

RACIALIZING ISLAM: THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF RACE, RELIGION AND  
CULTURE IN CONTEMPORARY GERMAN SOCIETY

by

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## ABSTRACT

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Racializing Islam: The Conceptualization of Race, Religion and Culture in Contemporary German Society

Thesis directed by Assistant Professor Beverly M. Weber

Since the implementation of the Guest Worker Program in the 1950s, Germany has struggled to accept that Turkish immigrants, along with subsequent generations, constitute a large part of its society. Thilo Sarrazin's book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*, which has been at the center of public discourse in Germany since its publication in 2010, has exacerbated the debates surrounding the status of ethnic minorities in German society. His strong negative opinions of Islam and Muslims living in Germany have influenced the direction of religious discourse, within the context of racial and multicultural discourses. In determining Germany's own national culture it is important to understand not only how ethnic minorities fit into this culture, but also how Germans understand religion and secularism in the context of Germany's culture. The relationship between race, religion and culture in Germany can best be understood by deciphering the focus on religion as a negative aspect contributing to multiculturalism and integration. In order to grasp this discourse, I will analyze various media sources, as well as Sarrazin's book. I will offer analysis on the use of the term racialization and the relationship the use has to notions of race, religion and culture. This thesis will further research on these issues through gaining a better understanding of race discourse in society today, by looking specifically at the relation of religion to racialization. An important question to address in this paper is how it is possible for Muslims to be subject to racism when their actions are religious.

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## CHAPTER I

### FROM PAST TO PRESENT: GERMANY'S IMMIGRATION WOES

Since the arrival of a large immigrant population from Turkey in the early 1960s, there has been an increase in recognition of minority members within Germany. While not all Germans reject the presence of ethnic minorities, or of Islam, there are nevertheless ongoing debates concerning how this acceptance is understood. This struggle has produced discriminatory views and statements concerning Islam and Turkish culture, as well as contentious and problematic understandings of culture, race and religion. More specifically, these debates have lead to an alternative and problematic conceptualization of religion. Thilo Sarrazin's book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*, which has been at the center of public discourse in Germany since its publication in 2010, has exacerbated the debates surrounding the status of Islam, Muslim culture and Germans of Turkish heritage in German society. His strong negative opinions of Islam and Muslims living in Germany, as well as the claims in the book itself, have influenced the direction of religious discourse, as well as discourses concerning race and multiculturalism.

It is the conception of public figures such as Sarrazin, that Germans of Turkish heritage remain a threat to Germany because of their seemingly backward, or non-progressive, culture and religion. Additionally, Sarrazin is concerned with the influence that such backwardness could have on German society. While opinions of the role of Islam in Germany do not follow traditional divides between liberal or conservative opinion, there are certainly conflicting judgments. Some maintain that the growth of Islam throughout Europe may be an important stepping-stone for Germany to progress in a globalized world. This opinion may be understood

as a means of expanding the horizon of multiculturalism and a sense of belonging. However, many others argue that Islam is not welcome in Germany and poses a threat to the fundamental beliefs of the German culture. Moreover, it appears, to those like Sarrazin, that Islam is inseparable from the Turkish culture. Such judgments have been further inflamed through the German media and, of course, Sarrazin's book. Herein lies the perceived failure of multiculturalism in Germany. The circulation of such discourses has led to the politicization and racialization of Islam and Turkish culture. I will discuss and analyze the relationships between such terms as racialization, race, racism, culture, secularism and multiculturalism. In brief, though, using the term racialization is a means of identifying racist processes, and the term race acquires a meaning closely associated with culture. Furthermore, both the religious and the secular are racialized, existing as two forms of religious understanding.

The racialization of Islam and Islamophobia in Germany can best be understood by deciphering its focus on religion as a negative quality contributing to multiculturalism and the integration of ethnic minorities. There is an ample amount of research and analysis being done concerning the relationship between Muslim populations and Europe. I am not focusing so much on migration as such, but instead I will focus on media sources and discourses. The themes represented in these sources do not so much explore the link between race, racism and religion, but they do concern Sarrazin, Islam and Germans of Turkish heritage<sup>1</sup>. My analysis will evolve into an examination of the contemporary notions of race, racism, religion and the secular and how these terms are conceptualized in German culture. Additionally, I will examine why it is that religion and culture are mistaken as being interchangeable. This thesis will supplement

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<sup>1</sup> Examples include: Beste, Ralf and Kurbjuweit, Dirk; Dürr, Anke, and Wolfgang Höbel; Fleischhauer, Jan; Preuß, Roland; Schloemann, Johan.

research on these issues by gaining a better understanding of race discourse in society today, in looking specifically at the relation of religion to racialization.

In this thesis, I analyze Sarrazin's book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*, and a selection of twenty newspaper articles in order to better understand the conceptualization of race, religion and the meaning of culture in Germany today. I generated a large sample of 400 newspaper articles from the *Factiva* database based on the keyword search 'Sarrazin and Islam', and identified major themes. Furthermore, I used the dates from the release of his book in August of 2010 until October 2011 as criteria for my search. Some of the major themes I identified in these articles include debates on immigration, integration, foreigners, migrants, religion and culture. The search was then further restricted based on a 1000 or above word count, as well as major newspaper sources, such as *Der Spiegel* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. The articles that carried the greatest weight for the purpose of my argument either specifically addressed Sarrazin's controversial positions on Turkish-Germans and religion, or addressed the lack of compatibility of Islam and secularism and Turkish and German culture. I will analyze and interpret certain aspects of both the articles and the book to determine in what way they portray Islam, culture, and secularism within a multicultural discourse in Germany. I chose these sources to provide an analysis that offers a broad spectrum of positions, mainly to convey the controversy surrounding these issues.



## CHAPTER II

### THE EVOLUTION OF RACE DISCOURSE

While extensive research is being done on issues of multiculturalism and race, I intend to focus on a somewhat untouched category within these issues, namely that of the conceptualization of religion in contemporary Germany and its relationship to the understanding of race and culture. Race, racialization and multiculturalism are terms at the forefront of race discourse in that their changing definitions throughout history have brought about controversial discussions in contemporary society. Furthermore, the significance of secularism within the context of multiculturalism and its important relationship with religion, as well as the important connections it maintains to racialization are pertinent to topics in race discourse. To understand the progression of such issues, it is first and foremost important to understand the evolution of the role of race in post-war German society.

At the end of World War II, the topic of race became taboo (Lentin; Dirlik). Race, during the Nazi regime, maintained a definition based on biological characteristics. During this period in history, it was believed that race was genetically inherited and passed down generation to generation through a bloodline. It was believed that the Jewish faith had the same characteristics. Since the end of World War II, however, race as supported and defined through scientific fact has been delegitimized (Chin et al. 14). In society today, it is in fact the historical definition of race that still holds true. Meaning that, instead of defining race through science, race is defined by social elements. Race is a socially constructed concept that is based on the differences in cultures (MacMaster; Eley; Dirlik; Lentin; Gündüz). The characteristics attributed to race, such as its unchanging and fixed status in society, as well as the perceived incommensurability of one race with another, are in fact characteristics associated with culture.

The use of the term race, more recently, has mistakenly been used in the place of culture. Such a definition of culture maintains that different groups of people are clearly different and these differences are incommensurable (Chin et al. 7, 92). Similar to historical definitions of race, culture is seen as unchanging and fixed. This definition of culture perpetuates a hierarchization of differences (Dirlik; further see Lentin; Gündüz).

