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# MANAGING HATE: Political Delinquency and Affective Governance in Germany

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On a cold January afternoon I arrived at the Friedrichstraße train station in central Berlin in the company of a young right extremist.[1] We had come from the city's southeast for a secretive encounter with a nongovernmental organization that helps young neo-Nazis exit the scene. Gino was known throughout his district as "SS-Gino" owing to the HASS ("hate") tattoo that decorated the fingers of his right hand, with its final two letters styled after the illegal symbol of the SS.[2] He was a slim twenty year old of medium height and trimmed dark hair. On his arms, back, and chest he boasted various other illicit images, including renderings of the Iron Cross, of a *leitwolf*,[3] and of a flag with the inscription *deutsche widerstand* ("German Resistance"). Silver hoop earrings and a thick gilded chain complemented the tattoos. Gino came of age in the district's poorest neighborhood, locally known as "the ghetto," with his alcoholic mother and her frequently violent partners. He had never completed high school and subsisted on various state remittances. His involvement in right extremist organized political activism had been minimal and erratic. In contrast, his criminal record presented an impressive assortment of offenses for his young age, including (but not limited to) shoplifting, vandalism, agitation of the people (*volksverhetzung*),[4] violent assault, and possession of banned symbols and illegal weapons. Our visit to the train station took place shortly after he completed his latest period of incarceration, the last of seven separate sentences—each lasting from a few days to a month—that he had already

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served at detention centers, juvenile delinquent reformatories, and prisons. This was no mean feat, for Germany's youth law, under which he had so far been tried as a minor, only reluctantly incarcerates offenders. When not in prison, Gino had spent much of the past few years under legal probation, struggling to comply—though then again, never too vigorously—with various court-mandated stipulations, including divesting himself of his weapons, moving into an apartment of his own, finding a job, and attending alcohol therapy sessions.

Gino finds himself at the peculiar intersection of two very distinct logics. First, his repeated internments and conditional living place him under the disciplinary and biopolitical power of modern penology, where he appears as that amalgamation of pathological predispositions and anti-social habits conventionally known as the delinquent. This first disciplinary regime links up with a labyrinthine web of legal codes, juridical norms, law enforcement procedures, and pedagogical strategies that, together, make up a field as immense and politically salient as it is fuzzy and uneven; an expansive terrain of praxis and knowledge that carries the fight against right extremism in Germany as its banner. Both the crusade against right extremism and the penal regime associated with it, in turn, are inscribed within neoliberal modes of governance invested in "the 'responsibilization' of subjects who are increasingly 'empowered' to discipline themselves" (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, 989), or, as Foucault (2008, 226) famously put it, in forging out of each subject a consumptive-productive, autonomous "entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of [his] earnings." This first penality is therefore economistic in nature. It shows its face in the prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation procedures that come to bear upon right extremists and that seek to instill the sorts of affective dispositions, normative investments, and modes of reasoning that would create self-controlling individuals, rather than costly lifetime targets of penal and welfare regimes. As part of such political rectification, authorities seek to bind right extremist delinquents to the mores of upright citizens by inculcating presumably heretofore absent social virtues and normative habits, such as a principled labor-routine that would repair a faulty work ethic or dwelling practices that would fortify traditional distinctions between public and private and bolster acceptable notions of property and propriety. The particularly neoliberal form of this penal regime is evident as well in the state-like, state-sponsored, and state-activated organizations that it calls into existence and in the sorts of highly-localized agents that such organizations in turn recruit to perform governance functions.

But while these mechanisms of neoliberal penality transform the menace of a quasi-fascist criminal class into a particular species of delinquency—a peculiar political deviance for which a special place is reserved within the German penal apparatus—a second logic is also at work here. Beyond the rationality of modern penology within which it takes shape, the right extremist delinquent comes into being also as the contemporary incarnation of the National Socialist specter. This article is concerned with some of the excesses and anxieties that manifest themselves in the production of this figure. Such excesses, I argue, betray not so much the follies of governance, but, more significantly, its inscription within cultural and historical aporias—such as the political memory of National Socialism in Germany—that belie biopolitical rationalities. The multiple procedures of governance that come to bear on Gino and others like him, a number of which I will describe in what follows, labor to reveal the location of the right extremist Thing; to signify it the better to control it. But the sense of frustration that this relentless quest seems to generate suggests that the political delinquent maintains a certain externality to the legal and penal order of the Federal Republic, that something in it defies its signification and localization. Its unlocatability, and the frustration that it creates, has often reminded me of Evans-Pritchard's (1937, 1–3) exasperated search for the precise corporal site and physical substance in which, according to the Zande, witchcraft resides. In a similar way, the techniques of governance I consider below hunt for the right extremist Thing upon the bodies, minds, and souls of Gino and his peers, without ever quite laying their hands on it.

In this article, I analyze the operations of this particular form of governance, in which neoliberal penality comes together with National Socialist specters. I argue that the penal regimes of right extremist criminality present us with excesses that "no amount of political, economic, and social causality, of rational aims, goals, and interests can explain" (Artexaga 1999, 47). Far from the calculated governmental modalities of risk and control, such seemingly irrational excesses would seem to point "not to a place but to places from which nothing acceptable can issue" (Siegel 2003, 152), that fail to bring closure and that fall short of performing the ordering function that one might attribute to them. My argument here is in line with a number of other scholars (Aretxaga 2003; cf. Mazzarella 2010) who have insisted that governance serves as a site for much more than mere optimization or efficiency, as notions of control, risk, or governmentality have often been understood to imply. Instead, governance will be shown to reference a social field for the elaboration and mediation of cultural and political

projects—from banishing illicit nationalism as a political force to fabricating a tolerant and cosmopolitan nation—that are wrought of affect and uncertainty.

