

**Heinz Peter Gerhardt (Ed.)**

**From Migrant to Citizen:  
Questioning and Learning in Lisbon**

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## **Heinz Peter Gerhardt**

### **From Migrant to Citizen: Questioning and Learning in Lisbon**

Germany's Federal Agency for Civic Education organised a conference from 26-28 April 2007 under the title, 'Networking European Citizenship Education'. The subtitle, 'Rethinking Citizenship Education in European Migration, Political Strategies – Educational Concepts' sounded just as complicated and ambitious. Is this combination a formula for the success of such an endeavour? It could be, if the ambition were to be coupled with openness, and shared by partners, participants, presenters and organisers alike. An openness and tolerance, which were – that much can be said in advance - hard to bear at times.

#### **First Day: Descriptions, Hypotheses and Temperaments**

Rita Süßmuth ([rita-suessmuth.de](http://rita-suessmuth.de)) started with a description of her experiences in the area of migration and human rights, to which her current work in this field is dedicated (cf. her keynote "Citizenship and Immigration in a Globalised World: European Perspectives" in this volume).

Migration policies should not differentiate between more welcome migrants and less welcome migrants, e.g. in Germany: Eastern Europeans or German Russians for the former, and Africans for the latter. National policies which give preference to immigrants with specific competencies and knowledge are only acceptable, when, like in the USA, Canada and Brazil, the right to political asylum, in the case of human rights violations in the country of origin, is upheld. Local authorities are the ones to implement Migration policies in the communities. The aim is, for migrants and members of the host society alike, to live together harmoniously and productively. Migrant organisations should be involved in this implementation.

Whilst Rita Süßmuth represented the voice of a host society, the next speaker was expected to present the view of the incomer. That the writer Abdourahman A. Waberi (his latest novel was, 'United States of Africa', Paris: Lattès 2006) did not live up to this expectation, might have been either due to his heavily accented English, or a deliberate choice. Waberi's main issue was with the concept of 'francophonie': although he moved to France from Djibouti for his university studies, and writes in French, he refuses to be considered a francophone writer from the 'periphery' (cf. his speech "The boundless kingdom of imagination" in this volume) Francophonie, he argued, is a neo-colonial instrument for the domestication of the cultural elite, mainly in Africa. Numerous French-writing authors are neither French, nor want to bow to a Francophonie, where France with its language is still seen as the universal benefactor, concerned with giving civilisation to the people living in the darkness. An author's use of French should not be measured by the rule sticks of the French grammar book, France' history and culture.

Almost facetiously, Waberi responded to what he felt was the audience's expectation for him to make a statement on Islam. Yes, in his country of origin Islam still is a dominant force. However, he himself hardly practises the religion. 'I have to play the Muslim now' was heard throughout the conference, and not just by him. The debate about Islam seems to force all sides to make statements, something that would have been unnecessary a few years ago.

The next speaker, Kenan Malik ([www.kenanmalik.com](http://www.kenanmalik.com)) divided the migration-integration debate into two camps: on the one side, assimilationists and on the other, the multiculturalists. The slogan, 'all people have the same rights and duties' for him summed up the position of the former, in which a 'common set of values' is required (cf. his speech "Europe and its multinational Project of Integration: How to succeed?" in this volume)

On the other side, he shed a new perspective on multiculturalists. He addressed them as people who want the different cultures to live separately, preferably in their own ghettos. Each culture is responsible for keeping its own house, i.e. its ghetto, in order. Multi-

culturalists don't share the conviction that all members of society should have the same fundamental values in common. Malik pointed to the British example: 'After the 7 July bombings, Prime Minister Blair, in his television address, did not ask British Muslims directly, but Islamic community leaders, to 'keep their house in order'.

In Germany, the Interior Minister Schäuble, is doing something similar with his German Conferences on Islam, even though I have not seen this criticised in the press yet. The key aim always seems to be to ensure that the chosen community leaders are representative and legitimate. And about this at every new edition of the Conference breaks out a fierce discussion. In my opinion, suchlike discussions are an attempt to enter into a debate with Germans of migrant background, in whose communities may reside marginal elements that pose a threat to the host country. Now, more than ever, it seems to me a crucial political prerequisite to ask migrants of Muslim faith and their representatives to accept the fundamental principles of peaceful cohabitation within their host country. This means also that they are required to institutionalise their faith - based communities and its migrant or non-migrant members. These institutions would enable the civil society and the state to enter into contracts and agreements, with clearly stated rules and duties on both sides. Concordats, trade union agreements and public-private partnerships are the historic precedents and current role models within a representative democracy, such as Germany.

The multiculturalists, who are much maligned today, started on this stony path in the former Federal Republic of Germany. To start with, institutional boulders had to be moved. Nobody felt responsible for the guest workers that were invited. The multiculturalists were one of the first to offer language courses to migrants, first in their mother tongue, later also in German, which was then followed by employment rights and responsibilities. The recognition of the respective migrant histories, including their contribution to the development of the host country (e.g. since 1981 the series, 'Foreigners in Berlin' by the first Berlin Officer for Integration, Barbara John), was the basis for the development of a certain national pride reflected both within the migrant communities, and towards the

outside. The creation of an Office for Multicultural Affairs, the first of which was set up in Frankfurt in 1989 with the political refugee Daniel Cohn-Bendit as its first, unpaid office holder, marked another step on the multiculturalists' march through the institutions. Other city councils and local authorities followed suit.

Cohn-Bendit's vivid account about these beginnings and the common rules for a new type of homeland were put down together in 1992 with Thomas Schmid under the programmatic title: "Heimat Babylon" (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe).

The podium discussion that followed Malik's speech was enriched mainly by the Czech PhD student Muhic Dizdarevic (Charles University, Prague). Her depiction, in easy-to-follow English, of the Czech situation, taking into account the previous presentations, was, for me, a sign for the openness of the conference: it is rare for a PhD student to sit alongside professors and other illustrious personalities. Her short intervention (cf. her "Statement for the Discussion Panel in this volume) regarding the widespread ignorance of the minority (Roma) and migration question (people of Chinese or Vietnamese origin, increasingly also from Eastern Europe) in the Czech Republic was extremely interesting.

## **Second Day: History Lessons for the European citizen**

History lessons kicked off the start of the programme for day two. Ute Frevert (Yale University) reminded us of immigration to the USA: from the voluntary (founding fathers) to the forced (slaves), to the annual Green-Card lottery for qualified migrants worldwide today; a history of inclusion and exclusion (native inhabitants). Her daughter's school experiences provided a vivid illustration: in her history classes, 'history' is being interpreted as 'heritage'. Each child has to research and present her own family's migration history, as an example for the migration story of the specific ethnic minority or nation. Building on these contributions to the US-American nation and culture, Frevert pleaded for a 'citizenship education', which places at its core 'the rights, duties and entitlements' of its citizens. In the US schools,



democratic values are learnt and practised. It is Frevert's belief that this practice has come to bear fruit in 'grassroots' movements, which, for example, fight for the right for abortion. 'Participatory Democracy' is the term she coined for this 'hard to get at' achievement in the North American and European History.

The next speaker, Paul Scheffer, from the University of Amsterdam, built on Frevert's presentation by urging us to review and disseminate our own European migration histories Cf. his contribution "The Land of Arrival. How Migration is changing Europe" in this volume). This would show the emergence of nation states as a continuous process, accompanied by multiple conflicts, which in turn led to the redefinition of the very bases of society. Historical research shows that the integration of groups of migrants can be represented on a linear continuum, from the initial rejection to isolation, through to confrontation and criticism. However, host societies and migrant groups have always found a *modus vivendi* of peaceful cohabitation. Migrant groups, whether implicitly or explicitly, always throw into question the way a nation sees itself. According to Scheffer, we should have the courage to ask ourselves the same questions as those we ask migrants in their immigration or citizenship tests. This could possibly result in other questions being raised, and might change our understanding of our nation state.

In this presentation, as in the discussion that followed, the theme was the 'Islamic threat': September 11 as the constant warning on the wall? I liked Scheffer, as when he emphatically demanded the right of Muslim immigrants not to be religious or join another faith community. His was clearly an encouraging refusal to bow to the noticeable pressure during this conference to make a stance on one's religion of origin, i.e. to play the Muslim, Christian or Buddhist. However, too few conference participants adopted his refusal.

'Pride and Shame' for the history of one's country or own ethnic group could have been the result of Scheffer's historical reflections. For his country stands for Rembrand and Vermeer and, at the same time, for its participation in the slave trade and in colonial exploitation.

These morning presentations rounded up the conference's first round of plenary sessions. The six workshops that followed were an opportunity to explore and discuss the arguments in more depth. I decided on Workshop 2: 'How to become a good (European) citizen: standards, subjects and models'. Unfortunately, in my workshop as in the others, more presentations were the norm and were shoehorned into the available time by the coordinators. I decided to stay in the same workshop. Even if not all topics interested me in the same way, I would at least be able to participate in its group dynamics.

Friedrich Heckmann from the University of Bamberg (Germany) was the coordinator. In his working group at the European Forum for Migration Studies he had already developed proposals for integration courses well before these became compulsory for immigrants. At the moment, these courses are piloted in cities, such as Nürnberg. This was followed by other participants presenting research, undertaken as part of their academic studies or not, on citizenship integration courses in European countries. What all these had in common was that each time the concepts of Britishness, Deutschsein, Etre francais, etc, were to be operationalised in the test papers, they bordered on the ridiculous. For example:

- Which colour are the claws of the German Federal Eagle?
- What would you do when in a pub in England you accidentally spill someone's beer?

My guess is that this clumsiness in expressing national characteristics is based on three factors:

- Instigated by politicians, civil servants undertake this task, and whilst they are aware of recommendations emanating from research and numerous NGOs, these are mostly ignored at this stage
- As these tasks are usually undertaken under time pressure, there is no time to organise a public debate, e.g. consultations on the products proposed (with the exception of legislative procedures)
- The lack of broad societal consensus on the necessary foundations for active citizenship in European countries was evidenced by all presentations, whether these applied to resident citizens or to newcomers.

Taking the example of the Netherlands (the murder of Theo van Gogh) and Denmark (the row over the Muhammad cartoons), the workshop could verify the validity of Scheffer's thesis, i.e. that a reflection about fundamental values only occurs in times of crisis. The Danish presenter, Per Mouritsen, University of Aarhus, demonstrated how the caricatures incident made the Danish realise just how vital a role irony and jokes play in the Danish political debate. Even those critical of the cartoons in question defended the right of the caricaturist to publish these drawings. Ines Michalowski, from the University of Münster, concluded that the citizenship examinations increasingly test knowledge, (language) skills and attitudes towards the host culture. Europe as a continent and as a political project, however, doesn't enter the equation.

The last point formed the main issue presented by Fiorella Dell'Olio, Cambridge University, who studied the discourses in peace education, global learning and multiculturalism. The realisation of our life circumstances, whether in its physical or moral guise, has to be considered and dealt with in a global context. Why struggle to become a national citizen, involving a lot of effort from all sides, and then become a European and World citizen? Not without some flaws, Dell'Olio advocated for a citizenship education for the One World, which prepares people for life in an open and democratic society. In this way, Dell'Olio represented the broadest interpretation of citizenship education, one that dispenses of the nation state. Both the workshop and the following 'laboratory' in the same room – the difference between the two was not entirely clear to me – supported the view that there needs to be some form of organised encouragement for migrants to take an active part in their host society. However, what form this should take was the object of fierce discussion.

As far as I was concerned, these stimulating discussions convinced me that with each arrival of a new group of migrants society needs to reformulate its 'social contract' (J. J. Rousseau). But this requires that all previous contract partners are aware of the new contract, and agree to subscribe and implement its values and content, as opposed to only the new signatories. The process for formulating this 'volonté générale' would follow probably Scheffer's timeline.

With hindsight the discussions, which took place in the workshops and laboratories, were clear and rigorous, despite a certain amount of dissatisfaction being voiced about the type of discussion and the overall purpose of the conference. For myself, it represented an opportunity for personal development. I noticed, however, that in particular representatives of ministerial agencies and departments, and representatives of organisations with specific purposes (e.g. the development of learning programmes), expected more practical outcomes and results, which they could implement in their work. I had the impression that these individuals were familiar with the basic arguments put forward by speakers and presenters, and now wanted to move on to some kind of hands – on activity to a citizenship education of migrants in Europe, or at least, to the curricular cornerstones of such an education. Basically, if this unique organisation in Europe, the Federal Agency for Civic Education, is able to set up and organise such a European Network, then why not thrash out first good practice ‘solutions’ in the presence of so much expertise? I would recommend to whoever organises the follow-up conference in Sofia in September/October 2008, taking more into consideration this kind of expectation and readiness.

The conference – the third of its type in a series planned by the Federal Agency – was entitled ‘Networking European Citizenship Education’. I have rarely participated in an event where the expression ‘networking’ could have applied more. All participants took an active part in it:

- Cooperation partners: I counted 9 from 5 countries; staying in the background, they did not want to impose their own agendas
- Speakers, presenters: for the majority chosen righteously for their topic
- Participants: about 200, very diverse from 29 countries

The eagerness with which all participants discussed these pressing European issues from the standpoint of their own perspective was certainly impressive. Apart from those already mentioned, there was the young, enthusiastic note-taking lawyer for African migrants, from Lisbon; two teachers from comprehensive schools in Cologne; the secretary of an NGO in Rotherham/England; the multilingual political

analyst from Berlin, the woman on placement at the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation in Lisbon; the impatient curriculum developer from Enschede; the co-organising director of the Goethe Institute; the reserved Programme coordinator from Belgrade; the European film manager and the Oral History Expert, both from Berlin – all were visibly willing to contribute to the re-shaping of the European migration space.

To begin with I described the conference's underpinning theme as complicated and ambitious. Complicated, in terms of linguistic communication ('We all speak bad English'), the remits of the working groups (workshops, laboratories – although the tasks were written down, my group ignored them mostly) and the lacking focus on results.

And ambitious: the issues that Europe faces as an immigration continent remain unresolved. The balancing act between safeguarding 'fortress Europe' on the one hand (e.g. the establishment of the European border Agency Frontex in Warsaw), and immigration legislation in the US or Canadian style, is being felt in each country. Seen this way, the ambition to find a European middle way cannot be strong enough. The next conference would do well to involve additional stakeholders in the Europe immigration continent theme, such as, for example, migrant organisations and security agencies. These stakeholders should also join the European Migration Societies Network.

### **Day 3: Learning from the United States**

The last day saw a captivating talk by José Casanova of the New School for Social Research, New York, emphatically introduced by Jörg Lau (from the German weekly 'Die Zeit'). His topic was 'Religious Pluralism – European Secular Identities – European Integration: Challenges for Citizenship Education'. Similarly to Ute Frevert, he praised the US - American 'nation-building' model. Hyphenated identities are the norm, without this being considered as a threat, through a supposed lack of identification with the host nation.

Even religious connections are being perceived as a resource rather than a threat. His research on the Catholic community in the US, with its allegiance to the Pope in Rome, i.e. to a power residing outside of the nation-state, was evidence for his viewpoint. He foresaw a similar process for the Muslim migrants in Europe. His warning was to avoid the imposition of a Christian-based cultural dominance in Europe (e.g. in the European Constitution).

If ethnic origin and non-Christian faiths are to be viewed as a source of revitalisation for the European Union and its member states, it looks like we have a long way to go.

## **Rita Süssmuth**

### **Citizenship and Immigration in a Globalised World: European Perspectives**

Dear Colleague President Krüger, dear participants.  
Thank you first of all for your welcoming words.

I am very happy to join you this morning in Lisbon and speak about a very important topic – citizenship of migrants. What does citizenship mean not only for migrants, but also for those who live with migrants – what does it mean for our societies? I think you have made a wonderful choice by coming to Lisbon. Why? Because the next EU presidency will be Portugal's, and the main topic will be: Citizenship. I think my friend António Vitorino - the former Portuguese EU commissioner – who is among us this morning, has highlighted the importance of citizenship on the European agenda. Let me stress that Citizenship is not only a question of participation, it is also a question of human rights. Nothing is more controversial – I believe – than dealing with migration issues via a human rights approach. I experienced this first hand during the debates we had in the Global Commission on International Migration. We were very glad that especially Kofi Annan pushed this approach, because issues of citizenship are very much linked to the question of rights and obligations. Reservations against a human rights approach are still strong and widespread. This shows that many people still think in terms of social and political exclusion. The most important question and the biggest problem with regard to integration is the lack of inclusion. For this reason, I am very happy the Portuguese presidency intends to follow a comprehensive approach to dealing with the citizenship of migrants in Europe. If you exclude citizenship, you are taking a very particular and not a comprehensive approach. I strongly believe that we should stop putting people into different categories. As Mr. Krüger has told us, the French example shows that even a very progressive naturalization policy does not necessarily and automatically mean that problems of social and cultural exclusion are solved for good.

