçe make less than 500 TL per month. These numbers explain better the impossibility of surviving under these conditions. As of 2010, three years



after the move to Bezirganbahçe, almost two out of every three families could not meet the monthly payments and were about to lose their houses. They are again forced to migrate, for the third time, under even more difficult conditions, poorer and more vulnerable.

As for Fatma's family, they are still surviving. Fatma and her younger sister sell water on the weekends at the traffic lights on a busy main street a few kilometres away. Their older brother was forced to leave school at the age of 12 to work in a textile factory for 300 TL a month in order to help the family make the monthly payments to the bank.

Exploitation of land and labour, the two major catalysts that force people to migrate, today constitutes the primary subjects of human rights violations in an increasingly authoritarian country. As people are forced to live and work under inhumane conditions and their neighbourhoods and public spaces are looted by capital, they are



Imre Azem is the director of "Ecumenopolis", a documentary in which he discussed Istanbul's urban transformation and the impact it has on many internal migrants in the city. The images in this article are taken from "Ecumenopolis: City Without Limits", © Kibrit Film, 2011.



Image: Gayya Gumay

The Gezi Park protests in Turkey started on 28 May 2013, initially to contest the urban development plan for Istanbul's Taksim Gezi Park. The protests were sparked by outrage at what was perceived as the brutal eviction of a sit-in at the park protesting the plan. Subsequently, supporting protests and strikes took place across Turkey protesting a wide range of concerns, at the core of which were issues of freedom of the press, of expression, assembly, and the government's encroachment on Turkey's secularism. With no centralised leadership beyond the small organisation coordinating the original environmental protest, the protests have been compared to the Occupy movement and the May 1968 events. Social media played a key part in the protests, not least because much of the Turkish media downplayed the protests, particularly in the early stages. 3.5 million of Turkey's 80 million people are estimated to have taken part in almost 5,000 demonstrations across Turkey connected with the original Gezi Park protest. Five people were killed and more than 8,000 were injured.

The media's response to the Gezi Park protests was to ignore the events. On 2 June 2013, at the height of the protest, CNN Turk aired a documentary about penguins. Although the major news channels eventually started to cover the incidents, the penguin has become the symbol of media black outs.

Source: en.wikipedia.org

Occupying Cities, Liberating Minds

SIRRI SÜREYYA ÖNDER

Although the history of occupation movements in Turkey goes as far back as the 1960s, the urban struggles seen in the 2000s and particularly in the post-2010 period are significantly different in form from the way that such struggles were carried out in the past. Today it is the people themselves who try to overcome the devastation politics creates "in the name of the people", and the different methods they use to do so played a fundamental role in the growth and endurance of the movement known as the Gezi Resistance and in the fact that its spectre continues to haunt the Turkish government.

Just as the Kurdish movement on the streets and in the mountains fundamentally changed the social life of the south-east of the country, the movement's legal parliamentary wing changed the way politics is carried out in parliament. The impact made recently by a small number of Kurdish members of parliament has played a key role in getting this problem, which is Turkish in nature but Kurdish in name, recognised as the fundamental issue in the country.

The Gezi Resistance

Secular politics, discontent with the stereo-

types, which obstructed it for years, and which have been forcibly identified with Kemalism, took to the streets with Gezi Resistance; this showed that the appearance of a new style of politics was the real way to change society. Gezi offered a new vision of society: a society that organises itself through a wide variety of public channels, from parks to universities. It is this that was the catalyst for a great breakthrough in our mentality.

On the other hand, as a movement that aimed to purge the city of capitalism and conservative authoritarianism, Gezi was a clear sign of the continued existence of an alternative culture of individuals coming together to communicate in networks that defined their own existence according to online debates and new visual cultures. Gezi showed that the world of politics and the mainstream media was not aware of this culture, just as they continue to remain unaware of the Kurdish population and the crimes committed against them. The crowds at Gezi, however, took things beyond a simple movement of conscience, giving people the chance to act as individuals within the framework of a freedom movement.

The city has become a new space of protest. Demonstrations that reached the top of the agenda in Istanbul in particular, such as those against the closure of the Emek Cinema and İnci Patisserie, were carried out by members of a class, the so-called precariat, that is not usually seen in the traditional labour struggle. The new protest culture went beyond civil society organisations and political parties, and the city itself emerged as the canvas for the protests, creating its own visual culture.

“The media has ignored or made one-sided news and has never represented the real *Kurdish question* which I’ve been a part of for thirty years.”

Gülten Okçuoğlu (Istanbul, Turkey)

In the context of the debate that rages over whether Gezi was the new Tahrir Square or the next Occupy, it is essential to recognise

that these movements took a different form in different geographies and that the Gezi Resistance was unique. Today, the biggest obstacle faced by Gezi would be to interpret the movement as a “purely” anti-government movement or a “fully” urban movement. In fact, Gezi was a method of mobilisation that carried the visual and audio legacy of the Indignados in Spain, the young women of Tahrir and the creative youths of Occupy Wall Street.

Today, cities are openly used to shape people, while the level of surveillance carried out by the government increases every day. Gezi was about the city, because it recognised that in such an environment the freedom of individuals and of society is only possible through bringing freedom to the city with an egalitarian urban design that is not based on the rules of capitalism – something our mainstream media has not understood.

Media, Kurds and Gezi

This issue of media perception has in fact existed in the same way for many years with regard to the Kurdish movement. While the Kurdish community has long established its own social networks both on the Internet and in daily life and has institutionalised and normalised its own language, the media and the state, hiding inside riot control vehicles or police cars, continue in their shared attempt to create a negative perception of the Kurdish community. Unfortunately in pre-Gezi Turkey, this perception had already seeped into the minds of the majority of people, even those who supported the Gezi movement.

When we look at the levels of participation in social networks such as Twitter and

Facebook during the Gezi protests, we see that the fairy tale of trust in the media is over. For over 50 per cent of the population of Turkey, the reputation of the prime minister and the government, and most importantly of the state, has come to an end. This meant that the media fell into disrepute, but also that certain new media organisations have gained new prominence.

This is the first time that the “noble Turkish media” has been so uneasy about the Kurdish movement taking to the streets. The government and the media used the peace process to put pressure on the Kurdish movement and the Kurdish people, but despite this pressure the Kurdish movement participated in Gezi. By dancing folk dances against the powers-that-be together with the middle classes, the Kurds created a visual memory that Turkey will never forget.