In Germany, we see the fusion of these two logics patently in a peculiar penal regime that generates a specific kind of social deviancy—the neo-Nazi, the right extremist—that I have elsewhere called political delinquency (Shoshan 2011). The once provocative notion that the category of delinquency, rather than descriptively referencing an objective social reality, instead constitutes a "political operation" (Foucault 1995, 277), hardly requires mention in our post-Foucaultian age. Mindful of the distinct historical co-figurations of crime and politics, my use of the concept of political delinquency is not meant to disavow the political nature of the category of delinquency as such, but rather to specify an articulation of the two in which a relatively explicit political project (unlike, e.g., the crude resistance of social banditry) comes together with a strong sense of delinquency in its conventional meaning (unlike, e.g., in the case of political prisoners).[5] In contemporary Germany, Gino and his friends stand at once for a political agenda deemed sufficiently menacing to warrant intensive state persecution (a racially pure nation, Third Reich anti-democratic authoritarianism) and for the sorts of criminal forms that commonly characterize the figure of the delinquent. From Gino's first encounter with the law, for nothing less than unlicensed fishing, to his later, brutal assaults on train station passersby or his taste for illegal neo-Nazi paraphernalia, the biographical trajectories of Gino and his friends defy any neat distinction between the criminal and even the narrowly political.

At a broader scale, political delinquency pertains to a field of knowledge/praxis that seeks to govern the affective relation of German (and, arguably, European) publics to cultural, ethnic, and religious difference.[6] This field, which I term the management of hate, includes not only the penal governance of political delinquents, but also a whole range of practices and institutions that seek to foment tolerance and curb cultural anxieties in the so-called mainstream. In Germany, however, the management of hate can only be understood in relation to the country's very particular twentieth century as a collective mode of "learning to live with ghosts" (Derrida 1994, xviii): a reflexive process of national becoming that stands between life and death, between past and present, between spectral presences (traces of Nazism and communism, to be sure, but also of the turbulent Weimar years) and the geopolitical and cultural projects of the post–Cold War moment, including the rebranding of the Federal Republic as a cosmopolitan country of immigrants.

Below, I consider three modalities through which the management of hate governs and, more specifically, aims to reform young right extremists. Each of the three locates the political delinquent in a different site: states of resentment within the affective self; cognitive incoherencies within the rational individual; and corporeal deviance within the physical body. Though other sites may well exist, the affective subject, the rational subject, and the corporeal subject emerged as particularly salient domains for affective governance in my research.[7] I draw on fieldwork, conducted in East Berlin in 2004 and 2005 with young right extremists and in the organizations charged with their governance, to examine the political delinquent as a composite laboratory for the germination, testing, and honing of various remedial technologies and theoretical models. Serving as a terrain for both scholars and practitioners in the field to experiment empirically with diverse conceptual frameworks, the political delinquent appears interchangeably as a reservoir of frustrated desires, as the rational consciousness of communicative action, and finally, too, as an anatomical corporeality of bodily comportment.

At the same time, as the figure that menaces the post-1989 project of a rejuvenated yet inoffensive German nationhood, the political delinquent serves to conceal (though, no doubt, never to resolve) the inexorable contradictions that mark this very same project, including its relation to the nation on the one hand and immigration on the other. The right extremist Thing emerges from the painstaking procedures of its management, not only as a special species of modern delinquency created by the German penal state but simultaneously as the effect of cultural and political antinomies that have bedeviled post-war Germany, foremost among which have been the memory of the war and the taboo on nationalism. My analysis thus reveals sites of governance as arenas for the elaboration, negotiation, and contestation of such historical stakes. The obsessive-compulsive circumscription of the political delinquent should therefore be understood as a constitutively indefinite effort to evacuate contemporary German nationalism of its discontents. In absorbing, distilling, and containing the dirty bathwater of German nationalism, the figure of the right extremist keeps the baby—a contemporary national project—safe and sanitary. To paraphrase James Siegel (2006, 210), it says that society is innocent.[8] Rendering the truth of the right extremist—what it says about society—articulable demands its signification, its subjugation to the symbolic order. Nevertheless, a residual excess about the right extremist Thing that eludes and frustrates signification always seems to remain. And it is

this indelible surplus, which escapes representation, that time and again kindles exploratory journeys into the therapeutic sciences of affective management.

