Gianna Zocco

# "Sometimes things begin with the wrong book." Images and Intertexts in Darryl Pinckney's *Black Deutschland* (2016)[1]

Abstract

African-American writer Darryl Pinckney's recent novel *Black Deutschland* constitutes an interesting case for the imagological and intertextual analysis of literature. Set in Berlin of the 1980s, the novel introduces British writer Christopher Isherwood's *Goodbye to Berlin* and his autobiographical *Christopher and His Kind* as its basic hypotext and as a kind of literary travel guide for the homosexual, African-American protagonist hoping to repeat Isherwood's romantic and bohemian lifestyle in the Western part of the divided city. While the references to Isherwood's experiences in the waning Weimar Republic constitute a structural foil to the protagonist's life in a city whose political structure is – again – only a few years from irreversibly changing, the intertextual structure of *Black Deutschland* is much more complex and multifaceted. Defining the references to the African-American literary genre of the black expatriate finding love in Europe as second core intertextual reference point, the article relates the references to Isherwood to the allusions to African-American writers such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Claude McKay, and James Baldwin. While the two intertextual traditions merge into a concordant image of romantic, bohemian Berlin promising 'black boys' to find the love of 'white boys', the article shows that this intertextual image of Berlin is put in stark contrast to the actual, disappointing experiences of the novel's own protagonist in the German metropolis.

## *I. "Home was where my books were"*[2]

African-American writer Darryl Pinckney's (*1953) most recent novel *Black Deutschland* (2016) begins with an unusual juxtaposition: "It doesn't always start with a suitcase. Sometimes things begin with the wrong book."[3] What makes this juxtaposition not only unusual, but also paradigmatic of the novel's general take on reality, is the particular nature of the two *comparata*: suitcases and books. Whereas packing a suitcase might be the most common way of beginning a journey or a move to another country, the novel's first-person narrator and protagonist Jed Goodfinch – a gay, African-American man in his early thirties – claims that his own journey to West-Berlin of the 1980s had its beginning in the reading of a particular book: "Berlin meant boys, Isherwood said. Fifty years after his adventures among proletarian toughs, Berlin meant white boys who wanted to atone for Germany's crimes by loving a black boy like me."[4]

The juxtaposition of books and suitcases is important because it characterizes Jed's attempt of solving his most basic psychic problem: his longing for a home. Born and grown-up in segregated Chicago, in an ambitious middle-class family of African-Americans committed to the Civil Rights movement and the idea of racial 'uplift', Jed – a former alcoholic and drug-addict suffering from his family's perception of himself as a kind of looser – has grown the habit of imagining his 'true' home through his books, through the reading and collecting of fictional and non-fictional, American and European literature telling him of a

---

1 This version of the article is the author manuscript. For the published version see: "'Sometimes things begin with the wrong book': Images and Intertexts in Darryl Pinckney's *Black Deutschland*." In: *Taking Stock – Twenty-Five Years of Comparative Literary Research*, eds. Norbert Bachleitner, Achim Hölter, and John A. McCarthy. Leiden and Boston: Brill 2019, pp. 421–444.

2 Darryl Pinckney, *Black Deutschland* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016), p.74.

3 Ibid., p.3.

4 Ibid.

city on the other side of the Atlantic that might not only provide a 'new home', but also offer "the chance to be another me":[5] "I may have fallen apart in the city of my birth, but the city of my rebirth would see me put back together again."[6]

While it is easy to understand that a black, book-loving, homosexual man from the Black Belt of Chicago – a city often described as one of the most segregated in the U.S.[7] – has dreams of moving to another country, it may seem rather surprising that (West-)Berlin of the 1980s – a city that Witold Gombrowicz saw as "a place that is more bespattered with history than ever, […] the most painful place"[8] – is able to hold out such promise. Why is it that the protagonist has come to think of Berlin as "a city that owed me and loved my fantasies"[9]? What qualities attributed to divided Berlin – qualities distinguishing the German metropolis from more glamorous European capitals such as Paris, London, or Rome – can explain the particular status it has come to occupy in Jed's imagination?

As a first step towards answering these questions, the next part of this article offers a quick look at the general nature of the images of nations, regions, and cities articulated in literature and other media, and of the more particular characteristics of the images and projections typically attributed to the former "island city"[10] West-Berlin. Departing from these theoretical observations, the subsequent parts provide a detailed analysis of the most central literary discourses converging in the protagonist's perception of his 'city of rebirth'. The intertextual references to Weimar Berlin and its climate of sexual libertinage as seen through the eyes of Christopher Isherwood and others, the references to Anglo-American notions of liberal Europe, as well as to the more specific tradition of Europe – and particularly France – as "haven for Black and mixed race Americans"[11] will all be put under consideration and analyzed in the interrelation established through the protagonist's subjective voice.

## *II. The Intertextual Character of Images*

As Joep Leerssen puts it in a recent essay, the ethnotypes (Leerssen's term for "representations of national character"[12]) articulated in an individual literary text "cannot be empirically measured against an objectively existing *signifié*", but are rather "discursive objects: narrative tropes and rhetorical formulae."[13] This means that they are elements requiring to be put in relation with a background tradition of former literary (and non-literary) texts articulating similar (or diverse) images of the same (or a neighboring) nation or region or

---

5 Ibid., p.96.
6 Ibid., p.5.
7 C. N. Le, "Bridging the Campus and the Community: Blogging about the Asian American Experience", in *Sociologists in Action: Sociology, Social Change, and Social Justice,* ed. by Kathleen Odell Korgen, Jonathan M. White, and Michelle K. White (Los Angeles: Sage, 2014), pp.149-53 (p.151).
8 Witold Gombrowicz, *Diary*, trans. by Lillian Vallee, 3 vols (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1993), III (1961-1966), p.109.
9 Pinckney, p.5.
10 Paul Hockenos, *Berlin Calling: A Story of Anarchy, Music, the Wall, and the Birth of the New Berlin* (New York/London: The New Press, 2017), p.14.
11 Werner Sollors, "African American Intellectuals and Europe between the Two World Wars", *Publication des Groupes de Recherches Anglo-Américaines de l'Université François Rabelais de Tours (GRAAT)*, 27, (2003), 41-57 (p.41).
12 Joep Leerssen, "Imagology: On Using Ethnicity to Make Sense of the World", *Iberic@l – Revue d'études ibériques et ibéro-américaines*, 10 (2016), 13-31 (p.16).
13 Ibid.

city,[14] a tradition that typically has the character of a "sounding board against which the individual instance reverberates."[15] Seen from this perspective, it becomes clear why Leerssen describes the "first task"[16] of any researcher interested in imagology as an intertextual one: It requires scholars "to establish the intertext of a given national representation as trope",[17] "to retrieve these implied commonplaces from the dormant, latent condition of 'the things one has heard before without quite knowing where and when."[18]