Gezi: the migrant perspective

Although the stories of those who left Turkey and of those who returned featured prominently in post-1980s cinema, the main focus of the media in terms of migration was the project to urbanise the migrant population of Istanbul. Migration – particularly internal migration – has today become institutionalised. In the different districts of Istanbul it is possible to find a neighbourhood for every city from which migrants have come. The representation of migrants is provided at the level of community organisations and through other channels, but the main source of this representation is the media, which continues to base its representation of migrants on specific models. When we consider the class-based references to migrants in popular TV series

or tabloid news reports, it is clear that hostility towards migrants still exists.

Just as migrants settle into a sense of normality in the places to which they move, their lives are again interrupted. In the hands of the government, urban transformation, with its neo-liberal bias, has affected migrants’ lives in this way.

They are forced out of the neighbourhoods in which they struggled to find shelter. Gentrification actually means driving out migrants, or those who are not deemed worthy of being urban citizens. If we interpret this with the classic logic of the Republic of Turkey, starting with the distinction between public and citizens, the TOKİ projects are presented to migrants as a way of “citizenising” the public. Furthermore, they are made to pay a price in order to be citizens. This price is their culture and their way of life.

The migrants who live in “renewal areas” are well represented by the Gezi Resistance, because, particularly in Tarlabası, the population that participated in Gezi share these living spaces with migrants. In this sense there is a profound connection between the people that created Gezi and the migrants.

This sense of togetherness was made possible by the fact that the migrants, who formed a class alliance with intellectuals, moved their own struggle to a new area.

Rather than a representational relationship, the relationship between Gezi and the migrants is, therefore, a relationship of direct participation and one that is also reciprocal. In fact, it is precisely for this reason that the renewal areas are seen as dangerous. The alliance of the Gezi

mind-set and that of the migrants is essentially the vision of which urban renewal is afraid.

The whole picture

The new media that emerged post-Gezi revealed the networks of capitalism, and pictures of enemies of the city were seen in every piece they produced. Seeing that the media bosses had in fact long been part of those pictures was proof of how those obstacles in front of the movement were strengthened in collaboration with the capitalists. The incestuous relationships of media bosses, construction company owners and ministers, as well as the AK Party's strategies to create more wealth for their entourage and supporters, gained a visibility that will go down in history.

The new state united the new and old capitalists against us and terrorised Gezi using a discourse full of enmity against Kurds and socialists. It is, however, the government itself that needs to protect its own reputation. The whole of Turkey knows that there is a war that needs to be fought against neoliberal urban design, and it is Gezi, rather than the existing political parties, that is able to fight this battle.

The reason that the future is bright yet still uncertain is Gezi's spontaneous nature and the possibility that the political culture needed to keep it alive may well be thwarted by a variety of old habits. On this point, what is being discussed today is how the forum culture, which will sustain the impact of Gezi, will influence wider solidarity networks in Istanbul and throughout Turkey. Gezi is now a phenomenon according to which a rational government

or opposition needs to shape itself. Turkey should be formed in the squares of its cities.

The concept of the right to the city is new to Turkish politics. When we consider that we have lived through a period in which TOKI projects were revered, this concept must be spread both in theory and in practice. As a communal experience, Gezi made an important contribution in terms of the policy of the right to the city, this much is certain. Gezi taught us that we were condemned to play the role of extras in disaster capitalism unless we lay claim to the parks and public spaces as we do to our own gardens, and the movement has many more lessons to teach us.

“After the Gezi incidents, I don't feel as lonely as I did before. I was able to share the same space with people who I previously thought I could not tolerate. To have shared a common space of conflict and struggle made me very happy. After these events, I felt triumphant.”

Fatih Bilgin (Istanbul, Turkey)

Turkey and Internal Migration

Historically Turkey has been affected by, and has produced, diverse forms of migratory movements and has become a country of emigration, immigration, and transit migration. Migration played a determining role in the establishment of the Turkish Republic. Its ideology, formed by individuals who had migrated from lost territories of the fallen empire, was set as a unitary state. Driven by past experiences, the idea of "one religion, one language, one ethnicity" was decisive. This strengthened the attitude of the "exclusion of others".

Internal migration is one of the most important factors determining Turkey's socio-economic structure. Rural-to-urban migration began with the excess workforce created as a result of the introduction of technology into agricultural practice in the 1950s, and was increased by industrialisation in urban areas; it has completely changed the demographic structure of the country over the last 50 years. Waves of forced migration that started in the 1990s also played a major role in this change. Once a society in which 80 per cent of the population lived in rural areas, Turkey has become a society where 75 per cent of the population lives in cities. This rapid, unplanned and unpredictable urbanisation has created new socio-economic classes and cultures. Those who were initially despised in the cities they migrated to, now make up the majority of the urban citizens. The slums they built have been transformed into residential high-rises and shopping malls.

The presence of spaces defined by common levels of wealth and lifestyles leads to segregation in the cities and the reorganisation of urban areas. The neighbourhoods that emerged as a result of migration are considered the most problematic areas of the city. The most disadvantaged members of society live in these neighbourhoods, where the resources and the physical conditions are the poorest. Gentrification projects have started to mark these neighbourhoods as "regions that need to be cleaned". However, these so-called regeneration projects, involving solely physical renewal, are impersonal projects, lacking any social content. People are alienated from society by illegality, illegitimacy, marginality, and ethnic identity, prejudices that are mainly shaped by the media. Migrants and the urban poor, having lost public support, are evicted from their homes and neighbourhoods, as in the cases of Sulukule, Tarlabası, Küçükbakkalköy, and Gülsuyu amongst many other such neighbourhoods.