## FACING THE FACTS

The southeastern district of Treptow-Köpenick, where Gino lives, and especially its southern half, Treptow, has traditionally been home to the industrial working-class of Berlin. In the aftermath of reunification and following rapid deindustrialization, certain neighborhoods in the district have suffered from particularly high unemployment and socioeconomic decline (see Shoshan 2012). Gino and his friends are in this sense second generation "transition losers" (*wendeverlierer*), a term used derogatively for those East Germans who have fared badly under the new economic and political order. The federal headquarters of the National Democratic Party of Germany, several local clandestine neo-Nazi fraternities, regular political marches, a concentration of business establishments that cater to young nationalists, and a number of brutal incidents of racist violence have won the district a certain reputation as a stronghold of right extremism over the past decade.[9] In response, more than a few organizations and initiatives have focused their efforts on curbing the gains of right extremists in the district. These have included, for example, several state-sponsored coalitions of municipal service providers, NGOs that consult schools and other institutions on strategies against racism and political extremism, youth work organizations that provide cultural offerings in high-risk areas, and special police squads dedicated to political and racist violence among young people. Not least among those is the team of street social workers that served the groups I studied and facilitated my access to them. While themselves an integral part of the governmental apparatus that I term the management of hate, they are crucial as well in mediating between their young clients and other agencies of governance.

Much like other organizations within this apparatus, the approach of street social workers to the challenges they encounter is informed by distinct scholarly perspectives on the problem of right extremism. These perspectives populate a contested terrain of explanatory frameworks and interventionist procedures, each with its own intellectual and political genealogy, that are expounded and brought to bear upon young political delinquents in today's Germany. For each perspective—indeed often for each of their many variants—there corresponds an assortment of techniques, strategies, and experts, from individual psychological therapy to the generation of group solidarity, the promotion of participatory experiences, or democratic experiments at school (Schubarth 2001). Taken to-

gether, they provide a set of orientations for professional practitioners in the field. At the risk of simplification, we may describe a fourfold general classification of these approaches. First, personality-structure theories, strongly influenced by Adorno's theory of the authoritarian personality (Adorno et al. 1950), typically locate the pathology in the psychological individual understood as the outcome of biographical histories. Second, political-culture theories stress how societal norms determine responses to racism or violence and may result in "democratic deficits" in particular contexts (Carlsson 2006; Jaschke 2001). Third, research on youth has often prioritized the local dynamics of belonging, consumption, and fashion over properly political convictions or formalized institutions (Hafeneger and Jansen 2001). Fourth, a range of sociological explanations has focused on large scale political-economic processes to account for right extremism, linking late-capitalist individualization, marginalization, or anomie to the emergence of xenophobia and political extremism (Butterwegge and Meier 2002; Steinmetz 1994). Of course, such theories rarely appear as monocausal explanations in the literature. Accounts of right extremism in the former East, for example, have variously described a scarcity of democratic civil society structures (political-culture theories), rigid institutional discipline and traditional parenting styles (personality-structure theories), a lack of appealing cultural alternatives for youths (youth theories), and the impact of epidemic unemployment and social marginalization (sociological theories).

In recent years, sociological models in particular have provided the salient paradigms in the field. Within scholarly debates, such sociological models have been successful at avoiding the labeling of the East as particularly hospitable to National Socialist ideologies by grounding its especially harsh circumstances within globally documented shifts. As importantly, they have allowed for the elaboration of critical perspectives on contemporary social processes. But for practitioners, critical-theoretical engagements with neoliberal capitalism address the concrete needs of their clients tangentially at best. Instead, when translated into practice (for example, in the daily grind of street social work), these models suggest two possible and not mutually exclusive routes: alleviating social marginalization by facilitating access to welfare services and mediating processes for workforce integration on the one hand, and taming unrealistic expectations and aspirations on the other. Implicit in these practical translations is a view of a disintegrating social fabric as the site from which the National Socialist menace spawns and as the terrain in which the battle against it would have to be waged. The right extremist Thing is rendered as frustration and helplessness; obsolete aspirations that collide

calamitously with reality to produce a politics of resentment. Attempts to unwind it must seek to collapse this chasm between aspirations and reality. They become a reality check, an imperative to face the facts of life as they really are. And they evoke a moment when twentieth-century European working-class aspirations must be brought in line with twenty-first-century economic relations, when European states struggle to clean up the debris left behind by Fordist-Keynesian social democracy, and where people mourn the loss of a sense of futurity, of what was imagined to have once been plausible (Berlant 2007; Muehlebach and Shoshan 2012; Shoshan 2012).

To illustrate how such approaches often turn out to incite the very affective forms they presume to target, allow me to return to that frosty afternoon at the Friedrichstraße train station. As Gino and I descended onto the thick afternoon rush hour crowds in search of our designated rendezvous point, a portly man in his mid-fifties dressed in a worn gray suit approached us and led the way to a nearby espresso bar. Herr Tomasky worked for the Berlin-based organization, "EXIT Deutschland," modeled after its Scandinavian cognates to facilitate a way out of the right extremist scene for those weary of its lifestyle or disillusioned with its politics. Founded in 2000 by former officers of the East Berlin police who specialized in youth violence and criminality, EXIT has relied on funding from diverse sources over the years—federal programs, EU initiatives, civil society foundations, corporate philanthropy, and private donations. Its representatives talk to school classes and participate in media campaigns, but assisting repentant right extremists remains the core of its activities. It operates on the not entirely unfounded assumption that its business is better kept concealed to protect its clients from possible retributions by their peers. Gino's appeal to the organization, about which he learned from his parole officer, no doubt reflected his desire to score points with the justice system in the run-up to his court hearing. He was summoned for a clandestine encounter in the city's center, an alien terrain for him, and so the social workers requested that I accompany him on this rare voyage, as guide and confidant.

