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Fortress Europe: Globalization, Militarization and the Policing of Interior Borderlands

ABSTRACT

The intensification of militarized violence, racist terror and destructive dehumanization across the globe makes it imperative to examine the corresponding formations of securocratic regimes in the centres of power. With a focus on a united Europe, my essay interrogates the ubiquitous penetration of militarization into everyday life-worlds. My research suggests that in these interior borderlands, emergent cultures of militarization are normalized by recourse to racialization, criminalization and securitization, which in turn gives rise to new intimacies of violence, dehumanization and othering within expanding networks of fortification in a self-proclaimed white society.

RÉSUMÉ

Forteresse Europe : Mondialisation, militarisation et police des frontières intérieures

L'intensification de la violence militarisée, de la terreur raciste et de la déshumanisation destructrice à travers le monde fait qu'il est impératif d'examiner les formations correspondantes de régimes sécuritocratiques dans les centres de pouvoir. En basant mon essai sur une Europe unie, j'interroge la pénétration omniprésente de la militarisation dans tous les mondes du quotidien. Ma recherche suggère que dans ces frontières intérieures, des cultures de la militarisation en émergence sont normées par un recours à la racialisation, la criminalisation et la sécurisation, ce qui, en retour, produit de nouvelles intimités de violence, de déshumanisation et d'altérisation, à l'intérieur de réseaux en expansion de fortification dans une société blanche autoproclamée.

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Rendsburg-Hohn military base, Germany, April 2007 - A public controversy ensued after print media publicize the electronic dissemination of a [You Tube] video clip that shows how a German drill sergeant conjures racist scenarios for

soldiers in basic training. The video captures a sequenced instructional exercise. The initial segment records how a recruit learns to load and shoot a machine gun while being told to imagine that he is part of a security detachment at an airport where terrorists have suddenly taken control of a plane. The trainer orders the recruit to fire two short bursts and then concludes, "Good, the terrorists are dead." The recruit is subsequently prompted to imagine himself in the Bronx, in New York, where he is suddenly confronted by three African-American men who emerge from a black van and taunt him by insulting his mother. The recruit is now ordered to open fire on these imaginary black male civilians. He is instructed to release each round of bullets by shouting "mother fucker." This exercise is repeated multiple times, until the trainer is satisfied by the speed with which the soldier-in-training fires his automatic weapon at these conjured phantom enemies, a phantasmatic threat of black masculinity on another continent, in a different nation. (Bundeswehr Ausbildung 2007)

My essay opens with this ethnographic instance of military training because it renders visible the hidden imaginaries of border militarism in contemporary Europe. The videotaped scenario reveals that the recruit is taught how to handle an automatic weapon while learning its application as a killing tool at the same time. The soldier's training begins by staging a social context for the legitimate use of the gun: an airport, as a site of translocal transit and global mobility, is identified as a security risk and imagined as a probable setting for a terrorist attack. As the recruit is ordered to fire his weapon, the use of the gun is given a political function; when the conjured attackers are killed, national space is protected. In the German training session, this staged threat to the national order is subsequently globalized. Situated beyond the confines of established political borders, the source of danger is displaced to a different nation and equated with the contested masculinity of the black Other. The implausibility of the scenario (a German soldier patrolling the streets of New York City) is deflected, even rendered credible, by recourse to a gendered and racist plot.

As urban global space is transposed into a borderless killing field, black men are imagined as legitimate military targets whose words are judged to be as dangerous as a terrorist event. In acquiring the techniques of warfare through a synchronized coordination of body, mind and weapon, the soldier learns to equate acts of urban military terror against non-white Others with matters of security and with the mandates of European border protection. The soldier's use of deadly force is authorized not only to secure corporate property (the airplane) or to protect national space (terrorism) but in defence of the white female/maternal figure (by an appeal to filial honour). The videotape reveals how a racist imagination is implanted and normalized for soldiers by basic military training exercises. While these machinations and practices are extracted from a single video clip, German historian Jay Lockenour has observed that given standard military training procedures founded on chain of command, obedience, discipline and perpetual

practice, it is difficult to “imagine that this is an isolated incident” (Lockenour 2007: n.p.). Lockenour continues:

The racism inherent in the scenario is so blatant. [The use of] lethal force in response to insults ... is bound to violate the rules of engagement any democratic military would establish for its soldiers.... The scenario is not only racist, it imagines the recruit committing a “war crime.” (n.p.)

But why are black males—in this case “Afro-American” men (in the drill sergeant’s words)—depicted as potential threats in the German military imagination? The black signifier seems to override political concerns for national sovereignty, citizenship, NATO membership, European Union security and defence treaties. Rooted in colonial fabrications of indigenous and native life-worlds far away from European space, black subjects have been imagined as Europe’s antithetical counters throughout the 20th century and into the present (Linke 1999; Mazón and Steingröver 2005; Pred 2000; Scheck 2006). “The idea of Europe,” as Goldberg notes, “excludes those historically categorized as non-European, as being not white” (2006: 347). How are such machinations of a white Europe sustained in this 21st-century era of globalization? Why is the social construction of the otherness of “the black Other” so central for this sense of Europeanness, even in contemporary Europe?