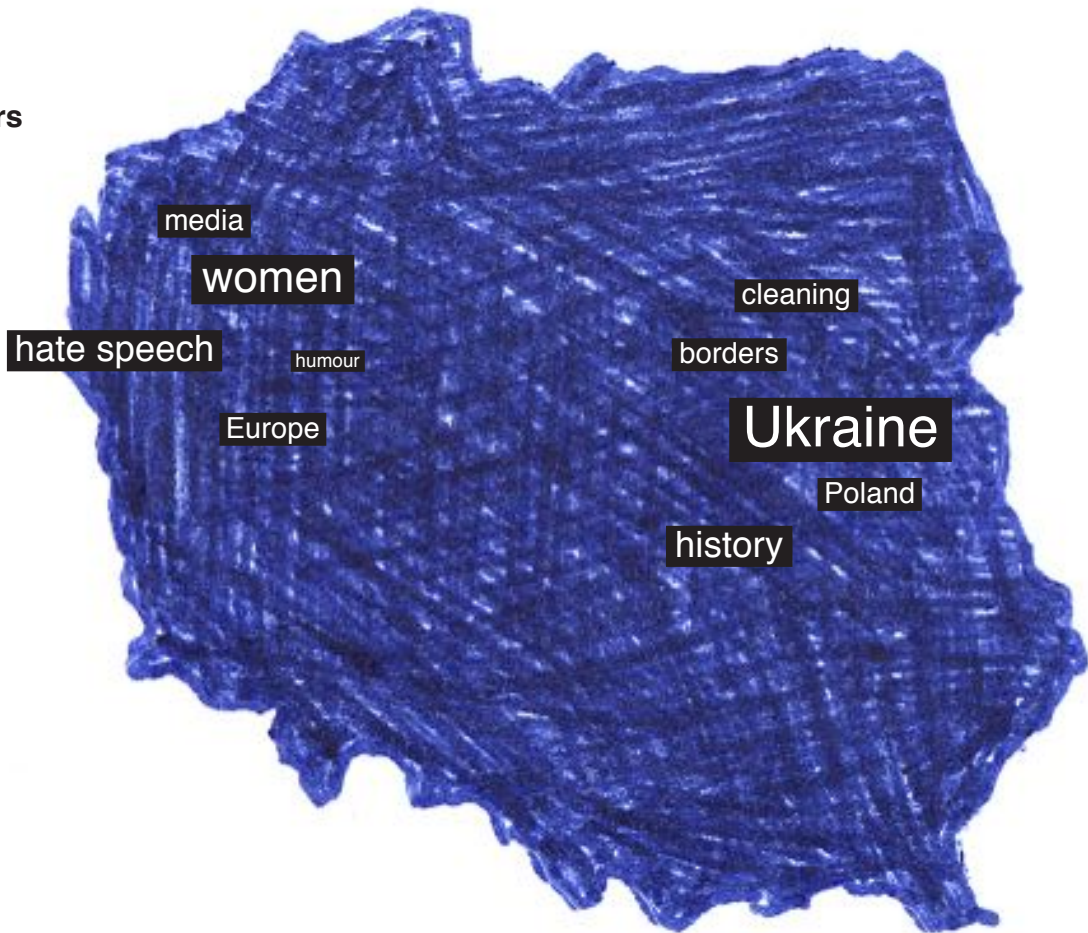
Neşe Erdilek, Istanbul Bilgi University Center for Migration Research (CMR). The Bilgi University CMR is the first migration research centre in Turkey to carry out large-scale, multi-dimensional scientific research into migration.



Gurbet City
directed by Mehmet Sami. Produced by MODE
Istanbul (Turkey, 2013) for Remapping Europe

Poland

I cleaned for
Polish masters



I cleaned for Polish masters



Image: Kateryna Pansova

"My name is Kateryna, I'm 27 years old and I live in Kiev. Every year more than half a million Ukrainians come to Poland. I wanted to see how Ukrainians live in Warsaw. Once I got there, I looked for a job in the small ads. I called some, and left some offers on the Internet. I quickly understood why other Ukrainian women who were also looking for a job, often added: *only decent offers.*"



Image: Adam Kozak / Newsweek Polska; Editor: Rainer Axel Springer Polska



In 2013 Ukrainian journalist Kateryna Panova worked undercover in Polish middle-class houses as a domestic cleaner for one month. In response to her search for a cleaning job she regularly received text messages and emails requesting romantic relationships or sex: "Hello Kateryna, can we arrange to have sex? Artur", "Why would you earn 10-15 zloty per hour when you could make 60-100 for the same time?".



Kateryna's diary was published in Polish Newsweek under the title *I cleaned for Polish masters*. The story in Newsweek revealed how migrants from neighbouring countries to the east are treated in Poland and how the thin line between cleaning and sex is part of their reality.

Sources: polska.newsweek.pl; galerie.newsweek.pl



Images: Adam Kozak



"I'll fire my Ukrainian!"
"I don't even know what mine looks like, because I only see her on her knees!"



"And I won't pay mine! If only she were a little prettier, I would rape her..."

The day after the Euro 2012 football match that Ukraine won against Sweden, radio hosts Jakub Wojewodzki and Michal Figurski had a conversation about Ukrainian women on their popular Polish morning radio show *Eska Rock*. Discussing their Ukrainian cleaners they joked about firing them and raping them. In the media controversy that followed, the presenters defended themselves by comparing their jokes to the satire of Monty Python.

Source: www.youtube.com. These images have been pixelated by the editors.



LOOSE BLUES

Jana Hartmana zapiski nieodpowiedzialne

STRONA GŁÓWNA O MNIE

◀ POPRZEDNI WPIS | NASTĘPNY WPIS ▶

23.06.2012

sobota

Kuba robi to z Dodą!

Jana Hartman [Share](#)

Łapię się za pysk oglądając festiwal świątobliwej nienawiści i bezholowia rozgrywany w mediach i innych szmeranych instytucjach na tle spowieszdniałego już Euro. Poniewieranie Rabczewską i Wojewódzkim przez jakieś sprzymierzone sądy, ministerstwa i gazety, przy wtórce

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Image: polityka.pl

On 23 June 2012 philosopher Jana Hartman wrote on his blog at Polityka website:

I clutch my face in disbelief as I watch the festival of saintly hatred and anarchy taking place in the media and other shady institutions against the background of the EURO 2012, something that has become all too common. The ill treatment of Wojewódzki by an alliance of courts, ministries and newspapers, accompanied by a hysterical mob, can be accurately compared to the church's hunts for witches and heretics of the not too distant past. (...) Demeaning Jakub Wojewódzki, accusing him thoughtlessly of racism and boorishness – so be it. One gets away with slander when barking in a pack. Let's understand that a malicious moron has demeaned himself enough with his pathetic excesses. Those who heard or read Wojewódzki's and Figurski's dialogue know that they laughed at the Warsaw nouveau riche who employ Ukrainian women and treat them brusquely and with contempt.