We sat around a small table on the ground floor of the train station. As Gino looked around somewhat anxiously, clearly concerned about the possibility that some acquaintance might walk past, Herr Tomasky inquired about his ascent into the right extremist scene, the crimes he had committed, and the dangers he could face as a deserter. Tomasky's barrage of terse questions, his dismissive offhand interjections, and his bossy tone of voice all suggested a well-rehearsed but mechanically and disinterestedly executed script that left little room for Gino's

personal narrative. Interrupting Gino's speech, he would scoff at replies that failed to satisfy him, repeat his question, and demand an alternative response, which he would sometimes provide himself. His was a sermonizing discourse that time and again pontificated about how poorly executed and morally reprehensible Gino's entire life had been. Gino, for his part, explained he was "just having fun" with his friends without thinking too much about it, which, he hurried to add, is what you do when you are young. But Tomasky judged this account as inadequate. Gino mentioned that, as a child, he had experienced domestic violence from several of his mother's boyfriends. "I externalized the violence I had internalized at home," he said. Still unsatisfied, Tomasky argued that most victims of domestic violence never became neo-Nazis. This went on for some time, until Gino appeared to remain entirely drained of ideas. Tomasky came to his aid, inquiring whether his right extremist sympathies could have emerged from frustration and despair, from the outlook of a life without prospects, from a sense that he was not in control of his future. Gino nodded indistinctly, neither confirming nor refuting—nor for that matter even indicating he had quite grasped—Tomasky's hypothesis.

Tomasky continued his interrogation, asking about Gino's educational record, employment situation, and professional aspirations. Gino, bemoaning the dearth of decent jobs and vocational training opportunities, clarified he had never finished school, held no diploma, and had always been unemployed. Tomasky's patronizing gaze transmuted into a ridiculing grin when Gino professed his desire to someday become an electrician. This clear attempt at modest pragmatism on the part of Gino, who often reported far more inflated life goals—from movie stardom to military glory—nevertheless appeared patently absurd in the eyes of Tomasky, who commenced on a tirade against delusional hopes and a sermon on the indispensability of facing the facts. His diatribe interlaced a vindictive appraisal of Gino with a bleak vision of the present to advocate an ethics that hovered between despair and resignation. Gino's dismal educational record and appalling criminal history would already set him for an abysmally disadvantaged start, he proclaimed. But even if their repercussions could be attenuated—say, if Gino conjured the willpower to resume his schooling, or if EXIT vouchsafed his repentance to potential employers—they only exacerbated the already disheartening realities of the contemporary labor market. Pickiness, he warned, was a luxury Gino couldn't afford. The coupling of a dire reality and his particular background ruled out any ambitions as illusory fantasies and permitted only the lowliest of expectations. This obliged him to gratefully accept whatever offers the employ-

ment office could make him. Indeed, Tomasky added, Gino should consider himself extraordinarily fortunate if any chances at all came his way.

On the train heading home, Gino brooded glumly over the meeting. No, he said, he found nothing particularly demoralizing in Tomasky's harsh pronouncements. He had heard it all many times before. His precarious despondency and the urgency of facing reality without delusions had already been impressed upon him on countless occasions by social workers, parole officers, government bureaucrats, and judges. What brought him down was precisely the fact that, as far as he could see, Tomasky had nothing new to convey, much less to offer. Whatever fantasies Gino had entertained about his appointment with EXIT aside, there was more than a grain of truth to his disillusionment. Tomasky's textbook performance invoked a particular diagnosis of the affliction of right extremism as rooted in a space of resentment that extends over the gap between implausible expectations and rough realities; and it prescribed, too, the appropriate advice. Recall that Tomasky offhandedly rejected Gino's accounts of his ignominious trajectory. Gino initially delineated his ingratiation into the "scene" as motivated by social happenstance and juvenile notions of fun. Tomasky's dismissal of this narrative repudiated the youth-phenomenon approaches to right extremism. Gino later suggested, in a language I had not heard from him before and that smacked of therapeutic contexts like his anti-violence seminar, that it was perhaps the violence he had absorbed at home that he later came to externalize. This narrative, in turn, tallied with authoritarian personality-structure theories. But it was ultimately a losers-of-modernization account that Tomasky more or less coerced Gino into.

In this hailing of Gino as the locus of resentment and frustration, we find more than the interpellation of individuals as passive, docile citizens bereft of expectations and resigned to unsavory futures, rather than, say, as entrepreneurial, autonomous agents of a neoliberal imaginary. More importantly, through tiresome repetition ("I have heard it all before"), a certain mode of governance seeks to inculcate forms of post-Fordist affect (Muehlebach and Shoshan 2012) and fabricate a particular figuration of lack. This mode of governance incites precisely the sorts of frustrated attachments that allegedly stand behind xenophobic violence and ultra-nationalism in the first place. Within the management of hate, then, a discursive incitement of resentment appears to emerge, tautologically, as explanation, in the process reaffirming its own claim to truth. The very attempt to exorcise Gino of his specters reveals itself as the moment of their summoning.