But it is important to ask: Are we really practising multiculturalism, or are we just living side by side? And the other question is: Why do we hesitate so much when it comes to giving civic rights to migrants? Sometimes when we speak of immigrants, we avoid using the word "citizens". As a matter of fact, it is not only a question of rethinking citizenship, but also of thinking fundamentally about the citizenship of the people living in our countries. An ethnic approach can – I believe – create more problems than we are able to solve. Nobody should be allowed to differentiate between ethnicities which are welcome and others which are not. What we need is a human approach which looks at people as individuals with different backgrounds and different talents and asks about their potential for living together peacefully and productively. This is – I believe – the cardinal issue in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is therefore very important to take a comprehensive approach to citizenship education, one which encompasses other areas of civic life. We may have good citizenship education, but if we fail to integrate migrants fully into our educational systems in general and into the labour market and the political system, we will not be able to make any real progress in this area.

In order to show you what "Citizenship and Immigration in a Globalised World – European Perspectives" means to me, I would like to highlight three different aspects. First of all, let me stress that Europe's problems in the field of migration and integration should no longer be regarded as a national affair and a domestic concern which can be discussed and decided at the national level only. More or less, we recognise today that no single state alone can solve the problems confronting us. What we have come to comprehend is that the European Commission has been much more progressive, looking for more cooperation and coordination. However, it has had to overcome high barriers, because the member states have consistently defended national decision-making processes in order not to have to shift national authority to European institutions. As a member of the Global Commission, I have myself witnessed similar processes. On the one hand, one could discern a need for a globalised view in order to identify the scale of migration in an interconnected world. On the other hand, one could observe strong opposition from a lot of countries, above all the USA, to ceding influence to the UN on this topic and to conducting



governance and management at a global level. There has been a first high-level dialogue, but we can only hope for a second and a third round of discourse in the near future.

Secondly, there are more than 200 million people migrating somewhere in the world every year. From our perspective, Europe might appear to be the most severely affected continent. That was true for a certain time, but it is no longer true now. If we take a global view, we soon realise that it is the American, Asian (i.e. the former CIS) and especially the African continents that are bearing the brunt of the migration processes. We can learn from this global perspective and we must acknowledge that migration is not a transitional phenomenon, but a persistent one.

Looking back in history, many European countries have a similar tradition of immigration in the form of the recruitment of "guest workers" in the 1950s and 1960s. Policies were not aimed at granting migrants citizenship of their host countries. Instead, the belief at the time was that labour migrants should stay for a few years and then return to their home countries. But reality proved to be different, as Max Frisch, a Swiss author, succinctly put it: "We asked for a work force and we got human beings."

Clearly, we have to take today's different and new patterns of migration into account and adapt our civic education programmes to the new situation. Many of our national policies are focused on long-term, permanent settlement, and not on temporary residence. Nonetheless, a gradual change in the nature of migration is taking place around the world, the model of permanent settlement is giving way to a fluid and ongoing process of immigration and emigration, i.e. circular migration. You start off in one country, move to another country and perhaps in the end you settle down in one or the other or you return to your country of origin. Then you might even start all over again. This shows the dynamic nature of modern migration. Consequently, we have to include the situation of temporary as well as permanent migrants in our deliberations, and we have to adjust our notions of civic rights accordingly.

Let me come to my third point: When using the term integration we may come up against various misunderstandings; at best the term is open to different interpretations and thus causes many difficulties. In many countries integration is conceived in the sense of adaptation and assimilation. In this respect, host countries expect migrants to conform to the local living conditions in the host society. Far too often, governments fail to ask their own citizens to adapt to living with migrants. How the term integration is interpreted is therefore very important. In my own country, integration has recently become a priority topic of discussion. Like other European countries, Germany was for a long time reluctant to admit that it was a destination country for immigration. It was in denial about its status as an immigration country, seeing itself only as a host country for temporary migrants. But in reality it had – long since – become an immigration country. The migrants were expected to learn the language, to follow the values and the rules of the countries they were now living in. No thought was given to how to deal with their personal backgrounds and their cultures, nor to how they might impact on and bring about changes in culture in our own societies.

When in my own country Wolfgang Schäuble, the Federal Minister of the Interior, pointed out that integration means not only learning how to live with Muslims, but also how to integrate their culture and their religion, this was more than just a new approach, it was a revolutionary approach. In some German cities, even the issue of building a new mosque gives rise to a lot of controversial debates. If you do not have the right to participate as citizens in these decision-making processes, you will soon feel alienated and not at home. People from different cultures with diverse ethnic backgrounds should be considered full members of our societies, enriching us, not as a threat. It is therefore important to discuss the social, economic and political context of civic education in any immigration country.

Until recently, we did not really invite the migrants and their organisations to join us in solving the problems. It is, thus, very crucial not just to make policy in favour of migrants, but to make policy together with migrants. The right to vote is important, but a comprehensive concept of citizenship education has to embrace the migrants themselves, the

individuals and their organisations. I have learned a lot from women's issues to the effect that it is not enough just to define the needs and necessities of women, or of migrants, or of the disadvantaged. Instead, we need to include them and invite them to participate, at the local community level, at the regional, national and international level. I have also learned a lot from NGOs. A comparison of European countries clearly shows that the more open they are to civil society, the more qualified they are to solve problems and to find better solutions. We do know that migration and integration are always accompanied by tensions and conflicts, but this is part of the dynamics of our societies.

It is a pity that for decades some European states, and also my own country, continued to be convinced that we require a homogeneous society in order to manage immigration successfully. Unquestionably, we need to create a common understanding of our similarities and differences. No society can survive in the long term without reaching a consensus on how to live together. The substance of our constitution, of our rights and obligations is always an essential part of civic education. I do believe that the word "integration" is not always appropriate: we should rather see ourselves as navigating between different cultures. Cultures which come together are mutually enriching, they can promote development, provided that we are willing to learn and to overcome our ignorance. Civic education must serve to bring these different cultures together to promote learning from other continents, and ultimately to accomplish global education. Since many countries in Europe have not even reached the stage of Europeanized education, it is going to prove a great challenge to achieve the global education stage.

In recent years, the question of the rights and obligations of migrants has become a topic of paramount interest. We are at the stage of developing the concepts and programmes, but we cannot yet implement them. Thanks to all the experts in this hall, we already know a lot, but we are far from putting the expertise into practice. Let me propose not repeating what we already know, but reflecting on how to implement it. For this purpose, it is essential to get together, to learn from one another, to form networks, and to define common European standards.

It cannot be that a migrant coming from a third country finds acceptable conditions in one country, in another not at all. If we have a European political and cultural identity of multiculturalism, we need some shared principles and some agreements on how to act within these 27 states. It is not sufficient to claim we can resolve this at the national level. In 1999, with the launch of the Tampere process, the first activities in harmonising procedures at the European level were established, but these concentrated on refugees only. As you can see, it has been only a very short time since we started thinking of changes in our societies from a more European perspective.

Finally, I would like to stress that we need to look for good practice at an European level. There are two further aspects I would like to comment on:

Firstly, whenever I hear all the arguments in Germany claiming that it is not possible to integrate people from developing countries, from cultures which are so different from European cultures, I think we should look to the many examples of work by citizens' initiatives, by NGOs such as foundations, associations, sometimes research results, that show that integration is indeed possible and working. When confronted with the situation of "unintegrated" children – young people who are perceived as unwilling to integrate – we ought to ask ourselves how we could have allowed this to happen in the first place. This kind of refusal is very often a response to frustration with and failures of the educational system. Nowadays, we have numerous examples to show that integration can be successful, provided that it starts early enough in childhood and incorporates the ideas put forward by the foundations and NGOs.

I would never have expected to see something like the German Conference on Islam<sup>1</sup> bringing together different groups of Muslim organisations and individuals at the national level. It shows that there are steps forward, but there are always steps backward as well. These steps backward – especially at the political level – are often due to efforts to cater to the expectations of voters who are dissatisfied and disapprove of migrants. To avoid relapsing into old patterns, politicians and educators need to adopt a leading role in this context. Without effective leadership in a society, we will not be able to make any progress. Addressing the various stakeholders, I have already spoken about the NGOs, but we also need to consider the very important role of the business sector. If we want to make full use of the human potential and human capital of migrants, we cannot rely on civic education alone. Business and the corporate sector have to play a role. This approach calls for participation at different levels, in different projects at a national and transnational level. Whenever we have been able to bring migrants and non-migrants together in projects, we have witnessed a change of thinking, a change of attitudes. We have solved problems together. Whereas we speak a lot of national identity, it is local identity that can provide us with another approach, just take the example of big cities like Dublin or Stuttgart or any other city. "I am not interested in your passports," the mayors of these cities say, "but I tell you, you are all Dubliners, you all are Stuttgart citizens, and we have to stick together to solve our problems together, to foster creativity among our citizens and to show we can live together peacefully and productively." I think this approach, which takes the city as a symbol of an historical forum of citizenship, should be applied all over the European Union. This will imply – I say this for my own country – giving migrants the right to vote at the local level. That is why I cannot understand why an EU citizen who has been living in a

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<sup>1</sup> The German Conference on Islam, launched by the Federal Minister of the Interior Wolfgang Schäuble, was first held in 2006. There are 30 permanent participants, 15 of whom are representatives of the German government and 15 of whom represent Muslims living in Germany. The Conference is intended to be a long-term process of negotiation and communication between the German state and representatives of Muslims living in Germany, and will continue for two to three years. (cf. Federal Ministry of the Interior home page)

city for just three weeks has the right to vote there, whereas migrants who have been living there for 20, 30 or 40 years do not. There is clearly a lack of rationality and coherence when it comes to voting rights for migrants. And if our constitution does not grant voting rights to migrants, we should convince government and parliament to change the constitution and adapt it to changing realities. I will stop here and encourage you to make the most out of this conference.

Thank you for your attention.

## **Abdourahman A. Waberi**

### **The Boundless Kingdom of Imagination**

*“Writers are citizens of many countries: the finite and frontiers country of observable and everyday life, the boundless kingdom of imagination, the half-lost land of memory”*

*Salman Rushdie, text delivered to the International Parliament of Writers, november 1993, Strasbourg*

When the organisers of this event kindly invited me to deliver this lecture, they suggested something that might reconcile my two worlds – the exile (here in its broader sense) in Europe and literature. While gathering ideas, feelings and impressions to conceive my topic for today, I thought about the issues that dominate my life the last two decades: my first years as an African student in Normandy, the first stories I published at that time and the unsuccessful homecoming in my country of birth, Djibouti, the latest French territory to be decolonised in June 1977. After five years in Caen, I have been turned out into a singularity, that is to say, I became a writer. Because of that peculiarity, I’ve had no other choice but to remain distant from the tight regime of Djibouti and to construct laboriously a self with many layers of identity and ties of loyalty. These events constitute my personal history which is not so different from that of many others. How did I succeed in finding my way in that difficult period, a period of profound anxiety, a period of questions and doubts, of small inner volcanos, the kind of schizophrenic dislocation experienced by millions of migrants throughout the world. Why is the question ‘Who am I?’ not longer so problematic and frightening? How did I succeed in finding cultural paths and knots both personal and collective? It is quite possible that I have cured, for the time being at least, the neurosis I was facing because I became a manipulator of words, *un homme de lettres*, a man of living in a country of his own imagination. My short introduction jumps over different concepts and difficulties – the complex notion of exile for instance - that I am not going to explore and eventually solve. It is interesting that the Bible describes naming as a decisive moment of creation. God sets man free through language and gives man the power to name the animals. Adam assumes a paramount

creative role, just as God did, through words. What is more, Indians believe in a universal mind – brahman – of which we are all a part. So, the main question (of this introduction) might be: are there rivers and bridges, modest or grandiose, that can unit all of us? Is there something as a collective imagination (*imaginaire*) founded upon the human condition beyond time and space ?

## **1. Problems without Passports**

I could continue discussing my personal problems for quite some time but it is more interesting and more challenging to move to serious considerations. Our world is facing, to use the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's phrase, numerous "problems without passports" – problems of terrorism and counterterrorism, of proliferating conflicts, of the degradation of our common planet, of contagious diseases and chronic starvation, of human rights and human wrongs, of mass illiteracy and massive displacement. These are problems that no one country, however powerful, and even no one continent, however protected, can solve alone. These are surely the shared responsibility of humankind. And therefore they cry out for solutions that, like the problems themselves, also cross frontiers. It is comprehensible to try to ignore worldwide tragedies, to retreat into the private sphere and discard depressing issues. Yet an event, or could we call it a sad ‘fait-divers’, taken place in 1999, still haunts me. Yaguine Koita (aged 14) and Fodé Tounkara (aged 15) were born in Conakry, Guinea. On the 28th of July, they froze to death on a Sabena Airbus (Flight 520) flying from Conakry, Guinea, to Brussels, Belgium. Their bodies were discovered on the 2nd of August in the airplane's rear right-hand wheel bay at Brussels International Airport, after having made at least three return trips between Conakry and Brussels. The boys were carrying plastic bags with birth certificates, school report cards, photographs and a letter. This letter, written in imperfect French, was widely published in the world media. I will, with your permission, quote a few lines of that letter I guess many of you know well. English translation of the letter

*“Excellencies, Messrs. members and officials of Europe, We have the honorable pleasure and the great confidence in you to write this letter to speak to you about the objective of our journey and the suffering of us, the children and young people of Africa. But first of all, we present*



*to you life's most delicious, charming and respected greetings. To this effect, be our support and our assistance. You are for us, in Africa, those to whom it is necessary to request relief. We implore you, for the love of your continent, for the feeling that you have towards your people and especially for the affinity and love that you have for your children whom you love for a lifetime. [Furthermore, for the love and meekness of our creator God the omnipotent one who gave you all the good experiences, wealth and ability to well construct and well organize your continent to become the most beautiful one and most admirable among the others]. Messrs. members and officials of Europe, we call out for your solidarity and your kindness for the relief of Africa. Do help us, we suffer enormously in Africa, we have problems and some shortcomings regarding the rights of the child. In terms of problems, we have war, disease, malnutrition, etc. As for the rights of the child in Africa, and especially in Guinea, we have too many schools but a great lack of education and training. Only in the private schools can one have a good education and good training, but it takes a great sum of money. Now, our parents are poor and it is necessary for them to feed us. Furthermore, we have no sports schools where we could practice soccer, basketball or tennis]. This is the reason, we, African children and youth, ask you to create a big efficient organization for Africa to allow us to progress. Therefore, if you see that we have sacrificed ourselves and risked our lives, this is because we suffer too in Africa and that we need you to fight against poverty and to put an end to the war in Africa. Nevertheless, we want to learn, and we ask you to help us in Africa learn to be like you. Finally, we appeal to you to excuse us very, very much for daring to write you this letter to you, the great personages to whom we owe much respect. And do not forget it is to you whom we must lament about the weakness of our abilities in Africa. Written by two Guinean children, Yaguine Koita and Fodé Tounkara”.*

If facts and figures are undeniable, it is not just a question about a set of figures on GNP tables, a subject for economists and businessmen. It is rather a matter of people. Yes, Africa is indeed now poorer than it has ever been. Extreme poverty has multiplied four times over the last two decades. More than a third of the continent's inhabitants survive on less than half a dollar a day. More "development money" (mostly

European) has gone into Africa than the Marshall Plan brought to a war-destroyed Europe. It is also absolutely true that most of that money returns to the pockets of the donor agencies.