The Ukrainian Foreign Office could thank them, though there is no obligation to do that. But the morons react like Pavlov's dog: "rape a Ukrainian" means that we're under attack. What, why, how – who bothers to go into detail? Ukrainian women are being raped and we have to run to their rescue! Who knows, maybe they will reward us with their virginity? (...) I want to thank Jakub Wojewódzki for bravely defying hypocrisy. That single excess in the media means more to the building of a law abiding and free Poland than years of boring philosophers' writing and idle talk. Sometimes you go over the top, but always for a reason. Take care!

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Dr Michał Bilewicz polemizuje z prof. Janem Hartmanem.



Dr Michał Bilewicz
Jednostka w Katedrze Psychologii
Osobowości Wydziału Psychologii
Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego
oraz koordynator Centrum
Badań nad Uprzedzeniami UW.
Zajmuje się psychologia

Słowa mogą ranić. I to całkiem dosłownie. Wystarczył rok nadawanie przez rwandyjskie radio RTML humorystycznych audycji, w których nawoływano do „wycięcia karaluchów” i „wycięcia wysokich drzew” (nawiązując do wysokiego wzrostu członków plemienia Tutsi), by słuchacze radia wylegli z maciejami na ulice – doprowadzając do mordu setek tysięcy mieszkańców tego kraju. Były też niewinne żarty z czasopisma „Kanguru”, które przedstawiało kobiety Tutsi jako owdowiałe seksualnością prostytutki. W 1994 r. setki tysięcy kobiet Tutsi zostało zgwałconych.

Takich przykładów – historycznych i współczesnych – można by przytoczyć znacznie więcej. Dlatego zaskoczyła mnie obrona skandalicznej audycji Kubę Wojewódzkiego i Michała Figurskiego na blogu prof. Jana Hartmana. Moralnie oburzenie wielu Polaków profesor nazwa debilizmem. Co więcej, przedmowa audycji w radiu Eska Rock, w której jeden z prezenterów zapowiedział zgwałcenie Ukrainki, a obaj w dehumanizujący sposób traktowali je jako bez mała sprzątające roboty, do wypowiedzi Dody Rabczewskiej o „naprutyach winem autorach Białej”.

Image: polityka.pl

On 25 June 2012 social psychologist Michał Bilewicz responded at Polityka:

Words can hurt. Quite literally. The Rwandan radio RTML only had to broadcast humorous programmes calling for the “extermination of cockroaches” and “cutting down the tall trees” (referring to the tall members of the Tutsi tribe) for a year to make the listeners walk out into the streets with machetes and murder hundreds of thousands of the country's inhabitants. There were also the “innocent” jokes of the Kanguru periodical that presented Tutsi women as prostitutes obsessed with sex. Hundreds of thousands of Tutsi women were raped in 1994. Many more examples could be quoted – both historical and contemporary. That is why the blog post of Professor Hartman defending the scandalous programme of Kuba Wojewódzki and Michał Figurski surprised me. He calls the moral indignation of many Poles debility. Moreover, he takes the programme in which one of the presenters announced his desire to rape a Ukrainian woman, and both of the presenters dehumanised Ukrainians and treated them as almost cleaning robots.

(...) The situation of Ukrainian women working in Poland is especially difficult and many Polish people are aware of that fact. They are usually employed outside the labour law system. That is why a declaration such as “I will take your money and sack you again” as expressed by Wojewódzki is more than just a joke. It is a declaration of an action from which the working person cannot protect herself. When a radio presenter utters such a declaration it can easily become a psychological justification for the listener who has treated his illegal domestic worker that way for a long time. (...) Many Ukrainians, not being able to earn their living in Lviv, Lutsk or Kolomyia chose Poland as a country that can give their children a better future. The language proposed by Figurski and Wojewódzki, if present in the media, can change the Polish Arcadia into an immigrants' inferno. Many Poles are against it. Are we really all the victims of debility, Professor?

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A few days after the Eska Rock radio show incident, during a live television programme, *Good Morning TVN* (Dzień Dobry TVN), journalist Jolanta Pieńkowska said that she would like to have a robot for cleaning. "There are such! They are called Ukrainians..." replied her guest, Bartosz Węglarczyk.

Source: www.youtube.com. These images have been pixelated by the editors.

Introduction (PL)

DOROTA BORODAJ / DAVID SYPNIEWSKI,
ASSOCIATION OF CREATIVE INITIATIVES "E"

On a June morning in 2012, Poland woke up to a popular morning radio programme. It was the day after the EURO 2012 Ukraine-Sweden football match, and one of the presenters, commented that he was so angry at the result – Ukraine had won 2-1 – that he would fire "his Ukrainian". His friend agreed that he would not pay "his" and remarked that, if only she were a little prettier, he would rape her. The first was surprised – he did not even know what "his Ukrainian" looked like, because he only ever sees her "on her knees".

The conversation unleashed a media scandal. The presenters defended themselves by comparing their words to the satire of Monty Python. But the topic would not move from the front pages of the papers. Almost simultaneously another presenter (by the way, all of them were men) referred to Ukrainians as "cleaning machines" during a live morning television programme. It had been a very long time since the Polish media had focussed on any topic related to migrants and their situation in Poland. Neither the hunger strikes of desperate refugees nor the Polish schools

unaccustomed to teaching immigrant children could arouse media attention like the furore that surrounded these presenters. It is very probable that the topic owes its long life in the media spotlight to the fact that the protagonists of the scandal were celebrities. Interestingly, while there are many seasonal workers from the east in eastern Poland, the phenomenon of the "Ukrainian cleaner" is particular to Warsaw. At the same time the experience of Ukrainians in Poland does not differ greatly from the experience of the Polish women who perform similar work in Germany and Great Britain. But the media does not seem to notice this.

The largest percentage of economic migrants in Poland comes from the Ukraine, both those with a legal working permit and those working on the black market. Poland shares a difficult relationship with Ukraine. On the one hand there is a conscious dissociation from the "Ruskis", yet on the other hand brotherhood and historical solidarity on Ukraine's own bumpy road to independence. According to opinion polls Ukraine is among the nations

the least liked by the Polish. On the other hand, during the Orange Revolution, Poles, still remembering anti-Communist opposition and their own transformation 15 years earlier, supported Ukrainians with unusual strength, organised demonstrations and monitored the Ukrainian elections.