Additionally, culture is used as a foil for racism, where the term race is used to refer to something else and to hide the reference at the same time. In this case, race is used to discriminate against a group of people because of their culture. This was the case in 2008, when a young boy was accused by his ethics teacher of having contact with an Islamic extremist group (Reimann & Trenkamp). *Der Spiegel* writes, “Im Frühling 2008 schreibt Yasin C. eine Klausur zum Thema ‘Das Weltethos’. Es geht darum, welche Werte alle Weltreligionen gemein haben. Etwas umständlich formuliert er, das Weltethos sei ‘zu spät’ bei den Menschen angekommen. Und: Christen sei nicht beizubringen, islamische Werte anzuerkennen” (Reimann and Trenkamp). Among other things, Yasin was also not a good student and he missed a lot of school. This alarmed the teacher, prompting her to report her suspicions to the police (Reimann and Trenkamp). However, the police investigation produced no evidence. This incident implies that because Yasin C. is of Turkish heritage and perhaps adheres to Muslim cultural traditions, he is more easily suspected than others of terrorist activity. Furthermore, this teacher is assuming that if someone adheres to Islamic values, he or she has some involvement in terrorism. This is problematic. Such assumptions replicate these racist discourses. Additionally, there is a fear of what is being said about Christians. In this case, Christians are accused of being intolerant and uncompromising. This is an interesting accusation, considering that Islam is

generally considered unchanging and fixed. In my media analysis, I will discuss in more detail the replication of such racist discourses.

By using historical tropes of race, Islam and Turkish culture become politicized and racialized. The discourses surrounding religion and culture today have structural similarities to race discourse in the early twentieth century. Racialization is the process of conceptualizing a difference in culture through the context of a dominating ideology and culture (Chin et al. 4, 27). It refers to a racist discourse; a process in which race, or cultural difference, is constructed in and through discourse without necessarily naming race (Chin et al. 81-82, 147-49, 154, 170). The use of the term racialization recognizes how society hierarchizes and categorizes cultures based on their differences (Chin et al.). This categorization of certain cultures creates a stigma around certain cultures as being unchanging and incommensurable with another culture. Additionally, the use of the term is a means of conceptualizing racism and a way of situating it in contemporary society (Chin et al.). Furthermore, racialization determines the categories of culture that create racism. For most of Europe, and in this case for Germany, that category is religion.

The progression of the conceptualization of the use of the term race can be traced through history. MacMaster's book, *Racism in Europe*, as well as the book *After the Nazi Racial State*, address the concepts of racism and racialization. He defined racialization as:

“Those processes through which one group (usually the ‘white’ majority) has set about the task of targeting other groups (frequently non-European minorities) as inferior, a process involving ideological constructions (those with black skins are ‘less intelligent’) as well as an apparatus of legal, political and social discrimination and oppression” (MacMaster 3).

This type of racialization dealt with the oppression of a certain group of people based mainly on the color of their skin. So how does MacMaster's definition of 'racialization' differ from racism? MacMaster continues to describe racism as if the two terms meant the same thing. Eley, however, seems to define racialization as a concept "for conceptualizing racism's ideological effects. He understands racialization in relation to the conflicts and disturbances associated with the regulation of migrant labor markets in an international system still mainly organized by nation-states" (Chin et al. 170). Therefore, racialization, in my view, is not so much the act of being prejudice towards a certain group of people, like MacMaster seems to define it. Rather, it is a discourse of racism, a way of producing racism by producing a particular group as other. That is to say, racialization places racism within a societal context of ideology, culture, politics, religion and the market economy.

Rita Chin and Heide Fehrenbach define contemporary racism in a similar way that Eley does. They conceptualize racism by examining the effects of the market economy through economic stagnation and unemployment, suggesting that racism may arise through the need to blame another group of people. Chin and Fehrenbach state that this contemporary racism is a characteristic of former East Germany and the poor integration into the democratic system of the West. Within this historical context, a shift in the conceptualization of racism emerges. Racism turns to cultural and social aspects of society and asserts that differences in culture stray from the (cultural) norm of the so-called dominant society, which in turn leads to a categorization of social life. Where class used to be the main way to categorize society into privileged and under-privileged, class itself has now become racialized. In other words, racialization has adopted and taken on characteristics that aren't necessarily new to social norms. The first of these characteristics is assuming a difference in cultures and assuming that these cultures are

incompatible and incommensurable. The second characteristic is hierarchizing cultures because of these differences. Finally, the third characteristic is that one culture is fixed and unchanging, while the other culture is dynamic and progressive. Racialization is a racist discourse that determines the categories of culture that produce a notion of race.

The use of the term racialization in the context of Islam and Islamophobia in Germany can best be understood by deciphering the focus on religion as a factor prohibiting effective multiculturalism and Turkish integration. It is imperative, as well, to state that both the acceptance and the rejection of multiculturalism often function as forms of racialized exclusion. Criticism of multiculturalism from scholars suggests that there are multiple definitions of multiculturalism. The focus for most of Europe, however, is the liberal notion of multiculturalism where groups of people are labeled and categorized based on their cultures (Dirlik; further see: Lentin; Gündüz). Restricting cultures further hierarchizes groups of people into categories of superior and inferior cultures, much the same way that racism has been represented throughout history. Comparably, those in favor of multiculturalism are likewise racializing culture. For example the use of the word *Mitbürger* may connote a space of coexistence, however, it more so suggests a separation of cultures, a way of protecting a culture. More specifically, the Turkish culture is considered archaic, unchanging and incompatible with European culture because of its association with Islam. Islam is hierarchized and racialized through the deeply problematic understanding of its connection to Turkish culture.

Representing Turkish culture as fixed, unchanging and as something incompatible with European notions of religion and culture racializes Islam. Within Europe, Christianity still remains an important part of everyday life, however, the advent of the Enlightenment resulted in a shift away from the dominance of religion in society to a society upheld by values supported by

science (Pellegrini; Asad). The Enlightenment resulted in the secularization of Christianity; thus, secularism is bound to a specific religion and period of history, namely, Christianity and the Enlightenment (Pellegrini; Asad). Secularism is a way of managing the relationship between religion and state. The particular form of secularism being discussed desires, as much as possible, to relegate religion to the private sphere. Religion is still very much a part of everyday life. In an article from *Der Spiegel*, the author even states, “Knapp zwei Drittel der Deutschen gehören einer Kirche an – verglichen mit rund zwei Prozent Parteimitgliedern zeugt das von einer immer noch robusten Konstitution institutionalisierter Religion” (Schieder). It remains embedded in the public sphere through the fact that secularism occurred through state intervention. Furthermore, the secular and the religious are not separate frameworks, “but two forms of religious understanding, intertwined with one another in various modes of avowal and disavowal” (Asad 119). Not only is religion racialized, the secular is racialized as well. Secularism, as an understanding of European religion is part of a racialized dichotomy in which Christianity is viewed as changing and evolving, while Islam is represented as stagnant. The characterizations and categorizations of both religions racialize both Islam and Christianity.

The conceptualization of religion in contemporary Europe intersects with the interpretation and understanding of both race and multiculturalism. The arguments from these scholars provide a foundation for my research. I intend to show the complexities of using race as a foil for culture and how religion and secularism fit into Germany’s multicultural lens by using Thilo Sarrazin’s book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*. As additional evidence, I will also analyze newspaper articles concerning Sarrazin, his book and his position concerning Islam and Germans of Turkish heritage. Sarrazin’s style of writing and word use suggest an unwavering determination to ensure that, specifically visual signs of Islam do not become a permanent

addition to German culture. Furthermore, he is also determined to relegate religion to the private sphere. The addition of newspaper articles will show the extent to which a racist discourse is being replicated. Furthermore, Sarrazin is also determined to ensure that Germans of Turkish heritage remain outsiders in Germany. Using Sarrazin as the main focus of this thesis provides evidence of racialization and the influence that he, as well as other political figures, has had on certain groups within German society. Additionally, the positions that Sarrazin and others uphold are not universal. There are those, as noted later in this thesis, like Feridun Zaimoglu, a Turkish-German writer, or *Der Spiegel* author Jan Fleischhauer that criticize Sarrazin for his positions and his contradictions<sup>2</sup>. It is nevertheless important to understand the impact Sarrazin has had on these groups, as well as the implications this impact has.

