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Affirmative Integration of Immigrants – Developing a New Approach
Towards Multiculturalism

Panel 4 – Pluralism, Multiculturalism and Civic Identity:
 International Approaches to Integrating Immigrants into Existing Democratic
 Systems

**1. Introduction: Between assimilation and integration in the era of
 globalisation - the challenge of irregular migration**

“More people want to leave their country than other countries are willing to accept. The result is a global migration crisis” – Myron Weiner wrote eight years ago (Weiner 1996: 43). Since then the situation has not changed for the better. The migration crisis in the United States and in Europe – not to mention Africa and the Middle East - has even worsened. Germany has, until recently, stuck to its doctrine of “kein Einwanderungsland” (no immigration country). Its immigration policy has been characterised as “**a stable contradiction**”, at least until summer 2004, when a new “Zuwanderungsgesetz” finally secured the majority in parliament. The contradiction comprises the *myth of return* of the “Fremd- oder Gastarbeiter” (foreign workers), cultivated by governments of the sending and receiving countries, the migrants themselves, employers, trade unions and public opinion. Whilst they all stress the temporary nature of the migration (“rotation model”) on the one hand, there are various factors which have brought about the move towards *permanent settlement* of some million former “guest-workers” on the other (Thränhardt 1992: 174f).

Without a reconceptualisation of Germany from an ethno-national society in which citizenship is based on ethnic identity to a society in which membership in the political system is acquired by birth and choice, Germany will fail to integrate its immigrant population and their children. Germany, as well as other European countries are in danger of becoming inhuman societies deeply divided between those who have full membership and those who are excluded and feel discriminated.

Globalisation has changed both the real importance and the imagined perception of international migration in the developed as well as developing countries. While we face a world-wide “*struggle for talents*” on the one hand, the world community is increasingly challenged with the consequences of a *global trend of more or less “irregular” immigrants* from developing countries on the other hand. The latter forms a permanent global South-North-issue which requires political and judicial solutions towards integration that go beyond concepts of pure assimilation.

In the year 2003, not less than 1,6 million immigrants came to the European Union, mainly from the Maghreb countries, from Africa South of the Sahara, Middle Eastern Europe and even from Asian countries such as China, Pakistan and India. Spain was on the top rung with 600,000 immigrants, followed by Italy with 511,000 immigrants, Germany with 144,000 immigrants and United Kingdom with 103,000 immigrants (according to EUROSTAT-Report from September 1st, 2004, quoted in Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung vom 2.9.2004, pg. 5). Still, European governments have not come up with any convincing concepts of how to deal with these people who have one thing in common: the desire to improve their situation which they experienced “at home”.

It is hardly conceivable that **assimilation**, as the imagined end-stage of a “race relation cycle” of “contact, competition, accommodation and eventual assimilation” (according to theories of Park and Milton Gordon, see Alba/Nee 1999), can still be perceived as a sequence that is progressive, irreversible and applicable to all strata of immigrants. As far as the classic immigration countries like Canada, the United States of America or Australia are concerned, there is abundant evidence that assimilation has been the general tendency among the descendants of the immigrants of the previous era of mass immigration for a long time. In the period before 1930, immigrants mainly came from Europe; their integration was a success story (Bade/Weiner 1997; Thränhardt 1992). Successful assimilation has diminished cultural differences that once served to signal ethnic membership to others and to sustain ethnic solidarity. This kind of assimilation – structural assimilation – can be equated, above all, with long-term processes that have eroded the social foundations for ethnic distinctions and ultimately the distinctions themselves. These processes have brought about a rough *parity of opportunities* to obtain the desirable social goods of the host society, such as prestigious and remunerative jobs, and loosened the ties between ethnicity and specific economic niches (Alba/Nee 1999: 145-146).

Since 1965, a “**new (type of) immigration**” has evolved, i.e. the migration of immigrants of Non-European descent to the USA and Europe. Facing these recent developments, the German sociologist, Hartmut Esser, from the University of Frankfurt/Main has lately asked in an article for “IMIS-Beiträge” (*Institut für Migrationsforschung und Interkulturelle Studien* in Osnabrück) whether there are at all “alternatives to assimilation” (Esser 2004), for example a “multicultural pluralistic society”. After a lengthy discussion on the different theories of integration he comes to the somehow surprising conclusion that there is no reasonable alternative to the concept of “**structural assimilation**”, especially in regard to education and the primary labour market (Esser 2004: 44-45).

In the following, I take his thesis as a starting point for discussion, focussing on the question of integration of so-called **irregular immigrants**, especially people from African countries and people with a cultural identity such as the Muslims.

2. Causes, triggers and political contexts of migration : state-failure and poverty

International migration, as a form of global, geographic, social and mental mobility, has become an integral part of the modern world, its rate/speed having increased since the end of the “Cold War” (Weiner 1996; Bade 1996; Weiner/Bade 1997, Huntington 2004). Perhaps “**state failure**” can be regarded as the single most important factor behind the South-North-migration, which seems to be the dominant form of migration to Central Europe (EU) and North America. “Failed states are tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring factions. In most failed states, government troops battle armed revolts led by one or more rivals...It is not the absolute intensity of violence that identifies a failed state. Rather, it is the enduring character of that violence (as in recent Angola, Burundi, and the Sudan), the consuming quality of that violence, which engulfs great swaths of states (as in Afghanistan, Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone)...” (Rotberg 2004: 5).