While it may be generally true that any research interested in how literary texts construct images of self and other profits from an approach conscious of the intertextual figures, types, and forms as described by theorists such as Gérard Genette (1982), or Ulrich Broich and Manfred Pfister (1985), this fact holds particular importance for the case of divided Berlin, a city whose unique political status explains why it functioned as a particularly appealing 'sounding board' for the expression of highly heterogeneous subjective projections, with many of them connected to the particular frame the Western part of the city provided "for a living out of counter-normative, creative identities."[19] Maurice Blanchot, for example, thought of Berlin as "not only Berlin, but also the symbol of the division of the world, and even more: a 'point in the universe', the place where reflection on the both necessary and impossible unity imposes itself on each and every one who lives there, and who while living there, has not only the experience of a domicile, but also that of the absence of a domicile."[20] Similarly, Olaf Kühl, the translator of Gombrowicz's diary, highlights the symbolic character of the German metropolis when stating that "Berlin is groß und erträgt geduldig jede Projektion, jeden Wahn"[21] ("Berlin is big and bears patiently every projection, every delusion"). Author Peter Schneider even claims that the term "Wahnsinn" ("madness") had its natural home in divided Berlin,[22] and historian Philipp Felsch recently described the divided city as "vielleicht […] der falsche Ort, um einen stabilen Wirklichkeitssinn auszubilden" ("maybe the wrong place for cultivating a stable sense of reality") – an observation for which he gives the following explanation: "Dazu lagen hier zu viele Wirklichkeiten nebeneinander: die Ruinen des Weltkriegs und die Monumente des Wirtschaftswunders, der Kurfürstendamm mit seinen Buttercremetorten und die Stalinallee mit ihrem Zuckerbäckerstil."[23] ("For this,

---

14 While imagology is traditionally concerned with the auto- and hetero-images of nations and representations of national characters in literature, Leerssen's recent article stresses the need of viewing the identity-constructs and identity-oppositions conveyed in these images as "articulated concurrently at urban, national/ethnic and translational (global and/or diasporic) levels." (Ibid., p.28) He also points to the increasingly important role that metropolitan cities should have in imagological research, explaining that "long-established metropolitan centres like Paris or Rome have a traditionally codified set of characteristics associated with them, and such cities are often presented as a concentrated microcosm of which they form part." (Ibid., p.28)

15 Ibid., p.20.

16 Joep Leerssen, "Imagology: History and Method", in *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, ed. by Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), pp.17-32 (p.28).

17 Ibid.

18 Leerssen, Imagology: On Using Ethnicity, p.20.

19 Andrew J. Webber, "Introduction", in *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of Berlin*, ed. by Andrew J. Webber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp.1-12 (p.9).

20 Maurice Blanchot, "Berlin", *MLN*, 109 (1994), 345-55 (p.346).

21 Olaf Kühl, "'Wirklichkeit' und Wirklichkeit", in Witold Gombrowicz, *Berliner Notizen*, trans. and intr. by Olaf Kühl (Berlin: edition.fotoTAPETA, 2013), pp.5-15 (p.9).

22 Peter Schneider, "Berliner Geschichten", in Peter Schneider, *Deutsche Ängste* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1988), pp.6-18 (p.8).

23 Philipp Felsch, *Der lange Sommer der Theorie. Geschichte einer Revolte 1960-1990* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2016), p.25.

there were far too many realities laying side by side: the ruins of the world war and the monuments of the *Wirtschaftswunder*, the Kurfürstendamm with its butter-creams cakes and the Stalinallee with its Wedding-cake style.")

*III. "Struggling to trust the Isherwood promises that Berlin was keeping with me"*[24]

Since the case of divided Berlin can be seen as a particularly rich example of the generally intertextual and highly subjective nature of images and identity-constructs ascribed to a nation or a city, an investigation of the individual image of Berlin expressed in *Black Deutschland* first needs to consider the particular *selection* of intertexts and projections shaping Jed's perception of the German metropolis. While Jed is an avid reader and has broad knowledge of cultural and historical figures as different as W.E.B. Du Bois, Bertolt Brecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Alma Mahler, Heinrich Mann, Claude McKay, Nina Simone, and Susan Sontag, he clearly admits his preference for some and his ignorance of other Berlin-related intertexts, for example when he reflects about his first experience of border crossing to visit East Berlin, which leads him to state: "But Berlin was not a Cold War story for me."[25]

Of the many intertexts Jed uses to mention, one occupies a special position: his frequent reference to the literature of gay British writer Christopher Isherwood, who lived in Berlin from 1929 to 1933 and gained fame for the two novels called his *Berlin Stories – Mr Norris Changes Trains* (1935) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939). As Isherwood is already introduced in the third sentence of *Black Deutschland* and as references to his *Berlin Stories* (particularly to *Goodbye to Berlin*) and to his memoir *Christopher and His Kind* (1976) keep coming up throughout the 294 pages of Pinckney's novel, it seems justified to ask: Could Isherwood's works have the function of what Genette describes as a *hypotext*, that is – could *Black Deutschland* be seen as a text "derived from another preexistent text", without which it would be "unable to exist"?[26] Or, to use Pfister's terminology, do the references to Isherwood's texts about Berlin have the quality of a "strukturelle Folie"[27] ("structural foil"), meaning that they do not just occur in passing, but rather shape the whole composition of the novel? Is – to frame this question in yet another way – Pinckney the young foreigner that Isherwood addresses when – in a foreword to the *Berlin Stories* written in 1954 – he regrets his lack of personal insight into the more recent developments of Berlin and states: "But I hope that some young foreigner has fallen in love with this later city, and is writing what happened or might have happened to him there."[28]

According to the terminology developed by Pfister, intertextuality can be scaled along six qualitative criteria, with each of these allowing for different degrees of intertextual intensity. While serving as a "structural foil" constitutes the highest degree of the criterion "structurality", the other five criteria include "referentiality" (defined as a text's ability of *referring to* – instead of merely *using* – another text),

---

24 Pinckney, p.233-34.

25 Ibid., p.227.

26 Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests. Literature in the Second Degree,* trans. by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), p.5.

27 Manfred Pfister, "Konzepte der Intertextualität", in *Intertextualität. Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien*, ed. by Ulrich Broich and Manfred Pfister (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1985), pp.1-30 (p.28).

28 Christopher Isherwood, "About This Book", in Christopher Isherwood, *The Berlin Stories* (New York: New Direction, 2008), pp.xiii-xxi (p.xxi).