Talking about diversity in a country as ethnically and nationally homogenous as Poland isn't easy. In 2011, 94.83 per cent of the country's 38.5 million citizens declared only Polish nationality. At the same time the number of foreigners in Poland continues to grow – in 2012 a little over 100,000 received a permanent residence card – a ten per cent increase in comparison with the previous year (these numbers do not take into account foreigners whose residence in Poland is considered illegal by law).

Research shows that the Polish like the Romani people the least (as well as Romanians who are often considered to be the same). Poles don't particularly like Jews, Arabs, the Vietnamese or Chechens. They like Czechs and Slovaks the most, as well as, invariably, Spaniards and Italians.¹ Statistically there aren't many migrants in Poland. But 500,000 people is still a significant number. The big cities are home to most of the foreigners, with Warsaw in the lead. They often create enclaves, which, despite their considerable size, remain almost invisible to the average city dweller. Migrants are similarly invisible to the state. The lack of a complex migration policy is obvious.

In the view of Thomas Huddleston from the Migration Policy Group, "Poland is one of the last countries of the EU without

an identified policy towards migrants". He stresses that in order to introduce one, "political will and the awareness that it's worth having, as well as an understanding of its goals are needed. The consequences of no integration activities aimed at different groups of foreigners can be serious and lead to social conflicts, as well as an increase in social stratification."² Foreigners in Poland meet a number of barriers, from services, to schools (unaccustomed to teaching immigrant and refugee children), and state offices. NGOs try to fulfil the responsibilities of the state – both big watchdogs and organisations that offer legal counselling and immediate support for migrants (including refugees).

The media is highly involved in the construction of a simplified and selective image of immigrants in Poland. From time to time we hear the echoes of some media uproar surrounding events caused by, or related to, migrants. Single strikes shake public opinion for a short time. Epicentres are found across the map of the country: *Bang!* – Łomża: a local councillor demands that a refugee centre be removed. *Bang!* – Warsaw: a policeman shoots a Nigerian man dead at a marketplace. *Bang!* – Białą Podlaska: refugees from Georgia go on hunger strike. *Bang!* – Warsaw: two presenters insult Ukrainian domestic workers. *Bang! Bang!* – Białystok: nationalists set fire to the doors of flats inhabited by immigrants, repeatedly.

Some events echo in wide circles around Poland. Others are local and don't reach beyond the regional media. Their time-span differs too: the media live on them for several days or several weeks. Regardless

of that, links between the events are rarely noticed. So how can we speak of the image of migrants in a country in which that exact image is built upon extremes?

On the one hand, media incidents flare up rarely and, despite the grassroots activities of communities involved in human rights, bring no visible changes. On the other hand, there are the friendly images from breakfast television, where foreigners tend to be colourful and exotic. It's much easier to accept that kind of *stranger*.

Migrants in Poland are either invisible or motley and colourful, like souvenirs. In the case of our radio presenters back in 2012, migrants are merely objects, the butt of jokes, not feeling, thinking people; defined by their occupation they are merely "cleaning machines" their existence circumscribed by hate speech and prejudice.

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Barriers to the integration of migrants in Poland.

The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights 2012

“The world’s economy keeps growing thanks to these women who look after other people’s lives and homes. And these women often also have children of their own back in their countries.”

María Jesús Valenzuela (Seville, Spain)

Polish People speak about the Stranger

The Psychology of Hate Speech

MICHAŁ BILEWICZ

Polish people find it hard to speak about refugees, immigrants and national minorities. “Jew, what a strange word. A brief moment of fear always introduces its utterance,” Tadeusz Konwicki wrote in his novel *Bohiń*. For decades Polish people avoided that word by all possible means – we spoke and wrote of “Israelites”, “Poles of Jewish origin”, “Polish people of Jewish faith”. The reluctance to utter the word “Jew” was related to the inability to build an open dialogue with Jews. Similarly, it is hard for us to speak about black people – not wanting to offend anyone, we prefer to avoid the subject or at least not to pay attention to the skin colour of these people so often discriminated against and humiliated in Poland. Having written about issues of racism I have often had to face editors who would not accept the word “black” on the pages of their books and periodicals.

The difficulties in speaking about minorities or immigrant groups create a strange tension that is noticeable in many situations. Psychology teaches us that suppressing a

stereotype makes it even more powerful. That phenomenon, known as the “rebound effect” causes our stereotypical thinking – even though we try not to express it. Single incidents, however, in which hatred spills out in the form of hate speech, show the extent of stereotypical thinking and the power of prejudice in Poles.

We experienced such outbursts during EURO 2012 when fans of the Russian national team were attacked by drunk Polish football fans shouting “Russian whore”, “Fuck Russia”. One year later – on Independence Day – the same exclamations by an aggressive crowd accompanied the arson attack on the Russian Embassy in Warsaw.

Other events of boorishness are seen in comical broadcasts when authors – wanting to attract bigger audiences – purposefully use elements of hate speech. Humorous programmes by Kuba Wojewódzki were the place of such jokes twice: when he suggested raping Ukrainian domestic workers (in 2012) and when he called an

Indian official a “nigger” and a “bushman”. (in 2011).

Why do we laugh at unfunny jokes that hurt minorities? A British researcher of racist discourse, Michael Billig, describes the specific function of jokes in this discourse. Racist humour, used, for example, on websites, makes it possible to express in a socially acceptable way messages that are banned by the norms of political correctness. Even Freud pointed to that liberating function of humour: the two greatest taboos of human life – sexuality and death (and also violence) are both topics of humour. The fact that the racist jokes of Wojewódzki make Poles laugh does not only tell us something about Wojewódzki – but also about Polish people who cannot speak about immigrants and minorities in a civilised way. The reality of taboos is that humour becomes the only way out. No matter how poor a joke may be, it always causes spasms of laughter.

That laughter may seem cathartic and healing but in reality it is an extremely effective tool of exclusion and discrimination. While racist humour helps reduce tension within the Polish majority, the consequences of such messages for the discriminated minorities are only negative. Studies from Canada, the USA and the UK confirm this – and they are all countries with large groups of migrants who experience hate speech and discriminating jokes on a daily basis.

A comic way of speaking about national minorities often uses word games – there are no Germans and Chinese, just “Krauts” and “Chinks”. Though the differences be-

tween these kinds of words are visible at first glance, until a short time ago we didn’t know the impression such labels made on the objects of these racist and chauvinistic jokes. In an extremely interesting study of hate speech directed at immigrants in the USA, Brian Mullen and Joshua Smyth demonstrated that the more negative the labels attached to a given ethnic group, the higher the suicide rate was among its members. That study included data such as the suicide rate of the given country. It turned out that exposure to day-to-day confrontation with negative labels boosts the tendency to commit suicide among all ethnic groups.