But where are our industries, universities, public institutions, hospitals, roads? Our civil wars have gone on for so long that they seem to be endemic, eternal, and insoluble. Somalia, a country which is almost mine because I'm culturally a Somali, has been totally disappeared as a state. Victim of the plethora of Somalian warlords. At the dark heart of African insecurity we find poverty, endemic and growing worse. We find greed. I am talking of the greed of the predators – the arms manufacturers and the oil guzzlers and the smugglers of people. Let me confess something heavy on my heart: having dealt with Somalia and having written a book on the Rwandan genocide (*Moisson de crânes, Le Serpent à plumes*, Paris, 2000), I would have occasionally pictured myself as an artist engagé but I must confess that I know nothing about the Darfour conflict. Experts discuss whether it could be designated as a genocide or not and there I am mute and ignorant. End of the parenthesis. From East to West of the continent, the situation is equally depressing. An average Nigerian, despite the oil boom, is now poorer than in 1970; the country is devastated by ethnic and religious disputes and remains one of the most corrupt places on earth; the justice system has all but collapsed; civil disorder and escapism are the norm and the once proud universities (Ibadan, the home of the first generation of daring Nigerian thinkers such as novelist Chinua Achebe or Ife where Wole Soyinka took his first position as a professor) have imploded. Nowadays, there is a joke tailored by my generation: 'Do you work or do you teach ?' is the question the potential mother-in-law asks you when you are introduced to her by your girlfriend. *Blague à part*, the vast majority of developing countries have emerged recently from the womb of colonialism; both colonialism and globalization have in many ways fractured and distorted their cultural self-perceptions. Development will not occur without a reassertion of identity: that this is who we are, this is what we are proud of, this is what we want to be. In this process, culture and development are fundamentally linked and inter-dependent. The task of the writer is to find new ways (and revive old ones) of expressing his/her culture, just as his/her society strives, in the jungle of globalization, to find new ways

of being and becoming. In my latest novel, *In the United States of Africa* (Jean-Claude Lattès edition, Paris, 2006), which is both a satire and a philosophical tale à la mode of Voltaire and Swift, I tried to revisit one of the most inspiring political ideas of the late fifties and sixties - Panafricanism – so that younger African generations know something about Kwame Nkrumah and Cheikh Anta Diop, Habib Bourguiba and Frantz Fanon, George Padmore and Haile Selassie. At the same time, I tried to put the world upside down. Africa has become a hegemonic continent just as the USA or the European Union and consequently the USA and the EU are the worst countries on earth. I did not write the novel to take a kind of virtual revenge (the poor replacing the powerful and closing their frontiers to the white easterners, desperate young Portuguese or Italians disappearing into the Mediterranean Sea whereas young charming girls from Monaco or the Vatican find themselves trapped behind walls of prostitution in Algiers or Douala). What I tried to do is to picture the world from a different, perhaps new and refreshing, point of view. All in all, I would like the novel to be read as a philosophical tale addressing the present issues of inclusion and exclusion, migration and powerpolitics, race and otherness. It also is a pleasant story, I hope. As a writer committed to democracy, ethnic and religious pluralism and secularism, I see cultural reassertion as a vital part of the enormous challenges confronting African countries – as vital as economic development. We are all familiar with the notion that "man does not live by bread alone". In Africa, I would argue that music, dance, art and the telling of stories are indispensable to our ability to cope with that vital essential construct we call the human condition. After all, why does man need bread? To survive. But why survive, if it is only to indulge in more bread or more couscous? To live is more than just to sustain life – it is to enrich, and be enriched by life, by others be they strangers or neighbours, friends or foreigners. Our poorest men and women in Africa and elsewhere in the developing world feel the throb of imagination on their pulse, that is why they continue telling stories to their children under the starlit skies. This brings me to Europe, the most illuminating continent in modern history. Europe has been the land of mass migration in the 19th century and till the middle of the 20th century. The social phenomena at the origins of yesterday mass migration were not very different from the ones which drive nowadays millions

of African, Asian migrants to the lands of Europe. Migration and nation are two connected entities, now in conflict, now in harmony. Are those leaving their homelands traitors or ambassadors? The relationships between migrants and local authorities swing from *laissez-faire* to coercion, from negative perception to positive perception, from ‘immigration subie’ to ‘immigration choisie’ if we use French recent taxonomy. These days, we experience the utterly negative side with its amount of fear, rejection and racism. The events of September 11th inaugurated a whole new set of challenges for Muslim immigrants. Life has become more difficult—not only for them but for their host societies, as well. And never in modern times has so much international attention been focused on Muslims – their religion, their beliefs, their way of life. Yet, one might not forget the fact that migration has a history as long as humanity. It has always existed and it will continue to exist. The largest community in the world ignored by institutions and statistics, a community with neither flag nor army, is the caste of “the other”: of exiles, refugees, immigrants, displaced people, outsiders, outcasts, strangers, untouchables – and, of course, artists and writers (as different as Dante, Victor Hugo, Einstein, Kafka, Mann, Conrad, Benjamin, Arendt, Hikmet, Neruda, García Márquez, Rushdie or Soyinka). When I am optimistic I fancy that as a writer, as an African-European citizen with many loyalties and ties, as a man of this time and world, my task is to be open to others, the Other with a capital ‘O’, to the Beyond, to what I don’t know and what I assume to be different. I like to think the knowledge of the Other is the highest task to undertake, a task similar to the unveiling of what Emmanuel Levinas once called the ‘visage humain’. When one becomes aware that the tragedies of our time are all global in origin and reach, and that tackling them is a global responsibility, then half of the job has been done. Interdependence and living together are the key goals.

## **2. The International Parliament of Writers**

Europe has in stock all the necessary conceptual and philosophical tools to tackle the issue of integration and togetherness. Just an example, in 1993 a profoundly original institution, the International Parliament of Writers, was founded at Strasbourg. A cluster of famous writers, philosophers and opinion leaders (including Jacques Derrida, Pierre Bourdieu, Edouard Glissant, Salman Rushdie, Vincenzo Consolo,

Russell Banks, José Saramago etc.) put together their energy and reputation to rescue endangered writers throughout the globe. The protection of freedoms of expressions outlined in such documents as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (art. 19) and the charter of International PEN, was the key goal. One of its originality was the target. The Parliament was not interested in dealing with the states or a group of states but with the cities, the municipalities or, even as in Paris with districts or local partners such as the Musée Pompidou. A year and a half later, the European Charter of Cities of Asylum by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. The experience had many advantages. First, it proved much more efficient. Secondly, it discarded the national level and focused on more humane level. One of the Parliament's references or source of inspiration was the medieval network of (European) cities and the notion of hospitality vivid at those times (I am mentioning in passing here the notion of cosmopolitanism and hospitality revisited by Derrida – 'On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness', Autodafé, the review of the IPW). After twelve years of functioning, the Parliament, whose mission was temporary, was dissolved. Many writers of every corner of the globe were rescued and given a shelter. If the institution disappeared the idea is still alive in the USA, in Mexico and in Europe. The International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN), located in Stavanger, Norway, is one of the offsprings of the IPW. A brand new founding charter was signed last year, in June 11, 2006. 'The Municipality of Stavanger is economically and legally responsible for the ICORN Administration Centre. The aim of ICORN is to 'work to advance a spirit of solidarity between individual writers and their host cities, among writers within the network, and among the participating cities and regions of refuge' (Founding Charter, Page 1). Needless to say, this amount of precious experiences, accumulated in the last fifteen years, should inspire European policy makers. It should help them to formulate and implement original and appropriate responses to other groups and situations. The North-South or transnational relationships are defined by historical processes, by perceptions, and by power equations. Two components that appeal to me are ethics and power – more precisely, how non-power (or imagination) can be used as transformative agent. This brings me to the second part of my argument or my example. It deals with the French language and its legacy and future. This

recent and highly political debate has been labelled ‘Le Manifeste des 44’ by the medias. Le Manifeste des 44 44 French-language authors, including Tahar Ben Jelloun, Edouard Glissant, JMG Le Clézio, Amin Maalouf, Alain Mabanckou, Erik Orsenna, Maryse Conde and Michel Le Bris, signed a manifesto titled "Pour une 'littérature-monde' en français," which was published on the cover of Le Monde des Livres (March 16, 2007). I am one of the 4 writers of the manifesto with Alain Mabanckou, Michel Le Bris and Jean Rouaud. The idea emerged in Bamako, Mali, where a North-South artistic festival ‘Etonnants Voyageurs Bamako’, has been taken place the last six years. Ideas and heated discussions take place there annually. The desire to undertake something practical was expressed by a group of writers, some African or Francophone and some French. These writers wanted to implement a reconsideration of the literary aspect of "francophonie", in which France sees itself as the centre or the hub, while countries from the ex-empire are the spokes or the periphery.

*«Le centre, ce point depuis lequel était supposée rayonner une littérature franco-française, n'est plus le centre. Le centre jusqu'ici, même si de moins en moins, avait eu cette capacité d'absorption qui contraignait les auteurs venus d'ailleurs à se dépouiller de leurs bagages avant de se fondre dans le creuset de la langue et de son histoire nationale : le centre, nous disent les prix d'automne, est désormais partout, aux quatre coins du monde. Fin de la francophonie. Et naissance d'une littérature monde en français ».*

Here is my rough translation: “The center, that point from which a Francophone-French literature was supposed to shine, is no longer the center. The center, up until now, had an absorption capacity that forced authors who came from somewhere else to give up their belongings before melting in the pot of the language and its national history. The center, the fall prizes tell us, is now everywhere, in the four corners of the world. End of francophonie. And birth of a world literature in French”. It has been largely noticed that this year, all the major French prizes (the Goncourt, the Grand Prix du roman de l'Académie française, the Renaudot and the Femina) were awarded to non-native French authors, and so it was perhaps an opportune time to raise the question of a "world literature in French," one that can live and thrive in the same way as world literature in English. Indeed, it is quite clear from the document that the authors look to the English-speaking world

as one in which it is easier for non-English writers to have their words heard, and their books considered for their merits. The authors write:

*«Combien d'écrivains de langue française, pris eux aussi entre deux ou plusieurs cultures, se sont interrogés alors sur cette étrange disparité qui les reléguait sur les marges, eux "francophones", variante exotique tout juste tolérée, tandis que les enfants de l'ex-empire britannique prenaient, en toute légitimité, possession des lettres anglaises ? Fallait-il tenir pour acquis quelque dégénérescence congénitale des héritiers de l'empire colonial français, en comparaison de ceux de l'empire britannique ? Ou bien reconnaître que le problème tenait au milieu littéraire lui-même, à son étrange art poétique tournant comme un derviche tourneur sur lui-même, et à cette vision d'une francophonie sur laquelle une France mère des arts, des armes et des lois continuait de dispenser ses lumières, en bienfaitrice universelle, soucieuse d'apporter la civilisation aux peuples vivant dans les ténèbres ?»*

And, in English: How many French-language writers, caught between two or several cultures, have asked themselves about this strange disparity, which relegated them to the margins, as 'francophones', a barely tolerated exotic variant, while the children of the ex-British empire were taking, in all legitimacy, possession of English letters? Was one supposed to take for granted a certain congenital degeneration among the heirs of the French colonial empire, by comparison with those of the British empire? Or else recognize that the problem was in the literary milieu itself, in its strange poetic art, turning like a dervish upon itself, and in this vision of a francophonie upon which a France, mother of letters, arms, and laws, continued to dispense its lights, as a universal benefactor, concerned with giving civilization to the peoples living in darkness?

Even if things are not so rosy in the world of English-language literature, they are certainly rosier than in the francophone world. In any case, the manifesto drew a number of reactions. Abdou Diouf, ex-president of Senegal and now secretary-general of the International Organization of Francophonie denounced the 44 authors as "gravediggers of francophonie." And in *Le Figaro*, presidential candidate Nicolas Sarkozy, who never misses an opportunity to show his muscles, jumped into the debate, saying that "francophonie is not a colonial concept." One wonders, given his passionate defense, how many na-

tive-born Frenchmen identify themselves as 'francophones.' We all know it is a term for the Blacks, the Browns, the migrants, The Others. Often, Francophone writers of European origins (such Russian born Andrei Makine or Greek born Vassilis Alexakis) succeed in joining the French literature category in bookshops, library, publishing collections or anthologies. On the other hand, French nationals by from the overseas (Glissant, Chamoiseau, Conde...), from the colonial empire are maintained into the Francophonie. The manifesto provokes an international coverage and a lively discussion is still going on the blogosphere. It is quite possible that the non-French world looks upon all of this with a mixture of sympathy and amusement. Some will think who cares about so silly labels (Francophone, French, Maghrebine, Negro-Africaine literature) while others will consider it as an obscure and sectarian debate. But, of course, I persist thinking that it is a very serious question considering the tight links between nation, citizenship and language in the history of France. In these times of identity revivalism (surenchère) and ambivalences, one of the aims of the manifesto is to reconsider the framework of the French model, to move from the French republic of letters to the "litterature monde" in French, this is of course a step forward before establishing the *welt-literatur*, the paramount dream of Goethe.

## Conclusion

The two examples show if need be that imagination is a transformative agent, it underlines the existence of groups and societies whose richness lies in their soul and not in their soil, whose past may offer more wealth than their present. Recognizing that this might be the case, and affirming that the imagination is as central to humanity's sense of its own worth as the ability to eat and drink and sleep under a roof, is part of the challenge. The IPW has shown us the way and the procedure. By renewing the true meaning of asylum. By welcoming persecuted immigrants. By removing borders. And by building decentralised bridges. I believe Europeans will not become any less European if, in Mahatma Gandhi's metaphor, we open the doors and windows of our continent and let foreign winds blow through our house. Diaspore writers have primarily brought broader political and cultural dimensions. They have vivified European literatures that were increasingly neglecting the ambitions of their grand heritage. They



have enlarged the horizons of countries self-righteously clinging to their insularity and shown them the world at large, a world once colonised. The enfants terribles of the UK, using the language of Shakespeare and Derek Walcott, for instance, have brought new visions of truths, colours, depths, spectrums, insights, and compassion. They have brought new horizons. They have enriched us with neglected or ignored cultures. They have reignited in us such universal concepts as the struggle for love, liberty, equality, and universal welfare. They have reminded us that the differences between peoples are superficial, that irrespective of ethnicity, colour, or creed, we laugh or weep in the same way and for the same reasons. This is why, as a writer, I would argue that the specificities of literature are the best antidote to the globalization of the imagination. Literature teaches us to empathise, to look beyond the obvious. Let me finish with a last image, a last wink to a European philosopher, Slavoj Žižek. Some claim that the era of the European intellectual fighting for the preservation of the diversity of the human spirit is now behind us. They claim that ‘les intellectuels sont fatigués’, that Sartre or Gramsci, Bourdieu or Derrida are history, that the European intellectual is mute and distant and brooding just like the character in the famous painting of Durer called ‘Melancholia’. Slavoj Žižek reminds us with his usual passion that one the most precious legacy of Europe is the forging of a dream of better condition for mankind.

# **Selma Muhic Dizdarevic**

## **Europe and its Multinational Project of Integration: How to Succeed? (1)**

### **1. On the Situation of Migration and Integration in Central Europe**

As other European regions, and also as Europe as such, the region of Central Europe bares only a light reference to a geographical region, referring more to political definition of a certain area. In case of Central Europe (CE), the use of the term can be ascribed as an achievement to the former President of the Czech Republic Václav Havel, who managed to replace the term Eastern Europe because the latter term invoked opposition between Western and Eastern Europe and did not go along well with the return of the Central European nations to “the European family” after the fall of communism. Therefore, the term refers to the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Slovakia, which have all recently joined the EU.

In short, the given countries have undergone tremendous changes from the late nineties up to now, trying to reconstitute themselves and repair the damage to social fabric inflicted by communism. At the same time they started facing some of the problems characteristic of the “old” EU countries, which often had no solution to offer themselves. One of such problems is migration. Since I am supposed to characterize the nature of migration and integration flows in the CE region, I will have to neglect a lot of differences in the given countries and focus on just a few of many common patterns.

First, let me focus on what did not happen as a pattern of integration: it was expected that post-communist societies of the region, which were so limited in terms of multiculturalism during communism would be more open and in a certain sense more compassionate with newly arriving migrants, partly because a lot of Central Europeans were migrants themselves or had a family member, who was a migrant. However, this did not turn out to be true – levels of xenophobia were rising coupled with animosity for national minorities. State pol-

icy response was rather slow and still leaves the impression of following more or less by inertia EU requirements than looking for their own specific path, which would be prosperous and adequate for the given societies. We should not forget that still some of the CE nationals migrate heavily into other EU states, such as Polish nationals to the UK or Ireland leaving a lot of blank spots on the local job markets and, thus, creating changes both in sending and receiving countries.

If we speak more specifically about the types of migration into the CE countries, they tend to be the following: illegal or semi-legal transit migration, inflow of refugees, asylum seekers and temporary protected persons, multi-form short-term flows of labor within the region and from or to other regions, seasonal movements of migrant workers, immigration for settlement (including re-emigration), not to mention huge movements of the members of many ethnic groups following the collapse of the former Soviet Union, either between its former republics or to beyond its boundaries. Given the above mentioned fact that the countries have undergone several huge societal changes, such as reconstituting society including some basic institutions and instruments destroyed by communist regime, changes of political and business elites and relatively shortly afterwards accession to the EU, response to these migration flows tended to be and still to a certain degree remains somewhat unsystematic. Still, the levels of migration influx are much lower than in almost all old EU countries, which gives hope that some of the mistakes made by the old EU societies will not be repeated by the new EU countries. However, since classical experiments in social sciences are not possible, it remains to be observed how the future cooperation will look like.

## **2. How to Succeed?**

Process of integration in European Union countries has two developing and somewhat separated sides: one is integration of the EU countries as such, including integration of new accession (and regularly acceding countries), the other is a far more visible and contested integration of newcomers, immigrants and refugees, i.e. groups of so-called new minorities. From the social point of view, this is a very challeng-

ing and hard to manage complicated range of problems because simultaneously the EU is constituting itself and absorbing newcomers from cultures and countries with very often quite different historical and political backgrounds. This requires quite an effort on the part of the European society, its institutions, policies, but also its citizens.

If we want to answer the question how to succeed in managing multicultural Europe bearing in mind the goal of integration, we have to ask the question: did we fail, and if so, where ? Do information and data warning us of failure of integration and multiculturalism, which we get from media and encounter in everyday life, signal that, although various policies were applied across Europe and although Europe has been and still is an attractive migration destination, this project of multicultural integration, understood as peaceful coexistence of cultures in one political community, European societies managed to produce an underclass consisting of immigrants and their descendants? My answer to this is: failure was not on the part of multicultural policies (although there are opinions that multiculturalism is European weakness, coming from bad colonial conscience), because there has been no single policy and there has not been a single isolated area where multiculturalism has been applied. What failed in my opinion was civic education and political emancipation in the aspect of coexistence of various groups as well as enhancing responsibilities, which the status of citizen entails, not stressing only rights and liberties.

The other important aspect, which seriously affected “the European multicultural project”, was the crisis of the European welfare state and the overall discussions on neo-liberalism approach vs. the social assistance state. Many critics pointed at some of the dangerous disadvantages of the welfare state concept - that is paternalism on the one side and complementary dependence and overall passiveness of the citizens on the other. This affected integration even more so with newcomers as a class of inhabitants being more vulnerable to social stratification. Welfare rights were not considered enough in its culturally conditioned aspect and consequences for integration. Instead, they sometimes provided means for hostile isolation, which created an atmosphere and channels for terrorist actions, which shocked our societies.