"communicativity" (the intentionality and distinctness of an intertextual reference), "autoreflexivity" (the act of directly reflecting on the intertextual nature of the literary text), "selectivity" (the concreteness of an intertextual reference), and "dialogism" (the semantic and ideological tension between the two texts).[29]

When applying these criteria to *Black Deutschland*, it seems that at least five of them are realized with high degrees of intertextual intensity in Pinckney's novel. To begin with, an instance of high "selectivity" – a criterion which reaches its most intense form when direct citations from the pretext are used[30] – can already be found in the first paragraph, when Isherwood is quoted as saying "Berlin meant boys."[31] This quote has its origin in the autobiographical *Christopher and His Kind* (1976) – a book differing from the *Berlin Stories* in its more explicit depiction of Isherwood's homosexuality and its attempt of being "as frank and factual as I can make it, especially as far as I myself am concerned."[32] In *Christopher and His Kind*, Isherwood states:

> However, when *Lions and Shadows* [Isherwood's first autobiography; G.Z.] suggests that Christopher's chief motive for going to Berlin was that he wanted to meet [John; G.Z.] Layard, it is avoiding the truth. He did look forward to meeting Layard, but that wasn't why he was in such a hurry to make his journey. It was Berlin itself he was hungry to meet; the Berlin Wystan [Auden; G.Z.] had promised him. To Christopher, Berlin meant Boys.[33]

Other very concrete references to Isherwood's Berlin experiences include the frequent mentioning of places and streets in (mostly) Berlin-Schöneberg, which Jed identifies as "Isherwood territory."[34] For example, he recounts "having lunch in Café Einstein, near Nollendorfplatz, Herr Issyvoo's old stomping ground" (thereby repeating the pronunciation "Herr Issyvoo" used by the protagonist's landlord Frl. Schroeder in *Goodbye to Berlin*[35]), and he admits to picturing himself as part of a Berlin scene in Isherwood's novel: "I'd read Isherwood's novel so often I had no trouble inserting myself into its scene. I am the negro boxer – small *n* of the British 1930s – whom Isherwood sees at the far end of Potsdamerstrasse, working at a fairground, in an attraction of fixed boxing and wrestling matches."[36] Other still relatively concrete references to Isherwood include several mentions of Bob Fosse's 1972 screen adaptation *Cabaret* ("I got up, as discreet as Michael York as Brian in *Cabaret*"[37]), the description of a discussion with his friend Alma about the amorality of Sally Bowles,[38] and a long reflection on Isherwood's depiction of his last days in Berlin in the final journal entry of *Goodbye to Berlin*, which is complemented by the admission that "I used to carry Isherwood around with me" and ends with the conclusion: "History is not a game, Isherwood warns us – and himself, angry at the loss of the city where he could be what he most wanted."[39]

---

29 Pfister, pp.26-30.
30 Ibid., p.28.
31 Pinckney, p.3.
32 Christopher Isherwood, *Christopher and His Kind* (London: Vintage, 2012), p.1.
33 Ibid., pp.2-3.
34 Pinckney, p.108.
35 Christopher Isherwood, *Goodbye to Berlin*, in Isherwood, *The Berlin Stories*, pp.207-410 (p.209).
36 Pinckney, p.294.
37 Ibid., p.176.
38 Ibid., p.196.
39 Ibid., p.293.

These concrete references to Isherwood's depictions of Berlin – to which numerous more abstract references to Jed being "in love with Weimar culture"[40] could be added – do not only constitute a high degree of selectivity, but also lead – following Pfister's categorizations – to strong levels of "communicativity" and "referentiality". They make sure that not just an academic, but almost every reader of *Black Deutschland* recognizes the reference to Isherwood, and perceives it as a central and obviously intentional element of the novel,[41] which is not just used casually, but made visible as an intertextual, 'foreign' voice sometimes merging into, but mostly clearly distinguishable from Jed's subjective voice.

While the criterion of "autoreflexivity" appears as the only one relatively insignificant to the intertextual analysis of *Black Deutschland*, "structurality" and "dialogism" are both present in high levels of intensity. In order to recognize structural parallels between Pinckney and Isherwood, let's first have a look at some structural features central to *Goodbye to Berlin*. The most famous structural element of this fragmentary novel (consisting of a series of six connected stories) is probably Isherwood's use of a first-person narrator (called Christopher Isherwood) with a relatively distant, mostly 'neutral' and kind of enigmatic narrative voice. Isherwood's intention of using such a voice is stated in the first page of the novel, with the narrator comparing himself to a camera: "I am a camera with its shutter open, quite passive, recording, not thinking. Recording the man shaving at the window opposite and the woman in the kimono washing her hair. Some day, all this will have to be developed, carefully printed, fixed."[42] Although the narrator's self-characterization as "camera" – and the later use of this phrase as title for John Van Druten's 1951 Broadway stage adaptation "I Am a Camera" – is probably one of the main reasons for the fame of the novel and its adaptations, Isherwood, the author, later became highly critical of his narrative style, stating that "In writing *Goodbye to Berlin*, I destroyed a certain portion of my real past. I did this deliberately, because I preferred the simplified, more exciting fictitious past which I'd created to take its place."[43] In particular, *Goodbye to Berlin* (as well as *Mr Norris Changes Trains*) does not include any mentions of Isherwood's homosexuality and of his extremely subjective reasons of choosing to live in Berlin, whereas the memoir *Christopher and His Kind* is very direct about these aspects. Writing about his former self in the third person, Isherwood states in his autobiography that Christopher "needed a working-class foreigner" in order to "relax sexually"[44] and that "to be infatuated was what he had come to Berlin for."[45] He also criticizes his own "lack of foresight"[46] regarding the upcoming political developments in Germany and admits to being "shockingly ignorant of the objective world, except where it touched his own experience."[47] This last aspect

---

40 Ibid., p.178.

41 This observation can be confirmed by a look at the reception of *Black Deutschland* in the U.S. press. Although reviewers still are professional readers and thus cannot be equated with 'ordinary' ones, it seems significant that most of the reviews published (including those in *The New York Times*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The Atlantic*, *The Rumpus*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Star Tribune*) all mention the intertextual reference to Isherwood, while only few (*Chicago Tribune*, *Seattle Times*, *The Michigan Daily*) fail to do so.

42 Isherwood, *Goodbye*, p.207.

43 Isherwood, About, p.xvi.

44 Isherwood, *Christopher*, p.3.

45 Ibid., p.4.

46 Ibid., p.124.

47 Ibid., p.198.

is also emphasized in *World within World* (1951), the autobiography of Isherwood's friend Stephen Spender that – describing the time Isherwood and Spender spent in Germany together – states:

> Christopher and I, leading our life in which we used Germany as a kind of cure for our personal problems, became even more aware that the carefree personal lives of our friends were façades in front of the immense social chaos. There was more and more a feeling that this life would be swept away. When we were on holiday at Insel Ruegen, where the naked bathers in their hundreds lay stretched on the beach under the drugging sun, sometimes we heard orders rapped out, and even shots, from the forest whose edges skirted the shore, where the Storm Troopers were training like executioners waiting to martyr the naked and self-disarmed.[48]

Apart from describing their stay in Germany as a kind of 'cure', the quote from Spender's autobiography catches another structural element often noted with regard to *Goodbye to Berlin*: the "sense of multiple timescales",[49] a complex temporality that becomes particularly vivid in the final journal entry with passages such as: "Sometimes he will bend forward to the window and regard a building or a square with a mournful fixity, as if to impress its image upon his memory and to bid it goodbye."[50] As Andrew J. Webber notes, passages such as this one capture both "the setting of the stage for the violence of National Socialist Berlin" as well as "a melancholic sense of a present that can only be the object of retrospection when he says 'goodbye to Berlin', and the march of history takes over."[51] This gesture of 'goodbye', which shapes *Goodbye to Berlin* from its title onwards, can – in a way – be seen as another parallel to the medium of the camera. It conveys the particular sense of melancholy that can be felt when looking at old photographs – photographs that were once taken to capture a moment of a certain present which has now become the past. As Roland Barthes puts it in *Camera Lucida*:

> I read at the same time: *This will be and this has been*; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is the stake. By giving me the absolute past of the pose (aorist), the photograph tells me death in the future. What *pricks* me is the discovery of this equivalence. In front of the photograph of my mother as a child, I tell myself: she is going to die: I shudder […] *over a catastrophe which has already occurred*. Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe.[52]

The 'photographic' gesture of 'goodbye' and its particular melancholy is one obvious structural parallel to *Black Deutschland*. Although the temporal organization of Pinckney's novel, which includes a description of the fall of the Berlin Wall and a last scene set in the early 2000s,[53] is less consequent in imitating the generic features of a camera, *Black Deutschland* shares the earlier novel's attempt of commemorating a historic period irreversibly lost. But while Isherwood's gesture of 'goodbye' is dedicated solely to the (ending) historic period that he himself experienced in Berlin, Pinckney's novel can be read as a tribute to the past in two different ways: On the one hand, Jed's obsession with Isherwood and his perception of Berlin as a city in

---

48 Stephen Spender, *World Within World. The Autobiography of Stephen Spender* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p.131.

49 Webber, p.4.

50 Isherwood, *Goodbye*, p.409.

51 Webber, p.4.

52 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), p.96.

53 The final scene, which recounts a meeting of Jed and his cousin Cello in Berlin's *Café Einstein*, can be dated from the iPod used by the bartender. Apple released the first version of the iPod in October 2001. Sam Costello, "History of the iPod: From the First iPod to the iPod Classic", *Lifewire*, 19 October, 2016, URL: *https://www.lifewire.com/history-ipod-classic-original-2000732* (23 January, 2018).

which "the past sat on the shoulder of everything you saw"[54] depicts him as Isherwood's belated successor, someone who has come looking not for a present that is about to become past, but for the traces of a past that took place more than fifty years ago. On the other hand, both the fictional character of Jed and his author Pinckney (who spent several years in West-Berlin in the 1980s[55]) made their experiences in Berlin at a time when – again – a unique historical period was about to end irreversibly: the period of West-Berlin being a "floating island of neon and pleasure deep inside Communist territory",[56] "a sanctuary for contrarians looking to lose themselves, to search and reinvent."[57] It is this now historical period – a time, in which a new gay culture with many links to the one of the 1920s developed[58] and in which intellectuals like Heiner Müller praised the atmosphere of Berlin for its closeness to the "end of history"[59] –, whose end Jed and his friends witness with feelings remindful of those expressed in Isherwood's novels: There is a similar sense of melancholia when Jed recounts that his African-American friend Bags expects the reunification of Germany lead to an end of the subcultural lifestyle of West-Berlin "because the first thing that would happen was that the city would be regulated and what were they going to do with us, the irregulars."[60] Furthermore, Pinckney catches a fear shared by many foreigners and international journalists at the time, a fear concerning the possible rise of nationalism and xenophobia in reunified Germany. Describing the first days after the opening of the Wall, he recounts:

> It was odd to see East German cars parked everywhere and sometimes people in full sail in their nightclothes. Maybe not every white person I saw was German, but it felt like it. Afer and his girlfriend were kissing at a little table and the ChiChi was hosting a riot.
> Big Dash was screaming: "Do you like black beer!"
> The bar screamed in the awful smoke: "Yes!"
> "Do you like Fassbinder!"
> Yes!" […]
> "We are one planet!"
> "We are one people!" the Germans screamed in correction, many in stonewashed jeans.[61]

Another structural parallel between Isherwood and Pinckney concerns the attitude that Jed takes towards his adopted city. Similar to the protagonist of *Goodbye to Berlin*, he is not very active or determined in deciding how to spend his time, but rather happens to be in certain places and to meet certain people that he makes observations about. This does not only explain why the structure of *Black Deutschland* is (at least) as fragmentary as the one of *Goodbye to Berlin*, it also has the effect that – just as in the earlier novel – different milieus of Berlin are described: While Isherwood's account covers the life of a working class family in Kreuzberg, the situation of a Jewish heiress of a prosperous family business, as well as the subcultural lifestyle in Berlin's cabarets and nightclubs, Jed spends time in a Berlin Philharmonic concert and in a gay bar called the "ChiChi", he goes to AA meetings near the U.S. army base in Dahlem, moves into a commune

---

54 Pinckney, p.4.
55 Christopher Bollen, "Darryl Pinckney" (interview), *The Interview Magazine*, 4 April, 2016, URL: *https://www.interviewmagazine.com/culture/darryl-pinckney* (23 January, 2018).
56 Pinckney, p.3.
57 Hockenos, p.1.
58 Ibid., p.47.
59 Felsch, p.186.
60 Pinckney, p.283.
61 Ibid., p.281.

located in a former factory several hundred meters from the Wall, and works for a vanguard architect influenced by deconstructive theory.

Pinckney's covering of different milieus and environments might suggest that Isherwood's self-description as "a camera with its shutter open, quite passive, recording, not thinking"[62] might be attributed to *Black Deutschland*'s protagonist, as well. However, this is only partly correct. While it is true that Jed is a keen and often passive observer, he is by no means "not thinking". In fact, Jed hardly makes any attempt of simulating a false objectivity, but is quite honest about the subjectivity of his reflections and statements. This has the effect that – in this regard – Pinckney's novel seems closer to the autobiographical *Christopher and His Kind* than to the *Berlin Stories*. Similar to Isherwood in his autobiography, Jed is "frank and factual"[63] about his motivations of going to Berlin, most of which are similar to the reasons mentioned in Isherwood's memoir. They include "the daydream of being the rootless stranger in Berlin who seduced tough German boys",[64] the fantasy of using Berlin as a 'personal cure' for "the chance to be another me",[65] and the clear preference for subjective projections over a more realistic impression of the city: "One day I went to East Berlin and sat. I used the border crossing at the train station on Friedrichstrasse and felt myself in my private movie."[66] What distinguishes Pinckney's novel from Isherwood's autobiographic account, is the difference in success of Isherwood and Jed in realizing their dreams. While Isherwood recounts having several affairs and one long-term relationship with German working-class boys, Jed begins his narration by admitting that Isherwood was "the wrong book."[67] In fact, his dreams of German "white boys who wanted to atone for Germany's crimes by loving a black boy like me"[68] are not fulfilled in the least. The only German man that Jed falls in love with happens to be heterosexual and the only romantic relationship he manages to have in Berlin is with Duallo, a twenty-year-old black boy from Paris, with roots in West Africa, who later loses interest in him.