**THE RATIONAL KERNEL**

The propagation of the right extremist Thing as post-Fordist resentment and, simultaneously, of that very resentment itself as an affective form, is not uncommon. But it is not the only framework for elaborating understandings of, and strategies against, xenophobic hatred in today's Germany. Nor is it the only manner in which such efforts would seem to undermine their own tenets. By way of contrast, I consider a set of approaches particularly (though not exclusively) popular with educators and youth workers that posit political delinquency not within the affective self but rather as anchored in what is considered to be the cognitive, (ir)rational subject—the subject capable of comprehending logical arguments, of evaluating the validity and coherence of predicative statements, and of formulating them on their own. Examples of these approaches include "argumentation training workshops," where guides lead exercises and simulations of actual or possible debates; expert-led seminars, where specialists arm participants with information that would help them disprove right extremist statements; or booklets with extensive lists of ultra-nationalist arguments, each complemented with an appropriate response. Usually provided free of charge by municipalities, political parties, NGOs, or government bureaus, such efforts at rational enlightenment target not only wayward adolescents but also—and perhaps more often—certain at-risk practitioners (teachers, youth workers, local politicians), parents of young nationalists, and the general public. They are particularly invested in transforming the pedagogical cultures of educational institutions where, so their proponents claim, exclusion, silencing, or disregard rather than earnest debate commonly characterize responses to expressions of right extremist sympathies. For those who practice or preach these methods, critical-rational debate (*auseinandersetzung*) with National Socialist and other racist, ultra-nationalist ideologies is vital for preventive work with politically rightist youths. Only the careful pedagogical dismantling of susceptibilities to elements of such nationalist ideological frameworks can make extricating young, vulnerable people from their politically delinquent social milieus possible. Hence, such approaches insist on the importance of taking the political stances of these young people seriously and literally, as referential predicates about the world, and of confronting them with the contradictions of their beliefs.

Under the auspices of a foundation associated with the Social Democrats and supported by both the Federal and the Berlin governments, one of the street social workers with whom I collaborated and I were invited to share our praxis-honed opinion on one variant of this approach. A professor of law and social work

and his assistant had prepared a draft version of a documentary, produced to be a pedagogical weapon against right extremism. The film was conceived as the first in a series of documentaries that would question distinct aspects of National Socialist and contemporary right-extremist ideology, and that together would provide a handy toolbox for educators under the heading "subversive destabilizing pedagogy" (*subversive verunsicherungspädagogik*). The screening took place in a spacious room in a building in central Berlin that belonged to the foundation. Seated with us in a half circle in front of a large television screen were the professor and his assistant, the director of a street social work NGO, the director of a youth work NGO and his assistant, the manager of a youth sports club that specialized in offerings for young right extremists, and a representative of the foundation that hosted the meeting and her intern. It was, hence, an assembly not only of experts but also of the professional audience for the film.

The documentary bore the title *Globalization and Xenophobia* (*Globalisierung und fremdenfeindlichkeit*). Divided into five sections, it looked at the World Trade Organization (WTO), international trade and global markets, trade wars and protectionism, the globalization of the extreme right itself, and the historical relation between foreigners and labor. It wove together the damning pronouncements of Gordon Reinholz, a prominent, young, and charismatic right extremist cadre and the explanations of an elderly economics professor; footage of military parades and mass spectacles from the Third Reich; praise for the globalized free-market from industrial leaders; and images of the contemporary extreme right, from websites to demonstrations and rock concerts. Each of the sections provoked a range of skeptical responses from the small group of invited critics. Before long a manifest sense prevailed that, while well intentioned, the film was glaringly misguided, albeit without consensus on why precisely this was so.

With a look of indignation, the sports club manager insisted that the problem hardly lay with opposition to globalization as such but instead with xenophobia (*fremdenfeindlichkeit*) in and of itself. He took issue with the construal of rationality as the discursive prerogative of market-friendly specialists and attacked the message implicit in the film, namely, that any struggle against the dictates of global capitalism could only signal irrational political extremism. According to this critique, in its substitution of an opaque rule of experts for political debate the film betrayed its alleged democratic aims. Like the narrative Tomasky delivered to Gino, the film construed global capitalism as an inescapable reality. It called, however, not for passive acquiescence with a regrettable yet inevitable future but rather for the active embrace of that future.[10]

The directors of the youth work and social work organizations expressed alarm about what they considered the film's imprudent use of images. Sequences on the dependency of the *Wehrmacht* on foreign trade included propaganda footage that showed the full glory of National Socialist military might and the fascist aesthetics of mass spectacle: armored divisions, fighter jets, and thousands of soldiers marching in formation. The section dedicated to the contemporary globalization of right extremism featured depictions of large neo-Nazi gatherings, thriving far right movements, white-power heavy metal concerts, massive marches and political events, and charismatic leaders of right extremist parties in Europe and beyond it. "If I were a Nazi," the director of the social work organization said, "I would surely find such images thoroughly inspirational." Their concerns, I would argue, rested on an implicit binary distinction between the rational, predicative transparency of linguistic communication on the one hand, and the irrational, affective force of the image on the other (cf. Horkheimer and Adorno 2002, 17–18). The film, in other words, let "decoration distract from the statement" (Brecht 1996, 231). In failing to subjugate the sensuous force of its images to the rationality of its discourse, the film's verbal content condemned what its visual form simultaneously glorified (cf. Žižek 1989, 188). It overestimated and thus undermined the pedagogical sway of its own discursive rationality, failing to recognize the "reality effect" of its images (Bourdeiu 1998, 21; Feldman 1997, 26).[11]

Helmuth, the social worker with whom I arrived at the meeting, squirmed and frowned as the screening progressed. "It's one to zero for the Nazis," he sighed several times. On the one hand, he began once his turn finally came to share his thoughts, there was Gordon Reinholz, youthful, fashionable, and charismatic, passionately weaving nationalist and anti-globalization slogans in the idiom of his young public. On the other hand, there was the economics professor, aged and heavy, with his old-fashioned moustache and his bald top, his dull suit answering the grayness of his office, monotonously explicating the nature and importance of the WTO. Utterly irrespective of the content of their enunciations, the former would unquestionably command a far greater authority than the latter for the people whom Helmuth served. Even worse, he continued, in elevating Reinholz's rhetoric to the same discursive level as the professor's, the film fortified rather than dismantled his claim to authority.