Cultural assumptions about non-white criminality and violence continue to resonate in the present despite recent shifts in political regimes. During the past two decades, beginning in late 1980s, the political landscape of Europe has undergone dramatic change. The powerful matrix of global capitalism has deeply affected European nation forms, social ideologies and political systems, as shown by German unification, the collapse of the Soviet regime, the war in the former Yugoslavia and the subsequent formation of the European Union, including the ongoing Europeanization of post-socialist states. In this context, the historical fixity of borders, bodies and spaces has been untethered. The end of the cold war in the 1990s has furnished new possibilities for envisioning society, promoting major realignments of border regimes and fundamental transpositions in the topographic fabric of Europe’s political imagination. In addition, the emergent entanglements of state and corporate interests not only changed the political contours of Europe but also altered the social conditions under which ethno-racial imaginaries are brought to public visibility.

Under the conditions of European reformation and globalization in the 1990s, the cultural production of identities, bodies and lifestyles has increasingly shifted to the marketplace and the terrain of advertising, fashion and media. Culture industries manufacture national distinction by means of commodity desire and consumption. The seductive promise of unlimited possibilities made by neoliberal economies is simultaneously and paradoxically defended as a state-protected privilege and a con-cession of citizenship reserved for European nationals. The political spaces of

capitalism are closely guarded. Cultural imaginaries of gender, sexuality and race are called upon to authorize participation in the dream-worlds of prosperity. The formation of the European security state after 9/11 has intensified this process by giving rise to fortified border regimes, ethnic profiling and militarized racism. From this perspective, the focus on citizenship in Europe considered according to the master narratives of cold-war national history requires a critical reassessment. The impact of globalization, founded on a cohesive network of political, military and corporate interests, includes fundamental shifts the parameters, discourses and possibilities for negotiating matters of national belonging in Europe.

How have Europeans “fashioned their distinctions” and “conjured up their ‘whiteness’” (Cooper and Stoler 1997: 16) in attempts to reconstitute themselves as global citizens in a multi-ethnic, post-imperial Europe? In a post-national Europe, the realities of ethnic diversity and cultural pluralism have unravelled the idea of citizens as a homogenous or undifferentiated group. As Europe strives to achieve political and economic unity in the 21st century, we see a concurrent push toward inequality, exclusion and marginalization. The legacies of colonialism and nationalism continue to imprint the privilege of whiteness onto the new map of Europe, and sustain the political fortification of Europe as a hegemonic white space. Within the post-9/11 European Union, the promotion of this ethno-political project can be documented in “the state-specific forms of attack against asylum, asylum seekers, and foreigners, and the ways in which fundamental rights are being legally altered and police powers built [or expanded] in specific states” (Glick-Schiller 2005: 527). In addition to these state-sponsored security measures against unwanted immigration, the whitening of European space is also attested to by the proliferation of hate crimes and the intensification of racial violence in Europe’s interior “borderlands,” those everyday zones of contact that Gloria Anzaldúa envisioned as “open wound[s],” “where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds” (qtd. in Fine et al. 2007: 76). In these quotidian border zones, the European intimacies of contact with different cultures and peoples are increasingly patterned by the use of terror against those whose visual appearances and lifestyles are rejected as non-European.

This essay explores the formative possibilities of citizenship and exclusion in the era of European globalization. My aim is to rethink the technologies of othering in Europe’s interior borderlands, where the lives of black subjects are increasingly patterned by state surveillance, police brutality and street violence. What spectres of the imperial legacy remain embedded in these spaces of whiteness that govern, wound and sometimes destroy the lives of black subjects in Europe’s postcolonial and post-national interior? What politics of representation are at work in the carceral zones of whiteness, where black subjects are forced to inhabit the semiotic prison-house of spectacle and/or the criminally grotesque? My aim is to scrutinize Europe’s disavowed blackness by examining how practices of othering and the “militarising of public space” (Giroux 2004) are mutually implicated in expanding

networks of fortification in a self-proclaimed white society. With a focus on the European Union from the 1990s to the present, I explore how cultural regimes of representation, racial violence and border militarism operate to produce ever more stringent forms of exclusion, subordination and fear.¹

Globalization, National Borders and the Place of Race

Despite the enormous interest in the impact of European racial thinking on the colonial histories of genocide, slavery and anti-black violence, relatively little is known about how the self-imagined whiteness of Europe has been propagated *in* Europe. The imperial centre has produced its own histories of violence, exclusion and terror to produce “the peculiar synonymity of the terms European and white” (Gilroy 2004: xii). The making of a white Europe has also affected black people within the frontiers of European space. If whiteness is a measure of national belonging in Europe, such a racial closure of citizenship inhibits a black subject’s durable ability to shape a life or to envision a future. Under fascism in the 1930s and 1940s, the phantasma of race became integral to a regime of genocide that equated “whiteness” with the prerequisite condition for the right to life. Those meant to be excluded from participation in the national order were de-Europeanized and un-whitened. The fabricated fear of blackness runs through German anti-semitism. As Sander Gilman (1982) documents, Jews were “negrified” by Nazi racial science: the phantasmatic figure of the “Jew” was not only Orientalized, but regarded as black and African by ancestry. The colour coding of citizen-bodies, as an index of racial status, was embedded in an order of power that Mbembe has termed “necropolitics:” racialization “made possible the murderous functions of the state” (2003: 11). How have these machinations been transformed in contemporary Europe, in the era of global capitalism and the “war on terror?”