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<sup>2</sup> Further see: Fleischhauer, Jan; Dürr and Höbel.

## CHAPTER III

### THILO SARRAZIN ON CULTURAL PRESERVATION

Thilo Sarrazin's book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*, addresses many different issues concerning Germany's social welfare system and immigration, however, my focus is on Sarrazin's opinions and concerns about immigrants, Islam and Turks and how such writing promotes the racialization of Islam. His book has brought about much debate concerning immigration policy, culture, multiculturalism and especially his own depressing views on the state of German society today, and its future. Since May of 2011, his book has sold over one million copies (Hahn). Throughout his book, Sarrazin's elaborates on topics concerning the social welfare system and its imperfections, the definition of poverty and the hierarchical structure of society, the problems with population growth and decline, the job market prospects, and the failing education system. Sarrazin cunningly adds his positions on the presence of Turkish-Germans and Islam in Germany.

Sarrazin begins his book, however, with a chapter on an historical review of cultures and societies from ancient Egyptians until today, a tactic to persuade his followers that multiculturalism is damaging to cultures. These examples obscure the fact that Europe has never consisted of homogeneous cultures due to the constant movement of people through travel and migration. He uses examples of ancient cultures to suggest that such cultures were successful by organizing society based on politics, culture and the economy (Sarrazin 25). However, in Sarrazin's view, the Roman Empire found its demise through the triumph of Islam over the Crusades in the East. According to Sarrazin, this is a terrible outcome that may very well be the same situation for Europe today (Sarrazin 27). His argument, though, is ignorant of scholarly discussions. This statement gives the impression that he is conflating the Holy Roman Empire



and the Roman Empire. A great example of his fear of historical repetition comes directly from his book:

Das ist wohl wahr, und damit ist man im emotionalen Kern des Problems: Das westliche Abendland sieht sich durch die muslimische Immigration und den wachsenden Einfluss islamistischer Glaubensrichtungen mit autoritären, vormodernen, auch antidemokratischen Tendenzen konfrontiert, die [...] auch eine direkte Bedrohung unseres Lebensstils darstellen. (Sarrazin 266).

Sarrazin's word choice directly enhances how his description of Islam is racialized. He clearly states that Islam is a threat to German culture because of its authoritarian, archaic methods and its unwillingness to modernize. Sarrazin's critical thoughts emerge from the public displays of Muslim culture, such as headscarves and Mosques that he finds so overwhelming to the German culture. Sarrazin maintains a simple and essentialist understanding of culture, one that preserves cultures by drawing attention to cultural differences, instead of reconciling those differences (Sarrazin 25). It is rather difficult for him to conceive of multiple and shifting forms of community and identity. In Sarrazin's mind, one cannot be both Turkish and identify with German culture. For him, assuming only one form of affiliation is possible. Sarrazin would rather that cultures remain separate entities instead of becoming multicultural. Using this understanding of culture, Sarrazin delves into the issues surrounding German society to show that the influence of immigrants, and more specifically Turkish immigrants, has a negative influence on German culture.

One of Sarrazin's first attacks on immigrants, but what I will call ethnic groups or minorities, comes in a chapter in which he discusses demographics in Germany. Sarrazin provides a breakdown of the different ethnic minorities in Germany, when and why they came to

Germany, and their integration issues. What he explains about immigrants of Muslim descent is as follows:

Die Zuwanderer aus dem ehemaligen Jugoslawien, der Türkei und den arabischen Ländern bilden den Kern des Integrationsproblems. Es gibt keinen erkennbaren Grund, weshalb sie es schwerer haben sollten als andere Immigranten. Ihre Schwierigkeiten im Schulsystem, am Arbeitsmarkt und generell in der Gesellschaft ergeben sich aus den Gruppen selbst, nicht aus der sie umgebenden Gesellschaft. (Sarrazin 59)

Through Sarrazin's interpretations, while many immigrants, like those from Eastern Europe and Asia, have successfully integrated in German society, those from Middle Eastern countries, Turkey included, have not had much success. He states that this group of immigrants is the core problem of immigration and integration.

Additionally, he claims that these issues do not stem from a problem with German social policies, but instead stem from something inherent in the specific group of immigrants (Sarrazin 59). Furthermore, Sarrazin shows, through the use of countless statistics, that the quality of the German education system is suffering because children of immigrants have difficulties succeeding in school. He claims that 33% of the children starting school are not of German heritage and he is blaming it on the ethnic minorities themselves for not integrating or properly educating themselves in the German language (Sarrazin 77). In addition, Sarrazin claims that children of immigrant backgrounds have the least success in school (Sarrazin 262, 286). However, in a report published to refute many of Sarrazin's statistics, there is concrete evidence that suggests that Germans of Turkish heritage have a higher success rate in schools than native

Germans do, if Turkish-Germans make it to higher levels of education, like *Gymnasium* (Foroutan et al).

In a study conducted by the *Bundesministerium des Innen (BMI)*, the study found that first generation immigrants, as compared to the parent generation, saw higher rates of university degrees (Foroutan et al. 21). Additionally, a PISA<sup>3</sup> study found that children of immigrant families are more motivated to learn and go to school than those of non-immigrant backgrounds:

Insbesondere für die selbst zugewanderten Schülerinnen und Schüler (erste Generation) und deren Eltern ließen sich häufig sogar höhere Aspirationen nachweisen als für Schülerinnen und Schüler ohne Migrationshintergrund. (Foroutan et al. 26)

Furthermore, a surprising statistic claims that children with immigrant backgrounds have a five times higher chance of getting into *Gymnasium* if they are at the same socioeconomic status and school performance as children with non-immigrant backgrounds that are also going to *Gymnasium* (Foroutan et al. 27). A Study from the *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge* concluded that there is no concrete connection between religion and performance in schools. Lastly, a census taken by the *Statistischen Bundesamt (Wiesbaden)* found that,

In der Gruppe der Iraner, Iraker und Afghanen, die auch Muslime sind, haben 33,3 Prozent (Fach-) Abitur, während diese Quote bei der Gruppe der Bevölkerung ohne Migrationshintergrund bei 21,5 Prozent liegt. In der Gruppe der jüngeren Generation der 20-25 Jährigen haben sogar 50% (Fach-) Abitur. (Foroutan et al. 30)

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<sup>3</sup> PISA stands for Program for International Student Assessment. It is a program funded by the OECD.

Overall, children and young adults of immigrant backgrounds appear to be more successful in school than those of non-immigrant backgrounds. While Sarrazin believes that ethnic minorities are at fault for the low success rate in education, he should perhaps examine the problem as a whole and acknowledge that it not just caused by a single group of people. To conclude, Sarrazin argues that what is inherently wrong with Germans of Turkish heritage is unchangeable and incompatible with the German culture, making them unable to integrate, or succeed in school. Sarrazin's belief that there is a lack of compatibility between the two cultures also clearly suggests a hierarchy of cultures.

Throughout the book, there is an atmosphere of fear in the tone of the text that alludes to the prospects of immigrants of Muslim origin overtaking the German population. Such critical thoughts further suggests that Germans of Turkish heritage are not included in German society, but remain outside of this public sphere, in a category that does not allow for integration. Sarrazin claims more specifically that if the birthrate of certain ethnic minorities remains higher than that of the native population, then ethnic minorities will overtake the native population within only a few generations (Sarrazin 259). Considering that there are already second and third generation ethnic minorities in Germany suggests that it will be quite a while for a situation like that to occur. Furthermore, he more specifically addresses this issue in relation to ethnic minorities:

Man mag es einen Kulturbruch oder auch anders nennen: Wenn die beschriebenen Trends sich fortsetzen, dann wird die säkulare und aus unserer Sicht kulturell vorzuziehende Lebensform Europas letztlich unterlaufen durch die höhere Fertilität der muslimischen Migranten und den durch sie ausgelösten Nachzug.