Civil wars, economic disasters, environmental catastrophes, cultural deprivation, religious oppression and political problems such as structural injustice and social exclusion of ethnic minorities –all of these can **trigger** migration processes as they may leave to individuals few options other than emigrating from their places of settlement. With increasing numbers of people who, for various reasons, cross borders legally or irregularly, the emergence of mass migration to industrialized countries, which themselves suffer from high quotas of unemployed workers and jobless youngsters, has changed the significance of immigrants for the OECD-countries and therefore their willingness to integrate unwanted foreigners.

Until the early 1970s, migrant workers from the South and East were eagerly welcomed; Western Europe witnessed impressive migratory flows, strictly regulated by bilateral agreements between sending and receiving countries (Straubhaar 1988). Such agreements established a yearly contingent and defined the procedure for the selection of the migrants as well as the conditions of work and residence in the receiving country. Such modalities of regulations generated – in all southern European countries, and later also in Turkey – a corresponding **irregular** segment of the outflows. One main reason for the emergence of irregular migration may be found in the *selection process*, which was almost always strongly biased by political considerations. In other words, a certain number of prospective migrants knew from the outset that they would never

qualify for emigration according to the actual rules of the game (see Sciortino 2004: 26).

The situation for prospective migrants became even worse, when in the early 1970s all main western European countries “adopted restrictive policies and stopped labour recruitment, tightened the rules for foreign seasonal work and tried – albeit somewhat unsuccessfully – to curb the chances of new inflows. Where necessary, as in the United Kingdom and later in France, the possible migratory consequences of colonial citizenships were reduced through the reform of citizenship laws. Since then, layers after layers of new rules have been introduced in order to shift the burden of proof for administration on the shoulders of the migrants themselves” (Sciortino 2004: 27).

Up to the present, the *reasons* for this “**stop policy**” are not quite clear, because it had been launched during a phase of economic boom “when employers were hiring foreign workers by the busloads” (ibid.). Thus one can speculate that the adoption of “stop migration policies” by European governments (at a time of tense North-South-fighting when the rich industrialized countries, shocked by the oil crisis of 1973, resisted the demands of developing countries for a “new and more just international economic order”) reflects more the shifting perception of the politicians from the political costs to the social benefits of immigration by foreigners. Especially *Germany* denied the idea of becoming an immigration country, although in reality, that is exactly what happened. Until the approval of a “Zuwanderungsgesetz” by parliament in summer 2004, Germany political behaviour was that of a “non-declared immigration country”. That means it pursued an immigration policy between the **two poles of ‘appellative denial’ and ‘pragmatic integration’** (see Holger Kolb 2004: 135). Here the issue of norms and identity comes in (see below and Cf. Huntington 2003).

Besides this type of migrants – labour migrants – the countries of the European Union are increasingly faced with a **second type of foreigners**, coming to them legally or illegally: **refugees** leaving their country because of political, economic, religious or environmental reasons. Especially young people from Africa try to escape to Europe for the sake of a better life for them and their families. It is estimated that about one thousand people try to reach the southern shores of Europe (mainly in Italy, Spain and Portugal) on a daily basis. Many of them die during the risky endeavour, turning the Mediterranean Sea into a mass grave for refugees.

When we question the **reasons** for the permanent trend of South-North-migration, this query in the case of African South of the Sahara is quite easily answered – The **push factors** dominate the migration process, although the imagined pull factors and the new opportunities for cheaper travels to Europe

make it much easier to emigrate or attempt to flee to Europe. The following quotation by the former *director of the African Leadership Forum*, based in Nigeria, gives a moving insight into the ambivalent considerations of the young generation of modernised Africans who know that there is hardly any alternative to globalisation and migration to the prosperous centres of modernization in the North:

“As it was in past, young Africans with a view to escaping the harsh social and economic conditions are willing to live anywhere else but home. Under any condition, willing to disregard the humiliation, hostility and unsavouriness of their host country. Another slavery has begun. This time, the African is actually begging to be enslaved. Blame it on globalization? Blame it on African managerial inadequacies? To this must be added the emerging trend of seeking to give birth in Europe and America. The intent being the need to acquire an American or European passport to, in the words of the practitioners, improve my child’s chances and make him a global citizen in the true sense of the word. Of course, therein lies the problem. These so-called global citizens will emerge in the world without any serious heritage, without any anchor. They will be culturally confused and amorphous” (Ayodele Aderinwale 2000).