The promise of national distinction by racial exclusivity contradicts conventional understandings of globalization. A globalized world marked by “reform” and “openness” is said to unsettle old identities and unlock new imaginaries (Appadurai 2001: 3). From such a perspective, the European racial state is regarded as a matter of the past. Racism in Europe is presumed to belong to colonial history, an era that ended with fascism in 1945. This historical past, with its carceral spaces of race, sex and gender, is opposed to the present, which is conceived as a world without frontiers, “a world of flows” (Appadurai 1996) and “liquid” social forms (Bauman 2000). Accordingly, processes of globalization have been analyzed by recourse to metaphors of fluidity, flexibility and liquidity, rather than ethnic fortification or racial closure. The global order comes into view through the possibilities and signs of motion: mobile populations, permeable borders, transnational flows of capital and the traffic of culture across space and time. The radically altered historical fixity of borders, bodies and identities suggests a progressive weakening of political

units and thus the disempowerment of nation states. Such visionary models of the decline of state power and the end of racial thinking have been well expounded.

With a focus on the geopolitics of globalization, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri deployed the term “empire” to describe the delocalized and decentred system of transglobal control: the world empire operates as “a non-place” of power in a universal terrain (2000: 210). The impact of empire on global life is said to be dramatic: as sovereignties, borders and territories are reconstituted and negated, imaginaries based on place attachment are rendered meaningless. In a world without borders, social constructions of difference cannot be spatially derived to signify membership or otherness: the relational determination of centres and peripheries, or interiority and exteriority, has been annulled. Following this logic, the global empire produces a deterritorialized world that lacks interior vantage points or centre-spaces of privilege from which salient Others can be imagined, marginalized and excluded. According to Hardt and Negri, the unbinding of economic space evaporates the logic of gendered, racial and sexual difference. But global transformations are never so simple. The political realities of globalization reveal a different trajectory.

In the new millennium, globalization has not produced a singular or unified world order. The global empire does not operate as a single-space economy, or as “a non-contradictory, uncontested space” in which all strands of social life are perfectly synchronized (Hall 2000a: 32). As Arjun Appadurai has observed, in a global world marked by flows, movements and fluidities, the structural order of things has been destabilized: “objects, persons, images, and discourses—are not coeval, convergent, isomorphic, or spatially consistent. They are in ... relations of disjuncture” (2001: 5). Political forms, cultural identities, social lives and economic interests engage global possibilities along different, sometimes contradictory trajectories. Globalization operates with a flexible fixity on the ground. Capitalist imperatives, sub-jectivities and the manufacture of elusive authenticities may intersect to produce “counterintuitive” results, as John and Jean Comaroff propose in *Ethnicity, Incorporated*: “Cultural identity, in the here-and-now, represents itself ever more as two things at once: the object of choice and self-construction, typically through the act of consumption, *and* the manifest product of biology, genetics, human essence” (2009: 1). Under globalization, ethno-racial logics can be reclaimed for profit. Likewise, the imaginative geography of a “white Europe” or the sense of Europeanness may be reconfigured by recourse to space, by signifiers of gender, nation and race, and by new consumer practices. Under global consumer capitalism, the “whiteness” of Europe has come to be imagined and defended as a lifestyle. Europeanness is reclaimed, enacted and consumed in ontological space by placing emphasis on “conjuring affect, itself ever more a commodity, by aesthetic means” (Comaroff 2009: 16). While culture can perform the work of race, drawing on variable aesthetic and affective repertoires, the emergent volatility of

white Europeanness is stabilized by recourse to border regimes, anti-immigrant legislation and, most recently, discourses of national security and militarism.

In light of these developments, my analysis of Europe's Europeanization of race takes account of how the politics of immigration, national belonging and citizenship are governed by neoliberal security issues: racial exclusivity, inserted into the political terrain of the bio-social (gender, family, sexuality) has once again "become a critical affair of state" (Comaroff 2009: 214). In Europe, as in many contemporary imperialist nation states, we observe resurgent forms of border protection, surveillance, and anti-black and anti-Muslim violence which seek to counter the destabilizing effects of globalization. When critically examining these political realities, we need to acknowledge that the "vision of a decentered empire," as Nicholas Mirzoeff observes, "has come to be overtaken by a more familiar model of empire controlled by a concrete nation state" (2005: 145). Militarization, policing and state intervention are deployed in attempts to securitize Europe. Such a politics of space, with its regime of borders, camps and racial terror, is emblematic "of the renewed desire of nation states to restrict global freedom of movement to capital and deny it to people" (146). This is an important observation. The management of white Europeanness and black-Islamicized alterities through the production of racial boundaries, sexual deviancies and gendered hierarchies is not *naturally* propagated. The negation or integration of racialized, sexualized and gendered Others in Europe's presumed white spaces is sustained by state intervention.

Body Count: Blackness in the European Imagination

How is the violent erasure of blacks from Europe revealed in this phantasmatic space of whiteness? My research suggests that "the threat of race" (Goldberg 2009) is encoded in the ways in which the European Union configures and imagines "the people of Europe."² My investigation of population statistics and demographic figures published by government offices began with a relatively simple question: how many black people live in Europe today? The answer has been revealingly elusive.

The actual size of the black community in Europe Union space is difficult to assess. Official estimates are conjectures, approximations based solely on *immigrant* statistics. According to these figures, first provided in 2002 and then released annually, black Europeans constitute a highly visible although surprisingly small minority population (Eurostat 2002; Copers et al. 2004; Schäfer et al. 2005; Schäfer et al. 2007).