Wer sich stärker vermehrt, wird am Ende Europa besitzen. Wollen wir das?  
(Sarrazin 320)

Sarrazin has a deterministic view that is constant throughout the book. The use of such a tone within the book provides his readers with even more reason to adopt the critical thoughts and maintain a certain distance from Turkish-Germans that Sarrazin has. Additionally, such views perpetuate discrimination against ethnic minorities in the public sphere and legitimize such public discrimination.

While he addresses the issue that women in Germany are either not having children or having fewer children at an older age, he does not necessarily panic about such statistics as much as he does when it concerns the increasing minority populations:

Die Alterspyramide zur Bevölkerung in Deutschland lässt deutlich erkennen, dass die Migration die quantitativen Wirkungen des Geburtenrückgangs erheblich abgemildert hat: Der Anteil der von der einheimischen Bevölkerung geborenen Kinder ist seit Mitte der sechziger Jahre um 65 Prozent gesunken, dank der Migranten hat sich die Gesamtzahl der in Deutschland Geborenen aber »nur« halbiert. (Sarrazin 60)

For Sarrazin, the increasing minority population is to be feared far more than the overall stagnant birthrate of native Germans (Sarrazin 60). It is extremely important to note, though, that most of the migrants that Sarrazin is referring to are in fact not migrants. He is referring to most of the Turkish-Germans in Germany that were born and raised in Germany.

In addition to addressing the shortcomings of immigrants in schools and the job market, Sarrazin also focuses on the creation of parallel societies (*Parallelgesellschaften*), otherwise known as ghettos (Sarrazin 294). Again, Sarrazin's tone when discussing the creation of sub-

cultures suggests that the inability to integrate into German society is solely the fault of the immigrant. Sarrazin goes on to claim:

In geschlossenen Siedlungen, wo man mittels Satellitenschüsseln rund um die Uhr jedes Fernsehprogramm aus der Heimat empfangen kann, besteht ja im Grunde gar keine Notwendigkeit, neben der Muttersprache auch noch die Amtsprache zu beherrschen...und den Söhnen wird in autoritären Strukturen ein Männlichkeitsbild vorgegeben, das sich für entbehnungsreiches Lernen genauso nachteilig auswirkt wie die männlichkeitsbetonte Gettokultur der Schwarzen in Amerika. (Sarrazin 236)

This passage uses words that suggest that even the second and third generation Turkish-Germans do not have a place in Germany, or are even considered German citizens. More specifically he uses the phrase '*aus der Heimat*' as if no one of Turkish descent has a home in Germany. Furthermore, the mention of the 'black ghetto-culture' in the United States insinuates a racist attitude towards Germans of Turkish heritage. The association of Turkish culture with black culture in the United States racializes Islam mainly by associating Islam with a historically racist discourse.

Sarrazin's use of the term ghetto implies an historically controversial form of space. One scholar, Maria Stehle, addresses the implications of the use of the term ghetto. Stehle's article is helpful in that it elaborates on German media culture in the 1970s and compares it to German media culture in the 2000s. She states, "On the one hand, the movement of people needs to be managed and policed, 'floods' need to be contained by laws; on the other hand, it is precisely this containment that prevents the desired 'integration' and is the root of lawlessness, violence, and social decay" (Stehle 49). The creation of ghettos in Europe perpetuate Sarrazin's wish to

preserve cultures in separate spaces, but this separation creates a ‘Fortress Europe’, or a means of racializing cultures (Stehle 50):

The making of Europe is both a continuing process and ‘a product of the nineteenth and twentieth century mostly constructed by the European Enlightenment, its racial theories and colonialism’. The focus on the ghetto as a central component of Europe, of ‘the metropolitan heartland of the old imperial racial system’, shows how the creation of Europe is still a deeply racialized process. (Stehle 50)

While Sarrazin uses the term in comparison with the historical black ghettos in the United States, the use of the term evokes memories of the Holocaust. Similar to the ghettos during World War II, these Turkish ghettos are a space of exclusion, as well as a characterization of Turkish-Germans as a group that, as Sarrazin would say, excessively reproduces to the point that it drives natives out of their living quarters (Stehle 53). Such ghetto-spaces create an exclusionary sense of belonging in which the ethnic group residing in such a space is cut off from the rest of society, yet the space is within the parameters of the society.

Additionally, Sarrazin’s book suggests that there is, at least among some people, a return to a nationalistic culture that is reminiscent of the 1930s. In the last chapter of his book, “Ein Traum und Ein Alptraum”, Sarrazin outlines what Germany could look like in 100 years in terms of a nightmare and a dream, the negative outcome and the positive outcome in his view. In the year 2017, he maintains that Germany would officially be recognized as a country of immigration and that foreign cultures are a crucial asset to the country:

“Es wurde bekräftigt, dass die Bundesrepublik ein Einwanderungsland sei; der wachsende Einfluss fremder Kulturen sei für das Land eine Bereicherung. Allen

Migranten wurde das kommunale Wahlrecht mit der Aufenthaltsgenehmigung zugesprochen. Die Koalitionsvereinbarung kündigte eine Gesetzesinitiative an, mit der die Unterstützung von Xenophobie und Islamophobie unter Strafe gestellt werden sollte”. (Sarrazin 397)

For Sarrazin, this is a terrible outcome. Germany has capitulated to a culture of inclusion, instead of maintaining a culture of exclusion.

In Sarrazin’s utopian version of Germany’s future, stricter laws are enforced concerning displays of religious representations. He states, “Bereits 2020 waren Schuluniformen eingeführt und ein Kopftuchverbot ausgesprochen worden” (Sarrazin 407). Furthermore, he states that there are fewer women on the streets seen wearing headscarves and migrant populations continue to diminish in 2040. Sarrazin’s style of writing and word use suggests an unwavering determination to ensure that, specifically visual signs of Islam do not become a permanent addition to German culture. Sarrazin’s assertions confirm Ewing’s argument that there is a return to nationalistic sentiment with similarities to Nazi ideologies; however, it is not a universal belief, as can be shown through studies concerning citizenship and government regulation of migrants.

The placement of the Turkish minority into ghettos also creates a more violent group of people, which Stehle refers to as ‘ghetto-Islam’ (Stehle 60). ‘Ghetto-Islam’ is a “closed and increasingly violent form of identity to resist a system that excludes, or at best, exploits, the majority of them” (Stehle 60). Through this exclusion, Sarrazin hopes to suppress the influence of Islam on Germany:

Ich möchte, dass auch meine Urenkel in 100 Jahren noch in Deutschland leben können, wenn sie dies wollen. Ich möchte nicht, dass das Land meiner Enkel und



Urenkel zu großen Teilen muslimisch ist, dass dort über weite Strecken türkisch und arabisch gesprochen wird, die Frauen ein Kopftuch tragen und der Tagesrhythmus vom Ruf der Muezzine bestimmt wird. Wenn ich das erleben will, kann ich eine Urlaubsreise ins Morgenland buchen. (Sarrazin 308)

It is of great importance to Sarrazin that Germany, and all of Europe for that matter, remains secular and democratic. The problem remains that, in Sarrazin's view, there is no way that Muslims can participate in such a secular and democratic society. Sarrazin criticizes countries like Switzerland that have worked to make integration for Muslim migrants easier, but Sarrazin argues that this is the beginning of the end of Europe (Sarrazin 257). He cites former German chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, on his reaction to Switzerland's support for Islam in Europe. While Schröder acknowledged that Islam has become a part of German society, Sarrazin comments that such acknowledgement isn't necessary (Sarrazin 270). Sarrazin continues to put forth that it is important to acknowledge that Germany is a proponent of religious freedom, but acknowledging that Islam is and should be a part of Europe is not necessary (Sarrazin 270). Sarrazin also opposes, and remains skeptical of, Schröder in his open-mindedness concerning the Koran as well as the democratization of Turkey (Sarrazin 270). Sarrazin's statements further disrupt the prospects of the integration of ethnic minorities into Germany.