The last of Pfister's criteria that remains to be looked at is "dialogism", a criterion derived from Bakhtin, which – according to Pfister – reaches its highest degrees of intensity "je stärker der ursprüngliche und der neue Zusammenhang in semantischer und ideologischer Spannung zueinander stehen"[69] ("the stronger the semantic and ideological tension between the original and the new context"). In order to investigate the centrality of this criterion to *Black Deutschland*, it becomes necessary to have a closer look at the particular features of the new and different context that the references to Isherwood's Berlin writings are embedded into. This leads us to the second intertextual reference point most central to *Black Deutschland*: the novel's relation to African-American literature, and – more precisely – to African-American literature's long tradition of the "black expat story"[70] set in Europe.

---

62 Isherwood, *Goodbye*, p.207.
63 Isherwood, *Christopher*, p.1.
64 Pinckney, p.293.
65 Ibid., p.96.
66 Ibid., p.149.
67 Ibid., p.3.
68 Ibid.
69 Pfister, p.29.
70 Bollen.

*III. 'It used to be 'Aimez-vous Paree?' that the black GI ran to'*[71] *– A black expat story*

With Pinckney's protagonist Jed representing a man who identifies himself as black, homosexual and American at the same time, his experiences in Berlin need to be seen as shaped by the positions he occupies along three intersecting identity categories: race (black v. white), nation (American v. German/European), and sexual orientation (homosexual v. heterosexual).[72] In this intersectional pattern, the intertextual reference to Isherwood – probably the most prominent of homosexual British and American intellectuals fleeing the puritan traditions of their home countries in the direction of continental Europe (and 1920's Berlin in particular) – is motivated by the similarities that Jed detects regarding the identity categories of sexual orientation (their shared homosexuality) and – to a lesser degree – the category of national and/or linguistic belonging (their shared status as English-speaking foreigners in Berlin). Based on their similarities in these regards, Pinckney's protagonist hopes that his going to Berlin might provide a basis for the 'repetition' of the experiences he read about in Isherwood's books. This motive, however, is flanked by Jed's awareness to another literary tradition relating to those of his identity categories that are not covered by white, British Isherwood: the tradition of the American intellectual (most prominently represented by writers such as Henry James, Ernest Hemingway, and Gertrude Stein) widening his intellectual horizon and discovering her own identity in the more complex 'Old World'; and the more specific tradition of the African-American writer and artist (most prominently connected to figures such as Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, and James Baldwin) enjoying (relative) freedom from racism and a different lifestyle in Europe. Several passages in *Black Deutschland* indicate that Jed understands his participation in these two overlapping traditions as providing the basis for an idea of 'repetition' similar to his intellectual appropriation of Isherwood. For example, we find him picturing himself along the clichéd image of the American abroad "searching for himself"[73] and explaining his inordinate proudness for his one-way ticket to Berlin by saying that: "I'd become that person I so admired, the black American expatriate."[74]

While the intertextual references to Isherwood and to the tradition of (African-)Americans in Europe share the protagonist's idea of (belated) repetition and imitation as their common motive, the literary technique of referring to the second literary tradition of intertexts is different from the one analyzed with regard to Isherwood. In the case of Isherwood, we found one or two core texts (*Goodbye to Berlin* and *Christopher and His Kind*) that most of the intertextual references and quotations, as well as most structural parallels are relating to. The references to these core texts are complemented by a number of more general (thus less intertextually 'intense') intertextual references and allusions to abstract notions of Weimar Culture and its main protagonists. However, in the case of the American and, more particularly, the African-American tradition of intellectuals spending time in Europe, there is not one single text or a very small

---

71 Pinckney, p.5.

72 The need to triangulate the category of the ethnotype with other identity categories such as gender, age, and social position has recently been emphasized by Leerssen: "Literary stock characters are always triangulated on the intersection between ethnotype, gender and sociotype, and while imagologists can foreground the first of these, we should always realize that ethnicity as a frame is not an absolute and never operates in isolation." (Leerssen, Imagology: On Using Ethnicity, p.26)

73 Ibid., p.226.

74 Ibid., p.6.

group of texts that can be identified as core intertextual reference point, although it can be said that the reference to African-American literature occupies a more central and specific position than the one to the broader tradition of Americans in Europe. In order to understand the way this tradition is activated, the following paragraphs will locate a few of a wide number of sometimes very small and inconspicuous intertextual references belonging to the African-American tradition, a tradition that can only be viewed by grouping texts from different authors and different historic periods as belonging together by reason of the authors' shared ethnic and national background, as well as the common theme of describing the experiences of Americans in Europe (although Europe may be associated with cities and regions as different as Paris, Berlin, Marseille, St. Paul de Vence, or Spain during the Spanish Civil War). The concluding part of my article will then investigate how the intertextual references to literary texts from the African-American tradition are engaged in a dialogue with Christopher Isherwood's presence in *Black Deutschland*, and how both core intertextual reference points relate to the experiences made by Jed and other African-American characters in Pinckney's novel. This last aspect will include a brief look at a second character of relative centrality: Jed's cousin Ruthanne (called Cello), a piano musician married to a German industrialist and former university leader of Maoist cells, with whom she has four children with German names such as Hildegard and Otto.

Before turning to the African-American intertexts in *Black Deutschland*, a few words about author Darryl Pinckney seem necessary. Pinckney, who already portrayed an African-American's expatriate life in Paris in his first novel *High Cotton* (1992), has studied the experiences of African-Americans in Europe for several decades. He has not only been a frequent contributor to magazines such as *The New York Review of Books* – with many of his reviews covering the work of African-American expatriates such as James Baldwin, Claude McKay, and Richard Wright –, but he has also authored several nonfiction books, one of which – *Out There: Mavericks of Black Literature* (2002) – investigates three relatively unknown examples of the presence of non-whites in Europe. In various interviews he gave after the publication of *Black Deutschland*, Pinckney is very keen to elaborate on the tradition of African-Americans going to Europe, a tradition that found its 'capital' in Paris of the 1920s and 1950s/60s,[75] but has its earliest examples when the Fugitive Slave Act was passed in the U.S. in 1850 and famous escaped slaves and abolitionists such as Frederick Douglas and William Wells Brown took refuge in England. Referring to the early examples of this tradition, Pinckney is quoted in the literary magazine *The Rumpus*:

> After the Civil War, after the collapse of Reconstruction, black Americans who could get to Europe regarded it as a haven. […] To go to Europe was a personal solution to a mass problem, like passing for white. And it cut across class lines. Black seamen, members of the international proletariat, as someone once described them, stayed in Europe, alongside educated blacks. But we think of American blacks in Europe as a 20th-century thing, one that got going with the end of World War I and the beginnings of the Jazz Age. Black musicians especially decided to stay in France rather than go back to a country that was lynching black veterans who refused to be put back in their places. Blacks in Paris were looking for the same thing that rich white people and white artists were looking for: personal liberation, how to get lost. Black visitors from the

[75] The idea of Paris as 'capital' for the transatlantic experiences of black diasporic writers has recently been used as title for an edited volume. *Paris, Capital of the Black Atlantic: Literature, Modernity, and Diaspora*, ed. by Jeremy Braddock and Jonathan P. Eburne (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