And finally, I think that Europe should revise its concept of humanitarian migration, which currently is a source of tremendous chaos in all aspects of the European asylum policy and consequently for integration issues. The EU should make clear whether it can support the asylum concept and set conditions for integration of successful asylum applicants or revise the concept and restrict the number of humanitarian AND increase the number of commercial migration. The EU still has no efficient policy of skilled labor migration.

In sum, the answer how to succeed, provided we agree on what success means is: increase civic education stressing obligations for all, make political participation more inclusive, reduce welfare state effects where they produce isolation and passiveness, revise and redefine asylum policy and set clear and attractive conditions for skilled labor migration. In the reasonable time horizon, these will be some of the most pressing European tasks.

**Kenan Malik**

## **Europe and its Multinational Project of Integration: How to Succeed? (2)**

The debate about the nature of integration has, over the past half century, generally taken the form of a debate between assimilationists and multiculturalists. Assimilationists argue that equality requires that every individual has to be treated as a citizen, not as a member of a particular racial or cultural group. Used as a criterion for allocating resources or opportunities, racial or ethnic categorisation inevitably confers advantages on members of some groups and disadvantages on members of others and hence helps perpetuate social antagonisms. Multiculturalists retort that the assimilationist idea of a neutral public space and of colour-blind public policies is a myth. Racial discrimination is a fact and without taking into account the reality of racial and cultural differences it is possible to combat it. One of the ironies of this debate is that the quarrel between assimilationists and multiculturalists has become particularly acute in recent years less because both sides are confident of their arguments than because both have developed deep misgivings. Both appear perplexed by the problem of how to manage a diverse society while maintaining a sense of common identity. Both the debate, and the misgivings, were brought into sharp focus in the autumn of 2005, when France and Britain were almost simultaneously rocked by riots. In France, nationwide riots set mainly, but not entirely, North African youth against the police. In Britain, Lozells in Birmingham saw a weekend of street violence between Asians and African Caribbeans, which left one man dead and relations between the two communities deeply fractured. What I want to do is repose the debate. Part of the problem is that both sides in this debate confuse the idea of a diversity of *peoples* and a diversity of *values*. On the one side, many argue that the presence in a society of diversity of peoples precludes the possibility of common values. Hence the need for differential public policy, to treat different groups differently. On the other side, many suggest that the diversity of peoples generated by mass immigration inevitably undermines social cohesion. Hence the need to clamp down on immigration and to reduce the level of diversity. Both arguments are wrong. It is facile to suggest

that society can run on diversity alone. Every society needs a common set of values to function properly, a vision of what kind of society it is. Of course, in every society values are contested, and there are radically different visions of the ideal society. Such conflict is not new, nor the product of immigration. Conflict between different value systems is part of a healthy democratic process necessary to mould the political and cultural shape of a society. What doesn't work is a *laissez-faire* attitude to values, whereby values are deemed to be incommensurate and a society is defined simply in terms of its willingness to tolerate differences. It is equally facile to try to pin the blame for the erosion of common values on immigrants. Take for instance the common fear that Islamic values are incompatible with the tenets of liberal democracy and that the growth of the Muslim community will undermine cohesion and transform basic secular values. The trouble is there is no such thing as *the* Muslim community nor a single set of Islamic values. Muslim communities are as riven by difference and division as any other community – especially divisions of class, gender and nationality. Today 'radical' in the Islamic context means religiously fundamentalist. When I was growing up in the 1980s it meant the very opposite – to be radical in Muslim communities was to be secular. Today the idea of a secular Muslim seems almost an oxymoron, but twenty years ago there were very strong and vibrant secular movements and organisations. The fact that they have disappeared and the Muslim community has come to be defined largely in religious terms, and its values defined largely in opposition to western liberal values, is not something intrinsic to Islam or to Muslim communities, but a product of both social developments and public policy that have shaped the character of those communities. The real problem is not so much that immigrants can't imbibe the values of liberal democracy, but that within many Western nations the sense of what those values are have been eroded, as has the sense of what kind of society they are or want to be. As a result people have begun to view themselves and their social affiliations in a different way. Social solidarity has become increasingly defined not in political terms - as collective action in pursuit of certain political ideals – but in terms of ethnicity, culture or faith. The question people ask themselves is not so much 'What kind of society do I want to live in?' as 'Who are we?'. The first question looks forward for answers and defines them in terms of the common-

ality of values necessary for establishing the good life. The second one generally looks back and seeks answers – and defines identity – in terms of history and heritage. The politics of ideology, in other words, has given way to the politics of identity. One of the enduring myths about immigration and integration is that the political classes have acquiesced to multicultural policies because minority groups have demanded that their cultural differences be recognised and be afforded respect. This is not the case, even in Britain where such policies have been taken furthest in Europe. Historically, postwar immigrants, including Muslims, were concerned less with preserving their cultural differences than in achieving political equality. Certainly, there was alienation and anger because of the degree of racism encountered. But the goal was always to gain equal political rights. Only over the past two decades have immigrant groups sought to assert their cultural difference. Why? Because they have been encouraged to do so by societies that celebrate the idea that different communities should pursue their own cultural values and interests. Immigration, in other words, has not caused the fraying of a common set of values. Rather multiculturalism is itself the product of such frayed values. Multiculturalism was the official response to the identity crisis within Western societies, an attempt to provide a positive sheen to this crisis, representing the lack of common identity as a new cultural pluralism, and the fragmentation of communities as an enriching kind of diversity. Accompanying this confusion between the idea of a diversity of *peoples* and a diversity of *values* is another confusion: between diversity as *lived experience* and multiculturalism as a *political process*. As lived experience, diversity is positive. Thanks to mass immigration Western Europe is less insular, less homogenous, more vibrant and cosmopolitan than it was half a century ago, and this is much better for it. Those who advocate multiculturalism as a *political process* are, however, talking about something different. Multiculturalism, they argue, requires the public recognition and affirmation of cultural differences. An individual's cultural background frames their identity and helps define who they are. If we want to treat individuals with dignity and respect we must also treat with dignity and respect the groups who furnish them with their sense of personal being. Social justice, they argue, requires not just that individuals are treated as political equals, but that their cultural beliefs are also treated as equally valid; that dif-



ferent cultural beliefs are affirmed, recognised, and indeed institutionalised, in the public sphere. Ironically, the impact of multicultural policies has been to undermine diversity as lived experience. As lived experience, diversity is an argument for open borders and open minds. The consequences of multiculturalism as a political project is, however, to seal people into ethnic boxes and to police the boundaries. A good illustration of this came in a public argument broke out last year in Britain between Tony Blair and Britain's Muslim leaders about the lack of progress in combating home-grown terrorism. Muslims accused the government of ignoring their advice about how best to deal with extremists. The real problem, the prime minister responded, was that moderate Muslims had not done enough to root out extremists within their own communities. The starting point for both sides was the belief that Muslims constitute a community with a distinct set of views and beliefs, and that mainstream politicians are incapable of reaching out to them. So there had to be a bargain between the government and the Muslim community. The government acknowledged Muslim leaders as crucial partners in the task of defeating terrorism and building a fairer society. In return, Muslim leaders agreed to keep their own house in order. The argument was about who was, or was not, keeping their side of the bargain. The trouble is, the bargain itself is the problem. For what it shows is that the government abandoned its responsibility for engaging directly with its citizens who happen to be Muslim. Instead, it has effectively subcontracted its responsibilities to so-called community leaders. Rather than appealing to Muslims as British citizens, and attempting to draw them into the mainstream political process, today politicians of all hues prefer to see them as people whose primary loyalty is to their faith and who can be politically engaged only by other Muslims. The consequences of this approach are hugely damaging. 'Why', as Amartya Sen asked in his book *Identity and Violence*, 'should a British citizen who happens to be Muslim have to rely on clerics and other leaders of the religious community to communicate with the prime minister of the country?' Far from promoting any sense of integration, such multicultural policies encourages Muslims – and other minorities – to see themselves as semi-detached Britons. After all, is it surprising that if mainstream politicians abdicate their responsibility for engaging with ordinary Muslims, that those Muslims should feel disenchanted with the main-

stream political process? But the insistence that individuals everyone as citizens, not as bearers of specific racial or cultural histories, that they should not be treated differently because of their racial and cultural identities does not mean that discrimination against particular groups should be ignored. We should not confuse 'colour blindness' and 'racism blindness'. This is exactly what is happening in France. Assimilationism in France has come to mean not ignoring differences, but pointing up differences to suggest why certain groups – in particular Muslims - cannot be French. The policy of corralling hundreds of thousands of the poor and disadvantaged into sink estates.

**Paul Scheffer**  
**The Land of Arrival:**  
**How Migration Is Changing Europe**

Migrants from every corner of the world have changed urban communities in Europe. Whatever their original intention, whatever ours, it has long since ceased to matter. The world has nestled into our neighbourhoods, a confusing and shocking experience. Shops, places of worship, schools and markets - everything and everybody is affected by the mass migration currently underway, the end of which is by no means in sight. Indeed, one gets the impression that the great mobility of people characterizes a new era that, in the absence of better words, we describe as an era of globalization.

We would be ill-advised to belittle or disregard these profound changes. The bromide “immigration is a timeless phenomenon” is therefore wasted on me. How often one comes across such extenuating phrases in official publications. The Municipality of Amsterdam writes, as if it were a routine statement, “Almost half of those living in Amsterdam do not originally come from the Netherlands. That is nothing new. As an immigration city, for centuries Amsterdam has welcomed people from different extractions and denominations: Portuguese Jews, French Huguenots and migrant workers from Germany”. In other words, people have always been on the move, and these times are therefore unexceptional.

But the old and new migrations differ considerably. Even if, according to historical criteria, there might be nothing new under the sun, we are nevertheless witnessing a radical shift in the composition of the population. The seventeenth century was, indeed, full of movement, but that does nothing to detract from the upheaval in big cities today. How can immigrant workers from Morocco or Turkey, who are changing our cities, possibly be cancelled out by the migrant workers from Germany who once arrived in these parts? It may be that Jews from Portugal fled this way to escape the Inquisition, but that does not mean that the arrival of refugees from Iran or Afghanistan, fleeing the religious tyranny of Islam, has simply become a matter of course.

## **A History of Alienation**

How long can the significance of what happens to you be diminished by referring to the vicissitudes of the past? How long can a major experience be denied and dismissed as outside the norm? Not so very long, as the sense of losing something essential is intrusive and will not easily be stilled. What can no longer be ignored is that tolerance and freedom are under pressure. Not only in the Netherlands, but also in surrounding countries. This growing unease demands expression.

The migration we are now experiencing has so far failed to make our society more open. If we look at the traditional views many migrants bring with them, it would be more accurate to say that old issues regarding women's position have suddenly re-emerged and that freedom of speech is once again contested. Even though these views are sometimes familiar from our own past, it can hardly be seen as progress to be forced to repeat the emancipation that took place fifty years ago. The immigration of closed communities is putting the open society to the test.

Unfortunately, the receiving societies in Europe are facing that test with utmost insecurity. In countries such as Austria, France, Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium, the success of populist parties is the visible sign of a buried unease. The mounting tension is tangible, as is the tendency to turn away from a threatening outside world.

It is uncertain, to say the least, whether the past few decades' migration constitutes an enrichment of society. In fact, repetitive use of that word is ill-chosen in view of the impoverished circumstances in which many migrants live. Their lack of education, in numerous cases their illiteracy, adds little to societies that are suddenly faced with the sum of these deprivations. In several European countries, the costs of migration are, for the time being, higher than its benefits.

This is not a question of guilt. Certainly many migrants could have done more to gain a place in their new country, and they should have rid themselves more quickly of the myth of return, the idea that their

stay in Europe was only temporary. But the receiving societies have failed to fully comprehend that migration and the welfare state do not automatically mix. Plentiful facilities of social support have reasonably provided for many immigrants, but at the same time, have placed them in a situation of hopeless dependence.

In retrospect, all sides have made errors in evaluation. But that does not sum it up, by any means. It remains to be seen how a renewal of society as a whole can emerge from this clash. Today's impasse can be overcome: That belief is the driving force in the current search for a new vocabulary and fresh insight. If we succeed in that search, then we will justifiably be able to say that the arrival of so many migrants has, indeed, made society more open, while enriching it in numerous ways.

What we need is a more open-minded view of the frictions and clashes characteristic of any mass migration process. Many current researchers are rather restrained in their opinions, but luckily we can fall back on earlier generations of historians and sociologists who have studied migration. Oscar Handlin, for example, the most famous historian of immigration to America, wrote in a time when the moralization of migration was not yet a major issue and the conflict between newcomers and natives was not yet expressed in terms of good and bad.

In *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People*, a book that won Handlin the Pulitzer Prize, he identified the causes and consequences of the migration of the large numbers of people who crossed the Atlantic from Europe to America. His story can be summarized in one phrase, the theme of everything that follows here: "The history of migration is the history of alienation and its consequences". Alienation and loss, those are the key concepts describing the arrival of migrants in a new environment.

Handlin first considers those who came to America - the migrants and their uprooting. Tens of millions were cast adrift by the consequences of industrialization and the enormous population explosion in the second half of the century. The disruption and poverty it caused in the countryside, in particular, translated into mass immigration from

countries such as Ireland, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Norway and Poland.

With great empathy, Handlin describes the often-horrifying ocean voyage and arrival in the new land. Once there, the migrants had to find their way, more than once entirely destitute and without any idea of what awaited them:

*A time came for many men when the slow glacial shift of economic and social forces suddenly broke loose in some major upheaval that cast loose the human beings from their age-old setting. In an extreme form this was the experience of the immigrants. It was also in some degree the experience of all modern men. They did not welcome the liberation, almost any of them. Its immediate form was always separation<sup>2</sup>*

Migration was, and is, primarily a tale of town and country; in addition to craftsmen, it was mostly farmers who sought refuge in America. Handlin describes their loss of status on arrival: “The loyal dutiful man, faithful to tradition, the man who was the son and grandson of substantial peasants, was reduced to the indignity of hired labour, while shrewd, selfish, unscrupulous upstarts thrived”. Family life, in particular, was affected; the old extended families slowly disintegrated, old skills suddenly proved unprofitable. “Loneliness, separation from the community of the village, and despair at the insignificance of their own human abilities, these were the elements that, in America, colored the peasants' view of their world”.

In these strange circumstances, many reverted to the security of tradition, particularly religious tradition: “In that sense all immigrants were conservatives, dissenters and peasants alike. All would seek to set their ideas within the fortifications of religious and cultural institutions that would keep them sound against the strange New World”. What concerns me most is that conservatism - reverting back to old customs and habits in order to survive in an entirely new, often urban

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<sup>2</sup> Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1952), p. 305.

environment. The final result was often a feeling of no longer belonging anywhere, concluded Handlin: “They had thus completed their alienation from the culture to which they had come, as from that which they had left”. That no-man's land also typifies the experience of many contemporary migrants, who seek handholds in a new society, but fail to find them.

It is not only the migrants who suffer from disorientation, but also those who already live in the land of arrival. After all, that land was not a blank canvas, but a country with a history of customs and habits, laws and institutions. The non-immigrant population, too, is thrown off balance and must try to regain its equilibrium. Handlin sees that side of the story all too well:

*Everything in the neighbourhood was so nice, they would later say, until the others came. The others brought outlandish ways and unintelligible speech, foreign dress and curious foods, were poor, worked hard, and paid higher rents for inferior quarters.*<sup>3</sup>

Harking back to a certain view of the community as it was before everything changed is an understandable reaction: “We want our country back”, or even stronger, “We want our goddamn future back”, as someone said recently in an English television programme. Not only do we see that resistance throughout the entire history of American immigration; naturally we are all too familiar with it in our own time and place. The feeling among the natives that something of a familiar society is being lost should be acknowledged, just as we acknowledge the uprooted feelings of many newcomers.

The phrase “We've become strangers in our own country” should therefore not be dismissed out of hand as an expression by the common man, unaware that the world has changed. On the contrary, this loaded sentence acknowledges that migration has brought the whole world into the neighbourhood.

No wonder, therefore, that newcomers and natives share the same feeling of loss, for the cause of their restlessness is the same. First of

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 189.

all, naturally, migrants embody a world adrift but, partly due to their arrival, the natives are being swept along with these changes in their daily environment. As Handlin says, it is the shared condition of modern people. Everyone is undergoing a disorienting experience. Indeed: “The history of migration is the history of alienation and its consequences”.

That also explains why this shared feeling of loss leads not to spontaneous rapprochement, but rather to a separation between newcomers and natives. The seclusion now in motion among both the minority and the majority is part of the history of immigration and also a reaction to a new phase of globalization. The literary critic Svetlana Boym illustrates that well, writing, “Nostalgia is paradoxical in the sense that longing can make us more empathetic toward fellow humans, yet the moment we try to repair longing with belonging, the apprehension of loss with a rediscovery of identity, we often part ways and put an end to mutual understanding”<sup>4</sup> That is exactly what is happening now: The longing to find a handhold in a turbulent world drives newcomers and natives apart. That is what I described several years ago, to the dismay of many, as a “multicultural drama”.