According to research by the European Union ... it is roughly estimated that ... there are about 300,000 Afro-Germans. In France ... people of

African descent constitute about one million. And in the United Kingdom, the Afro-Caribbean population is about ... 880,000. (Lusane 2003: 251)

European Union records suggest that Europe's black population is numerically insignificant and therefore inconsequential. Although the European Commission acknowledged in 2007 that "[I]t is likely that these figures are under-estimates of the extent of migration flows between countries," because they exclude "clandestine migration such as illegal immigrants or human trafficking" (Schäfer et al. 2007: 75), the statistical disappearance of black Europeans, here explained by criminalizing the vanishing subaltern, is much more problematic.

The magnitude of the numerical erasure of black presence is suggested by a comparison with current United Nations documents, which assess the international migrant population in Europe at sixty-four million (United Nations 2006: 29).³ Corresponding demographic figures reveal that close to one-third of these "immigrants in Europe" are from Africa and the Caribbean. This data would suggest a seven-fold differential in the approximate size of the black community when compared to the minimalist estimate produced by the European Union: three million versus the United Nations estimate of twenty million. But even these numbers are misleading. With an exclusive focus on *immigrants and immigration*, the demographic figures erase or obscure the reality of blackness among Europe's nationals and citizens. Such statistical estimates work by exclusion. State sponsored census counts with racial markers are prohibited by the European Union (Goodey 2007: 583-84). While the 2007 European Union anti-discrimination directive makes prominent mention of race in order to criminalize racism, Goodey has argued that the "data collection practices in England and Wales" are at the forefront of legislation and policy implementation at present; among other member states, the population's ethno-racial composition remains unreported as well as unrecorded (2007: 571, 575). Although the prohibition against racial data collection is anti-discriminatory in intent, designed to expunge the biometric registers of Nazi persecution from bureaucratic memory, European population statistics are configured by an unspoken discourse of race. What are the truth claims embedded in the manufacture and dissemination of this "official" knowledge?

Black presence is presumed to enter Europe from *outside*: from the Caribbean Islands, Africa, the developing world and the global south. In this statistical universe, immigrant bodies are inferentially blackened (or whitened) on the basis of national origin. According to this procedure, colour is erroneously ascribed as an essential geographical trace. As Lusane points out, it is absurd to categorically assume "that an immigrant from South Africa or Jamaica is black," and "to believe that one from the United States or Canada is white" (2003: 251). Such a vision of human bodies branded by space and invariably marked by a geopolitical territory not only belies the histories of globalization, hybridity and mobility, but also

recuperates colonial fantasies of white entitlement. Writing race onto the world map is clearly a political project. The symbolic charting of racial zones across the globe relies on the ontological coupling of nature, race and space, and so is crucial for our understanding of contemporary European Union population politics. A white Europe, imagined without blacks, “serves as the subliminal text for the raceless state:” a body politic conceived as benign (female), civilized, Christian and white (Goldberg 2006: 339-40). In Europe’s phantasmatic production, blackness is affixed to the peripheries of a global cartographic project that strives to *see* the citizen-subjects of a united Europe as intrinsically white.

It is no coincidence that the statistical yearbooks produced by the European Community diminish the presence of black people in numerical terms and imagine the “people in Europe” as white citizen-subjects. The statistical erasure of blackness is enmeshed with a visual record. Although the statistical yearbooks feature photos of a diverse multitude of young adults of different ethnic backgrounds on their front covers, the bodies of the publications contains less celebratory images of diversity or ethnic pluralism. Europe’s population statistics are illustrated with an assortment of photographs of white babies (Copers et al. 2004; Schäfer et al. 2005: 61, 67, 71; Schäfer et al. 2007). A white child implies a white mother and father: the photos idealize the white European family, and white motherhood in particular. The visual images reveal a pattern: each photo depicts a single white infant cradled, held, embraced, kissed or cuddled by a white woman—a young mother, a grandmother, a female medical caregiver. While the accompanying statistical figures and narratives speak about Europe’s “declining fertility rate” and “fewer children” (messages repeated as quantifiable truth-claims in the captions), the photos provide a record of women’s sensuous, loving devotion to white children. The fearful message of demographic projections (white Europeans as an endangered species) is countered by a suggested solution: the need for more white offspring.

Apocalyptic visions of Europe’s anticipated white depopulation are infused with a fabricated fear of blackness. The demographic analysis of the “People in Europe,” as published in the European Union statistical yearbook of 2005, concludes with an untitled photo of babies in a hospital setting: in the centre, six cribs with white infants; on the outer edge, positioned on either side, two cribs with black infants; a population graph is superposed on the photo (Schäfer et al. 2005: 79). Interpreted in context, based on the statistical data presented in the preceding text, the visual message is emphatic: one out of four babies born in Europe is black. The unsettling implications of the numerical decline of Europe’s white population are enhanced by a visual focus on the multiplication of black children. Europe’s statistical imagination conjures and affirms cultural anxieties about the disappearance of a white European future by reference to diminishing birth rates among white mothers and the disproportionate fertility of the black female body.

From this perspective, the statistical diminution of blacks in Europe is no accident. Indeed, it articulates “Europe’s repressed, denied, and disavowed blackness” (Gilroy 2004: xii). The preoccupation with immigration and female reproductivity, as Gilroy asserts, implicates the European Union in the explicit construction of a “white fortress” (2000: 247), a “bleached, politically fortified space” (2004: xii). Europe still imagines black population growth as a movement of bodies from elsewhere: from *outside* the borders of Europe.