When “**cultural confusion**” is the price for survival in a Western host society, then it is not only the immigrants who will face difficulties with their identity. State and society in the host countries also have to react in order to accommodate or integrate the new groups of citizens in search of a new existence and a new civic identity. Without a successful immigration policy for immigrated minorities and ethnic and cultural communities, European countries will not overcome the many problems associated with disappointed people full of frustrated hopes and even hate towards the host country. The inner peace of society is at stake. The condemnation of the violence inflicted by terrorists in the name of Islam by the Muslim community in France on the latest events concerning the massacre of Beslan in Russia (September, 6th, 2004) is a good counter-example. This courageous reaction has shown that, to achieve a peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies, all different communities should express a sense of solidarity in cases of national crisis, based on a common belief in some “core values”.

3. Immigrants from Africa and the challenge of identity (change): the emergence of hybrid institutions

As many scientists would agree, the concept of (personal) **identity** is vague and unclear, although indispensable. It is a specific construction, determined by social and historic circumstances, perhaps comparable with the notion of “nations”, described by **Benedict Anderson** as “imagined communities”. Identity can be regarded as a product of “Selbstverortung” (Georg Elwert), “a

product of self-consciousness, that I or we possess distinct qualities as an entity that differentiates me from you and us from them” (Huntington 2004: 21). In his interesting and much debated book “Who Are We? The Challenges to America’s National Identity” **Samuel Huntington** maintains “to define themselves, people need an other” (Huntington 2004: 24). They need boundaries, real or imagined, to know who they are and who they are not. Identity requires differentiation. Differentiation necessitates comparison, the identification of the ways in which “our” group differs from “their” group. Comparison, in turn, generates evaluation: Are the ways of our group better or worse than the ways of their group? Group egoism leads to justification, justification to competition, and competition may lead to antagonism and conflict. Stereotypes are created, the opponent is demonized and the other is transferred into “the enemy” (see Huntington 2004: 26).

Huntington underlines the fact that individuals, and to a lesser extent groups, usually have **multiple identities**, “which may be ascriptive, territorial, economic, cultural, political, social and national. The relative salience of these identities to the individual or group can change from time to time and situation to situation, as can the extent to which these identities complement or conflict with each other” (Huntington 2004: 23). Thus he fears, for example, that the great influx of Hispanics could culturally divide the United States. Hispanics are seen as a cultural threat to American values and national identity – especially in an election year in which immigration policy is one of the hot political issues. Huntington charges that Hispanics are different from previous immigrants, not just because of their numbers, but because of their adherence to their national tongue and culture tongue and culture which distinguishes them from many other immigrant groups in the past. (critical to this view is Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson 2004: 145ff.).

The situation in most European immigration countries is different, yet comparable with the American scenario in at least one aspect: the reluctance, if not refusal by some religiously defined Islamic communities of foreign origin to accept a few characteristics of the culture of the host country, mainly secularisation (the division of state and church), equality between man and woman and ...On the other hand there are host countries who are reluctant to appreciate the efforts of immigrants to fulfil the expectations of their co-citizens . In Germany, half of the political class and large parts of the society cannot accept the alleged European identity of modern Turkey, whose academic and bureaucratic elites as well as the political class (with some fundamentally opposed politicians) desperately want Turkey to belong to the European Union. As a response to this refusal some Turks have been conflicted over whether they should think of themselves primarily as European, Western, Muslim, Middle Eastern, or even Central Asian (according to Huntington 2004: 24).

As what should immigrated **Africans** perceive themselves? As African Germans, or as people with a double identity whose spiritual home is in Africa whilst their physical home is in a modern, alien host country. The following quotation quite aptly mirrors the complicated situation of an African woman living and working in a German industrial city for several years, without her soul having fully arrived in the host society:

“I believe I am still not fully integrated in this society. I work, I earn my living, but as soon as I leave my protective environment, I feel discriminated against: in department stores, in restaurants for instance, where they don’t offer you the same service as purely white Germans as though your money was not wanted or as though you want to have everything for nothing, without paying. In Department stores Africans are considered to be potential thieves. Everywhere they want to tell you that you are not wanted, that you are in the wrong place. The constant justification of my presence makes me simply sick. I want to be accepted the way I am. I have lived in Germany for such a long time. I should actually feel like at home, in my country of origin. To work, to be active socially and politically without Germans being bothered about it. The people here should not treat me like an alien. You are excluded in many domains and the constant negative discrimination makes life very difficult”. (Statement by an African woman, living as a “tolerated” (geduldet) foreigner in North Rhine-Westphalia, quoted in: “Lebenslagen, Erfahrungen und Erwartungen von Afrikanerinnen in Deutschland 2002-2004”; Research project of the University of Essen, Department of Education, directed by Renate Nestvogel, unpublished).

This statement (by an African woman in German exile) seems to be typical for discontented, if not frustrated people who had come as refugees (from Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Liberia or Congo-Kinshasa) to Europe several years ago and who did not find a new home in their host country. Although it gave them at least some kind of protection and the means to survive, it refused the genuine acceptance of “the other”. There are reasons to believe that a majority of Germany’s eight million foreigners (migrant-workers, refugees, irregular immigrants, asylum-seekers, tolerated foreigners) have similar feelings, fears and expectations as the African woman quoted above. In my opinion, three aspects of her statement seem to be of general interest for our topic:

- The personal frustration of the woman, not because of her material living conditions, but because of the sick-making coolness (and “Ausländerfeindlichkeit” = xenophobia) of the German society at large;
- Her consciousness of being socially excluded as an “alien” from the new home country, although she is “placed” properly on the labour market;
- Her desire to become well-integrated or even assimilated, that means the desire to belong to the European country without having to abandon her own cultural identity as an African.