The rediscovery of identity has nothing to do with irrationality. It is a defence mechanism, for both majorities and minorities, which we need to understand. There is a risk of people entrenching themselves in a sense of loyalty to their own community. Self-images under pressure become ossified, while everyone knows you can only develop in constant interchange with an ever-changing environment. We must reach past nostalgia and internalize the fact that migration is changing our societies irreversibly.

## **Conflict in Migrant Families**

Migration generally stems from necessity, but the talent to make a virtue of that necessity is not given to everyone. Too often we see the romanticized image of the immigrant as the embodiment of a world

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<sup>4</sup> Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), p. xv.



increasingly in motion. The migrant is described as a forerunner, a kind of reluctant advance guard. An experience that usually has traumatic aspects has been translated into an added value. There are many examples of that attempt to turn a necessity into a virtue. Some writers, entrepreneurs, sports heroes and politicians succeed in acquiring prominent positions in their new countries. There are also innumerable teachers, shopkeepers, policemen and nurses who have made a success of migration, but it doesn't always come easy.

Keeping your balance on the slack rope strung between the land of origin and the land of arrival demands immense effort. Not many are blessed with the ability to master that difficult balancing act. Often, the temptation is great either to break with everything left behind or to cling to memories and resist the new environment. In any event, the loss cannot be denied, even if the added value of migration is emphasized.

It does not help to relativize the effort of migrating. Despite the successful efforts of many to drag themselves out of the quagmire, we should not forget that the effort all too often begins in a quagmire. Migration has been referred to as a brutal bargain: You lose something precious and, at the same time, gain access to another culture. In other words, acquiring a place in a new country often means compromising, or even betraying, family traditions. Learning a new language estranges many migrants little by little from their parental homes. That struggle between the culture of the land of origin and the land of arrival embroils many migrant families.

This social reality carries more weight than do abstract models of integration. In countries such as Great Britain and France, much emphasis is placed on the individual traditions of integration; the migration experience and consequent ethnic tensions in the two countries, and elsewhere in Europe, however, are reasonably comparable. We must look beyond the discussion of models, which functions as a way of immunizing countries against experiences over the border (“the crisis of the French model” or “the failure of the Dutch model”, means, in other words, “it’s not a British problem”). Then we discover that the

experiences of migrants and natives in Bradford, Lyon, Malmö, Rotterdam and Antwerp are not all that different.

Let us look more closely at the degree to which relocation is an uprooting experience. There is nothing harmonious or easy about this experience, certainly in view of many migrants' rural backgrounds. Imagine the voyage in time, from a small village community in the Rif Mountains or Anatolia to the teeming urban environment of Amsterdam, Birmingham, Lyon or Frankfurt. The saying in the Morocco is: "going to the airport on a donkey". It is not surprising that all kinds of confrontations arise in this situation; it would be more likely to raise questions if there were none.

Had we known our classics, we would have been able to anticipate the problems immigration provokes. Read what the founder of the famous Chicago School of sociology, Robert E. Park, wrote as far back as 1925 on the basis of his observations in Chicago's migrant milieu, in the ghettos that developed so spectacularly there. The fact that Little Italy was also referred to as "Little Hell", with fifteen thousand uneducated farmers from Sicily and their families packed together in wretched conditions, leaves little to the imagination.

Migrants' lives are marked not only by poverty, but also by a difficult cultural transition, Park wrote in the 1920s: "We are living in such a period of individualization and social disorganization. Society is, apparently, not much more than a congeries and constellation of social atoms". In such an individualized society, it is hard for community-based migrants to find their way:

*Energies that were formerly controlled by custom and tradition are released. The individual is free for new adventures, but he is more or less without direction and control. The result is a cultural hybrid, a man on the margin of two cultures and two societies, which are never completely interpenetrated and fused.*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *The City: Suggestions for Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 107.

Even at the beginning of the last century it was recognized that the main issue was the clash between individualization and community spirit.

Disorientation in a society where so many rural people find themselves in an urban environment is therefore not surprising; it can be seen in the lands of origin. Migrants from the Moroccan and Turkish countryside already have difficulty adjusting in Casablanca and Istanbul. The culture shock is even more severe when, on top of this difficult transition in their own country from a village community to an anonymous city, they also must transition from a religious culture to an overwhelmingly secular society. In fact, two steps are taken in one journey, making the transition from tradition to modernity very abrupt indeed.

This unsettling quest can be found in numerous places, but first within the family, where the distance from and proximity to the new society are felt most strongly. Farah Karimi, a Dutch member of parliament originally from Iran, wrote, "There is certainly a multicultural drama being played out here. In the living rooms of minority families, in particular".<sup>6</sup> This is a fierce conflict between traditional and modern views of relations between men and women, parents and children, believers and nonbelievers.

For those involved, much is at stake: It is more than a question of give and take. A compromise is not easy between one culture based on destiny and another that tries to give priority to individual freedom. In the first case, everything is virtually predetermined: The social position, caste, faith and gender into which you are born is the mould into which the rest of your life is poured. There is virtually no chance of escape. In the other culture, life is seen as an invitation to self-development. The idea that you must take "fate" into your own hands also leads to high, even excessive expectations, but the point of departure is quite different from that of a traditional culture, which places all emphasis on community, leaving little or no room for the individual.

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<sup>6</sup> Farah Karimi, quoted in a Dutch newspaper article.

The distorted relationship of migrant parents and their children is one of the most painful consequences of migration, as the relative isolation of many increases their alienation from sons and daughters, who are neither willing nor able to keep such distance from the society they live in daily. There is nothing strange or unexpected about a generational conflict, but in many migrant families the distance between the generations is extreme. Many parents miss the opportunity to prepare their children for life in a society where they are unfamiliar with not only the language but also the customs and habits. Their resignation is all too visible, the feeling that everything has been taken away from them.

In his novel *Judith and Jamal*, Fouad Laroui typifies the father and son relationship: “Abal-Khail loved his son, but did not know how to put it into words. He was concerned for him, there in that country of which he understood so little. It was his fault that Jamal was growing up in that land of infidels. He had wanted to protect him from all dangers, against the temptations, the pitfalls”. The mother is, if possible, even further removed from her surroundings. Is it possible to live somewhere and yet not be there, Laroui wonders?

*Years later that question was answered when I saw Mina lying asleep one day on a couch, worn out. The answer is a tragic yes. Early in the morning, swathed in an outlandish jellaba, she hurries through the streets of Paris, but what is she actually making of her life? Everywhere, she is excluded, irrevocably excluded....<sup>7</sup>*

The parents' impotence is painfully obvious. As someone said, “It's not that they don't want to give us any support; they just can't. You can't give away something you haven't got”. Many immigrant parents are so distanced from the surrounding society that they know nothing about their children's life outside the house. The children grow up in separate worlds: at home, at school and on the street. The norms that prevail at home have little to do with those in the world outside. For many parents and children, the distances that must be bridged day after day are simply too great.

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<sup>7</sup> Fouad Laroui, *Judith en Jamal* (Amsterdam: Van Oorschot, 2001), p. 63.

The frequent arranged marriages betray a clear view of the role of women, a view that increasingly conflicts with a society that has just seen forty years of emancipation. Fatima, a Moroccan student, had this to say, "Like my father, my mother thinks I should stop studying and ought to get on and get married. Education is not that important in our family. As a woman, you don't have much use for an education; after all, you're going to get married and become a housewife, so working for qualifications is a waste of time". Cultural preferences thus have far-reaching social consequences, a connection that, for many years, has been rather frenetically denied.

The families of Caribbean migrants from Jamaica or Surinam - who differ in many respects from Muslim families from Morocco and Turkey - also suffer a generation gap. The parents try to remain as invisible as possible, while the children stand up for themselves far more. Mike and Trevor Phillips illustrate that beautifully in their oral history of these migrants and their children, who make themselves more felt in British society:

*The experience opened up a gap between the generations which was all the more disturbing because it was so unfamiliar within the cultures from which the migrants came, but it was the experience which was to define the future of the Caribbean migrant community.*<sup>8</sup>

The problem is not only the cultural divide between the generations; it is also the transfer of deprivation in education. If you look at the children of migrant families, the so-called second generation, it is immediately striking that the often-explicit expectations of a rapid rise in society have, in many cases, not been realized. The whole idea that integration is only a question of time and that we should patiently await the generational change turns out, on closer examination, to be facile. The statistics for education, work and crime speak for themselves. The overrepresentation of children from migrant families at the bottom of the social ladder is unmistakable.

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<sup>8</sup> Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips, *Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-racial Britain* (London: Harper Collins, 1998), p. 203.

This has raised a new social issue. Although the differences between and within ethnic groups are considerable, the general situation seems troubling. On average, children from migrant families have an appreciable disadvantage in cognitive development and language skills, barring them from the better jobs. According to researchers, there is a “considerable talent reserve”.<sup>9</sup> Yet the gap between native and immigrant children remains great.

It should be clearly stated that there is, on the other hand, a growing middle class of migrants and their children. Innumerable successful migrants have acquired an intrinsic stake in our societies. That is important as, although they feel an affinity with their land of origin, their identification with the land of arrival is marked. Also, the place they can attain in society determines the degree to which they see this land as their own. A society that offers talented migrants too little opportunity will pay a high price.

We are seeing a polarization within migrant communities between those who are doing well and the considerable group that is not. Half the Turkish and Moroccan children in a country like the Netherlands may leave school with insufficient qualifications, but between one quarter and one third of the children from these families do quite well at school. It has long been impossible to lump the life path of children from these families under the common denominator of “deprivation”. And that is hopeful. What remains is the large group that has failed in the current educational system and has little chance in the labour market. What will happen to them in our cities? What will their lives be like, what outlet will their frustration find in an environment of seemingly unlimited opportunities? The tensions they will cause cannot be cancelled out by the success stories, although these exist, and should be told.

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<sup>9</sup> Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (SCP), *Rapportage minderheden 1999. Positie in het onderwijs en op de arbeidsmarkt* (Den Haag, 1999), p. 99.

## Old and New Migrations

Much of the current immigration can be understood in the light of history. Here and now in the big cities of Europe, we face many of the problems Polish or Italian immigrants experienced in early- twentieth-century America. The distance between parents and children is classic. Moreover, most of those early-wave migrants were fairly poor, with little education when they began their journey. Finally, there is nothing new about migrants attributing special significance to their faith; how often have they prioritized the rebuilding of their places of worship in the land of arrival, in order to retain something from their land of origin? In a certain sense, today's migrants are simply repeating an old exercise.

Could it then be true that there is nothing new in today's migration? No, the old and the new migrations have plenty in common, but there are also substantial differences. Something new is really afoot. Religion has always played a major role in the migration process, but Islam is an entirely new phenomenon in the Western world. And not only here, but also in the history of Islam itself: The presence of Muslim minorities in a liberal, secular society is unique. The fact that, before too long, some 20 million Muslims will be living in the countries of the European Union and soon, perhaps, after Turkey joins the Union, even more, is a challenge in every respect. Not only for religious Muslims, but also for the receiving societies that seek a way to deal with a religion that, until now, has always been in a majority. It does not help that, since 11 September, Islam has become so controversial in the West.

Religion, culture and politics are woven into the tradition of Islam, certainly where it is predominant, as in the Arabic world. In a modern society, however, those domains are separated. The image of cohesion is highly distorted here, which the fundamentalist Muslim thinker Sayyid Qutb referred to as "the hideous schizophrenia of modern life".<sup>10</sup> Serious obstacles must be overcome if we are to achieve a

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<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003), p.75 .

more or less natural integration of Islam and if religion is, indeed, to be emancipated from the culture of the land of origin, even if only to prevent specific customs and traditions acquiring a sacred aura. It is not about a departure from Islam as a spiritual tradition, but a question of how to live as a religious minority in a democratic environment. Too often the mosque is the place where resentment of other beliefs or of nonbelievers is preached.

For the receiving societies, the arrival of a new religion should be an incentive to reconsider the issue of religious freedom. Migration has generated religious conflicts in the past, too. Catholic immigrants in Protestant America in the nineteenth century, for example, were opposed by a major populist movement, the Know Nothings. If you ask Muslims to acknowledge freedom of religion you must be prepared to do likewise. Only on that basis is a new social contract possible; the secularization of governmental institutions must be complete.

In another aspect, too, the old and new migrations differ. That migrants are often poor is nothing new, but the high level of unemployment among migrants in Western Europe, in particular, is new. One of the reasons for that poor outcome is a generous social security system. Mass immigration into the welfare state is unique; there are no other examples in history. The consequences are visible: Large groups of migrants find themselves in a dependent situation without any prospects. What should be a dynamic element in society - immigrants are by definition risk-takers and survivors - has become one of the population's most immobile segments.

The subsidized isolation of those migrant families has proved an enormous impediment for them, their children and society as a whole. In a city such as Amsterdam, 60 percent of Moroccan and Turkish men over the age of forty are unemployed or occupationally disabled.<sup>11</sup> From a comparison of the position of first- and second-generation migrants in education and the labour market, the American

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<sup>11</sup> Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (SCP), *Jaarrapport Integratie 2005* (Den Haag, 2005), Hoofdstuk 6, p. 81 ev.



researcher John Mollenkopf concludes that Amsterdam scores considerably worse in both areas than New York.<sup>12</sup>

When extensive migration must be justified by the contribution these newcomers make to society, long-term unemployment makes that justification very difficult. It cannot be denied that the welfare state in many Western European countries has contributed considerably to these enormous differences. The first generation, no longer considered necessary after the economic crisis of 1973, ended up living en masse on benefits. This demonstrates that the welfare state in its present form creates dependence and takes away responsibility.

Finally, there is a third major change in the pattern of integration. First-generation migrants often still feel involved in their lands of origin, a phenomenon seen in all migrations. The Irish in America have always been very concerned with the fight for the independence of their former country and, later, with the undeclared civil war in Northern Ireland. The same applies to Germans in America, who were preoccupied by events in their country and experienced direct consequences of both world wars there.

Nothing new so far. Due to modern communications and low-cost travel, however, migrants' bonds with the land of origin are now far stronger than in the past, so that today, ethnic groups are often described as "transnational communities", groups of people present in more than one society at once. Taking no part in public life, too many migrants are tuned into another reality by satellite dish. In the past, immigration meant saying goodbye for good, but now people travel constantly back and forth to their countries of origin, even if only psychologically. Immigration in the age of constant communication is a unique phenomenon.

Tighter bonds between migrant communities and their lands of origin contribute to their becoming increasingly a diaspora; migrants de-

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<sup>12</sup> John Mollenkopf, "Assimilating Immigrants in Amsterdam", in Leon Deben et al (eds), *Understanding Amsterdam: Essays on Economic Vitality, City Life and Urban Form* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2000).

scribe themselves with an eye to the past and have not yet entirely given up the illusion of returning home. How often does one hear that their bags are packed, often with the argument that the receiving society has become so inhospitable that there's no chance of succeeding here? This perception is confirmed by the fact that three-quarters of young Turkish and Moroccan people born in the Netherlands marry someone from their parents' country, in which pressure and force on the part of the parents play a dominant role.<sup>13</sup>

The outcome of these changing circumstances of migration is great uncertainty whether integration will take no more than three generations. To clarify this likely delay, the second generation is now being referred to as a “one-and-a-halfth” generation - in other words, someone who is born here marries someone from the land of origin, so their children grow up in a family that does not speak the language of the land of arrival. The most important advisory body in the Dutch government itself is hesitant about an automatic improvement from generation to generation:

*The question is whether the cycle can be completed, with a third and following generation of all the population categories living in the Netherlands being integrated entirely into the society, if the second generation has realised too little advancement.*<sup>14</sup>

## **Without An “Us”, It Won't Work**

In the 1920s, Robert Park described the “race relations cycle” that progressed from “isolation through competition, conflict and accommodation to assimilation”.<sup>15</sup> The underlying philosophy is familiar:

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<sup>13</sup> Leen Sterkx and Carolien Bouw, *Liefde op maat. Partnerkeuze van Turkse en Marokkaanse jongeren* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2005), p. 13.

<sup>14</sup> Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het regeringsbeleid (WRR), *Nederland als immigratiesamenleving* (Den Haag: Sdu uitgevers, 2001), pp. 162-63.

<sup>15</sup> Summarized in this way by Ulf Hannerz, *Exploring the City: Inquiries Toward an Urban Anthropology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 44. For a somewhat different definition, see Robert E. Park, *Race and Culture: The Collected Papers*, vol. i (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1950), p. 150.

Arriving migrants tend to isolate themselves, partly due to the standoffish reaction of the surrounding society. Later, migrants and their children try to win a place for themselves in the land of arrival, which leads to friction and conflict. The newcomers and natives then seek a compromise and, if that progresses, the surrounding society assimilates the migrants and their descendants.

That is a hopeful cycle, in which one can recognize the model of the three generations. The first generation stands for isolation and avoidance; the migrants' children refuse to accept that and claim their rights, inevitably coming into conflict with established citizens, prompting a need for compromise. Finally, the grandchildren in the third generation have the opportunity to assimilate without too much difficulty, participating in the society without too much friction.

Naturally, this is only schematic: reality cannot be divided so neatly. There is also much to debate about the assumed final point, "assimilation", whose definition is very controversial. What concerns me here, however, is that the integration of any sizeable migration movement inevitably entails conflict. Many European countries are currently embroiled in that stage.