Border Militarism and the Carceral Spaces of Whiteness

How are Europe’s visible minorities governed, monitored and disciplined in the realm of global security? European concerns about security, safety, protection and defence are circulated as part of a global public discourse of fear that encourages proactive military action, legitimates war as surgical intervention and authorizes faraway acts of violence as a means of national border fortification. The securocratic language of the contemporary Western state is “war” talk: it empowers a state’s military reach across national borders, diminishes civil society and limits visions of peace. In global media productions after 2008, the figure of the enemy-other has been conflated with the “the terrorist:” he is imagined as a syncretic figure, as Muslim-Arab-Black. But this image of the dangerous militant Other is a phantasm: it typifies salient ethnicities, “drawing together West Indians, Africans, South Asians into a blackening singularity as uninvited immigrant presence” (Goldberg 2009: 179). Militarized media invigorate a montage of fear, masculinity and race, recuperating an anti-black Orientalism that resonates across the Atlantic divide, into Europe and worldwide.

The intensity, sophistication and speed with which political truth-claims can be mobilized to traverse international boundaries has forged a climate of unprecedented state-legitimated terror against phantasmatic Others. Visions of the “axis of evil” or the figure of “the terrorist” are as illusive as they are reactive, fuelling a popular desire for fortified political borders. These ideological fantasies about fortification and border protection are not merely discursive machinations. They are grounded in the operational logic of an expansive capitalist empire that seeks to disguise inherent instabilities and contradictions by a turn to the so-called war on terror. In Europe, the shifting configurations between politics, power and capital have encouraged a rigid nationalism and vigilant patriotism. But, the economic requirements of mobility, flexibility and deterritorialization in the neoliberal global order collide with the European state’s political commitment to securitize space. In this volatile terrain, the imperatives of national security not only restructure the space of the bio-social by an appeal to gender and racial hierarchies, but simultaneously alter the essence of the border regime. In contemporary Europe, as Ticktin has observed, “the struggle to define citizenship and the borders of the nation-state is now also a struggle to define the threshold

of humanity and of life itself” (2006: 35). The ubiquity of borders and the liquidity of empire are both symptomatic of this current reality of the capitalist security state: in an imperialist nation-form, founded on fear, policing, surveillance and militarism have become companions to “normal” life.

European notions of a securitized *inside* and a threatening *outside* are enforced by a border regime that monitors, protects and sustains cultural notions of relative human worth. In what spaces can we locate the protective, often dehumanizing capacity of borders? Following Balibar, we need to speak of a *regime of borders* “both in the middle of the European space and at its extremities” (2004: 13). Indeed, any modern state recognizes or creates borderlines, “which allow it to clearly distinguish between the national (domestic) and the foreigner” (4). The outer borders of Europe, as mapped out by single states, have an incontestable geospatial dimension, a territorial reference or landmark, a footprint just beyond no-man’s land, where “the entrance of asylum seekers and migrants into the European common space” can be regulated and controlled (14). But on the ground, where matters of belonging and exclusion are decided, borderlines also acquire tangible form as legal, political and social contact zones.

European Union territories, like other federated sovereignties, are defined by “open” borders in the interior—the so-called *Schengen* space—where European citizens can traverse national borders without passport or identity checks. Established in 1995, the *Schengen* area now covers the territory of twenty-seven countries or member states of the European Union. It is an area where internal border controls have been abolished by mutual agreement. This inner *open* space, which guarantees the freedom of mobility for nationals, is protected by the simultaneous fortification of exterior borders. After the 2001 World Trade Centre attack, we observe an intensification of closure. This is one snapshot of “fortress” Europe: an imagined political community with an interior borderland that is envisioned as open, liberal and democratic, and an exterior borderline that is policed and protected against enemy-outsiders, including refugees, immigrants, asylum-seekers and non-Europeans. But such a juxtaposition of internal openness (no policing) and exterior closure (border militarism) is misleading. In the process of monitoring, capturing and detaining unwanted populations—the dark-skinned migrants from the global south—external border guarding has become part of a militarized apparatus that extends into the very centre of Europe, into European “securocratic public space” (Feldman 2004). The regime of borders in Europe is not confined to a fixed periphery, but comes into evidence as a decentred, dislocated and ubiquitous process of exclusion and containment.

The preoccupation with fortification and security has given rise to a “Europe-wide network of detention camps for foreigners” (Hintjens 2007: 412). Border militarism is thereby intimately implicated in detention procedures. In June 2008, the European Parliament approved a new set of common rules for expelling

undocumented migrants from European Union space (JRS-Europe Article 15.5 and 15.6). Under these directives, unauthorized border-crossers, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants can be held in specialized detention camps for up to eighteen months before being deported (JRS-Europe 2009a). At the time of publication, 235 detention centres have already been built, scattered throughout Europe, usually in remote locations, “almost invisible to the average EU citizen” (Hintjens 2007: 412). Information about the camps is difficult to obtain. Available data reveal that 150 internment centres administer a combined population of 31,139 detainees. This figure excludes thousands of migrants incarcerated in the remaining eighty-five camps as well as those housed in prisons (in Germany) or other secret facilities (JRS-Europe 2009a, 2009b). Hidden from view, with their existence officially erased, these detainees can be counted among the disappeared (Amnesty International 2009). When placed in this context, the regime of borders performs multiple functions: in its defensive mission, it not only excludes, but also detains, puts lives on hold and even makes them disappear.