In the following chapters I want to deal with questions related to the recent trend of transforming exiled people into persons living as members of an ethnic-cultural community. In other words, the life of **diaspora**-people. Increasingly, the latter have challenged the European governments by adding a new dimension to an old question: How to deal with foreigners who came to Europe legally or illegally and demand a right to stay for ever? How many of them – and at what costs – could be integrated without threatening the tolerance and the consensus of the host society; values which form the “cement of society” (Heitmeyer)?

I believe that we should look for a fair solution of the present migration crisis in a direction which could be characterised by the metaphor of a **salad bowl** (contrary to the “melting-pot”- or “tomato soup”-metaphor), describing a tolerant, pluralistic republican community with some common values and interests, shared by all participants without losing their cultural heritage. It implies a creative mixture of endogenous and foreign elements, without demanding the minorities to surrender to the dominant culture. In the era of globalisation, we are already experiencing the emergence of **hybrid forms** with regard to cultural, economic and political systems mainly in developing countries (Rüb 2002). New variations of democracy, for example, have developed in Africa and Asia – hybrid forms of (neo-patrimonial or illiberal) democracy. Hybrid institutions have the advantage of coping with challenges of modernity without ignoring previous levels of endogenous performance.

There is no reason to believe that such hybrid institutions will be restricted to developing countries or countries in transition to liberal democracy. Food, music and sports are the domains where expansion and hybridization are most apparent.

4. From exile to diaspora – the case of the Eritreans in Germany

For this exercise it is useful, even necessary, to distinguish exile from what comes thereafter, when exile is not ended by returning home. **Exile** can be defined as a situation of forced absence from home, the country of birth. For the individual, being forced to live in exile signifies a sense of loss and a strong yearning for return which dominates most aspects of that person’s life. **Diaspora**, on the other hand, “may or may not describe a situation of forced dwelling in a foreign country. While it is characterized by preserving a distinct identity, the diaspora nonetheless accommodates itself permanently within its host society, thus creating a home abroad” (Conrad 2004: 178).

History is full of examples for diasporas. The Jewish experience usually comes first to mind as a prototype for diaspora formation. The notion could then be extended to include African-Americans, Armenians, Kurds, Cubans and Palestinians. Since the 1990s, more and more nationals from African war-torn

countries – Eritreans, Sudanese, Congolese, Liberians, Algerians, Tutsis from Rwanda and so forth – formed exile communities in Western countries which, within ten or twenty years, gradually transformed themselves into diasporas. In diasporas, a group has suffered some kind of **traumatic event** (in the African case mostly “ethnic conflicts”, genocide, civil wars) which leads to the dispersal of its members. At the same time there is a vision and remembrance of a lost or imagined homeland still to be established, often accompanied by a refusal of the receiving society to fully recognize the cultural distinctiveness of the immigrants.

Diasporas frequently include a full cross-section of community members who are dispersed to many diverse regions of the world, which is the case with **Chinese** emigrants in the 19th century, for example. The Chinese, driven by poverty and war hardships, went abroad as settlers and traders, and later experienced xenophobia (“China Towns” in the USA; Huntington 2004). The perspective of the Chinese was, at first, much less oriented towards their ancestral homeland, and lacked components of exile. It was only later that Chinese in Southeast Asia and the United States became united by separation or even discrimination. In addition, they developed an increasing awareness of unity as a consequence of the revolution against Manchu rule and the resistance to the Japanese invasion of their homeland. The subsequent rise of nationalism throughout Southeast Asia and the attacks against their economic position by the long established ethnic groups further intensified their collective identity of being Chinese abroad (Faist 1998: 222-223). According to this pattern of forging new imagined identities by external events, community-building towards diasporas may nowadays occur in the European Union with regard to ethnic minorities (like the Kurds, Afghanis, Serbs, Chechenyans, who have been repressed and expelled from their countries of origin).