Sarrazin's focus on the apparent negative effects of Islam on Europe brings up more specifically, his racialized views on Islam and Christianity. Sarrazin hierarchizes both religions, suggesting that because Christianity has gone through the Enlightenment, it is considered modern and secularized, whereas Islam remains archaic (Sarrazin 268, 272). Sarrazin is preoccupied with the violence of Islam and dismissing the violence that Christianity has produced. For Islam, this violence refers specifically to Islamic fundamentalists. The violence

associated with Christianity would be the Crusades. These religions cannot be hierarchized when both have histories of violence (Sarrazin 280).

One of the most important statements that Sarrazin makes in his books comes towards the end. Sarrazin asserts his position on what is expected of immigrants, hinting more specifically at Turkish and other Muslim immigrants, and makes it clear that cultural differences are not welcome in Germany (Sarrazin 310, 326):

Wer da ist und einen legalen Aufenthaltsstatus hat, ist willkommen. Aber wir erwarten von euch, dass ihr die Sprache lernt, dass ihr euren Lebensunterhalt mit Arbeit verdient, dass ihr Bildungs- ehrgeiz für eure Kinder habt, dass ihr euch an die Sitten und Gebräuche Deutschlands anpasst und dass ihr mit der Zeit Deutsche werdet – wenn nicht ihr, dann spätestens eure Kinder. Wenn ihr muslimischen Glaubens seid, o.k. Damit habt ihr dieselben Rechte und Pflichten wie heidnische, evangelische oder katholische Deutsche. Aber wir wollen keine nationalen Minderheiten. Wer Türke oder Araber bleiben will und dies auch für seine Kinder möchte, der ist in seinem Herkunftsland besser aufgehoben. Und wer vor allem an den Segnungen des deutschen Sozialstaats interessiert ist, der ist bei uns schon gar nicht willkommen. (Sarrazin 326)

Here, Sarrazin provides an excellent example of the equation of Turkish and Muslim cultures. He appears to advocate religious freedom by suggesting that he accepts that people practice the Muslim faith. However, he would prefer that religion were relegated to the private sphere. The key sentence in this excerpt, though, is his rejection of ethnic minorities, which he expresses here as national minorities. Additionally, he presumes that all of these people have no interest in democracy. Sarrazin's overarching argument contradicts his entire premise. On the one hand,

Sarrazin advocates for integration, but also suggests that integration is impossible. However, on the other hand, he does not accept Turkish-Germans or Muslim culture into German society. The contradiction lies within the fact that Sarrazin proposes integration while also rejecting it. While Sarrazin does not in any way support the presence of Islam in Germany, he also does not support the presence of Turkish-Germans in Germany. In his view, it appears, there is no room for ethnic minorities in the German society. His argument is also distorted by claiming that Muslims have the same religious rights as other religious sects in Germany. Out of all the religious symbols in Germany, Muslim symbols of faith are the most banned symbols (Yurdakul and Bodemann). Furthermore, Sarrazin associates Islam specifically with a notion of a Turkish race. It is not possible for Sarrazin to separate an “ethnic minority” from the religion. By not accepting Turks as an ethnic minority, he is also not accepting Islam. It also does not make sense in the reverse order either, where he does accept Islam, but does not accept Turks into German culture. Regardless, his argument makes his entire premise on which his book and his opinions are based no longer credible.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MEDIA PERSPECTIVE ON SARRAZIN, RELIGION AND IMMIGRATION

After the publication of Sarrazin's book, countless news media published opinions and debates surrounding his controversial grievances concerning the German population and the influence that various ethnic groups have had on it. My analysis will focus on a selection of articles that provide examples of racialization through the use of word choice, the tone of the article, the visual symbols that the article evokes, and the creation of binaries that hierarchize. Additionally, it is important to decipher what meanings are being produced in these newspaper articles. Where certain words suggest a difference in cultures, such as *Mitbürger*, *Migrationshintergrund* or even the constant reminder that Turkish-German is not the same as German; other words suggest a racist discourse, such as *Kopftuchmädchen*. Furthermore, these words also evoke a certain tone within the article. The tone may suggest a negative view towards Germans of Turkish heritage, but it may also suggest a positive view. Combining both the tone of the article and the use of certain words will conjure up certain images of Muslims and Germans of Turkish heritage that indicate the use of racialization. While the underlying tone of these articles, for the most part, suggest that Sarrazin's opinions are viewed with dislike; the media nonetheless, racializes Islam through the acknowledgement of Sarrazin's opinions and the use of the same type of words that Sarrazin uses.

#### ***Kopftuchmädchen***

An excerpt of Sarrazin's recent book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*, appeared in a 2010 issue of *Der Spiegel*, that lends insight into Sarrazin's rationale. Thilo Sarrazin, as well as some other politicians, argues radical claims that instill religious and racial hatred in, and influence,

many Germans. Sarrazin states, “Ich muss niemanden anerkennen, der vom Staat lebt, diesen Staat ablehnt, für die Ausbildung seiner Kinder nicht vernünftig sorgt und ständig neue kleine Kopftuchmädchen produziert” (Sarrazin, *Was Tun?* 136). The word that is racialized in this context is *Kopftuchmädchen*, inasmuch as the word suggests excessive reproduction in association with Germans of Turkish heritage. Furthermore, Sarrazin’s use of the term refers back to his disapproval of the increasing birthrates of ethnic populations while the German population growth remains stagnant. In an interview conducted by *Der Spiegel* in December after the book was published, Sarrazin comments on women wearing headscarves:

Es ist dunkel geworden, der Zug fährt im Bahnhof von Gelsenkirchen ein. Über Sarrazin ist eine Leselampe angegangen, sein Gesicht liegt jetzt im Dunkeln, das graue Haar leuchtet hell im Schein der Lampe. Er hat die Hände unter dem Kinn verschränkt, die Ellbogen ruhen auf den Armlehnen seines Sitzes. Er guckt aus dem Fenster in den dämmrigen Bahnhof. “Da sind wieder vier in Kopftüchern.  
(Fleischhauer)

The use of *Kopftüchern*, within that sentence, suggests a negative undertone towards Muslims, as well as a discrimination against Islamic practices. Using such a term also produces an explicit difference in cultures. The tone of the last sentence of the quote is condescending and suggests that Turkish culture is inferior to German culture. While the reader does not know what Sarrazin is thinking exactly, it is implied that he is hierarchizing Turkish culture, as well as suggesting that perhaps Christianity has progressed, while Islam has not. Sarrazin suggests that Germany’s foundations of Christianity are in fact secular, compared to Turkey’s foundations of Islam, which he sees as religious.

It is equally important to note the criticism the article maintains of Sarrazin himself. While the article reinforces Sarrazin's opinions towards Muslims, it also cleverly portrays Sarrazin as an evil entity, suggesting that the author of the article, as well as the audience reading it, should remain highly critical of Sarrazin's views (Fleischhauer). One specific passage in the article speaks very clearly to the author's own position:

Für einen Augenblick starrt Thilo Sarrazin noch in die Dunkelheit. Dann lacht er sein schiefes Lachen, der Zug setzt sich in Bewegung, und an der Stelle des bösen Geistes, der für einen Moment unter dem Schein der Leselampe Platz genommen zu haben schien... (Fleischhauer)

Showing this form of objection to Sarrazin's views provides readers with the acknowledgement that one does not have to adhere to Sarrazin's views of Muslims. This portrayal of Sarrazin also suggests that, in reality, discriminating against Muslims is not as wide spread in Germany as it may appear to be. Sarrazin provides the German public with the opportunity to think about Islam in other ways. He is allowing for people to articulate an anti-racist position. That being said, however, many articles are still reproducing these discriminatory opinions concerning Muslims and Germans of Turkish heritage.