Helmuth's comments betrayed how the fundamental premise of the film, predicative discursive rationality, rested on an ultimately irrational groundwork, and this in three ways. First, Helmuth's comments called attention to the rhe-

torical conventions and performative stylistics—a poetics of speech—that, beyond denotational meaning, endow certain enunciations (e.g., a young cadre's) with efficacy (Caton 1990; Sebeok 1964). Second, they exposed how certain voices (e.g., a professor's) rest on socially-institutionalized power differentials that authorize them and not others (Bourdieu 2001), rather than on their coherence or truth-value. Third, in describing a radically divergent mode in which young right extremists would interpret the film, the comments took aim at the assumption of a uniform discursive universe, exposing its unevenness and openness to variation (Bakhtin 1998). Helmuth's comments unraveled the language ideology (Woolard 1998) within which the film could appear legible and efficacious, thereby shattering the very premises of "subversive destabilizing pedagogy": rational deliberation within the framework of pure communicative action and an ideal speech situation operative within the uniform discursive universe of a homogeneous public sphere. This framework would have been the ground from which right extremism could appear as cognitive error, the effect of obfuscation, a lack or distorted knowledge that required rectification. But it turned out to be no ground at all.

All three critiques voiced unease with the film. The first more or less accepted the assumption of an irrational kernel at the heart of the right extremist Thing, yet located this irrationality in xenophobic racism rather than in anti-globalization politics. The second commentary identified a tension between a predicative rationality of text and an affective irrationality of image. The third critique pointed to an irrationality inherent to discourse as such. Taken together, the critiques left no doubt that, in the eyes of the participants, through its uncritical embrace of free-market idioms, the force of its images, and its appeal to discursive authority, subversive destabilizing pedagogy undermined its own foundations in a manner that was all but certain to invigorate, rather than enfeeble, right extremist ideological commitments.

## IF IT WALKS LIKE A NAZI

The approaches to governing hatred, whether they orient themselves toward a rational cogito or an affective self, seem to undo their own logics, inciting resentment by interpellating individuals as post-Fordist subjects, or provoking the irrational with claims to discursive rationality. Within each of these domains—the affective soul and the rational mind—a certain self-defeating, tautological thrust marks the projects of governance. At a different level, however, the excesses and apparent irrationalities that haunt the management of hate make them-

selves evident in the very proliferation of its domains, in the fabrication of ever more peculiar methods and targets. In order to illustrate this point, I want to shift from the relatively conventional approaches of rational debate and "facing the facts" discussed above to a more outlandish instance of therapeutic intervention that targets the corporeal subject. This is the method of "body-language therapy," which seeks to treat political delinquents through their corporeal habitus. Specifically, the method consists in identifying extreme-right-typical bodily styles and training young right extremists to move differently. The social workers with whom I collaborated in my research were once invited to a presentation of the body-language-therapy method.[12] To their disbelief, the demonstration video screened at the meeting starred none other than Gino. At first, a guide instructed him to act naturally and pace around the room as he normally would, while the camera followed his posture and movements. Gino was then asked to describe how he felt and responded with "tired" and "stressed." Next, the guide coached him in how to adjust his pose, gestures, and gait so they would become more "relaxed." The film documented his newly learnt demeanor as he moved about. After he tried out this novel fashion of bodily mobility for some time, he was asked if he now felt better, to which he replied with a mumbled "yes."

Members of the body-language-therapy team reported that Gino had been delivered to them by his parole officer, and had punctually and consistently shown up to all his scheduled appointments. The parole officer, with whom the social workers were closely acquainted, later elucidated that Gino had been receiving a hefty remuneration for each session he attended. Gino's investment in the profitable business of body-language therapy could, no doubt, thus be accounted for relatively straightforwardly in financial terms. In allowing Gino to capitalize on his political delinquency and translate it into lucrative transactions, this therapy was, to be sure, not exceptional. On other occasions, Gino reaped direct financial benefits from the attention of journalists and, less directly, from the heightened investment in his case by state institutions. However, the remuneration he received from those advocating the body-language-therapy method for leasing himself as guinea pig signaled a particular (and, arguably, particularly disturbing) valorization of the capital that his racist violence had won him. In leasing himself in this way, Gino simultaneously enabled the flourishing of a specific scientific knowledge: the elaboration of theoretical hypotheses, experimental procedures, typological classifications, and modes of representation and dissemination, all of which ultimately referred to his bodily presence.