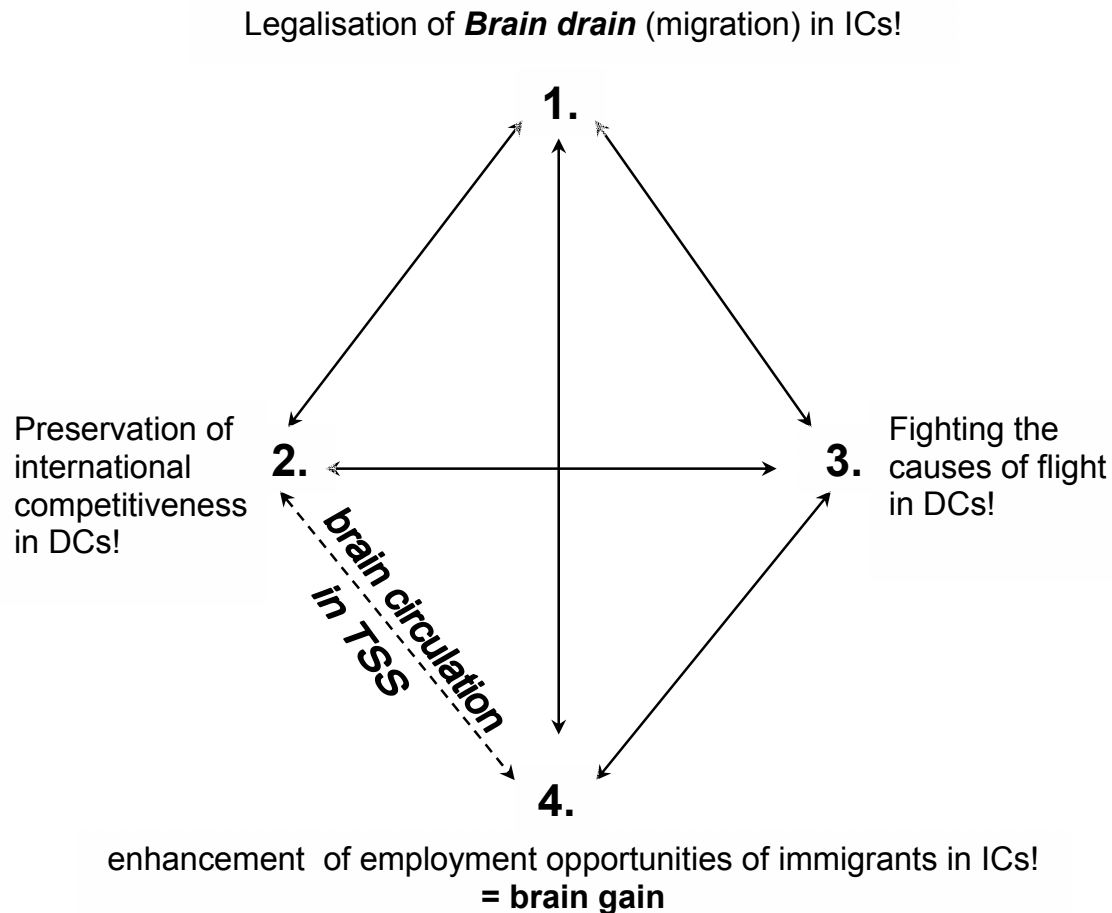
It is not useful to apply the term diaspora to immigrated settlers or labour migrants because they did not experience traumatic experiences. Moreover, it cannot be said that most of the members of these groups yearn to return to their lost homeland (see William Safran 1991 and Thomas Faist 1998: 222).

With the transformation from an exile community into a diasporic community, the relations between the foreigners and their host society change profoundly because then the necessity of having a reasonable and publicly endorsed immigration policy (or “Zuwanderungspolitik”, as the German government calls it) can no longer be denied.

For the host society the challenge is to determine the conditions under which immigrants who opt for staying in the host country can be integrated or assimilated. Is the integration of immigrants on a large scale justifiable when bearing in mind the *developmental consideration*, which takes into account that a potential **brain gain** for host countries may mean a severe “**brain drain**” for developing countries, which in most cases are in great need of intelligent and

active “human capital”? The **magic square of migration** (see Figure 1) reveals that each decision by a host country – favouring immigration or complicating “naturalisation” by law – can do harm to people who are often trapped between two conceptions of identity and home.

Figure 1: Magic Relationship - Migration policy with a human face



DC = Developing countries
IC = Industrial countries
TSS = Transnational Social Spaces

Source: Rainer Tetzlaff: VAD-lecture on 25.5.2002 in Hamburg

For Germany, as an undeclared “immigration country”, this challenge is a rather new task, producing difficulties for the government as well as for civil society. Political parties criticize each other for not having a convincing answer to this new challenge. This complex issue can be illustrated and discussed by exemplifying the actual case of the **Eritrean** community in Germany, whose members hesitate to return home in spite of all incentives by the Berlin

government urging them to leave Germany and build up a new existence in the country of their origin. German Eritreans are Africans who fled their homes in reaction to the long lasting brutal liberation war against Ethiopia. Ethiopia, which had briefly been an Italian colony, is a poor, small country in the Eastern part of Africa, the “hot spot Horn of Africa” (Bruchhaus 2004; following a study done by Bettina Conrad from Germany).

During the 30-year-struggle for independence (1960-1991) from Ethiopia, more than one million Eritreans were forced to leave their homes. Most of them were stranded in the Sudan; others went to the Gulf States. A much smaller number became asylum seekers in the USA, Australia and Europe. The approximately 30.000 Eritreans living in Germany today constitute the largest Eritrean Community in Europe. The majority of them arrived in Germany as refugees during the 1980s. They became organized in political mass mobilisation organizations; their main aim was to rally both moral and financial support for the liberation war. “The endless months spent in German refugee centres condemned to doing nothing, the difficulties in finding a flat or job, the experience of discrimination, it all happened to the Eritreans as much as to other refugees. And yet: while it is part of their past and present, it seldom figures in discussions among Eritreans. Germany was, as someone wrote on the internet, ‘a train station’, ‘a place with a transitory function’, a mere stage of a long journey whose destination was Eritrea, a free and prosperous Eritrea” (Conrad 2004: 178-179).