> Harlem Renaissance were not insensitive to the irony that they were having a good time in what were capitals of empires, metropolitan centers from which issued policies that oppressed black and brown peoples.[76]

By creating a character as bibliophilic as Jed, who keeps mentioning the "boxes of books"[77] he needs to transport from Chicago to Berlin and from Schöneberg to Charlottenburg and Kreuzberg, Pinckney has developed a fictional voice that can credibly allude to the numerous African-American writers and artists whose works he himself has studied in the past. From Jed's various references to figures such as Frederick Douglass (and his German mistress), Josephine Baker, Phillis Wheatley, Nina Simone, and George and Philippa Schuyler, I will select three relatively prominent cases, each of which relates to both a particular period of transatlantic travel and a different element of *Black Deutschland*. The first example is African-American sociologist, civil rights activists, and writer W. E. B. Du Bois (1868-1963), a historical figure Jed feels particularly connected to for his being the most prominent (and probably earliest) case of an African-American who spent a longer period of time in Berlin. Du Bois first came to Berlin as a graduate student in 1892 and he lived in the capital of the *German Reich* until 1894. As his surviving diaries and several autobiographies show, Du Bois experienced in Berlin what Eberhard Brüning calls a "'culture shock' in a highly positive sense."[78] In his last autobiography – written briefly before his death and after knowing of the central role of Berlin in the atrocities of two world wars – Du Bois still gave a highly favorable description of his time there:

> From this unhampered social intermingling with Europeans of education and manners, I emerged from the extremes of my racial provincialism. I became more human; learned the place in life of "Wine, Women, and Song"; I ceased to hate or suspect people simply because they belonged to one race or color; and above all I began to understand the real meaning of scientific research and the dim outline of methods of employing its technique and its results in the new social sciences for the settlement of the Negro problems in America.[79]

In *Black Deutschhland*, the reference to Du Bois adds to Jed's romanticizing of Berlin through the writings of Isherwood. Reflecting on the "long arc of […] alienation – black nationalism, Stalinism, Ghana, death" that Du Bois experienced later in his life, Jed pictures his student time in Berlin as a period when "he could read Goethe and still go to bed happy every night."[80] A similar view is expressed when Jed summarizes the content of a journal entry taken by Du Bois at his 25th birthday in Berlin, an entry that has strong reminiscences to the empathetic style of the "Sturm und Drang" manner and that is directly cited in Du Bois' last autobiography. The idea of Berlin as a place where a black man can find love and romance is also picked up in a third reference to Du Bois, a reference centering on Du Bois' second novel *Dark Princess* (1928), in which the Berlin-related aspects of the plot are described. Although this novel introduces Berlin as the place of the Congo Conference and – thereby – does not give an exclusively positive depiction of the

---

76 Deesha Philyaw, "The Saturday Rumpus Interview: Darryl Pinckney", *The Rumpus*, 7 May, 2016, URL: *http://therumpus.net/2016/05/the-saturday-rumpus-interview-darryl-pinckney* (23 January, 2018).

77 Pinckney, p.141.

78 Eberhard Brüning, "*Stadtluft macht frei*: African-American Writers and Berlin (1892-1932)", in *The City in African-American Literature*, ed. by Yoshinobu Hakutani and Robert Butler (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp.79-95 (p.86).

79 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W. E. B. Du Bois* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.101.

80 Pinckney, p.278.

German capital, the romantic aspects prevail: Berlin is the city in which Du Bois's African-American protagonist meets the Dark Princess – the love of his life – and embarks on a mission in which the claim for racial justice becomes synonymous with the fulfillment of the protagonist's inner longings for love and heroism. As Claudia Tate puts it in her introduction to the novel: "In this way the marriage or sexual union of this feminine ideal with its masculine complement serves as a metaphor for the formulation of a heroic black psyche that is essential for the advancement of world culture."[81]

A second African-American writer referred to in *Black Deutschland* is the originally Jamaican Claude McKay (1889-1948), one of the central figures of the *Harlem Renaissance*, whose intertextual presence critic Walton Muyumba finds the one "perhaps most strongly felt"[82] in the novel. More than through direct quotations or other intertextual forms of high selectivity, the reference to McKay takes place on the level of structurality, with most of the structural parallels pointing to McKay's second novel *Banjo* (1929). Told in a realist manner imitating the slang of black seamen, *Banjo* tells the story of a group of sailors temporarily staying in 1920's Marseilles, a city they find "a most wonderful place foh meeting-up" and "a great vagabond host of jungle-like Negroes trying to scrape a temporary existence from the macadamized surface of this great Provençal port."[83] The vagabond, temporary lifestyle lived by the mostly male, often dark-skinned community of "picturesque proletarians from far waters whose names were warm with romance"[84] in *Banjo*, finds its correlate in Berlin's ChiChi bar, a place with no closing hours, where Jed feels at home within an international group of black and white-skinned, homo- and heterosexual people sharing the life of "irregulars"[85] with temporary resident permits and inordinate working conditions. In both novels, this vagabond, directionless lifestyle of the protagonists is reflected in the structuring of the plot: As Muyumba notes, *Banjo's* subtitle as "a story without a plot" could easily be given to *Black Deutschland*, as well.[86]

With the structural parallels pointing to the 'hard-boiled', proletarian milieu of *Banjo*, it may seem surprising that one of the few direct references to Claude McKay and his experiences in Berlin emphasizes another, a more romantic aspect of the Jamaican-born writer. Referring to his 1923 stay in Berlin (an experience described in McKay's autobiography *A Long Way from Home*), Jed recounts: "Berlin was inflation-sick and hostile, but not toward him. […] Gentlemen liked McKay; McKay liked sailors and the guts of banjos. He wrote sonnet after sonnet in Berlin and didn't know he had syphilis."[87] It is important to know that the poems McKay wrote while in Berlin have recently been studied as "homoerotic love poems" with a "queer subtext."[88] Thus, this reference to McKay does not only match well with Jed's fascination for

---

81 Claudia Tate, "Introduction", in W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Dark Princess* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995), pp.ix-xxviii (p.xviii).

82 Walton Muyumba, "*Black Deutschland.* A Melocomic Novel of Experience", *The Atlantic*, 15 February, 2016, URL: *https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/02/darryl-pinckney-black-deutschland/462690/* (23 January, 2018).

83 Claude McKay, *Banjo. A Story without a Plot* (San Diego and New York: Harvest, 1957), p.64, p.68.

84 Ibid., p.67.

85 Pinckney, p.283.

86 Muyumba.

87 Pinckney, p.288.

88 Lindsay Tuggle, "'A love so fugitive and so complete: Recovering the Queer Subtext of Claude McKay's *Harlem Shadows*", *The Space Between: Literature and Culture, 1914-1945*, 4/1 (2008), 63-81 (p.63).

Weimar culture and Christopher Isherwood, it also serves him as a kind of 'evidence' proofing why it is justified to expect that the sexual and romantic experiences made by white, British Isherwood can be 'repeated' by him – a gay, black American expatriate.