“These are terribly harmful stereotypes. I’ve long been trying to understand how they are created.”

Magda Radwańska (Lublin, Poland)

What is the link between a racist joke and suicidal thoughts among members of groups subjected to such jokes? It is well described by the so-called Hurtful Speech Model defined by American psychologists

of communication, Laura Leets and Howard Giles. The model is an attempt to explain the minorities' reactions to hate speech. The reactions are similar to those of any traumatising event.

At first there are emotional reactions: gloom, anger, sadness – due to the loss of dignity. After some time members of minorities and immigrants, try to understand the situation. Then they tend to blame the majority. Victims of discriminating jokes or verbal assault, in a state of deep emotional agitation, often neglect turning to the police or to the law. But the trauma remains. With time the victims begin to experience hatred and grief.

Minorities can express those feelings by demonstrating, smashing shops, burning cars (examples of such activities are often seen in the streets of France or Sweden) or turning the hatred against themselves in forms of depression, helplessness, drug addiction, and alcoholism.

Hate speech about immigrants also changes the way majorities look at minorities. Many tolerant and open members of the majority start treating the minorities differently after hearing such language. "If someone speaks that way, there must be some truth in it!" a German could think about Turkish people, a Pole about Ukrainians, a French person about Algerians.

In psychology this basic human illusion is called the belief in a just world: victims of violence are always seen as in some way guilty of what was done to them. Hate speech works the same way. People who are insulted seem worse; we start to make them responsible for the evil that

they experience. It is no coincidence that Mullen's study proved that widespread negative and simplifying labels reduced the perceived attractiveness of minorities: in periods when minorities were more often insulted by such labels, mixed majority-minority marriages were rarer.

We often think: "It's nothing to do with me!" when two comedians tell jokes in bad taste on some radio station that we don't listen to anyway. When some demonstrators march the streets with hateful slogans on their lips, and we are far away from the noise, putting the day to good use. We feel strong in our liberal views and tolerance for all minorities. However, research shows that that strength is an illusion.

Proof can be found in Jeff Greenberg's study at the University of Arizona. He asked a test group to listen to a video debate of two opponents – one white and the other black – and then grade their arguments. While the black person was speaking half of the people undergoing the test heard the researcher utter a comment with an offensive verbal label, "no way a Negro could win this debate".

The other half of the group being tested heard the same commentary but without the negative label, "no way he could win this debate". After watching the whole video the people tested were asked to grade both participants in the debate. It turned out that those who heard the offensive, racist comments found the black participant less apt and less convincing.

The same study was repeated with many variants, e.g. the debate was replaced with a video recording of a court hearing, in

which the racist words of the researcher caused a negative attitude towards a black attorney and even made the test subjects increase the suggested sentence. Most interestingly, the results of the study did not correlate with the views of the test subjects, racist invectives were "effective" both with left-wing, right-wing and liberal people to the same extent. Even the most tolerant people, when they hear hate speech, shift their opinions.

The reason for our lack of immunity to hate speech is the fact that the influence of such messages is unconscious. Andrea Carnaghi and Anne Maass who analysed that phenomenon in Italy presented the tested people with a number of invectives for homosexual people on a screen, for a very short time. It turns out that even extra-short exposure to hate speech caused the tested heterosexuals to see gay and lesbian people in a more negative way. Hate speech causes us to change our beliefs on a completely unconscious level.

All of these studies suggest that the innocent, humorous use of words such as "nigger" or "bushman" for a specific person on a morning programme of a popular radio broadcaster can hugely influence the way that person – in this case a state official – will be seen by a majority of Polish people. Even the most open among us will discredit his competence and start to see him as a victim. Those less open – more prejudiced – will be delighted with the joke that expresses their negative emotions on air. The members of the ridiculed minorities will feel the worst. Those who won't be able to react to the insult will be those whose views on Poland and Polish people

will change most significantly. Therefore the whole society loses and Poland – as a country that lets such words be uttered – begins to be seen as a place hostile to the stranger, to people of different skin colour, nationality or sexual orientation.



All comments
come from the Polish internet forum
for people looking for housemaids
from Ukraine.

My Ukrainian
directed by Krzysztof Janiak. Produced by Association of
Creative Initiatives "e" (Poland, 2013) for Remapping Europe

Lublin, Multicultural Past, Multicultural Present?

Lublin and the Lublin Region are said to have been a place “where different nationalities, ethnic and religious groups have lived next to one another for centuries”. This banal statement is only partly true. Those groups lived here. But instead of living “next to” one another they coexisted in one community. But the savage legacy of the Second World War and Socialism have separated us from our historical multiculturalism. People here are Polish Catholics. The rest are “foreign bodies that come here” or “used to live here for a while”.

In Lublin one can spend a life without talking once to a non-Catholic, non-Polish or non-white skinned person. You can see them on a bus, go past them in a street or a shopping mall. And that would be all. There are no spaces for integration – both for intellectual meetings or for physical interaction. There are events, described as “ethnic” but these rarely cut across groups. The number of migrants continues to grow in the city but they are rarely visible in the streets, not to mention the city’s social and cultural life.

When the Lublin authorities mention the city’s legacy of multiculturalism in their strategies and activities, we try to make them see its contemporary version that is being lived in front of our eyes. There are people from Asia in our medical schools, cooks and salesmen from the Middle East, people from Africa and a growing number of Ukrainians – all of whom have all chosen Lublin as their city. They feel at home here. If we turn our slogans into reality and try to treat them as co-inhabitants, we may be able to avoid the mistakes of the countries of Western Europe and their gloomy consequences. We, the majority, can make them feel part of this community; make them feel welcome here; show them that their voice is important.

Integration is a two-sided process. But the hosts, who have power and money, who are at home, can do considerably more.

Piotr Skrzypczak, Founder Homo Faber. Homo Faber is a Lublin NGO working in the field of human rights. Their methods of activism consist of education, monitoring and advocacy.

Europe: crossing borders, facing contradictions

KRZYSZTOF CZYŻEWSKI

In the 1960s, the countries of Western Europe aimed to eliminate their borders, which separated nations and people. A dynamic development of modern technology, as well as a growing number of problems, which could only be solved across borders, such as ecology or security, all seemed to confirm Marshall McLuhan’s prediction about a coming “global village” – a world community, where borders would lose any importance. This was accompanied by a conviction that thanks to such a development of events, ethnic conflicts and any national separatism would disappear.