It is obvious that we have passed through the avoidance phase. "Multiculturalism" is the model for that episode, for it tried to find terms for the peaceful coexistence of cultural communities existing next to each other without much contact. Now, we have inescapably entered the throes of a period of conflict that must find a new accommodation. That conflict is necessary and can be extremely productive, if we succeed in keeping violence at bay.

It is difficult to say how long and turbulent this period will be. We still know too little about the generational dynamics of integration for the simple reason that so far we in Europe have seen too little of the third generations, and it is unclear how their changed circumstances will affect the integration process. What is clear is that every integration process entails conflicts, frictions and clashes. That was so in America, and it is repeating itself in Europe today.

Far closer involvement is needed; that must rest upon a clear idea of integration. The half-heartedness of the reluctant immigration land is eminently demonstrated in the way we treat citizenship. For too long, naturalization has been approached too casually. For a long time, the philosophy was that quick, easy naturalization aided integration, but setting requirements for obtaining nationality actually demands an effort. The undervaluation of citizenship is not a good idea. If someone chooses to adopt a new nationality, in addition to gaining rights, that ought to entail the acceptance of obligations.

Professor of law and author of Iranian origin Afshin Ellian describes his disillusionment:

*I received the most important decision concerning my life, namely my Dutch nationality, by post. It was no more than an administrative letter, signed by the director of the Immigration and Naturalization Department. A deep sense of embarrassment and disappointment tempered my joy. The moment of citizenship should be ritualized, out of respect for both the new citizen and the constitution.*<sup>16</sup>

You do no favour for migrants who wish to obtain the nationality of the land of arrival by demanding nothing of them. Not asking a single question makes clear that nobody cares much about an answer. The veiled message is: “You will never be part of this society, anyway. We don't expect you to have any influence on anything. Just stay where you are, don't move outside your own circle and, in particular, cherish your own identity”.

That way, no obligations are entered into, because we know full well that, when a society makes demands of newcomers, it also undertakes an obligation. If you are striving for integration you must clarify the fundamentals of your own society; if you want to promote respect for the legal order, you yourself must know what those rules entail. If you want to transfer cultural heritage, you must have an idea of what your own history contains. Requirements set for immigrants inevitably backfire on those who set them.

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<sup>16</sup> Speech by Afshin Ellian.

So now we come to the fundamental rule of all integration: *The natives should never ask anything of newcomers that they are not prepared to do themselves.* The demand for integration hits back hard at those who make that demand. As European natives are not sure of the degree to which we ourselves still feel part of the larger entity, we don't know what we can and cannot ask of newcomers. In other words, integration demands self-examination and there has not been much enthusiasm for that. We are so tolerant that, above all, we don't want to make things difficult for ourselves.

Over the past few years, it has become clear, not only in the Netherlands, that the arrival of so many migrants and their difficult integration into the land of arrival has provoked a real citizenship crisis. All the well-meaning jubilation over diversity could provide no answer, because the question was unavoidable: What do we have in common, taking into account all the differences? What holds society together in a time of mass migration, particularly in the urban areas where most migrants settle?

The attitude often met these days in immigrant circles is a mixture of “What do you actually want of us?” and “For heaven's sake leave us alone”. The tone is all too often aggrieved - but if you aim to make the gaps narrower than they are, you must be able to answer those questions convincingly. At the moment, we seem to have no answers. A sense of “This is our country now, too” or, even better, of “my country”, can only ultimately be generated out of a free choice, which migrants are invited and challenged to make, by a society that itself has a strong culture of citizenship.

But that tradition has been neglected. There is no clear idea of a new “us” encompassing more than the old “us”. Is any effort being made to keep the collection of individuals and groups together with a modern concept of nation? That search is part of a wider re-evaluation, which is about finding a new balance between rights and obligations, between individual development and mutual dependency, between privacy and public order. We need a richer idea of what citizenship could be in this day and age.

Multiculturalism supplied a noncommittal answer: There is no longer such a thing as an “us”. What then remains of citizenship is entirely unclear. Without an “us” it won't work; without critical involvement, society crumbles. That “us” need not necessarily refer to a shared pride; it could just as well be an expression of vicarious shame. For example, it has to be progress when a spokesperson from a Turkish organization says, “We failed in Srebrenica”.<sup>17</sup> Surely the answer to that statement cannot be, “But there is no such thing as ‘us’. You aren't responsible for the decision to send troops to a so-called safe enclave, and neither am I”. We quickly see that an “us” implies a shared responsibility.

We began this search for a new citizenship by establishing a sense of alienation and loss, on the part of both migrant and native. Once we succeed in deriving a renewal from the shock of the unfamiliar, we will be further than we are now. Immigration doesn't have to lead to a loss of strength; on the contrary, once we succeed in internalizing migration it will make our societies more universal, and therefore more competitive, in a globalizing world.

We are far too overcome by the confrontation with militant Islam, which obscures our view of a change we should welcome. The ascent of the Asian world can release an energy that could help us out of our oppression. Through competition, Europe has already taken steps towards integration; we need that external push from Asia. The same applies to the forces released by the arrival of immigrants. The strain of allowing people from all over the world to become part of our urban societies is causing us to reconsider - not by betraying Europe's contributions to the idea of an open society, but by striving to be truer to that idea.

The fact that the shock of immigration has been harshly worded above perhaps helps make clear the urgency of renewal. Anyone wishing to trivialize migration by continually pointing out that there is nothing new about it not only misses an important experience being gained in the big cities of Europe today - but also, most importantly, fails to see

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<sup>17</sup> Haci Karacaer, then director of Milli Gorus.

that the new migration offers a unique opportunity for introspection and self-improvement. The recent immigration forces us to reach above ourselves, to rise above our inhibitions. That may be asking a lot, but if you don't ask a lot in this world you will fail miserably.

Let me give a couple of examples. A new religion in our midst could lead to a truly secular society that lives up to the ideal of religious freedom. The unemployment of so many migrants could be the beginning of a re-evaluation of the welfare state, to eliminate unintentional obstacles to social mobility. Shortcomings in the preparation of many children from immigrant families could lead to an educational system that devotes serious attention to language, history and legal culture. The arrival of people from former colonies could expand our self-image, which must encompass the dark side of the colonial past, starting with slavery. The harrowing exclusion of many Muslim women could lead us to realize that equal treatment is a recent acquisition that should be defended all the more fiercely. And there is so much more that would be possible if we were to examine our own shortcomings committedly.

Almost a century ago, the American sociologist Henry Pratt Fairchild already knew that. Much of what he wrote is now dated, but he was capable of seeing that the degree to which migrants are able to feel part of the land of arrival does not depend solely on them: "Before laying tardy assimilation too readily at the door of the immigrant we should thoughtfully consider whether our own house does not need to be set in order". In other words, we can only discuss integration if we are willing to improve our society. In Fairchild's words, *If the immigrant is to love America he must first have the opportunity to experience America, and having experienced it he must find it lovable. No amount of lecturing, legislating, and threatening can make the alien love America if he does not find it lovable, and no amount of strangeness and unfamiliarity can keep him from loving it if in the final event he finds it worthy of his love.*<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Henry Pratt Fairchild, *Immigration: A World Movement and Its American Significance* (rev. ed.) (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), p. 425.

We have to break with the years of avoidance. Perhaps integration was, indeed, successful in past years, and newcomers have simply adjusted to the nonchalance of the natives - in a land to which, in many respects, you would not want to belong. This is why the impasse in which we currently find ourselves demonstrates so many shortcomings of our society. It is time for some major maintenance - in our case, a thorough reconstruction. We must not lose sight of the distance that separates us from our ideals. After all, an open society thrives on self-criticism. We must be willing to become what we say we are.

## **Accommodating Islam**

Let me finally illustrate what I mean by “to become what we say we are” by discussing Islam's incorporation into the liberal democracies of Europe. The current impasse is partly caused by our inability to find a more or less stable way of dealing with Islam as a new religion in our society. That “our” refers expressly to the Muslims, too. A number of clear choices are unavoidable. These will be acceptable, however, only if based on the principle of equal treatment. Nothing feeds mistrust like the impression of a double standard.

Three concrete questions are involved. First, to what extent is the separation of church and state, which forms the basis of religious freedom, observed in Europe? On that basis we can then ask Muslims whether, in addition to the right to religious freedom, they are also willing to accept the duty to defend that same freedom for other beliefs and unbeliefs. What's more, Muslims must also be asked whether they are willing to grant the freedom they claim as a group to all members of their own community.

Let's examine these issues more closely. How could we deal with Islam on the basis of the idea of equal treatment? It begins with the separation of church and state, which is the basis of religious freedom. There are plenty of misconceptions of that separation. Many people think the Netherlands achieved religious tolerance at an early stage. But history teaches us that, according to current criteria, there was no separation of church and state in the Republic. The seventeenth cen-



ture saw a struggle between the principle of freedom of conscience on one hand, embraced early on, and, on the other, the idea of the Reformed Church as the public church, which was privileged by the government.

From that era we can also learn that the separation of church and state must not only safeguard the state from improper pressure from the church but, equally and sometimes even more, protect the church against intervention by the state. Even now, it seems to me that too often the separation of church and state is only practiced with a view to protecting the state. Certainly with respect to Islam it must be reiterated that, in principle, nothing should stand in the way of Muslims freely practicing their belief. Mosques belong here on principle. The state should adopt a reserved attitude.

When we emphasize this principle of equal treatment, we must ask ourselves whether we in Europe actually live up to that idea. Innumerable countries have regulations that are at odds with the separation of church and state. Consider, for example the church tax Germans are obliged to pay, the official position of the Anglican Church in Great Britain, the state-subsidized religious schools in the Netherlands and elsewhere, or the crucifixes in Italian classrooms and law courts. If you ask Muslims to acknowledge religious freedom, you must be prepared to do likewise. Only on the basis of a separation of church and state is a new social compromise possible: The secularization of institutions must be complete.

It is on that basis of equal treatment of religions that limits can and should be set. We can only combat political Islam effectively once we scrupulously observe the principle of religious freedom. Then, an imperative question can be posed to Muslims: Does not the exercise of that right to religious freedom entail an irrevocable duty to defend that same freedom for other beliefs and for unbelievers? The duty to defend religious freedom is what political Islam contests, not only in words but also with threats and violence.

That radical Islamic interpretation was not created in a vacuum. Far too often, Muslims divide the world into two, us and them. When reli-

religious freedom is used to spread contempt for non-Muslims, the right that Muslims invoke is undermined. Then, sooner or later, comes the moment when Muslims make it impossible for themselves to live in a democracy with religious diversity. The right to religious freedom goes hand-in-hand with the duty to respect the freedom of others. That applies to everyone and therefore also to the Muslim community. If they are not prepared to accept this, Muslims will stigmatize and marginalize themselves.

Earlier this year, I was invited to take part in an inter-religious discussion. As a nonbeliever, I joined an imam, a bishop and a rabbi. Every discussion demands a couple of common principles, and a discussion among religions certainly demands the acceptance of religious freedom as a point of departure. The imam, however, wasn't having any of that: Yes, that was what the law of the Netherlands stipulated, but it could be different elsewhere; higher authorities had to pass judgement on that. We can think about it pragmatically - the imam ultimately accepted religious freedom in the Netherlands - but that is the route of least resistance. Especially when talking about equal treatment, one should be able to expect a little more consistency in principle.

The integration of Islam into democracy will therefore demand major adjustments. Due to migration, a unique situation has come about: For the first time in their history, Muslims constitute a minority in a liberal, secular society. It is therefore premature to judge that democratic principles and Islam as practiced here can never be combined. It is an open question whether the accommodation of Islam in Europe will succeed; with no guarantees, clarity concerning a number of principles is crucial.

As a result, the principle of equal treatment has another inevitable consequence. If you claim religious freedom as a group, you must be prepared to grant that same freedom to the members of your group. As it stands now, however, other movements within Islam are often ostracized. Think of the way more liberal groups such as the Alevi and the Ahmaddiya movements are excluded. Claiming religious freedom should at least entail an acceptance of pluralism within the claimant's own circle. Most are not prepared to comply with that principle even

within the environment of Islam itself. What we have, then is not a Muslim community, but an extremely divided collection of believers with little in common.

Muslims already find it difficult to acknowledge differences within their own circle, but the subject of apostasy is even more taboo; to confess openly that you no longer believe is tantamount to social exclusion or worse. Here, too, though, if a group claims the right as a group to freely practice religion, it cannot do otherwise than to acknowledge that same right for members of the same religious community, for religion is freely practiced or rejected. That is nothing like the case now.

Religious freedom does not exclude religious criticism. On the contrary, the price of an open society includes criticism of religious traditions as part of an open debate. A little subtlety may be expected of critics, but, nevertheless, speaking freely about what, for others, is sacred can still sometimes be deeply offensive. That's just the way it is. If Muslims want to live here with the idea that the Koran or the prophet is above criticism and may never be the subject of satire, they are going down a dead-end street. The cartoon affair taught us that religious freedom and the freedom to criticize religion are inseparable.

I reiterated this argument in an American television programme, which generated an exceptionally revealing reaction from a Muslim organization in the US. In a public statement they wrote, “We as an American Muslim community claim the human right to self-definition”.<sup>i</sup> Since when has “self-definition”<sup>19</sup> been a human right? Since when have only believers been allowed to comment on their holy books? Such remarkable assertions do not belong in a democracy; every belief belongs to everybody, in the sense that we can all have opinions and freely express them.

The attempts of the Dutch and British governments to reintroduce blasphemy as an offense are therefore unwise, to say the least. Why should insulting the gods actually be worse than insulting our fellow

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<sup>19</sup> Press statement by the Muslim Public Affairs Council (15 March 2005).

human beings? Anyone defending the principle of equal treatment cannot do otherwise than to see religious and secular philosophies as equal in law. There are certainly limits to the freedom of speech, but these do not preclude the criticism or derision of a belief. Otherwise we can start burning at the stake Erasmus' *In Praise of Folly*, with chapters such as "Even More Folly in the Bible". Tolerance cannot be based on fear.

Equal treatment does not mean that everyone must suddenly embrace liberal ideas. Like other traditional believers, conservative Muslims can reject an institution such as homosexual marriage, as long as they accept that the majority has decided otherwise for the present. And, vice versa, those who criticize religion on principle must be prepared to defend religious freedom, as duress in matters of belief is an assault on democracy. Diplomatic avoidance does not help in dealing with Islam; honesty regarding the shared principles of religious freedom does.

For the moment, we are entangled in a conflict with a politicized Islam, the end of which is not yet in sight. That international climate casts a shadow on attempts to accommodate Muslim minorities in Europe. Nevertheless, when we succeed in that task and find a place for Islam in secular and liberal societies, we will have become more universal. When we succeed in remaining true to the idea of religious freedom and in peacefully incorporating many millions of Muslim migrants and their children into our societies, we will have attained a privileged position in the world.

Since 1989 Europe has had the opportunity to unite in a peaceful manner, not only by overcoming old differences, but also by giving migrants a new place. There is no compelling reason why the Old World should not be able to reinvent itself. Because plenty of things in Europe deserve to be cherished, not brutally modernized, a certain reticence is quite understandable. Still, the shock of migration and integration should be seen as an invitation to live up to the idea of an open society.

**Ute Frevert**

**Migration – History – Diversity:  
National Memories and Cultural Identities in Europe**

Let me start with an idea of what citizenship is, then proceed with reflections on citizenship education and finally end with some thoughts on how history ties into it, or, to be more precise: how history can mediate between “national memories” and “cultural identities” and thus provide a platform for social integration. For the sake of clarity, I have organised my talk in 10 brief statements.

1. Historically, citizenship has been defined as the result of a continuous expansion of rights. According to Thomas Marshall, a British sociologist writing in the 1940s, citizenship in Europe has seen three waves of expansion: starting with civic rights (f.ex. legal equality, habeas corpus, the right not to be deported), continuing with political rights (voting) and ending with social rights (health care, social security). In the light of recent multiculturalism, we might add a fourth wave: the right to be different and to be protected in one's being different.
2. My take on citizenship, though, is somewhat different. I will not focus on rights and duties (which I will take for granted), but on active participation, on what we might call participatory democracy. Why that? Because I consider participatory democracy to be one of the great achievements of European and North American History. It is an achievement that was hard to get at, and that was often in danger of being lost or weakened. It had been manipulated by authoritarian regimes that mistook democratic participation for mass mobilisation. It had been subdued in formally democratic regimes with strong paternal authority figures (like de Gaulle's France and Adenauer's Germany). But it has seen, by and large, an extraordinary flourishing in recent times. Since the 1960s, Western societies have experienced a remarkable widening of the public sphere and an

increasing involvement of citizens in the public sphere (new social movements, “grass-root democracy” etc.).<sup>20</sup>

3. This – third point – has fundamentally changed the notions of politics. No longer can politics be confined to parliament and parties and voting patterns. Politics have been expanded, both in terms of issues that became “politicised” (remember the slogan: “the personal is political”), and in terms of its modes, procedures and personnel. More people have gained access to information and take part in political communication, in school or local communities as much as on the federal, European or even global level. Issues like abortion or rape, education or sexual orientation, the protection of animal species or the introduction of energy saving methods are given wide attention among fellow-citizens. Discussion and debate, negotiation and contestation have acquired a stronger position than ever before, and are less and less influenced by party affiliations. The re-definition of politics thus displays a general trend: they have become less abstract, more tied to personal concerns, and more democratic.
4. Political involvement and participation (in this broader sense) are, to be sure, not mandatory. Western democracies grant their citizens the right to be apolitical (which distinguishes them from totalitarian systems like communism and fascism). But it seems that many people actually want to get involved – not so much in terms of party membership and long-term commitment, but in the shape of short-term, and limited participation (local civic initiatives, students’ projects etc.). Social scientists are not quite sure about the general trend: Some speak of a growing tendency of “bowling alone” and a weakening of social ties and associations<sup>21</sup>, while others highlight the shifting

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<sup>20</sup> Linked to education! Press etc.). – long american tradition (Tocqueville) – involvement of citizens in local politics, school boards, charity/philanthropy etc. – historical role of associations (even in Europe)

<sup>21</sup> see Putnam who refers to a weakening of social ties and, as a consequence, political activity.

location and timing of politics and are reluctant to discuss it in terms of higher or lesser degrees of overall engagement. Most observers, though, agree that, as such, citizens' involvement is a good thing: because it places democracy on a broader and deeper scale, it is one of the checks and balances that democratic government depends on, and it commits citizens to their society and state (citizens as agents of politics, rather than recipients of political decisions). The latter point is, of course, crucial for immigrant societies. "Integrating" new citizens ultimately means inviting them to take part in the institutions and practices of the host society, above all in its public sphere.