The scientific project of identifying illicit bodily composures might evoke the biological-anatomical determinism of early positivist criminology, in which "a set of distinguishing physical features were stigmas of criminality" (Laclau 2005, 37), and in which social deviance therefore appeared as inscribed upon and readable from the body. Yet it differed from the latter insofar as it focused not on anatomical compositions but rather on locomotive habits that, most importantly, could be reformed. This science's investment in the micro-management of corporeal movements could also be inscribed within the normalizing regime of disciplinary power and docile bodies. But its logic, instead, articulated deviance—and its rectification—with an embodied aesthetics of laxity. This science of the body becomes a key for accessing and engaging with deviant subjectivities as neither deterministic physiology nor disciplinary praxis, but as style. The menace of an illicit nationalism is rendered into a pliable corporeal habitus, a locomotive aesthetics of posture and comportment that can be purged of its rough contours and substituted with more refined—or better yet, more "relaxed"—physical mannerisms.[13]

Viewed in this light, the body-language therapy did more than tweak surface appearances. Consider, by way of contrast, the meeting that the social workers had arranged for Gino a few months earlier with a tattoo artist who provided her services free of charge for those who wished to remove their right extremist tattoos. After missing a couple of appointments—perhaps because he would not be financially compensated—Gino finally had his illegal SS tattoo, which he had increasingly come to view as a liability, skillfully transformed into a tattoo of innocuous playing cards. While this surgical intervention was equally corporeal and corrective as body-language therapy, it could hardly be described as therapeutic. The philanthropic transfiguration of tattoos sought to help right extremists remove illicit signs from their bodies, while also expunging them from the visual landscape, not unlike how anti-fascist activists remove far right graffiti and posters from the streets. It posited the skin as canvass, without postulating some other essence beyond, beneath, or within the skin as its real target. It thus genuinely collapsed appearance and essence. In sharp contrast, the "depth model" (Jameson 1991, 12) of body-language therapy conceived of physical style as the depository of political substance, at once the telltale symptom of pathological deviance and the secret to its undoing. Side by side with its financial valorization of political delinquency as profitable business, the body-language therapy therefore at once reduced delinquency to a matter of style.

**CONCLUSION: Governing Hate**

The sense that something is awkwardly amiss with this body-language therapy, I suggest, reveals the untamable nature of the right extremist specter, its refusal to give in to its various domestications, and the sorts of excesses to which it gives rise: all of which characterize—if less conspicuously—the two other rehabilitative methods I examined in this article as well. Whether collapsed into styles of movement, written off as the whimsical unruliness of adolescents, traced back to the authoritarian formation of a pathological ego, or sited in a space of resentment between implausible aspirations and immutable realities, the right extremist Thing obstinately defies its varied localizations. The operations of affective governance that labor to pin it down reveal themselves, their claims to scientific rationality notwithstanding, as haunted by cultural anxieties and historical apprehensions to a far greater extent than either scholars or practitioners would care to acknowledge. These operations mediate and enable the articulation of such anxieties as intelligible models and offer themselves as sites for their signification, all the while falling short of providing them with a viable and sustainable resolution.

Each of the construals of the political delinquent entailed by the remedial procedures I described in this article—as a forlorn casualty of neoliberal capitalism, as the subject of rational deliberation, or as malleable bodily habitus—could also, looked at differently, imply a distinct contemporary rendering of politics. In diagnosing and treating a "political" malady, these rehabilitative efforts effectively collapse politics itself into an ethics of resignation and affective states of resentment; into the scientific discourses of institutionally-authorized expertise; or into aesthetic style. Perhaps the key for understanding these divergent modes of therapeutic knowledge is to be found less in the different answers they provide and more in the similar questions they pose: What precisely is the right extremist Thing about the political delinquent? Where, within the right extremist subject, is the locus of this malady? Along what contours do symptoms and causes carve up this subject? Such questions are of obvious concern to a project of governance that seeks to manage hate. They sustain a compulsive drive to locate and root out the right extremist Thing within the political delinquent, giving rise to ever more innovative attempts to capture and contain it. The ways in which these modes of therapeutic knowledge subvert their own efforts just as much as their relentless proliferation bespeak an excess that defies any reassuring significations: the political delinquent is never merely a socially disaffected youth, a hardened corporeality, an irrational mind. In their keenness to subjugate the specter of an illicit

and genocidal nationalism, these therapeutic sciences fall short of bringing historical closure or restoring the social order. Instead, by reaffirming the truth of the right extremist Thing and implanting it within the operations of governance, they reinscribe it in the very heart of contemporary German nationalism.

The sorts of enchantments that unsettle these efforts to crack open the political delinquent suggest more than a secular project of governance. They indicate a deep concern with understanding how good might turn into evil—for example, how working-class resistance might express itself as bigoted, violent resentment, or how domestic violence could turn an innocent child into a brutal neo-Nazi. The governance of hate appears as an arena for making the National Socialist specter, which still haunts Germany today as the sign of pure evil, legible and hence manageable. It provides a space for articulating the need for domestication itself—that is, for domesticating the very possibility that domestication is impossible—within concrete discourses, practices, and institutions. The vigorous and constantly expanding spectrum of reformative sciences that flourish today around the political delinquent amounts to a project of signifying, elaborating, and circumscribing this urgent need within a corpus of therapeutic procedures and disciplinary techniques. And yet this project of signification responds not simply to the shadow of National Socialist evil in some general sense. Rather, it seeks to negotiate the myriad ways in which this sinister past hovers over the contemporary dilemmas of German nationalism, and particularly its troubled relation to immigration and cultural difference (see Shoshan 2008b). In this sense, the management of hate addresses not only—perhaps even not primarily—the political delinquent. If its concern is the working through of a present national aporia, its addressee is the far wider, national public.