A similar assumption was found in communist Eastern Europe, only there a liberation from national phobias was to be brought by a new, unified human creation, the *homo sovieticus*. This eastern internationalism actually turned out to be illusory, hiding a profound chauvinism. At the borders of these brotherly countries a traveller, who had all their documents in order, who was not smuggling anything, who was not even carrying any forbidden books, felt guilty, and was nagged and humiliated. Inhabitants of countries to the east of the Berlin Wall jealously observed the processes

taking place in Western Europe. The world of open borders symbolised freedom.

The destruction of the Berlin Wall in 1990 was supposed to initiate the opening of borders all over Central and Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, new borders, paid for in blood, were created in the former Yugoslavia, and a whole network of borders has covered the territory of the former Soviet Union. Our understanding of borders themselves has been reevaluated: more and more often, in the name of freedom and threatened sovereignty citizens require the strengthening of borders, or even their closure.

Despite the fulfilment of predictions about modernisation and technological development, despite the advanced process of the unification of Europe, today nobody can seriously talk about the complete elimination of borders from our continent. On the contrary, increasingly strong voices are heard in their defence, in defence of maintaining separateness. Technology has changed a great deal, but it is helpless faced with the fear of citizens. Ethnic conflicts have not vanished, and the awareness of nationality, in spite of these many

transformations, still constitutes a vital force affecting contemporary Europeans.

In its long history, Europe has experienced many different forms of border. A border was marked out in order to separate, keep away and isolate, to protect, as well as join and meet. Changes in approach to borders have always been strongly connected with philosophies of life. The present moment is a time of revaluations, downfall of old systems and hierarchies. That is why it is important to ask questions about how we understand borders again today, during debates concerning the European Union, or the “Europe of regions”. National, geographical borders are not the most important themes of these considerations. The cultural, social and sociological aspects of borders in the life of Europeans are more important.

I come from the part of Europe where it would be difficult to find anything more unstable than state borders. Here, you can meet people who, despite living in the same place all their lives, have been citizens of three, or even four countries.

After the Second World War the borders of my country were moved a hundred, and sometimes more, kilometres to the West. I myself live close to the so-called Triple Junction, an unusual place in this part of Europe, where, since the fifteenth century, the borders of three countries have invariably met: before, the Kingdom of Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Teutonic Order; today, Poland, Lithuania and the Kaliningrad District of Russia.

According to Professor Kucera, “after the First World War, fourteen countries were created in the Central Europe, instead

of seven, and today there is no country there which would consider its borders fair – this is the heritage of peace treaties from both wars. The borders were marked out with a pencil by a group of political and military psychopaths, on the desk where they celebrated their victory.”

“Finding one’s place within new borders is always difficult. A lot depends on the mentality of people, whether they accept you or not. But I think it is possible. There are always some people who accept difference.”

Anahita Rezaei (Warsaw, Poland)

This relativity of borders is further emphasised by their courses, so often absurd, defying rational thinking or any recognition of reality. In my part of Europe a border

often runs through the middle of a town, separating families, or people speaking the same language, for unknown reasons.

In his book, *Europe: a Cultural Challenge*, Jean-Marie Domenach perceives Europe’s evanescent borders as follows: “I cross the Rhine by the European Bridge, not even noticing as I go from France to Germany. Once, as a child, I observed manoeuvres of young Nazis through the field glasses of my artilleryman grandfather. Today, I am overwhelmed by a joy, which, however, is accompanied by a certain uneasiness: I no longer see the borders of my territory, and, after all, the border (*finis*) has always been something which defines (*definit*) and closes me, which shows me my own limitations.”

This observation contains a contradiction which is difficult to solve: on the one hand, overcoming, or liberating oneself from borders causes joy, yet on the other hand, there is a need to mark out borders that define oneself and determines one’s identity. In other words, a longing for isolation meets a longing for rootedness. This is the very essence of the polemics that are taking place in contemporary Europe, absorbing politicians, economists, people of culture and science. And no wonder, for we are in the process of working out the new shape of a united Europe. Sociological studies conducted among young Europeans have shown an increase in a sense of the importance of roots, as opposed to isolation. How far we are from the 1960s.

For us, however, a different issue is important: do these attitudes have to be regarded as mutually exclusive? Do we have to look

for solutions? Shouldn’t we simply let this contradiction, which manifests in Domenach’s confidence, exist? Isn’t it the very nature of the European spirit, enrooted in diversity and polyphony, despising purges and one-dimensional reasoning?

To let this contradiction exist means regarding it as a part of European nature, to build Europe’s shape so that it contains what cannot be contained elsewhere. This is the very task of a builder – as the old saying goes: “it’s no achievement to build a roof over one’s head; it’s an achievement to build a roof that does not conceal the sky!” It is such a construction that is aimed at by those who work out the shape of the Europe of regions, the Europe, where, once again, the universal can be born out of what is separate.

Borders are autonomous elements. Humans establish them but they are mistaken to think that they are their only creators and masters. Nature, fate, the subconscious and life itself also draws on the map. More and more globe trotters among us enjoy the hospitality of other countries.

At the same time our houses are ever more tightly secured, our districts monitored, our cities offer privileges only to our “own people”. As citizens of Poland and the European Union we experience the constant dynamics of borders. Borders with Germany or Lithuania have been opened for us but those with Belarus and Russia are more difficult to cross than they were a dozen years ago.

For our eastern neighbours, their borders with Poland are sites of humiliation. But that humiliation isn’t only a phenomenon of the border zone. It carries on within

our communities where our neighbours are immigrants and refugees of our global village. In our increasingly multicultural world, borders remain and we have to work out the culture of crossing them – the ethos of coexistence. It doesn't come easy – neither to the border crossing customs officer nor to the young gang at a school, nor to a journalist talking to Ukrainian women who came to Poland looking for work.

We are still burdened by the inferiority complex that we developed during the historical and civilising domination of Poland by those stronger than us. Now we take this insecurity out on those weaker than us in the present moment of history. They are the evidence of our own emancipation and newfound open-mindedness. But there are other sources of this weakness – take the ancient Greek gephyrophobia, the fear of bridges, of crossing them, of meeting a stranger. Instead of stigmatising this fear with cheap political correctness, we should try to understand it and be aware that it's most difficult to cross a bridge alone.