But when the objective of the war – the liberation of the country from foreign rule (referred to by some Eritreans as “black imperialism”) – had been reached in 1991, the importance of the host society for the refugees changed in an unexpected way: The great majority of the Eritreans discovered that they preferred to stay in their host country, which had become, unconsciously, something like a new and safe “home” for them. They were satisfied with occasional visits to the country of their fathers and grandfathers, which in comparison to the new home had lost attractiveness to them. In spite of all material incentives by the German government, only between 2000 and 3000 Eritreans dared to remigrate home. Reasons and personal motives behind the decision (whether to stay or to leave) differed, but at least some general attitudes among four groups in favour of the **diaspora-option** can be stated.

- **Successful and westernized men** in good positions and with satisfactory incomes (former students) hesitated to give up their relatively safe jobs in Europe;
- **Emancipated women** in particular, who were afraid of having to give up the relative independence they had come to appreciate in exile, decided to stay;
- A third group with the inclination to stay could be identified: the **educated youth** who had spent most of their lives outside their

“motherland”, which they had rarely ever seen before. “It is the younger generation in particular that embodies this in-between situation with its inherent conflicts. Hampered by generation conflict and tangled up in the web of politics they are struggling to create a new community” (Conrad 2004: 175).

- And finally there are **disappointed people preferring to live in self-imposed exile**: These are those Eritreans who returned home for a visit and then felt a **sense of alienation** when confronted with the new situation in the “liberated” independent country, which had, within a short space of time, evolved into one of Africa’s most repressive dictatorships. US-Eritrean researcher Tekle Woldemichael has described them as people who “discovered that they could not go back to the ‘home’ they left a long time ago. The ‘home’ they know remains only in their memory which they could cherish and remember while continuing their lives in self-imposed exile” (Tekle 1998, quoted in Conrad 2004: 177).

Parents, too, who had postponed their return for the sake of their children’s education discovered that taking them back “now”, as young adults, would be even less feasible. With this realisation new problems arise, according to Bettina Conrad’s findings. Some of them are related to the ambivalent German environment: “How to keep the youngsters away from drugs and crime? The fear of ‘losing’ the children to the host country is perceived as a new kind of threat. Many parents try to force an Eritrean way of life upon their children which clashes radically with the way they are “co-educated” by school, the media and non-Eritrean friends. How to deal with racism? How to help them fight for equal opportunities when many Eritrean parents have difficulties with German and know little about the host country’s educational and vocational systems?” (See Conrad 2004: 181).

As a conclusion of this case study one can assert that the conventional nineteenth-century perception which maintains that migration results from certain pull and push factors (which were taken to be measurable) is no longer suitable to mirror the highly complex **transnational networks of migration** of the 21st century. Instead of viewing migrations as linear finite processes connecting a sending and a receiving state, migration systems have been constructed within which migration takes place over long periods of time and in various directions. These migration systems can deterritorialise culture, lead to hybrid or multiple identities and define areas within which migration has occurred frequently and has followed established patterns (see *Papastergiadis 2000*).

6 Migration as a challenge for social peace and security?

With increasing numbers of unwanted migrants coming irregularly and illegally to European societies, large proportions of society now regard international migration as a **security issue** for state governments and their systems of national social security. **Security**, although a concept that is crucial to an understanding of international politics, is ambiguous and elastic in its meaning. In the most fundamental sense, being secure means feeling free from threats, anxiety, or danger. Security is therefore a state of mind in which somebody feels safe from harm by others.

The demand and necessity that governments should control migration is a rather recent phenomenon. It emerged from the nineteenth-century European conceptualisation of statehood which awards to governments the task of moulding or maintaining the coherence or integrity of the nation (e. g. *Johann Gottfried Fichte, Der geschlossene Handelsstaat, Tübingen 1800*). Up until the Napoleonic Wars, Europe consisted of more than three hundred polities, most of which had at least some attributes of sovereignty or claimed to be under the control of sovereign rulers. The populations which placed these rulers in their positions were made up of multifarious groups whose members shared multiple identities and cultivated multiple loyalties to a variety of institutions and persons. Changes of loyalties were frequent, especially for military personnel, so that the degree of control by rulers over the ruled was limited (Kleinschmidt 2003: 14).

Today security is perceived in the sense of “*comprehensive security*” (a definition used now by military officers within NATO circles; see Frank 2001: 17f.), meaning the inclusion of environmental, economic and social aspects into the conventional concept of military security. By including the issue of migration as a core factor of insecurity or a threat to the stability of particular states, proponents of this concept of “*comprehensive security*” have turned **migration from an issue of sociology into one of international relations** (see also Harald Kleinschmidt 2003).