Several other articles, none of which interview Sarrazin, contain the word *Kopftuchmädchen* or other derivatives of the word. While some use the word in the context of discussing Sarrazin, others use the word in their own contexts. In another article from *Der Spiegel*, the term is used in a derogatory sentence: "Muslimische 'Kopftuchmädchen' sind zur Bedrohung für den Feminismus ebenso geworden wie zu gefährlichen Gebärmaschinen, die nur noch den 'demografischen Dschihad' im Kopf haben" (Schieder). The author of this article discusses the obsession Germany appears to have with the topic of Islam. What he seems to be

accomplishing with this specific sentence is rephrasing Sarrazin's fear that German culture and Christianity will become obsolete due to the increasing Muslim population in Germany. He is comparing young women, who wear headscarves, to Islamic fundamentalists recruiting new members. This indicates a discourse whereby German women of Turkish descent practicing values of Islam are seen as accomplices to a radicalized form of Islam promoting violence. In turn, this suggests that Islam has not progressed or modernized and remains archaic, compared to an enlightened, non-violent Christianity. Furthermore, several other articles use the term *Kopftuchmädchen* in the context of discussing Sarrazin, however, these articles appear to have adopted the word as the norm, and as something to be used outside of a connection to Sarrazin. The use of this term nonetheless racializes Islam and provides readers with a negative discriminatory visual assumption of what it means to be Turkish, as well as what it means to be Muslim (Schloemann; Wiegand). Additionally, the use of this term, when read in the context of these articles, provides the reader with perhaps an image of something infectious and diseased, also evoking anti-Semitic images of historical significance during World War II.

The images of diseased or infectious ethnic minorities that emerge in these newspaper articles conjure up similar images in anti-Semitic propaganda films, such as *Die Ewige Jude* ("Die Ewige Jude"). In this specific article from *Der Spiegel*, Follath describes a popular Internet site, '*Politically Incorrect*', on which people post derogatory terms towards Muslims. Some of these phrases include, "Du dreckiger Muslim" or "Du verdammter Kameltreiber" (Follath, "Deutschland, deine Amokläufer"). Additionally, Muslims have been compared to Jews during World War II in terms of their movement across borders. Muslims have taken on the identification of a group of people that reside within a national identity that they cannot participate in, thus creating a need for a host identity. The specific scene in *die Ewige Jude* that

is reminiscent of such a view occurs when a map of Europe and Asia appears and the narrator describes the spreading out of Jews across these continents (“Die Ewige Jude”). This image conjures up, once again, the thought of a spreading disease or illness that seems unstoppable. The prevalence of cosmopolitanism has created a shift from identifying with a specific nation, to identifying with a religion and this is certainly shown through media.

An article that stood out from the rest is an interview conducted by *Der Spiegel* with Turkish-German writer, Feridun Zaimoglu. The article provides juxtaposition to the one-sided arguments from Sarrazin and other newspaper articles that replicate the discourse. Zaimoglu is asked what bothers him about the word *Kopftuch*. Zaimoglu replies:

Dass dieses Wort gleichgesetzt wird mit einem Demokratiedefizit, mit einem ideologischen Bekenntis. Viele Medien erwecken derzeit den Eindruck, das seine Frau mit Kopftuch etwas Hochinfektiöses sei. Dabei haben viele der fremdstämmigen jungen deutschen Frauen, die ein Tuch tragen, für sich selbst die zentralen Fragen der Identität längst ganze selbstverständlich geklärt: Sie sind Deutsche und tragen Kopftuch. (Dürr and Höbel)

Zaimoglu acknowledges the implications of the use of the term *Kopftuch* as a negative connotation of Islam and Turkish culture. The tone suggests disappointment in the way that many, including the media, view Germans of Turkish heritage -- as something diseased and something that hinders democracy. Zaimoglu’s perspective, as a person of German-Turkish heritage, provides readers with an analysis that shows hurt and disgust for the way that many Germans of Turkish heritage are treated in Germany. While this perspective is rare, and may even go unnoticed in German media, it does impart on many Germans that there are opinions counter to Sarrazin’s.



***What is the Difference: muslimische Migranten or türkische Einwanderer***

Among the most used terms in these chosen articles are forms of the word Muslim and immigrant, such as *muslimisch*, and *Migranten*. Other terms such as *Einwanderer* or *Ausländer* are words used in place of *Migranten*. Patterns in these articles suggest that if migrants are discussed, such a term will either be lead or followed by the term Muslim, and most likely various forms of the term integration. Consider these sentences, “Und der die Probleme der Integration allein bei den muslimischen Migranten und ihrer angeblichen Un-Kultur sieht – als gäbe es nicht beides: ein Bringschuld der Einwanderer wie des Einwanderungslandes”, and, “‘Ausländer raus’ geht nicht mehr. Also wird jetzt erklärt, nicht der Zuwanderer, sondern der Muslim an sich sei integrationsunfähig” (Follath, “Deutschland, deine Amokläufer”). Another article states, “Als es so weit ist, redet er über verfehlte Einwanderungspolitik der Vergangenheit, die Versäumnisse bei der Integration, die kulturelle Rückständigkeit des Islam” (Fleischhauer). Statements such as these alienate ethnic minorities by assuming that integration has already failed. By assuming that integration has already failed, ethnic minorities may perhaps find it a waste of time to continue to try to integrate, further alienating them. There are many articles that have sentences like these in which these words are used together in what appears to be an attempt to alienate ethnic minorities from integration debates.

Additionally, the identification of these migrants as Muslim suggests that there aren’t necessarily issues to be had with other migrant populations. There is only one specific group that Sarrazin has an issue with. Using the words *Migranten* and *Einwanderer* portray a distancing effect. It is a way of keeping Turkish culture and German culture separate, as well as a way of reminding the public of the differences between the two cultures so as to ensure that integration remains difficult. What is more, though, is the repetition of these terms throughout

the articles. Using such terms as *Migranten* and *Einwanderer* are unwarranted because most of the people being referred to are in fact not immigrants - they are Germans born of Turkish descent. While I understand it is difficult to discuss such a topic without having to use certain terms, the intentions in these articles appear to be negative.

The way in which the terms are used, especially in repetition, overwhelms the discussion in the article. The repetition goes unnoticed if one does not pay close attention, however, when highlighting these terms one finds that terms relating to religion (both Christianity and Islam) and secularism appear almost seventy times, terms relating to immigration appear upwards of ten times, terms relating to culture appear about five times and terms relating to integration about two times in one specific article (Schloemann). The article I used to count these terms is focused on religion; however, in other articles, terms relating to immigration and integration are equally as prevalent. Again, the repetition of these terms persuades the reader to acknowledge the negative connotations of the articles. Germans of Turkish heritage never appear to be a part of German culture; they are always separate. No matter how long someone of Turkish heritage has lived in Germany, he or she is still considered an immigrant and a foreigner and unable to integrate. Even children born in Germany to Turkish parents are not considered German in the eyes of Sarrazin and these articles. Instead terms like *Migrantenkinder* and *Türkenkind* are used (Dürr and Höbel; Schieder; Fleischhauer).

Another excellent example of racialization is that the differences in German and Turkish cultures are made quite obvious. I have noticed that these articles use several different terms for immigrant in the German language: *Migrant*, *Einwanderer*, *Zuwanderer*, *Ausländer*, and even *Gastarbeiter* and *Fremder* (see for example: Akyol and Hamsici, Geisler, Follath, Schloemann, Prantl, Herrmann and Wierth, Bartch et al., Deggerich et al., Dürr and Höbel). Scholars, like

Chin, that have written about immigration in Germany since the beginning of the Guest Worker program have analyzed the use of terms such as *Gastarbeiter*, and *Fremder* (see for example: Chin; Dirlik; Gündüz). As time has progressed so have the terms. These terms have progressed such that they become subtler in their discrimination. Terms such as *Einwanderer*, *Zuwanderer* and *Ausländer* are still discriminatory nonetheless when the people being described are not actually immigrants or foreigners (see for example: Lentin; Gündüz). Recently, though, these outdated terms, like *Gastarbeiter* and *Fremder*, have made reappearances in the media. These terms recall identifications that historically have ostracized ethnic minorities, such as Turks, in Germany. To apply such words to Germans born of Turkish heritage is unwarranted and inappropriate. The fact that the German language maintains so many different words for the same concept suggests that German culture cannot let go of the issue of immigration.