The regime of borders, which includes the camps, is expansive, amorphous: it reaches into all contact zones between state officials and non-nationals, both outside and inside of European space. A cartographic view of the location of the camps is revealing. The “empire of camps” (Mirzoeff 2005) extends throughout North Africa, southwest Asia, the eastern parts of Eastern Europe and western Asia; it demarcates Europe’s southern and eastern security borders and extends into all interior borderlands, with notable concentrations in Germany, Great Britain, Spain, Italy and Poland (Migreupe 2009). An analysis of contemporary border militarism therefore requires a focus on “the contradictory effects of the violent security policies waged” by *Europe* within its interior borderlands and “*in the name of Europe* by the bordering countries, now aggravated by the conjuncture of the global war on terror” (Balibar 2004: 15, emphasis added). The regime of borders operates as an amorphous buffer zone against global mobility and the presumed threat of race, even beyond Europe’s sovereign space.

Europe’s political borders may be conceived as a militarized apparatus, a violent procedure for exclusion, tracking and containment that is subject to the operations of the neoliberal capitalist state apparatus, where immigrants and refugees can be envisioned either as a valued labour force or as a potential threat to life and safety. As such, border regimes always have a dual disposition:

[O]n the one hand, a *violent process of exclusion* whose main instrument (not the only one) is the quasi-military enforcement of “security borders,” which recreates the figure of the *stranger as political enemy*...; on the other hand, a *“civil process of elaboration of differences*, which clearly involves ... a basic aporia concerning the self-understanding of Europe’s ‘identity’ and ‘community’.” (14, emphasis added)

According to documentation provided by humanitarian organizations, border militarism in Europe has resulted in nearly 9,000 deaths of undesirable border crossers between 1993 and 2007 (United for Intercultural Action 2007). This figure includes “statistics of the permanent increase of death cases in some sensitive areas of the ‘periphery’ (such as the Gibraltar Strait, the sea shores of Sicily and the Adriatic, some passages of the Alps and the Carpaths, the English Channel and Tunnel, etc.), which are recorded officially as casualties or tragic accidents” (Balibar 2004: 15). In addition to recording the fatalities of border militarism in Europe’s periphery, these statistics include the deaths of migrants in Europe’s interior, in the detention camps and in police custody. Refugees, migrants and asylum seekers are imprisoned, tortured and killed, even after they enter the presumed zones of safety in Europe:

In January 2005, while detained in a police station in Dessau, Germany, Oury Jalloh (from Sierra Leone) was burned alive in a holding cell, found with his hands and feet chained to a bed, his nose broken, and his pants pulled down to his ankles. A month later, his death was declared an accidental suicide, with a notation by the chief of police: “Blacks just happen to burn longer.” (Jansen 2008)

This murder is not an isolated case. In Europe’s interior, border militarism is violent and often deadly. Detainees, most often young black men, are murdered in state custody, whether in the camp, the holding cell or the police station. The most frequently used methods of killing, based on my review of the recorded cases (United for Intercultural Action 2007), include the following: asphyxiation (hanging, suffocation with an object, strangulation, manual choking); the use of sedatives; water boarding; drowning in police custody (by pushing a water hose down the victim’s throat); forcible drug-induced vomiting (as practiced in Germany in violation of European Union laws); being set on fire or dying in a fire (at airport detention centres or in police custody); and the denial of medical treatment. These murders by European state officials are pronounced and recorded as accidents or suicides. Under conditions of extreme dehumanization, when those who die are perceived as subhuman phantoms, the act of killing becomes inconsequential (Mbembe 2003: 24). Following Noam Chomsky (2001), I suggest that we must rethink such practices in terms of a “silent genocide.”

Normalizing Militarized Violence in the Interior

As I have shown, the violent tactics of border guarding in Europe are not confined to an external periphery. Border security extends its reach into the very centre of Europe, where predatory state terror unfolds in the detention camp and the police station, in holding cells, in police custody, in airplanes (during deportation procedures), in airports and in prisons. But Europe’s border militarism and attendant racial violence is not limited to the carceral spaces of state detention.

It takes effect in all those public places where non-white subjects are policed, monitored and violated by ordinary European citizens: the street, the park, the subway and so on. The extension of this violent apparatus into vernacular social space remains largely unrecorded and, as such, unacknowledged.

The violent capacity of borders is evident beyond fixed geographies. In analyzing the pattern of terror perpetrated within such “imaginative geographies,” Stephen Graham describes “the ways in which imperialist societies tend to be constructed through normalizing, binary judgments about both ‘foreign’ territories and the ‘home’ spaces which sit at the ‘heart of empire’” (2006: 255). In Europe, these logics of “place attachment” serve to demarcate a putative *us* in opposition to those *others* who are rendered hypervisible. The everyday work of state terror requires visible signifiers and abject difference has come to be visually marked. In the public realm, the binary logic of race is implanted into vernacular socialities, used to identify the enemy—Others on sight. Laura Bilsky’s analysis of “citizenship as mask” provides a useful conceptual tool (2008). In the European Union, as in other nation-state systems, the legal persona is defined by “citizenship,” which secures the “dimensions of political equality.” The corresponding metaphor of the mask exposes the artificiality of this postulate. The right to belong, as Bilsky suggests, is defined by specific requirements of “concealment” or “disclosure:” legal subjectivity may be differently encoded in different subjects. But a black person is “not offered the protection of the mask and thus remains exposed, not able to re-present his or her body in public” (Bilsky 2008: 7). Such a radical fixture of personhood by colour suggests that citizenship status is also encoded by extra-legal dimensions. In the European national imaginary, the very mask of citizenship is racialized. Whiteness *is* the mask of national belonging, rendering all European subjects metaphorically equal under the “white” signifier.