Let us now turn to the issue of “*new migration*”. Within these new migration systems, the capacity of the governments of sovereign states to control migration is reduced (see *Sassen 1996*). Migrants have become accustomed to operating within networks that convey a degree of *autonomy* in the decisions about their migrations. These migration networks provide sources of information about immigration procedures and help accommodating migrants in their target areas; they allow migrants a fair degree of autonomy of action and thus become less subject to government surveillance (see *Kleinschmidt 2003*). One can call this phenomenon “*new migration*”.

Many scholars have pointed out that the administrative capacity of the governments of sovereign states *to control migration* has declined as non-state actors such as NGOs and MNCs (Multinational Corporations) as well as regional institutions and international organisations have acquired more influence on migration processes (Boules 1997; Schuck/Münz 1998). For example, international organisations such as the ILO advanced proposals for an international relations act to reduce the decision making capability of institutions of sovereign states with regard to immigration rules. These proposals formed the basis for the international **Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families** which was approved by the UN General Assembly in 1991. It has been the purpose of this convention to secure the provision of essential human rights to immigrants who are found to have violated immigration rules. Likewise, regional institutions such as the EU have granted the freedom of movement to all nationals of the (15) EU member states. In the context of the Maastricht Treaty of 1991, Brussels forced member states to take measures towards the rigorous control of immigration from non-EU states. Also, private NGO's such as Amnesty International have requested the freedom of emigration as a human right and intellectuals have demanded that the right to emigrate should be supplemented by an internationally guaranteed right to immigrate.

Apparently, a multitude of private organisations exist that are able to bring almost anyone anywhere for payment, usually outside the bounds of legality. Migration has thus emerged as a process as well as an issue that has begun to impact on affairs of the state and **civil society**. State institutions are no longer solely legitimised to deal with migration, whilst civil society has thus far not acquired sufficient legitimacy to compete with institutions of the state. "Therefore, state institutions and civil society can be in a position where they compete with regard to migration regulation and frequently take opposing attitudes to migration. The dividing line, which frequently separates institutions of statehood from groups acting as parts of civil society is state security" (also see Kleinschmidt 2003).

Regarding immigrants as a "threat" to identity or security of the host country becomes politically relevant during parliamentary elections, when political parties are often tempted to compete for voters with emotional arguments enforcing latent fears of "Überfremdung" ("infiltration with foreign elements"). In these situations people forget that immigrants are urgently needed to sustain their market economies and social security systems, and that immigrants bring new energy, tastes and impulses to the immigration country which broadens, not destroys its culture. Recently, the migration issue has been exploited in a somewhat different manner by the political ambitions of the decision makers in the United States. A few months ago, President Bush called for an overhaul of US law to give legal status to at least eight million illegal immigrant workers,

60% of whom are Mexican. Observers have criticized this move as a bid to win the favour and hence the Hispanic vote in this year's presidential election.

7. Conclusion and outlook: Searching for a new peaceful coexistence between old and new citizens: the need for adaptation by immigrants

It is a fact that there is no homogeneous society anywhere in Europe (or elsewhere in the world). The peoples of Europe are **pluralistic, heterogeneous** and **mixed** in many different ways: social class status, ethnicity, religious beliefs, demographic behaviour, etc. There can be no peaceful return to (national or cultural) homogeneity, nor should we desire it. The majority of the more than ten million Muslims, for example, who are living in Europe today do not intend to become German, French or Spanish citizens. Instead, they want to be recognized as European citizens **integrated** by law as well as by general acceptance by the residents as human beings, and without losing their cultural and religious "identity". But what we urgently need is a multicultural **consensus** – achieved by means of public consensus – not about common values, but about common "Spielregeln" (rules of the game) of coexistence in cultural heterogeneity. And rules of the game include sanctions and prescribe limitations.

Multiculturalism in this sense seems to be the most convincing vision of a peaceful future in Europe; it is a call for change, and ultimately, for a different **pluralistic** and **inclusive** society whose members accept diversity as a source of inspiration and moral strength (as confirmed by many writers and artists Keller/Rakusa 2003: 127f.; also see Landfried 2003). Multiculturalism can be conceived as "a (revolutionary or reformist) radical project that is not just about culture: at its base it is about **inclusion and exclusion**, it has an anti-exclusionary direction and hence is about power and domination. Its program is that the mechanisms of exclusion should be abolished or at least reduced, and the number of those included increased" (Puhle 1998: 255).

I chose the case of the Eritrean diaspora in Germany merely as an example of the transformation of refugees into peoples of two homes, living mentally in two worlds, and showing loyalties towards different regimes and cultures. Refugees and immigrants from Sudan, Congo (Zaire), Rwanda, Afghanistan or Ex-Yugoslavia have to cope with very similar problems and have to choose between two main options, two main trajectories available to newcomers: **structural assimilation or ethnic pluralism**.