Most of these articles use the phrase *muslimische Migranten*, or a form of the phrase, to describe those of Turkish descent living in Germany. For example, in an article from *Die Tageszeitung*, the authors state: “Inzwischen wurde der Muslim zum Inbegriff des Migranten. Dabei sind längst nicht alle Muslime Migranten und nicht einmal die Hälfte der Zugewanderten in Deutschland Muslime” (Spielhaus). In a *Süddeutsche Zeitung* article, the term used is *zugewanderter Muslim* (Prantl). Finally, in another article from *Die Tageszeitung*, the term *muslimische Migranten* is used three times, and *muslimische Zuwanderer* is used once (Herrmann and Wierth). For example, the authors state:

Dass die muslimischen Migranten selbst schuld sein müssen, ist für Sarrazin schon deswegen belegt, weil Osteuropäer und Asiaten sich problemlos ins Bildungssystem integrierten. Also müsse es ihre “Mentalität” sein, die

muslimische Migrantenkinder häufig an der Schule scheitern lasse. (Herrmann and Wierth)

Being Muslim does not mean that one necessarily practices Islam. One may practice Islam, but one can also identify with Islam as a cultural heritage. Islam may be understood as transnational, while being Turkish is viewed as a national identity. Religion transcends borders and it should not, therefore, be considered a concept that can only travel if crossing a boundary. The interchangeable use of *muslimisch* and *Türkisch* is nothing new; however, when using these terms interchangeably there appears to be a return to tropes used in anti-Semitic discourse. Christianity exists around the world, yet people are not associating it with a boundary. I have never heard the term *christliche Migranten*, yet *muslimische Migranten* is used without hesitation. What is more interesting, however, are the two articles I found that use the phrases *türkische Einwanderer* and *türkische Gastarbeiter*. The first article is from *Der Spiegel* and the author states:

Wenn man Sarrazins Rechenmethode der Förschreibung von Geburtenentwicklungen übernimmt, dann könnte man auch ‘beweisen’, dass es in ferner Zukunft keine Nachkommen der türkischen Einwanderer mehr gibt, da sie sich ja offensichtlich von Generation zu Generation weniger vermehren. (Follath, “Deutschland, deine Amokläufer”)

Furthermore, in the article from the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, the author describes an immigrant family with the son being a *türkischer Gastarbeiter* (Wiegand). Not only does this article label Germans of Turkish descent as remaining foreign, but it also replicates an understanding of otherness even while challenging Sarrazin’s claims. Why are there two different terms for the same group of people? Why are more articles using the term *muslimische Migranten* rather than

*türkische Migranten?* Using the term Muslim migrants, as opposed to the term Turkish migrants may instill more fear in the population. Additionally, neither of these terms should be used considering that they are Turkish-Germans. The repetition of the term may facilitate not only a greater hatred for Turks, but also a conscious effort to separate German culture from Turkish culture, further hindering any integration efforts.

### ***Christianity, Secularism and Islam***

Throughout these articles, Muslims and Islam are portrayed as qualities of a person or group of people that are unable to integrate into German culture. These articles also suggest that Muslims are not a part of German culture, and that they remain foreigners even if Germany is their home. In an article from *Die Tageszeitung*, the authors sum up the relationship between Islam, being Muslim and German culture:

Seit Jahren stehen Islam und Muslime in Deutschland im Zentrum öffentlicher Debatten, die die religiöse Identität insbesondere im Bezug auf Zugewanderte betonen. Inzwischen wurde der Muslim zum Inbegriff des Migranten. Dabei sind längst nicht alle Muslime Migranten und nicht einmal die Hälfte der Zugewanderten in Deutschland Muslime. Die von Sarrazin, Seehofer und auch der Zeit befeuerten Debatten aber machen sie zu Muslimen. Sie lassen sich als Teil eines neuen ‘Wir’ sehen, dass sie vorher nicht gedacht haben – und das keineswegs nur angenehm ist. Diese Muslimisierung platziert Eingebürgerte und geborene Deutsche muslimischen Glaubens oder Abstammung außerhalb des deutschen Nationalverständnisses. Sie entfremdet deutsche Muslime, weil sie als Subtext die Botschaft trägt: ‘Ihr gehört nicht dazu.’ Wir können euch und euren

Glauben definieren, aber ihr habt keine Aktien, über das Wesen des Deutschen mitzureden. (Akyol and Hamsici)

Most immigrants, assuming they are referring to those that come from Turkey and the Middle East, are being identified as Muslim even when they may not be. The debates and opinions from Sarrazin and others are creating this discourse. Such labeling is creating a stereotype that instills this sense of “the other” in German culture. Regardless of if the person was born in Germany and he or she is of Turkish descent, he or she is labeled Muslim, and thus labeled a foreigner. Along with such a label, the authors argue, it is difficult for German born Turks to participate in German society. Labeling immigrants in this way also creates a binary of differences whereby those with Turkish heritage, and perhaps Muslim cultural values, are cast as not only outsiders, but also as something hindering the progress of German culture. There is a similar view in another article from *Die Tageszeitung* in a round table interview. The moderators pose a question concerning the place of immigrants within German *Leitkultur* and how they can identify with it (Bax and Feddersen). Erika Steinbach’s, a high-ranking official, response more or less asserted that immigrants must change their ways in order to identify with German culture because Germany already has dominant and fixed cultural traditions, rising out of the influence of Christianity (Bax and Feddersen).

That being said, the mention of Christianity or secularism in these articles is associated with the Enlightenment and progress, as well as the concept of *Leitkultur*, meaning leading or dominant culture. In an interview with Hans-Peter Friedrich from *Der Spiegel*, he is cited saying, “Dass der Islam zu Deutschland gehört, ist eine Tatsache, die sich aus der Historie nirgends belegen lässt” (Mascolo and Stark). Furthermore, he was asked if such a statement could be applied to the massacre in Oslo, to which he replied, “Ach, kommen Sie, das eine hat

doch mit dem anderen nichts zu tun! Mir ging es dabei um die Frage nach der Identität Deutschlands. Diese Identität ist durch das Christentum und die Aufklärung geprägt, nicht durch den Islam” (Mascolo and Stark). Clearly, Friedrich does not believe that Islam can be a part of German culture. For Friedrich, the modernization and progress that German culture has made cannot accommodate Islam. While Friedrich, and others that maintain similar opinions to his, argue that Germany’s identity is made up largely of Christian ideals, they also argue that Germany is a secularized country.

As I have argued earlier, however, Germany’s status as a secular society is just another way of recognizing that Germany’s traditions and values are religiously based. Secularism became enlightened Christianity. One article provides an appropriate explanation:

Was ihnen fehlt, ist die religionslose, säkulare Gesellschaft. Von der ist Deutschland aber weit entfernt. Knapp zwei Drittel der Deutschen gehören einer Kirche an – verglichen mit rund zwei Prozent Parteimitgliedern zeugt das von einer immer noch robusten Konstitution institutionalisierter Religion. Wir leben zwar in einem säkularen Staat – dieser will und schützt aber gerade nicht eine säkulare, sondern eine religiös und weltanschaulich lebendige, mithin plurale Gesellschaft. (Schieder)

In short, the author claims that Germany has yet to realize its non-religious, secular capability. The author of the article proclaims that two-thirds of Germans belong to a church and two percent of party leaders adhere to a religion, maintaining Christianity as an institutionalized religion (Schieder). Furthermore, how is it legitimate to discriminate against the presence of Islam in Germany, when Germans have the freedom to publicly practice Christianity?