**ABSTRACT**

*The governance of young right-extremists in Germany has spawned a proliferation of therapeutic procedures for their political rectification. This article examines three such efforts in order to expose the excesses and paradoxes that dovetail with, and at times seem to overwhelm, the presumed biopolitical rationality of governance. The penal regimes that bear on young right-extremists call into being a peculiar figure: the political delinquent. In turn, these regimes form part of what I call the management of hate, a wide field of knowledge/praxis invested in governing the relation of German publics to cultural alterity. The elaboration and administration of corrective methods to political delinquents, key to the management of hate, thus reveals itself as inscribed within cultural and political aporias, rather than as fundamentally concerned with the economistic management of populations. Specifically, the intractable specter of*

*National Socialism and the troubled relation of contemporary German nationalism to immigration and difference haunt these therapeutic regimes, which often end up inciting precisely those affective dispositions they seek to curb. The governance of hate in Germany, I conclude, reveals itself as a politically-charged social field, suffused with historical specters and cultural antinomies, and generative of tautological irrationalities and inexorable excesses.* [governance; hate; nationalism; affect; Germany]

## NOTES

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1. "Right extremism" is a politically and culturally charged category in Germany, which I examine critically elsewhere (Shoshan 2008a). Its broadly acknowledged weakness as an analytical concept contrasts with its resilience and salience as a local category in both lay and expert discourses, where it is used to designate political postures that transgress the culturally and politically tolerable.
2. All names in this article have been modified to protect the confidentiality of my subjects.
3. The *leitwolf* is a lonely wolf, the leader of the pack, and a favorite iconic image among many right extremists.
4. Section 130 of the German Criminal Code, "Agitation of the People," defines as criminal the incitement of hatred or violence against groups, assaults on the dignity of groups, or the approval, denial, or downplaying of National Socialist crimes (Bundesministerium der Justiz 2008).
5. Foucault notes the central importance of the need to graft criminality onto popular leaders and social struggles for delinquency to emerge (1995, 273–75). In turn, Eric Hobsbawm (1969) famously coined the phrase "social bandits" to capture the slippage between a certain figure of rural criminality and a crude mode of political resistance. The category of political prisoners has likewise indicated a certain articulation of criminality and politics (e.g., Feldman 1991). From a different perspective, Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2006, 223) have insisted on the fundamentally political stakes of "crime talk."
6. Specifically in Europe, political delinquency seeks to govern affective relations to Muslim immigrants, as anthropologists have shown (Asad 2003; Bunzl 2005).
7. What I call affective governance can be described as affective in a double sense: First, in view of its objects (the xenophobic, racist, nationalist, or other feelings and sensibilities it seeks to orchestrate and regulate). Second, specific affective investments—a political economy of historical memory and an emergent project of national rejuvenation, both saturated with hopes and anxieties—inflect the aims pursued by such governance, just as much as the strategies and technologies it employs. In this article, I understand affects as attachments and investments that, while perhaps often not entirely conscious or explicit (Berlant 2007, 277), nevertheless are not unstructured intensities or indeterminate potentialities (Massumi 1995). Instead, affects are always already socially mediated and configured structures of feeling that may, for example, attach to or circulate between extensive publics, institutional practices, forms of social belonging, or pervasive normative aspirations (Berlant 2007; Mazzarella 2009). Affect in this sense

is a social effect (Martin 2013) but is not merely epiphenomenal—it effectively shapes and motivates projects and commitments (see also Muehlebach and Shoshan 2012).

8. Unlike Siegel's witches, however, right extremists cannot be conceived as victims or their crimes compared with alleged sorcery, nor can their adversaries be compared with witch-hunters.
9. The Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands (NPD) has been the most prominent among Germany's right extremist parties over the past two decades.
10. Both Tomasky's sermon and the film could be taken as paradigmatic of the contemporary "shrinkage of existential time" (Jameson 2003, 708). And yet, their apparent incapacity "of framing immediate alternatives" (704) would seem to be less the result of the waning of a critical substantive relation to the present (Jameson 2004), and more of a moral incitement to political conversion, a condemnation of alternative aspirations as at once heretic and irrational (cf. Guyer 2007).
11. The philosophical *reductio ad absurdium* of this critique can be found in Adorno's (1997, 207) insistence that the object can only be grasped in the absence of its image. A more historically sensitive understanding of this *bilderverbot* (ban on images) refers to the longstanding cultural prohibition in post-war Germany on public representations of Nazi imagery and the Holocaust (Huyssen 2010). This taboo hasn't ceased to exercise its force, if now as regulation and discomfort rather than blanket censorship. Tellingly, the reactions to "Globalization and Xenophobia" replicated the scandal that followed the release, in 1993, of the documentary *Beruf Neonazi* (Occupation Neonazi) (Bonengel 1993). An intimate view into the life of a young East Berlin cadre, the film came under harsh critique (resulting in legal charges against its director) for serving as propaganda because of its allegedly seductive, uncommented format (Bathrick 1996).
12. My discussion of the "body-language-therapy" session is informed by interviews with the social workers who attended.
13. It is difficult not to be reminded by this positing of style as the locus of politics of other contemporary contexts in which, as anthropologists have insisted, the politics of class and nationalism increasingly come to be understood and experienced "as yet another personal trait or lifestyle choice" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001, 15; see also Holmes, 135–36).

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