As already indicated, *irregular* migration systems are "the outcome of the interaction of two social processes: the human mobility across social spaces and the enactment of state policies [within] the very same spaces. The adjective 'irregular' does not [describe] the migration flows [themselves], but only ... their

interaction with political regulations (Sciortino 2004: 21). As a matter of fact, states may, with a single stroke of a pen, turn hundreds of thousands of irregular migrants into legal foreign residents, “as it has happened so many times in the recent Western past with the enactment of amnesties. Similarly, legislative reforms may turn previously semi-regular residents into irregular migrants, as it has happened to so many ‘sans-papiers’ with the French immigration reform of the 1980s” (ibd.).

Irregularity – the Italian political scientist *Giuseppe Sciortino* defines irregularity “first and foremost [as] a juridical status that entails a social relation to a state. As such, it is not a label that describes individuals, or even their most prominent social role. Legal status is significant, indeed relevant, only when and if – and to the degree of which – the legal reality is a constraint over the relationships and actions of the actor. Human rights activists are right in claiming that human beings are never illegal. States appear equally right, however, in claiming that illegal roles do instead exist and actually it is their task to make and enforce them” (Sciortino 2004: 21-22).

Thus the question of moulding the relationship between state and irregular immigrants arises: which procedures and principles could and should be agreed upon and respected from both sides when “**full integration**” of immigrants – not assimilation - is regarded as the main political objective.

Some items discussed above can be summarized accordingly:

- The demand by European societies for young and qualified immigrants will continue and – considering the demographic situation of the over-aged Europe – increase, as will the demand of (legal and irregular) immigrants and asylum-seekers for jobs and legal security with regard to their status as citizens in all industrialized countries.
- International **development aid** – be it bilateral or multilateral – will never be attractive and efficient enough as to prevent desperately poor people (from Africa and elsewhere) from starting the long and risky journey to a rich and tempting country in the North (to North-America and Europe). But it is also obvious that large-scale immigration to the rich countries cannot be justified on grounds of structural misery and poverty in Third World countries: the brain drain would weaken their chances of catching up with the industrialised countries: At the same time host societies would continue to feel overcharged by “too many foreigners”, claiming that “the boat is full” (as our minister of the interior, Otto Schilly, asserted recently).
- Thus the EU requires a **coordinated human immigration policy** in order to cope with the present “migration crisis”, which should fulfill at least *three main objectives*: 1. to regulate the influx of people from poor and/or repressively ruled countries in a clear and reasonable

manner; 2. to maintain the balance between brain drain from emigration countries and brain gain to immigration countries, and 3. to convince the public in both camps of the necessity to change traditional attitudes in order to cope with the demands and imputations of global migration processes.

- In Europe, we would need some kind of a fair bilateral **social contract** (Gesellschaftsvertrag) between the host country and the immigrant who wants to stay here for good. The latter needs a clear conception of his or her own future as a potential member of the host country with equal rights and obligations.
- Immigrants should be guaranteed fair and equal chances in labour markets, the right of status security and the promise that, as individuals, they will not be forced to give up their cultural (and especially religious) identity. Dual citizenship should be tolerated. **Diaspora-people** should be encouraged to settle down in their “new, chosen home” without being expected to give up their close relations to their country of descent.

The host country should do everything possible to prevent situations in which immigrants face the experience of (racial) prejudice and discrimination of foreigners as has happened in the past. Discrimination reduces the willingness of people to embrace compromise, tolerance and finally acculturation. Not multiculturalism, but the **open pluralistic republic** – which guarantees cultural freedom for all people from various ethnic homelands – should be the leading idea of immigration laws and practice (Oberndörfer). .

On the other hand, immigrants should be urged to accept, from the start (defined by immigration laws), that the dominant society inevitably expects some adaptation to the new political and cultural context. Most importantly, they have to accept **seven core values of western constitutions**, which include

- The principle of sovereignty by the people as the foundation of a participatory democratic society;
- The legitimacy of the power monopoly (“Gewaltmonopol” in the sense of Max Weber and Norbert Elias) of the state, which means that the citizen has lost his natural right of self-defence;
- The rule of law, which includes the independence of the judiciary;
- The majority rule (in parliament) as the dominant procedure to end conflicts of interests peacefully and to reach a consensus after a free, fair and open public discussion on all public affairs;
- The protection and inclusion of minority groups (“Minderheiten”) by government, all of whom clearly have to comply with the constitution;

- The universal validity of human rights (as defined in the UN-documents, especially in the two UN-pacts of 1966, concerning the political, economic and social human rights) and finally,
- A plural society with competing political parties, governing and opposition parties.

Immigrants who intend to stay as residents are expected to know the constitution of their new home country and its language. To master the foreign language of the host country properly can be considered as the most decisive single factor determining the chances of the new immigrant on labour markets – his chances of “placing”. (Esser). It should therefore be declared the obligation of state authorities in the local and regional communities to offer regular and free-of-charge language courses for all groups of immigrants. This must be a precondition for achieving the status of a full citizen (Staatsbürgerschaft). .

Obviously, **acculturation** is mostly a one-directional acceptance of cultural patterns of the host country by the immigrant. It is therefore an asymmetric relationship, yet it is also an inevitable endeavour. To avoid the culturalization of social conflicts as embodied in Samuel Huntington’s “clash of civilizations”, the prospects of multicultural politics within a European legal context must be improved.

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