Islam is also portrayed as a political ideology in some of these articles, and Muslims are equally portrayed as the followers of that so-called ideology. In an interview from *Der Spiegel*, Islam-critic Necla Kelek and feature-writer Patrick Bahners discuss the implications of Islam as a political ideology and as a religion. Kelek criticizes Islam for resembling a political ideology more than a religion, creating a hierarchical view of Islam (Beyer and Spörl). She states:

Die Religionen sind nicht gleich. Es gibt Religionen, die sich modernisiert haben und in der säkularen Welt angekommen sind. Sie passen sich den Menschen an, die nach ihren Bedürfnissen glauben können. Dazu gibt ihnen der gesellschaftliche Rahmen die Möglichkeit. Die islamischen Länder geben den Menschen dieses Recht nicht, dort gibt es keine Religionsfreiheit. Schon die Frage, ob jemand ein Muslim ist oder nicht, ist eine politische Frage, die Folgen nach sich zieht. Man kann nicht in diese Religion eintreten oder austreten. (Beyer and Spörl)

Kelek is racializing Islam through a categorization of Islam. She proclaims that Islam is fixed, and does not allow for any changes (Beyer and Spörl). She points out the differences in the religions, insinuating that Islam does not fit into European society.

Furthermore, she criticizes Bahners for maintaining the opinion that Muslims should be able to practice Islam freely, as if to suggest that promoting such a freedom is detrimental to Germany (Beyer and Spörl). While Bahners does support the freedom to practice religion, he also acknowledges the opinion that Muslims and Islam do not belong in Germany:

Ja, denn man kann doch nicht sagen, die Muslime gehören zu Deutschland, der Islam aber bleibe auf ewig etwas Fremdes. Wie zu den Christen die Kirche



gehört, so gehört zu Muslimen die Moschee und ebenso der Verband, in dem sich mehrere Moscheen zusammenschließen. (Beyer and Spörl)

Bahners acknowledges that Islam still remains something foreign to Germany and he even creates an otherness by specifically stating the different entities of each religion. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind, though, that not only do the discussions of Islam become a racialized discourse, but the discussions of Christianity and secularism do as well.

Whether the discussion concerns the perceived incompatibility of Islam with German culture, or the use of racialized terms of identification, these articles have shown that Germans of Turkish heritage, as well as those practicing Islam, are outsiders within their own society. Sarrazin has opened an important, yet controversial conversation about the presence of a very specific ethnic minority in Germany. These articles have brought back the use of certain outdated terms, such as *Einwanderer*, *Ausländer* and *Kopftüchern* that condemn Muslims and Germans of Turkish heritage to a life of discrimination and being ostracized. While many of these articles have also shown the inappropriateness of Sarrazin's views, these articles have also preserved the discrimination and racialization that have kept Germans of Turkish heritage from successfully becoming a part of German society.

## CHAPTER V

### A LOOK TOWARDS THE FUTURE

The reemergence of terms such as *Gastarbeiter* and *Fremder* as a way of identifying Germans of Turkish heritage has many different implications for the future of German society. On the one hand, these terms have historically ostracized ethnic minorities. To bring these terms back into discourse suggests that there is a return to historically discriminatory forms of exclusion. Additionally, these and other exclusionary terms being used, such as *Ausländer*, *Migrant* and *Einwanderer*, label and categorize ethnic minorities in Germany as outsiders. Such labeling is problematic in that those being categorized as outsiders and unable to integrate are in fact not immigrants, but Germans of Turkish heritage. The emergence of these historical terms can be found in Sarrazin's book, *Deutschland schafft sich ab*, as well as media sources. Furthermore, such a reemergence indicates that it is difficult to let go of the issue of immigration. My contributions to the discourse concerning the importance of the relationship between race, religion and culture offer theoretical analysis of Sarrazin's contributions to the discourse. My theoretical contributions have also offered analysis of the public's reaction to Sarrazin and various debates surrounding Germans of Turkish heritage, religion and secularism. After examining the ways in which religion and secularism have been talked about, I would like to propose ways to talk about religion and secularism that are not racialized.

The globalization and integration of ethnic minorities into European culture is not new, and does not appear to be ending soon. As shown throughout history, migration across boundaries is difficult to end. Instead of trying to maintain separate cultures and avoiding the issue of finding ways to integrate, Europe needs to seriously examine ways to discuss secularism

and integration as a whole. Germany, and the rest of Europe, needs to find a way to talk about secularism and integration that imagines a better future for minorities in German society without basing such integration on the rejection of Islam. Perhaps the best way to approach this issue and improve relations between native Germans and ethnic minorities is to discuss the creation of a new European identity. Such an identity may be based on European cultural influences and include cultural influences from Islam. This is merely a suggested direction. Furthermore, the difficulty of reinventing the European identity is nothing new. The objective of a new European identity may seem utopian; however, the presence of Muslim culture does not appear to be decreasing. While I understand European culture is based on historical influences, in order to remain a modern culture, there must be some flexibility to the characteristics of the culture. Additionally, it is important that Europe reflects on their current identity, considering that it currently maintains values that it criticizes: incommensurable and unchanging.

There are two sides to this racist discourse on Islam in Germany. On the one hand, Sarrazin and those that agree with him have a deterministic view of both Germany and Europe's fate. Sarrazin concludes his article from *Der Spiegel* in 2010 with this statement:

Die Letzten Jahrzehnte haben gezeigt, dass die finanziellen und sozialen Kosten der muslimischen Einwanderung weitaus höher waren als der daraus fließende wirtschaftliche Ertrag. Wenn wir den Zuzug nicht steuern, lassen wir letztlich eine Veränderung unser Kultur, unserer Zivilisation und unseres Volkscharakters in eine Richtung zu, die wir gar nicht wünschen. Es würde nur wenige Generationen dauern, bis wir zur Minderheit im eigenen Land geworden sind. Das ist nicht nur ein Problem Deutschlands, sondern aller Völker Europas. (Sarrazin, *Was Tun?* 140)

This conclusion from Sarrazin epitomizes the attitude that is not needed when approaching the issue of Germans of Turkish heritage in Germany and Europe. The belief that changes in cultural values and *Volkscharakter* is a bad thing is holding European culture back. Sarrazin should not be thinking of German society as becoming a minority when the people he is discriminating against are in fact a part of that society. Sarrazin's negative attitude toward Germans of Turkish heritage is not what will resolve the issue of integration and equality. While this is only one side of the argument, it is important to reiterate that a vast number of Germans disagree with Sarrazin.

Instead of Sarrazin's negative attitude, Germany needs a new and progressive influence, such as Turkish-German writer Feridun Zaimoglu. As an immigrant to Germany, not only does Zaimoglu have a realistic view of the issues surrounding Islam, Turks and immigration. He also provides Germans with a new way of talking about ethnic minorities, immigration and Islam. Zaimoglu wants to transform the discussions to both include and acknowledge German's past, while incorporating a nondiscriminatory, new identity that includes Germans of Turkish heritage (Dürr and Höbel). Furthermore, Zaimoglu focuses on the words being used to describe Germans of Turkish heritage and Muslim immigrants, *Migrationshintergrund* and *Gastarbeiter*. In his view, in order for German culture to be accepting of ethnic minorities, the language of the discussions must change. While Sarrazin may have the impression that many Germans agree with and can identify with his views, Zaimoglu sees the opposite:

Die einzigen Menschen, die heute Identitätsprobleme haben, sind die Konservativen. Das sind die, die über ihre Unbehaustheit jammern. Mich hat es unendlich viel reicher und freier gemacht. Deshalb kann ich sage: Ich bin ein gutgelaunter Deutscher (Dürr and Höbel).

It goes without saying, the way these issues are being discussed currently is not moving Germany forward. In this case, the better option for Germany would be to adopt Zaimoglu's approach. Instead of moving backward, towards a more anti-Semitic identity, Germany needs to move forward to a multicultural and inclusive society.

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