5. This said, what can societies do to increase citizens' participation, to encourage and enable it? On a general level, what can they do to ensure that every citizen has the chance and the resources to take part in public debate, association and decision-making? This is, again, not just about rights and entitlement. Rather, it is about the resources that allow people to practice their rights – we might call it the resource-driven approach. What are those "resources"? Very basically, they comprise things like personal safety, physical integrity, food, clothing, shelter, health. Still, it needs more to become an active citizen. Information is another important resource, with education closely linked. Without access to information and knowledge, people cannot communicate with one another. On top of that, they require skills of communication, like polite and civil manners, and basic training in how to conduct a debate, how to listen to one another, how to make an argument and defend it against criticism. These skills depend on a clear set of values: respect for each other, tolerance of other attitudes, abdication of violence. Such values and skills have to be widely propagated - and taught: in the family as much as in schools, at the workplace, in the media and in public institutions (like town-halls, trade unions, or churches).
6. But citizen education should not stop here. Teaching democratic values and practices, implies teaching about their development and appropriation. How did we become democrats?

How did we learn democracy, and how could we, at times, forget about it? Democracy, after all, is not a given thing. It had to be invented, popularised, fought for and defended. It did not come easy. Each country had to face a number of challenges in order to establish a political system that granted the rule of law, civic rights, the separation of powers and public participation. Each society had to overcome a great deal of obstacles before it cast itself as a civil society based on mutual respect, solidarity, and an abdication of violence. Each nation had to experience quite a bit of turmoil and stress until it embraced all its members, regardless of sex, race or religion. And, to be sure, those achievements were not there to last. European history has many tales to tell about democracy being curtailed, diminished, abolished, about civil rights being suspended or denied altogether. Within and without Europe, democracy was and still is – and will always be – an imperilled project.

7. This is why history matters. If told in a critical, self-reflective way, it can serve as a major educational force reaching out to both old and new citizens. On the one hand, it reminds those whose families and ancestors had, in one way or another, shared the nation's past, (it reminds them) of the problematic aspects of this past – of wrong directions taken, cruel deeds performed, non-democratic practices enacted. It does not conceive of the modern democratic age as a kind of *via triumphalis*, as a one-way-road of glorious success and national pride. Instead, it presents it as a map of diverging boulevards and alleys, including a number of dead-end-streets and no-go-areas. It tells about democracy as an endangered species – and about the reasons why we might and should be inclined to defend it by all means. On the other hand, history also reaches out to new citizens, to immigrants who carry different national memories or cultural identities. It teaches them that their host country's history is not as immaculate, heroic and “superior” as it is often presented. As such, it defies identification, and rather calls for critical distance and reflection – thus making it easier for immigrants to approach and accept it. History can therefore



actually bridge the gap between long-term citizens and new immigrant generations. Rather than divide, it can unite.

8. This might come as a surprise. Most of us are used to think of history as a divisive matter. We have read about young Turks in Germany, who refuse to be part of the collective that remembers the Holocaust as the crucial moment of national history. We have heard about Arab or African immigrants to France who feel left out of the historical narrative that reconstructs the benevolent achievements of French civilization. And we wonder about the sense of historical estrangement that might befall African or South American immigrants to Portugal when they are greeted by the Padrao dos Descobrimentos celebrating the European quest for discovery and conquest in non-European regions. Immigrants from non-European countries, so the general argument runs, cannot identify with European history, for a couple of reasons: a) Either they are left out of this history, and their personal or collective experiences are excluded; or, b) they are negatively involved in the historical narrative, be it as colonial subjects or as victims of imperialism; or c) they are not prepared to accept the “negative property” (Jean Améry) of the host country, f.ex. the Holocaust as the defining factor of German historical consciousness.
9. This said, what makes me think and argue that history can do better? That it can reach out to immigrants as well and, even more, contribute to their democratic education? Above all, it is the American example. Living in the US, teaching history at a major university, and having kids in American high schools taught me a crucial lesson. Or maybe more than one. America, as we all know, is the classical immigrant society. Unlike most European countries, the US openly embraces its identity as a country of immigrants. Many people have commented on the extraordinary speed and degree to which immigrants absorbed and still absorb the dominant culture. The second generation normally speaks fluent American English, embraces American popular culture including fast food and Hollywood movies. Schools welcome immigrant children with elaborate programs

of learning English as a second language and helping their families to adjust to American life and manners. This seems to work perfectly well for the large majority of those who come to this country because they want to do better or want their children to do better. The educational system – diverse as it is – has a great share in this. But now, what does history have to contribute? Let me just mention three things. First: there is definitely a strong focus on democracy and its development in the US. The founding fathers play a huge role – although they are no longer depicted as faultless heroes. The issue of slavery looms large, and so does the fate of America's native population. The history of democracy is presented as a story of attempted exclusion and the constant fight for inclusion. Second: There is an equally strong focus on the history of immigration, its successes and pitfalls. Immigrants are not presented as alien intruders, but as assets of American culture and society. Third, much more attention (compared to Europe) is given to non-American history. Students learn about other continents and world regions as well: about Chinese and Indian civilization, about Africa and South America, and, of course, about Europe. This helps them to recognize and appreciate their own heritage and cultural identity.

10. To conclude and slightly modify a slogan from former East Germany: To learn from America helps us to win. It helps us Europeans to win the hearts and minds of new citizens, and it helps us to strengthen our continent as a place of democratic citizenship. History can contribute a lot – if it is taught with a keen eye on diversity rather than homogeneity, and in a spirit of critical appraisal rather than blowing one's own national trumpet.

**José Casanova<sup>22</sup>**

## **Religion, European Secular Identities, and European Integration**

The rapid and drastic process of secularization in western Europe over the last decades has not diminished the continuing unease with which Europe considers the Islamic religion and Muslims in its midst. In this benchmark essay from 2004, José Casanova argues that the "Islam problem" is an indicator of the disparity between liberal and illiberal strands of European secularism.

### **Focal Point: Post-secular Europe?**

Is religion a public or a private matter? Can there be such a thing as a European Islam? If so, what characterizes it? What role can religion -- or religions -- play when it comes to the emergence of a European solidarity? In a series of articles, *Eurozine* focuses on post-secular tendencies and religion(s) in the new Europe.

Since the signing of the Treaty of Rome in 1957 that established the EEC and initiated the ongoing process of European integration, western European societies have undergone a rapid, drastic, and seemingly irreversible process of secularization. In this respect, one can talk of the emergence of a post-Christian Europe. At the same time, the process of European integration, the eastward expansion of the European Union, and the drafting of a European constitution have triggered fundamental questions concerning European identity and the role of Christianity in that identity. What constitutes "Europe"? How and where should one draw the external territorial and the internal cultural boundaries of Europe? The most controversial and anxiety-producing issues, which are rarely confronted openly, are the potential integration of Turkey and the potential integration of non-European immigrants, who in most European countries happen to be overwhelmingly Muslim. It is the interrelation between these phenomena that I would like to explore in this paper.

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<sup>22</sup> See [www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-07-29-casanova-en](http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-07-29-casanova-en).

The progressive, though highly uneven, secularization of Europe is an undeniable social fact.<sup>23</sup> An increasing majority of the European population has ceased to participate in traditional religious practices, at least on a regular basis, while still maintaining relatively high levels of private individual religious beliefs. In this respect, one should perhaps talk of the *unchurching* of the European population and of religious individualization, rather than of secularization. Grace Davie has characterized this general European situation as "believing without belonging".<sup>24</sup> At the same time, however, large numbers of Europeans even in the most secular countries still identify themselves as "Christian," pointing to an implicit, diffused, and submerged Christian cultural identity. In this sense, Danièle Hervieu-Léger is also correct when she offers the reverse characterization of the European situation as "belonging without believing."<sup>25</sup> "Secular" and "Christian" cultural identities are intertwined in complex and rarely verbalized modes among most Europeans.

The most interesting issue sociologically is not the fact of progressive religious decline among the European population, but the fact that this decline is interpreted through the lenses of the secularization paradigm and is therefore accompanied by a "secularist" self-understanding that interprets the decline as "normal" and "progressive", that is, as a quasi-normative consequence of being a "modern" and "enlightened" European. It is this "secular" identity shared by European elites and ordinary people alike, that paradoxically turns "religion" and the barely submerged Christian European identity into a thorny and perplexing issue when it comes to delimiting the external geographic boundaries and to defining the internal cultural identity of a European Union in the process of being constituted.

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization*, London 1978; and Andrew Greeley, *Religion in Modern Europe at the End of the Second Millennium*, London 2003.

<sup>24</sup> Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain Since 1945: Believing without Belonging*, Oxford 1994, and *Religion in Modern Europe: A Memory Mutates*, Oxford 2000.

<sup>25</sup> Danièle Hervieu-Léger, "Religion und sozialer Zusammenhalt", *Transit* 26 (2003/2004).

I would like to explore some of the ways in which religion has become a perplexing issue in the constitution of "Europe" through a review of four ongoing controversial debates: the role of Catholic Poland, the incorporation of Turkey, the integration of non-European immigrants, and the place of God or of the Christian heritage in the text of the new European constitution.

### **Catholic Poland in post-Christian Europe: Secular normalization or great apostolic assignment?**

The fact that Catholic Poland is "re-joining Europe" at a time when western Europe is forsaking its Christian civilizational identity has produced a perplexing situation for Catholic Poles and secular Europeans alike. In a previous issue of *Transit*, I examined the convoluted, long historical patterns of convergence and divergence in Polish and western European religious developments.<sup>26</sup> It suffices to state here that throughout the Communist era, Polish Catholicism went through an extraordinary revival at the very same time when western European societies were undergoing a drastic process of secularization. The re-integration of Catholic Poland into secular Europe can be viewed therefore as "a difficult challenge" and/or as "a great apostolic assignment". Anticipating the threat of secularization, the integralist sectors of Polish Catholicism have adopted a negative attitude towards European integration. Exhorted by the Polish Pope, the leadership of the Polish church, by contrast, has embraced European integration as a great apostolic assignment.

The anxieties of the "Europhobes" would seem to be fully justified since the basic premise of the secularization paradigm, that the more a society modernizes, the more secular it becomes, seems to be a widespread assumption, also in Poland. Since modernization, in the sense of catching up with European levels of political, economic, social, and cultural development, is one of the goals of European integration, most observers tend to anticipate that such a modernization will lead to secularization also in Poland, putting an end to Polish religious "ex-

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<sup>26</sup> José Casanova, "Das katholische Polen in säkularisierten Europa", *Transit* 25 (2003).

ceptionalism". Poland becoming at last a "normal" and "unexceptional" European country is after all one of the aims of the "Euroenthusiasts".

The Polish Episcopate, nevertheless, has accepted enthusiastically the papal apostolic assignment and has repeatedly stressed that one of its goals once Poland rejoins Europe is "to restore Europe for Christianity". While it may sound preposterous to western European ears, such a message has found resonance in the tradition of Polish messianism. Barring a radical change in the European secular *zeitgeist*, however, such an evangelistic effort has little chance of success. Given the loss of demand for religion in western Europe, the supply of surplus Polish pastoral resources for a Europe-wide evangelizing effort is unlikely to prove effective. The at best lukewarm, if not outright hostile European response to John Paul II's renewed calls for a European Christian revival points to the difficulty of the assignment.

I've suggested that a less ambitious, though no less arduous, apostolic assignment could perhaps have equally remarkable effects. Let Poland prove the secularization thesis wrong. Let *Polonia semper fidelis* keep faith in its Catholic identity and tradition while succeeding in its integration into Europe, thus becoming a "normal" European country. Such an outcome, if feasible, could suggest that the decline of religion in Europe might be not a teleological process necessarily linked with modernization but a historical choice that Europeans have made. A modern religious Poland could perhaps force secular Europeans to rethink their secularist assumptions and realize that it is not so much Poland which is out of sync with modern trends, but rather secular Europe which is out of sync with the rest of the world. Granted, such a provocative scenario is only meant to break the spell which secularism holds over the European mind and over the social sciences.

### **Could a democratic Muslim Turkey ever join the European Christian club. Or, which is the *torn country*?**

While the threat of a Polish Christian crusade awakens little fear among secular Europeans confident of their ability to assimilate Catholic Poland on their own terms, the prospect of Turkey joining the

European Union generates much greater anxieties among Europeans, Christian and post-Christian alike, but of the kind which cannot be easily verbalized, at least not publicly. Turkey has been patiently knocking on the door of the European club since 1959, only to be told politely to keep waiting, while watching latecomer after latecomer being invited first in successive waves of accession.

The formation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951 by the six founding members (Benelux, France, Italy, and West Germany) and its expansion into the European Economic Community (EEC) or "common market" in 1957 was predicated upon two historic reconciliations: the reconciliation between France and Germany, two countries which had been at war or preparing for war from 1870 to 1945; and the reconciliation between Protestants and Catholics within Christian Democracy. Indeed ruling or prominent Christian Democrats in all six countries played the leading role in the initial process of European integration. The Cold War, the Marshall Plan, NATO, and the newly established Washington-Rome Axis formed the geopolitical context for both reconciliations. Greece in June 1959 and Turkey in July 1959, hostile enemies yet members of NATO, were the first two countries to apply for association to the EEC. That same July, the other western European countries formed EFTA as an alternative economic association. Only Franco's Spain was left out of all initial western European associations and alliances.

The EEC always made clear that candidates for admission would have to meet stringent economic and political conditions. Ireland, The United Kingdom, and Denmark formally applied for admission in 1961 but only joined in 1973. Spain and Portugal were unambiguously rebuffed as long as they had authoritarian regimes, but were given clear conditions and definite timetables once their democracies seemed on the road to consolidation. Both joined in 1986. Greece, meanwhile, had already gained admission in 1981 and with it de facto veto power over Turkey's admission. But even after Greece and Turkey entered a quasi-détente and Greece expressed its readiness to sponsor Turkey's admission in exchange for the admission of the entire island of Cyprus, Turkey still did not receive an unambiguous answer, being told once again to go back to the end of the queue. The

fall of the Berlin Wall once again rearranged the priorities and the direction of European integration eastward. In 2004, ten new members, eight ex-Communist countries plus Malta and Cyprus are set to join the European Union. Practically all the territories of Medieval Christendom, that is, of Catholic and Protestant Europe, will now be reunited in the new Europe. Only Catholic Croatia and "neutral" Switzerland will be left out, while "Orthodox" Greece as well as Greek and Turkish Cyprus will be the only religious "other". "Orthodox" Romania and Bulgaria are supposed to be next in line, but without a clear timetable. Even less clear is if and when the negotiations for Turkey's admission will begin in earnest.

The first open, if not yet formal, discussions of Turkey's candidacy during the 2002 Copenhagen summit touched a raw nerve among all kinds of European "publics". The widespread debate revealed how much "Islam" with all its distorted representations as "the other" of Western civilization was the real issue rather than the extent to which Turkey was ready to meet the same stringent economic and political conditions as all other new members. About Turkey's eagerness to join and willingness to meet the conditions, there could be no doubt now that the new, officially no longer "Islamic" government had reiterated unambiguously the position of all the previous Turkish "secularist" administrations. Turkey's "publics", secularist and Muslim alike, had spoken in unison. The new government was certainly the most representative democratic government of all of Turkey's modern history. A wide consensus had seemingly been reached among the Turkish population, showing that Turkey, on the issue of joining Europe and thus "the West", was no longer a "torn country". Two of the three requirements stated by Samuel Huntington for a torn country to redefine successfully its civilizational identity had clearly been met: "First, the political and economic elite of the country has to be generally supportive of and enthusiastic about this move. Second, the public has to be at least willing to acquiesce in the redefinition of identity."<sup>27</sup> It was the third requirement that apparently was missing: "The dominant ele-

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<sup>27</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York 1996, 139.



ments in the host civilization, in most cases the West, have to be willing to embrace the convert."