A similar effect is achieved with the third example I want to give: Pinckney's reference to a whole 'genre' of African-American literature that might be described as "the interracial love story of the black American expatriate in Europe."[89] While writers as different as William Gardner Smith (*Last of the Conquerors,* 1928; *The Stone Face*, 1963) and Andrea Lee (*Sarah Phillips*, 1984; *Interesting Women*, 2002; *Lost Hearts in Italy*, 2006) can be seen as belonging to this tradition, its most famous representative is probably James Baldwin (1924-1987) – a writer only rarely mentioned directly in *Black Deutschland*, but – given his centrality in much of Pinckney's non-fictional writing – almost continuously present as part of the novel's 'sounding board' of intertextual voices. What makes Baldwin particularly important to *Black Deutschland*, is the fact that the romantic experiences his American protagonists have with Europeans in Europe (mostly France), include both white and black, hetero- and homosexual Americans such as white, gay David of *Gionvanni's Room* (1956), white, gay Eric of *Another Country* (1962), or the black, heterosexual narrator of the story "This Morning, This Evening, So Soon" (1960). Despite the last case's integration of a more critical perspective regarding the role of France in the Algerian War, all three examples of Baldwin's fictional writing express an experience that Baldwin also addressed in the autobiographical essays about his own move to Paris in 1948:

> Still, my flight [to Paris; G.Z.] had been dictated by my hope that I could find myself in a place where I would be treated more humanely than my society had treated me at home, where my risks would be more personal, and my fate less austerely sealed. And Paris had done this for me: by leaving me completely alone. […] I didn't want any help, and the French certainly didn't give me any – they let me do it myself; and for that reason, even knowing what I know, and unromantic as I am, there will always be a kind of love story between myself and that odd, unpredictable collection of bourgeois chauvinists who call themselves *la France*.[90]

*IV. Conclusion: A harmonious duet – and a contrasting voice*

Although Du Bois, McKay, and Baldwin came to know Berlin and/or Europe in historic periods as different as the time of the *Kaiserreich*, the 'Golden Twenties', or post-World War II, *Black Deutschland's* references to these African-American intellectuals emphasize the parallels of their experiences: Both Du Bois and Baldwin write about being treated 'more human' in Europe; both McKay's *Banjo* and Baldwin's writings depict the advantages of the 'vagabond', Bohemian lifestyle possible at the docks of Marseille or in Parisian cafés such as the *Deux Magots*;[91] and while Du Bois remembers learning about "Wine, Women, and Song" in Berlin,

---

89 Pinckney himself uses this term in an interview given to Caroline Picard. Caroline Picard, "Life Among Other Men: An Interview with *Black Deutschland's* Darryl Pinckney," *Art21 Magazine*, 8 June, 2016, URL: *http://magazine.art21.org/2016/06/08/life-among-other-men-an-interview-with-black-deutschland-s-darryl-pinckney/#.WmYGB3kiGJC* (23 January, 2018).

90 James Baldwin, *No Name in the Street*, in James Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, ed. by Toni Morrison (New York: The Library of America, 1998), pp.349-475 (pp.376-77).

91 According to his biographer David Leeming, most evenings of Baldwin's early time in Paris included the same ritual: "Every evening he settled in with his notebook at the Deux Magots, the Brasserie Lip, or, more often, upstairs at the Flore." (David Leeming, *James Baldwin. A Biography* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2015), p.59) In *Black Deutschland*, Jed's favorite bar the ChiChi is described in parallel to this Parisian café: "The ChiChi was my café, my Dôme, my Deux Magots, my Blaue Reiter hangout." (Pinckney, p.65)

the (autobiographical and fictional) texts by McKay and Baldwin both recount homosexual, romantic experiences that the characters find possible only in Europe. When comparing these African-American romantic fantasies and experiences of Europe with the images of Berlin that Isherwood expresses in his writings, there are no strong contrasts, but numerous parallels between the two. As Pinckney himself states in an essay: "Sexuality is self-exploration in his [Baldwin's; G.Z.] novels and same-sex desire is a path toward liberation and higher consciousness. […] Other major writers whom I knew to be gay – Gore Vidal, Truman Capote – didn't deal with men loving men as directly or often in their work. It was just Baldwin and Isherwood."[92]

If one had to find a metaphor adequately describing the intertextual dialogue between *Black Deutschland's* two core reference points, one would hardly choose that of a heated dispute between two heterogenous partners, but rather that of a harmonious duet, in which one voice pursues and complements the other and in which the actual experiences, fantasies, and projections belonging to the formerly relatively independent traditions of gay writing about Berlin and African-American writing about Europe merge into a romantic image of Berlin as a city promising 'black boys' to find the love of 'white boys'. While the duet between these two traditions is a harmonious one, its effect may be considered much more controversial – in two different ways. First, it is important to note that – whereas the intertexts themselves go well together – the relation between the intertexts and the actual plot of the novel is much more ambivalent and contrastive. Jed's own experiences in Berlin can hardly be described as a third, equally harmonious voice merging into and actualizing the romantic image of Berlin. While it is true that he profits from the exceptional popularity of African-Americans in Berlin[93] and experiences a mostly joyful lifestyle dominated by "Big Fun,"[94] his hopes of finding romance and love are hardly fulfilled in 1980's Berlin and will – as his melancholia about the fall of the Berlin Wall suggests – have even lower chances of being fulfilled afterwards. This sense of delusion and disappointment gets even stronger when considering the fate of a second, relatively central African-American character in *Black Deutschland*: Jed's cousin Cello, a very talented piano musician and "the only person I knew who lived in that somewhere else I yearned for, Europe",[95] who – at the beginning of the novel – is married (with four children) to a German industrialist and enjoys a luxurious lifestyle as part of West-Berlin's cultural elite. Although Cello is only aiming at living the much more conventional ideal of a bourgeois, stable family life in Berlin, the end of the novel shows her attempt as irreversibly failed. In the final scene, Jed – after losing contact to his cousin for more than a decade – accidentally runs into her in what used to be one of Isherwood's favorite places, the new Café Einstein:

---

92 Darryl Pinckney, "Escaping the Prison of Realism", *The Center for Fiction*, URL: *http://www.centerforfiction.org/magazine/why-fiction-matters/darryl-pinckney/* (23 January, 2018).