What impact does such an optical mask of citizenship have on the lives of blacks in Europe? Perceived as an external otherness, blackness is most often associated with an experience of utter isolation. As May Ayim expresses it, “I could cry, because I realize that basically I’m ... all alone.... Being Black means ... feeling alone” (qtd. in Wiedenroth 1992: 176). This sense of social isolation is further enhanced by a particular optical regime: black subjects are visually incarcerated by white “looking relations” (hooks 1991: 168). In everyday social encounters, blackness attracts visual attention: black bodies are immediately *seen*, *recognized* and *identified*, catapulted out of the terrain of whiteness and perceived as alien, foreign and other, as suggested by the following pastiche of comments by black Germans:

“People think I’m a foreigner.” “As soon as they see me, they think I can’t speak German.” “We’re not perceived as European.” “A lot of people assume that I have a particular relationship to Africa.” “I am not viewed as a German.” (Qtd. in Baum et al. 1992: 151, 145, 154)

On the ground, in Europe's interior borderlands, blackness is linked to concrete forms of visual marginalization, where ethno-racial identification operates as a form of terror. As suggested by Frantz Fanon (1967), interactions in public space are encoded by the visual capture of the "black" subject by "white" recognition. The hyper-visibility of "black-inscribed skin" is entrapped in "an imposed othering and dehumanization from which there is little escape" (Lusane 2003: 21). In such a racialized terrain, a sense of visual vulnerability becomes a central experience for non-white subjects:

With our color we are always visible.... Yes, we're walking targets. We can never "submerge" ... I can't ever "just walk around" ... I can't walk relaxed at all.... I am German, and I'm dark ... "coffee-and-cream brown." [...] But no matter how many nuances are defined, it always comes down to the same thing: You are branded (no, marked) as non-white. (Qtd. in Wiedenroth 1992: 174, 176)

By deploying the panoptics of race, border militarism has extended its reach into the social interior of Europe and the everyday spaces of life. In Europe's national interior, violent exclusion proceeds by what Jonathan Inda (with view to the U.S.-Mexican border) has termed "border prophylaxis," through spatial enclosures (camps, detention centres, prisons), surveillance and by "governing through crime" (2006: 116). Racialization is always a subtext. The conflation of blackness and criminality has several important consequences. African immigrants, by extension black Europeans, are forced to inhabit the figure of the illegal alien, the enemy outsider, the welfare sponger, pimp or prostitute, drug dealer and the diseased body. Identified as criminals and/or as threats to society, the body politic and national security, they are treated accordingly (Menschenrechtsverein 2002). Random passport and identity checks, arbitrary arrests, body searches, physical abuse, torture and sexual humiliation are perpetrated by European state officials and police with increasing frequency (Goldberg 2009: 178, 189). In public space, the non-white signifier is continuously monitored. In this panoptic theater of race, the figure of the male-terrorist-criminal is conjured on sight. The imperatives of border security have transformed European public space into a quasi-militarized zone, in which non-white subjects are monitored, policed and apprehended as presumed criminals.

When Europe's "security package" was drafted into law in spring 2009, it enabled pogrom-like actions against visible minorities. "While disproportionate numbers of Afro-Europeans are beings arrested and incarcerated or deported, police brutality against racial minorities—including murder—has skyrocketed" (Lusane 2003: 253).

By criminalizing unauthorized migration across national borders, the law turned all dark-skinned individuals into potential suspects. In Italy, such a criminalization of the non-European Other synergized latent stereotypes against African immigrants and "gypsies." Fabricated accusations of theft, sorcery, child

abduction, blood rituals, sexual perversions and rape were turned into believable truth-claims that unleashed the protective power of state militarism in Rome, Milan and Naples:

Police operations [against Roma and other groups] are carried out with the use of helicopters, police dog units, and armed men in uniform, both during the day and in the dead of night.... Officials have announced the employment of 30,000 more soldiers to work alongside the police on the streets of the major cities (Rome, Milan, Naples, etc.).... The Ministers of the Interior and Defence initiated [this] project in 2008 ... investing a total of two billion Euros a year. The Italian Prime Minister defined the Roma [gypsies], immigrants, and the homeless as “the evil army” and “the enemy” to be combated using these troops. (EveryOne Group 2009)

In these acts of state military terror against minorities, race is clearly a central factor: non-white subjects are criminalized, defined as a security threat, conjured as “the enemy” of the nation and the state. In Italy, under “the spectre of racial targeting,” as Angel-Ajani (2002) has observed, such dissimilar peoples as Nigerians, Senegalese, Moroccans, Tunisians, Albanians, Poles, Colombians and Roma are collectively classified as “criminal types” and “deviants,” who are apprehended on suspicion of drug trafficking or prostitution and arrested on sight.

In Europe’s interior borderlands, we observe a further intensification of everyday violence and street terror against those subjects who are rejected as non-European. Perceived “as a threat to the body politic” (Camp 2005: 83), salient Others are brutalized, even killed by ordinary Europeans. The attacks appear to be opportunistic encounter-killings (on a train, in front of a pub, on a street, in a park, on a streetcar or subway) perpetrated by close-contact violence; the victim is kicked or beaten to death, stabbed, dowsed with alcohol and burned, bashed with a rock, pushed through a glass door or thrown out of a window.⁴ Europe’s border war has transfigured the space of the street into a zone of terror. The use of soldiers against civilians transforms immigration into a military matter and provides a legitimating context for non-official acts of violence perpetrated by ordinary citizens.