Humans cannot erase borders, nor can we completely control them. We can only learn to live with them – and that is truly the contemporary *ars magna*. The same goes for the borders hidden deeply in us. Only they, marked by morals and the heart, cannot be changed or crossed. Love always brings us to a bridge, to another person. But at the same time it makes us guardians of our inner borders that cannot be crossed if we want to remain who we are.

This is an updated version of an article first published under the title "Limes and Agora" (published in Kafka. The Central European Quarterly 2003 no. 11. Earlier it was published under the title "From the borders to the center, or the Europeans in search of identity" in Borussia 1995, no. 10.)

Euro-orphans

2014 is the 10th anniversary of Poland's accession to the European Union. One of the first changes accession brought to Poland was the possibility for Polish Citizens to work in other EU countries. The Central Statistical Office states that by 2012 as many as two million Polish people were abroad. Most of them were elsewhere in the EU, especially in the UK, Germany and Ireland. There are villages in Poland where every family has lost at least one person to work in London, Hamburg or Cork.

The children of economic migrants have found themselves in a unique position. Often at least one parent is permanently abroad. In many families both parents work abroad. Children often stay in Poland with their grandparents, other family members or sometimes alone because of school or the unstable financial situation of their parents. Children most often affected by this phenomenon are of school age.

This situation, in which children are raised without one or two parents, whose absence is caused by economic migration, is called Euro-orphanage. For some, this term accurately describes the situation of hundreds of Polish children who contact their parents via electronic media, who are "raised on Skype".

Studies have indicated that there are as many as 110,000 Euro-orphans in Poland. But these studies only focus on poor and disadvantaged families; certainly the number of Euro-orphans is far higher.

Source: www.stat.gov.pl

BIOGRAPHIES OF CONTRIBUTORS

abu ali (Toni Serra) studied History of Art and Philosophy at the Universidad de Barcelona, video edition and aesthetics at the Film & Video Art in New York, and Communication Analysis at CUNY Brooklyn College. In 1989 he started working in video as a form of reflection and critique of contemporary culture, and also as a means of personal exploration. In 1992 he co-founded the OVNI archives where he still works doing research and programming events such as: "Post Sept 11th", "Resistances", "Colonial Dream, Autonomous Zones". He has also organised the series of programmes and the website known as Ru'a (visions). He has been living in Morocco since 1998 and is working on a media archeology project called *Los Archivos Babilonia* (The Babylon Archives).

Imre Azem graduated from Tulane University in New Orleans with degrees in Political Science and French Literature. He completed a French Literature degree at the Sorbonne in Paris. In 1998 he moved to New York where he worked in the media. From 2004 he worked as a director of photography and editor on independent projects. At the same time he designed and built furniture. In 2007 he moved to Istanbul to embark on his directorial debut, *Ecumenopolis: City Without Limits* a film about the neo-liberal urbanisation of Istanbul. This award-winning feature-length documentary was completed in 2011. Azem is also a member of People's Urban Movement, a volunteer group that produces reports and actions on urban issues.

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Matthew Cuzner is a media-arts professional working for the Future Film Programme of the British Film Institute (BFI) in London, the UK partner of the Doc Next Network. He is the coordinator of Doc Next Network's programme *Remapping Europe – A Remix Project Highlighting the Migrants Perspective* in the UK and researcher of the UK chapter in this publication. Future Film is aimed at 15- 25 year olds, programming a festival, monthly screenings, workshops and events to help young people develop their skills, learn about their craft and hopefully go on to become the next generation of film industry workers.

Krzysztof Czyżewski is a practitioner of ideas, poet, essayist, culture animator and editor. He is the co-founder and president of the Borderland Foundation (1990) and director of the Centre "Borderland of Arts, Cultures and Nations" in Sejny. In 2011, together with the Borderland Foundation, he opened an International Center for Dialog in Krasnogruda at the Polish-Lithuanian border. In 2008 his new collection of essays was published under the title *Line of Return. Notes from the Borderland*, which won the Cogito Prize for the best book in 2008. He coordinates intercultural dialogue programs in Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia, Indonesia, Bhutan and USA. He is a President of the Board of Eastern Partnership Congress of Culture. Since 2012 he has been an Artistic Director of European Capital of Culture Wrocław 2016. He has been awarded with Gabor Bethlen's Prize (Budapest), the Medal of St. George (Cracow), the Order of Giedriminas (Vilnius), the Cross "Polonia Restituta" (Warsaw), the Alexander Langer Prize (Rome), the Dialogue Award (Berlin), the Dan David Prize (2014) and the Alexander Gieysztor Prize (Warsaw 2007).

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Rubén Díaz has combined cultural production and research with his educational work since 2004. His work explores the intersections between media, cultural and social imaginaries. Since graduating in 2003 from the University of Seville in Media Studies, with a Postgraduate Degree in Digital Journalism and an MA in Communication and Culture, he has also studied Hispanic Literature (University of Birmingham, UK) and Anthropology (University of Seville). Rubén has edited and contributed to publications such as *Creative and Collective Intelligence* (2005), *Television Is Not Filming This* (2006), *Digital Culture and Participatory Communication* (2006), *Control Panel* (2008), *Source Code: Remix* (2009) and *Expanded Education* (2012). He was also co-founder of ZEMOS98. He has worked with the European Cultural Foundation on setting up the Doc Next Network since 2010.

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Louis Reynolds is a Research Associate within the Centre for the Analysis of Social Media at Demos, the British cross-party think-tank. His research interests include online political behaviour, social media analysis, European populism, extremism and terrorism.

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Sırrı Süreyya Önder is a film director, actor, screenwriter, columnist and politician. His 2006 film *The International* was awarded the Best Picture Prize at the 2007 International Adana Golden Boll Film Festival, and was entered into the 29th Moscow International Film Festival. He has written and continues to write as columnist in various Turkish newspapers such as *BirGün*, *Radikal* and *Özgür Gündem*. Backed by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in the 2011, he ran for an independent seat in the elections for the Parliament of Turkey. Elected as a deputy from Istanbul, he joined then the BDP. He is currently running for mayor of Istanbul for People's Democracy Party (HDP). Sırrı Süreyya was involved in the 2013 Taksim Gezi Park protests.

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www.docnextnetwork.org

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