93 *Black Deutschland* mentions the popularity of African-Americans in Berlin when recounting the tragic incident of a bombing in a club mostly frequented by American soldiers, especially African-American ones: "She [Jed's cousin Cello; G.Z.] said many people they knew had come down to Dahlem for the memorial. People who would not have gone to an event associated with the U.S. Army, never mind in support of U.S. policy, felt that they could come in honor of the victims of the bombing, because this memorial was known to be black-organized." (Pinckney, p.37)

94 Ibid., p.62.

95 Ibid., p.12.

> The imposing brown woman upright on a banquette was none other than Cello, able to fit into her vintage Agnes B. Berlin was in its bleak winter period, cold, deserted, damp, with pig dished in many kitchen pots.
> She was right out there, in the open, not hidden behind the newspaper racks. She would have had it shaved before she'd cut it. I could tell from her hairstyle just how crazy she was: it was pinned up into several thick, tight, glossy Spartan braids. A family of black lizards was riding on her head. […] Her three divorces, campaigns of mutually assured destruction, told village Berlin of damage I'd known nothing about. But time had gone by. I wasn't sure how many people cared about her overdose.[96]

The second aspect introducing an element of contrast into *Black Deutschland's* intertextual dialogue, concerns any possible categorization of the novel as belonging to 'black literature'. In this regard, Jed's – and thereby: Pinckney's – natural-seeming way of merging a mostly 'white' tradition constituted by gay, British, expatriate writers of the Weimar period with the 'black' tradition of African-American's literary writing about Europe constitutes an almost political, self-reflective statement refuting any ideas of 'ethnic' literature as originating in isolation or constitutive difference from the literary works written by people of other ethnic or national belongings. In this sense, *Black Deutschland* can even be seen as illustrating the cross-cultural approach central to the discipline of comparative literature: Its intertextual style comes to represent the transnational, 'transethnic' ways in which literature is produced – and in which it should be read. Writing about his literary mentor Elizabeth Hardwick, Pinckney himself argues:

> Hardwick liked for me to remind her that when I was her student she saw it as her moral duty to wipe out any notion I may have had about there being such a thing as a black novel, distinct from fiction by white people in its attitude to form or even in its ultimate purpose. After all, Morrison had written her doctoral dissertation on Woolf and Faulkner. Hemingway and Faulkner had more to do with the sound of black literature than anything or anyone else. Black writers were influenced by the same writers that their white counterparts were.[97]

*Bibliography*

Baldwin, James, *No Name in the Street*, in James Baldwin, *Collected Essays*, ed. by Toni Morrison (New York: The Library of America, 1998), pp.349-475

Barthes, Roland, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982)

Blanchot, Maurice, "Berlin", *MLN*, 109 (1994), 345-55

Bollen, Christopher, "Darryl Pinckney" (interview), *The Interview Magazine*, 4 April, 2016, URL: *https://www.interviewmagazine.com/culture/darryl-pinckney* (23 January, 2018)

Braddock, Jeremy and Jonathan P. Eburne, eds. *Paris, Capital of the Black Atlantic: Literature, Modernity, and Diaspora* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013)

Brüning, Eberhard, "*Stadtluft macht frei!*: African-American Writers and Berlin (1892-1932)", in *The City in African-American Literature*, ed. by Yoshinobu Hakutani and Robert Butler (Cranbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 1995), pp.79-95

96 Ibid., p.291-92.
97 Pinckney, Escaping the Prison.

Costello, Sam, "History of the iPod: From the First iPod to the iPod Classic", *Lifewire*, 19 October, 2016, URL: *https://www.lifewire.com/history-ipod-classic-original-2000732* (23 January, 2018)

Du Bois, W. E. B., *The Autobiography of W. E. B. Du Bois* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)

Felsch, Philipp, *Der lange Sommer der Theorie. Geschichte einer Revolte 1960-1990* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2016)

Genette, Gérard, *Palimpsests. Literature in the Second Degree,* trans. by Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997)

Gombrowicz, Witold, *Diary*, trans. by Lillian Vallee, 3 vols (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1993), III (1961-1966)

Hockenos, Paul, *Berlin Calling: A Story of Anarchy, Music, the Wall, and the Birth of the New Berlin* (New York/London: The New Press, 2017)

Isherwood, Christopher, "About This Book", in Christopher Isherwood, *The Berlin Stories* (New York: New Direction, 2008), pp.xiii-xxi

Isherwood, Christopher, *Christopher and His Kind* (London: Vintage, 2012)

Isherwood, Christopher, *Goodbye to Berlin*, in Christopher Isherwood, *The Berlin Stories* (New York: New Direction, 2008), pp.207-410

Kühl, Olaf, "'Wirklichkeit' und Wirklichkeit", in Witold Gombrowicz, *Berliner Notizen*, trans. and intr. by Olaf Kühl (Berlin: edition.fotoTAPETA, 2013), pp.5-15

Le, C. N., "Bridging the Campus and the Community: Blogging about the Asian American Experience", in *Sociologists in Action: Sociology, Social Change, and Social Justice,* ed. by Kathleen Odell Korgen, Jonathan M. White, and Michelle K. White (Los Angeles: Sage, 2014), pp.149-53

Leeming, David, *James Baldwin. A Biography* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2015)

Leerssen, Joep, "Imagology: On Using Ethnicity to Make Sense of the World", *Iberic@l – Revue d'études ibériques et ibéro-américaines*, 10 (2016), 13-31

Leerssen, Joep, "Imagology: History and Method", in *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, ed. by Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), pp.17-32

McKay, Claude, *Banjo. A Story without a Plot* (San Diego and New York: Harvest, 1957)

Muyumba, Walton, "Black Deutschland. A Melocomic Novel of Experience", *The Atlan*tic, 15 February, 2016, URL: *https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2016/02/darryl-pinckney-black-deutschland/462690/* (23 January, 2018)

Pfister, Manfred, "Konzepte der Intertextualität", in *Intertextualität. Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien*, ed. by Ulrich Broich and Manfred Pfister (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1985), pp.1-30

Philyaw, Deesha, "The Saturday Rumpus Interview: Darryl Pinckney", *The Rumpus*, 7 May, 2016, URL: *http://therumpus.net/2016/05/the-saturday-rumpus-interview-darryl-pinckney* (23 January, 2018)

Picard, Caroline, "Life Among Other Men: An Interview with *Black Deutschland's* Darryl Pinckney," *Art21 Magazine*, 8 June, 2016, URL: *http://magazine.art21.org/2016/06/08/life-among-other-men-an-interview-with-black-deutschland-s-darryl-pinckney/#.WmYGB3kiGJC* (23 January, 2018)

Pinckney, Darryl, *Black Deutschland* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016)

Pinckney, Darryl, "Escaping the Prison of Realism", The Center for Fiction, URL: *http://www.centerforfiction.org/magazine/why-fiction-matters/darryl-pinckney/* (23 January, 2018)

Schneider, Peter, "Berliner Geschichten", in Peter Schneider, *Deutsche Ängste* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1988), pp.6-18

Sollors, Werner, "African American Intellectuals and Europe between the Two World Wars", *Publication des Groupes de Recherches Anglo-Américaines de l'Université François Rabelais de Tours (GRAAT)*, 27, (2003), 41-57

Spender, Stephen, *World Within World. The Autobiography of Stephen Spender* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994)

Tate, Claudia, "Introduction", in W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Dark Princess* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1995), pp.ix-xxviii

Tuggle, Lindsay, "'A love so fugitive and so complete: Recovering the Queer Subtext of Claude McKay's *Harlem Shadows*", *The Space Between: Literature and Culture, 1914-1945*, 4/1 (2008), 63-81

Webber, Andrew J., "Introduction", in *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of Berlin*, ed. by Andrew J. Webber (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp.1-12