Violent practices that strip black Europeans of their lives, personhood and identities, “in fact making them a non-entity” (El-Tayeb 2005: 28), are legitimated by public discourse. In police reports and news media, the victims of hate crimes are categorically described as “African,” “African-born,” “black-African,” “coloured” and “tribal.” Occasionally a victim will be described as “a holder of a German passport, but never as German,” or as French, Dutch or British (El Tayeb 2005: 27). The racialized colour-coding of national belonging, which defines blackness and Europeaness as “mutually contradictory categories” (Smith 2006: 430), confirms the otherness of the presumed Other. The Europeanization

of Europe, as propagated by police and media, is embedded in a discourse that renders racial violence acceptable. In this terrain of white-on-black violence, fear becomes a central experience. Europe's "violent security policies...install migrants in a condition of permanent insecurity" (Balibar 2004: 15). In the words of one young African man: "I cannot move freely and avoid certain places; I am always afraid" (qtd. in Menschenrechtsverein 2002). Terror, founded on the panoptics of racial classification, becomes an amorphous instrument of control: the militarized securocratic apparatus is ever-present. By policing the perceptual anti-citizen across European Union territory—from the outer perimeter to the camp to the street—border militarism has become commonplace: it has been implanted into the security habitus of the mundane.

Concluding Reflections

In Europe's securocratic world, the politics of race remain entangled with past histories of empire, social engineering and bio-political experimentation. But in the global present, racial violence and border militarism belong to a new order of terror. An examination of Europe as a late-modern political form "reveals how modern government stages itself by dealing directly in the power over life: the power to exclude, to declare exceptions, to strip human existence of civic rights and social value" (Comaroff 2007: 22). The contemporary exclusion of blacks from Europe is a terror formation with a new political purpose. Border security, underwritten by violence and death, is entangled with the militarization of civil society.

Border fortification is a move against the forces of global mobility. Europeanness is contrasted with the enemy-outsider: the anti-citizen, the fleeting figure of the terrorist, the border crosser, the non-sedentary black body. The figure of the enemy-outsider has emerged as a trope for people in motion, including migrants, immigrants, refugees, seekers of asylum and transient border-subjects, who are perceived as potential threats to "homeland" mobile security. Human figures are criminalized as icons of global instability and disorder. In Europe's imaginative geography, such frictions are articulated through the idiom of race; the home world, populated by white citizen-subjects, is to be protected from those dark others, the mass of "immigrants" and/or "illegals." According to this logic, globally mobile populations must be harnessed, contained and controlled.

By recourse to familiar racial tropes, Europeanness "is imagined as an identity against the Other" (Mbembe 2003: 23). Tangible alterities or figures of difference (the veiled Muslim woman, the Arab terrorist, the black immigrant) occupy a strategic place in the determination of Europeanness and the articulation of the corresponding fields of whiteness. As Stuart Hall has observed, the "largely unspoken racial connotations" of national belonging in Europe are encoded by a cultural logic of othering that promotes either assimilation or exclusion (Hall

2000b). Distinction is manufactured along a narrow register that “accords differing groups cultural normativity or deviance” (Ong 1996: 759). In this volatile terrain, the European nation-state is “caught between the need to enforce sameness and the fear of absolute difference, with no middle ground” (Bilsky 2009: 306). Such an identity formation in turn legitimates the fortification of Europe as a gated, exclusive community. But border militarism, as I have shown, entails more than policing. The regime of borders can grant life or deliver death. The militarized security state, to borrow Achille Mbembe’s phrasing, has been endowed with the “capacity to define who matters and does not, who is *disposable* and who is not” (2003: 27). Accordingly, state violence and military security are no longer confined to their former roles. From the security perimeter into the urban interior, border militarism deploys racialization to enhance its capacity to exclude. A distinguishing feature of Europe’s border regime is its amorphous quality; ordinary life is militarized as the colour of bodies and the acts of racial violence are woven into the fabric of everyday social governance.

Notes

1. My research on this subject derives from multiple sources over a ten-year period: ethnographic research from 1997 through 2005, when I lived and worked in Germany for four years, with subsequent follow-up trips during the summer. Following to my experiences and findings, I began to investigate popular representations of blackness in Europe. Work at the European University in Budapest during the summer of 2003 allowed me to conduct comparative research with nationals from former socialist countries. My data collection from field research was supplemented by print and media materials on black Europeans and the fortification of a “white” Europe after 2005.

2. Building on my extensive work on immigrants and refugees in Germany and Europe in the postwar era through the 1990s, I expanded the scope of my research and assembled an archive of statistical and demographic information produced by the official publication office of the European Communities: included are “Europe in Figures,” the Eurostat year books furnished since 2002, special issue publications on the demographic data produced by the European Union and other materials available from the Eurostat and Europa websites. For comparisons, I have consulted United Nations and World Bank sources on European demographic information, which include different sets of data sources such as financial transactions, remittances and emigration information from the migrants’ countries of origin.

3. In contrast to European Union statistics, this figure not only includes the narrowly defined bureaucratic category of the “immigrant,” but also short-term migrants, reunited family members, spouses, refugees and other foreign residents who are excluded from the EU statistical roster. The United Nations Recommendations on Migration Statistics suggest that the migrant stock be measured in terms of foreign-born and foreign populations (United Nations 2006: 29, table 2).

4. This summary is based on my review of cases reported in the news media, which I have collected as part of my research since 2000 as they appeared in major newspapers (which I acquired as searchable CD ROMs): *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, *Taz*, *Berliner Zeitung*, *Die Zeit* and *Der Spiegel*. I have supplemented this information with the data collections on racist violence provided by FRA (2009).

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