The dream of Kemal, "Father of the Turks", of begetting a modern Western secular republican Turkish nation-state modeled after French republican *laïcité* has proven not easily attainable, at least not on Kemalist secularist terms. But the possibility of a Turkish democratic state, truly representative of its ordinary Muslim population, joining the European Union, is today for the first time real. The "six arrows" of Kemalism (republicanism, nationalism, secularism, statism, populism, and reformism) could not lead towards a workable representative democracy. Ultimately, the project of constructing such a nation-state from above was bound to fail because it was too secular for the Islamists, too Sunni for the Alevis, and too Turkish for the Kurds. A Turkish state in which the collective identities and interests of those groups that constitute the overwhelming majority of the population cannot find public representation cannot possibly be a truly representative democracy, even if it is founded on modern secular republican principles. But Muslim Democracy is as possible and viable today in Turkey as Christian Democracy was half a century ago in western Europe. The still Muslim, but officially no longer Islamist party in power has been repeatedly accused of being "fundamentalist" and of undermining the sacred secularist principles of the Kemalist constitution which bans "religious" as well as "ethnic" parties, religion and ethnicity being forms of identity which are not allowed public representation in secular Turkey.

One wonders whether democracy does not become an impossible "game" when potential majorities are not allowed to win elections, and when secular civilian politicians ask the military to come to the rescue of democracy by banning these potential majorities, which threaten their secular identity and their power. Practically every continental European country has had religious parties at one time or another. Many of them, particularly the Catholic ones, had dubious democratic credentials until the negative learning experience of Fascism turned them into Christian Democratic parties. Unless people are allowed to play the game fairly, it may be difficult for them to appreciate the rules and to acquire a democratic habitus. One wonders who the real

"fundamentalists" are here. "Muslims" who want to gain public recognition of their identity and demand the right to mobilize in order to advance their ideal and material interests, while respecting the democratic rules of the game, or "secularists" who view the Muslim veil worn by a duly elected parliamentary representative as a threat to Turkish democracy and as a blasphemous affront against the sacred secularist principles of the Kemalist state? Could the European Union accept the public representation of Islam within its boundaries? Can "secular" Europe admit "Muslim" democratic Turkey? Officially, Europe's refusal to accept Turkey so far is mainly based on Turkey's deficient human rights record. But there are not-too-subtle indications that an outwardly secular Europe is still too Christian when it comes to the possibility of imagining a Muslim country as part of the European community. One wonders whether Turkey represents a threat to Western civilization or rather an unwelcome reminder of the barely submerged yet inexpressible and anxiety-ridden "white" European Christian identity.

The widespread public debate in Europe over Turkey's admission showed that Europe was actually the torn country, deeply divided over its cultural identity, unable to answer the question whether European unity, and therefore its external and internal boundaries, should be defined by the common heritage of Christianity and Western civilization or by its modern secular values of liberalism, universal human rights, political democracy, and tolerant and inclusive multiculturalism. Publicly, of course, European liberal secular elites could not share the Pope's definition of European civilization as essentially Christian. But they also could not verbalize the unspoken "cultural" requirements that make the integration of Turkey into Europe such a difficult issue. The spectre of millions of Turkish citizens already in Europe but not of Europe, many of them second-generation immigrants, caught between an old country they have left behind and their European host societies unable or unwilling to fully assimilate them, only makes the problem the more visible. "Guest workers" can be successfully incorporated economically. They may even gain voting rights, at least on the local level, and prove to be model or at least ordinary citizens. But can they pass the unwritten rules of cultural European membership or are they to remain "strangers"? Can the European Union open new

conditions for the kind of multiculturalism that its constituent national societies find so difficult to accept?

### **Can the European Union welcome and integrate the immigrant "other"? Comparative perspectives from the American experience of immigration**

Throughout the modern era, western European societies have been immigrant-sending countries, indeed the primary immigrant-sending region in the world. During the colonial phase, European colonists and colonizers, missionaries, entrepreneurs, and colonial administrators settled all corners of the globe. During the age of industrialization, from the 1800s to the 1920s, it is estimated that ca. 85 million Europeans emigrated to the Americas, to Southern Africa, to Australia and Oceania, 60 per cent of them to the United States alone. In the last decades, however, the migration flows have reversed and many western European societies have instead become centres of global immigration. A comparison with the United States, the paradigmatic immigrant society (despite the fact that from the late 1920s to the late 1960s it also became a society relatively closed to immigration), reveals some characteristic differences in the contemporary western European experience of immigration.

Although the proportion of foreign immigrants in many European countries (United Kingdom, France, Holland, West Germany before reunification), at approximately 10 percent is similar to the proportion of foreign born in the United States, most of these countries still have difficulty viewing themselves as permanent immigrant societies or viewing the native second generation as nationals, irrespective of their legal status. But it is in the different ways in which they try to accommodate and regulate immigrant religions, particularly Islam, that European societies distinguish themselves not only from the United States but also from one another. European societies have markedly different institutional and legal structures regarding religious associations, very diverse policies of state recognition, of state regulation, and of state aid to religious groups, as well as diverse norms concerning when and where one may publicly express religious beliefs and practices.

In their dealing with immigrant religions, European countries, like the United States, tend to replicate their particular model of separation of church and state and the patterns of regulation of their own religious minorities. France's etatist secularist model and the political culture of *laïcité* require the strict privatization of religion, eliminating religion from any public forum, while at the same time pressuring religious groups to organize themselves into a single centralized church-like institutional structure that can be regulated by and serve as interlocutor to the state, following the traditional model of the concordat with the Catholic Church. Great Britain, by contrast, while maintaining the established Church of England, allows greater freedom of religious associations which deal directly with local authorities and school boards to press for changes in religious education, diet, etc, with little direct appeal to the central government. Germany, following the multi-establishment model, has tried to organize a quasi-official Islamic institution, at times in conjunction with parallel strivings on the part of the Turkish state to regulate its diaspora. But the internal divisions among immigrants from Turkey and the public expression and mobilization of competing identities (secular and Muslim, Alevi, and Kurd) in the German democratic context have undermined any project of institutionalization from above. Holland, following its traditional pattern of pillarization, seemed, until very recently at least, bent on establishing a state-regulated but self-organized separate Muslim pillar. Lately, however, even liberal tolerant Holland is expressing second thoughts and seems ready to pass more restrictive legislation setting clear limits to the kinds of un-European, un-modern norms and habits it is ready to tolerate.

If one looks at the European Union as a whole, however, there are two fundamental differences with the situation in the United States. In the first place, in Europe immigration and Islam are almost synonymous. The overwhelming majority of immigrants in most European countries, the UK being the main exception, are Muslims and the overwhelming majority of western European Muslims are immigrants. This identification appears even more pronounced in those cases when the majority of Muslim immigrants tend to come predominantly from a single region of origin, e.g., Turkey in the case of Germany, the Ma'ghreb in the case of France. This entails a superimposition of dif-

ferent dimensions of "otherness" that exacerbates issues of boundaries, accommodation and incorporation. The immigrant, the religious, the racial, and the socio-economic disprivileged "other" all tend to coincide.

In the United States, by contrast, Muslims constitute at most 10 percent of all new immigrants, a figure that is actually likely to decrease given the strict restrictions to Arab and Muslim immigration imposed after September 11 by the increasingly repressive American security state. Since the US Census Bureau, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and other government agencies are not allowed to gather information on religion, there are no reliable estimates on the number of Muslims in the United States.<sup>28</sup> Available estimates range widely between 2,8 million and 8 million. Moreover, it is estimated that from 30 to 42 percent of all Muslims in the United States are African-American converts to Islam, making more difficult the characterization of Islam as a foreign, un-American religion. Furthermore, the Muslim immigrant communities in the United States are extremely diverse in terms of geographic region of origin from all over the Muslim world, in terms of discursive Islamic traditions, and in terms of socio-economic characteristics. As a result, the dynamics of interaction with other Muslim immigrants, with African-American Muslims, with non-Muslim immigrants from the same regions of origin, and with their immediate American hosts, depending upon socio-economic characteristics and residential patterns, are much more complex and diverse than anything one finds in Europe.

The second main difference has to do with the role of religion and religious group identities in public life and in the organization of civil society. Internal differences notwithstanding, western European societies are deeply secular societies, shaped by the hegemonic knowledge regime of secularism. As liberal democratic societies they tolerate and respect individual religious freedom. But due to the pressure towards the privatization of religion, which among European societies has become a taken-for-granted characteristic of the self-definition of a

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<sup>28</sup> Karen Isaksen Leonard, *Muslims in the United States. The State of Research*, New York 2003

modern secular society, those societies have a much greater difficulty in recognizing some legitimate role for religion in public life and in the organization and mobilization of collective group identities. Muslim organized collective identities and their public representations become a source of anxiety not only because of their religious otherness as a non-Christian and non-European religion, but more importantly because of their religiousness itself as the other of European secularity. In this context, the temptation to identify Islam and fundamentalism becomes the more pronounced. Islam, by definition, becomes the other of Western secular modernity. Therefore, the problems posed by the incorporation of Muslim immigrants become consciously or unconsciously associated with seemingly related and vexatious issues concerning the role of religion in the public sphere, which European societies assumed they had already solved according to the liberal secular norm of privatization of religion.

By contrast, Americans are demonstrably more religious than the Europeans and therefore there is a certain pressure for immigrants to conform to American religious norms.<sup>29</sup> It is generally the case that immigrants in America tend to be more religious than they were in their home countries. But even more significantly, today as in the past religion and public religious denominational identities play an important role in the process of incorporation of the new immigrants. The thesis of Will Herberg concerning the old European immigrant, that "not only was he expected to retain his old religion, as he was not expected to retain his old language or nationality, but such was the shape of America that it was largely in and through religion that he, or rather his children and grandchildren, found an identifiable place in American life," is still operative with the new immigrants.<sup>30</sup> The thesis implies that collective religious identities have been one of the primary ways of structuring internal societal pluralism in American history.

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<sup>29</sup> José Casanova, "Beyond European and American Exceptionalisms: towards a Global Perspective," in G. Davie, P. Heelas, and L. Woodhead, eds., *Predicting Religion*, Aldershot 2003.

<sup>30</sup> Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, Chicago 1983, 27-8.

One should add as a corrective to the thesis that not religion alone, as Herberg's study would seem to imply, and not race alone, as contemporary immigration studies tend to imply, but religion and race and their complex entanglements have served to structure the American experience of immigrant incorporation, indeed are the keys to "American exceptionalism". Today, once again, we are witnessing various types of collision and collusion between religious identity formation and racial identity formation, processes that are likely to have significant repercussions for the present and future organization of American multiculturalism. Religion and race are becoming, once again, the two critical markers identifying the new immigrants either as assimilable or as suspiciously "alien".

Due to the corrosive logic of racialization, so pervasive in American society, the dynamics of religious identity formation assume a double positive form in the process of immigrant incorporation. Given the institutionalized acceptance of religious pluralism, the affirmation of religious identities is enhanced among the new immigrants. This positive affirmation is reinforced moreover by what appears to be a common defensive reaction by most immigrant groups against ascribed racialization, particularly against the stigma of racial darkness. In this respect, religious and racial self-identifications and ascriptions represent alternative ways of organizing American multiculturalism. One of the obvious advantages of religious pluralism over racial pluralism is that, under proper constitutional institutionalization, it is more reconcilable with principled equality and non-hierarchical diversity, and therefore with genuine multiculturalism.

American society is entering a new phase. The traditional model of assimilation, turning European nationals into American "ethnics", can no longer serve as a model of assimilation now that immigration is literally world-wide. America is bound to become "the first new global society" made up of all world religions and civilizations, at a time when religious civilizational identities are regaining prominence on the global stage. At the very same moment that political scientists like Samuel Huntington are announcing the impending clash of civilizations in global politics, a new experiment in intercivilizational encounters and accommodation between all the world religions is taking

place at home.<sup>31</sup> American religious pluralism is expanding and incorporating all the world religions in the same way as it previously incorporated the religions of the old immigrants. A complex process of mutual accommodation is taking place. Like Catholicism and Judaism before, other world religions, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism are being "Americanized" and in the process they are transforming American religion, while the religious diasporas in America are simultaneously serving as catalysts for the transformation of the old religions in their civilizational homes, in the same way as American Catholicism had an impact upon the transformation of world Catholicism and American Judaism has transformed world Judaism.

This process of institutionalization of expanding religious pluralism is facilitated by the dual clause of the First Amendment which guarantees the "no establishment" of religion at the state level, and therefore the strict separation of church and state and the genuine neutrality of the secular state, as well as the "free exercise" of religion in civil society, that includes strict restrictions on state intervention and on the administrative regulation of the religious field. It is this combination of a rigidly secular state and the constitutionally protected free exercise of religion in society that distinguishes the American institutional context from the European one. In Europe one finds on the one extreme the case of France, where a secularist state not only restricts and regulates the exercise of religion in society but actually imposes upon society its republican ideology of *laïcité*, and on the other the case of England, where an established state church is compatible with a wide toleration of religious minorities and a relatively unregulated free exercise of religion in society.

As liberal democratic systems, all European societies respect the private exercise of religion, including Islam, as an individual human right. It is the public and collective free exercise of Islam as an immigrant religion that most European societies find difficult to tolerate

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<sup>31</sup> Indeed, one of the most questionable aspects of Huntington's thesis is his nativist anti-immigrant and anti-multi-culturalist posture in order to protect the supposedly Western civilizational purity of the United States from hybridization.



precisely on the grounds that Islam is perceived as an "un-European" religion. The stated rationales for considering Islam "un-European" vary significantly across Europe and among social and political groups. For the anti-immigrant, xenophobic, nationalist Right, represented by Le Pen's discourse in France and by Jörg Haider in Austria, the message is straightforward. Islam is unwelcome and unassimilable simply because it is a "foreign" immigrant religion. Such a nativist and usually racist attitude can be differentiated clearly from the conservative "Catholic" position, paradigmatically expressed by the Cardinal of Bologna when he declared that Italy should welcome immigrants of all races and regions of the world, but should particularly select Catholic immigrants in order to preserve the Catholic identity of the country.

Liberal secular Europeans tend to look askance at such blatant expressions of racist bigotry and religious intolerance. But when it comes to Islam, secular Europeans tend to reveal the limits and prejudices of modern secularist toleration. One is not likely to hear among liberal politicians and secular intellectuals explicitly xenophobic or anti-religious statements. The politically correct formulation tends to run along such lines as "we welcome each and all immigrants irrespective of race or religion as long as they are willing to respect and accept our modern liberal secular European norms". The explicit articulation of those norms may vary from country to country. The controversies over the Muslim veil in so many European societies and the overwhelming support among the French citizenry, including apparently a majority of French Muslims, for the recently passed restrictive legislation prohibiting the wearing of Muslim veils and other ostensibly religious symbols in public schools, as "a threat to national cohesion", may be an extreme example of illiberal secularism. But in fact one sees similar trends of restrictive legislation directed at immigrant Muslims in liberal Holland, precisely in the name of protecting its liberal tolerant traditions from the threat of illiberal, fundamentalist, patriarchal customs reproduced and transmitted to the younger generation by Muslim immigrants.

Revealingly enough, Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, in his address to the French legislature defending the banning of ostensibly re-

religious symbols in public schools made reference in the same breath to France as "the old land of Christianity" and to the inviolable principle of *laïcité*, exhorting Islam to adapt itself to the principle of secularism as all other religions of France have done before. "For the most recently arrived, I'm speaking here of Islam, secularism is a chance, the chance to be a religion of France."<sup>32</sup> The Islamic veil and other religious signs are justifiably banned from public schools, he added, because "they are taking on a political meaning", while according to the secularist principle of privatization of religion, "religion cannot be a political project". Time will tell whether the restrictive legislation will have the intended effect of stopping the spread of "radical Islam" or whether it is likely to bring forth the opposite result of radicalizing further an already alienated and maladjusted immigrant community.

The positive rationale one hears among liberals in support of such illiberal restriction of the free exercise of religion is usually put in terms of the desirable enforced emancipation of young girls, if necessary against their expressed will, from gender discrimination and from patriarchal control. This was the discourse on which the assassinated liberal politician Pim Fortuyn built his electorally successful anti-immigrant platform in liberal Holland, a campaign which is now bearing fruit in new restrictive legislation. While conservative religious people are expected to tolerate behaviour they may consider morally abhorrent such as homosexuality, liberal secular Europeans are openly stating that European societies ought not to tolerate religious behaviour or cultural customs that are morally abhorrent in so far as they are contrary to modern liberal secular European norms. What makes the intolerant tyranny of the secular liberal majority justifiable in principle is not just the democratic principle of majority rule, but rather the secularist teleological assumption built into theories of modernization that one set of norms is reactionary, fundamentalist, and anti-modern, while the other set is progressive, liberal, and modern.

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<sup>32</sup> Elaine Sciolino, "Debate Begins in France on Religion in the Schools", *New York Times*, 4 February 2004.

## **Does one need references to God or to its Christian heritage in the new European constitution or does Europe need a new secular "civil religion" based on Enlightenment principles?**

Strictly speaking, modern constitutions do not need transcendent references nor is there much empirical evidence for the functionalist argument that the normative integration of modern differentiated societies requires some kind of "civil religion". In principle, there are three possible ways of addressing the quarrels provoked by the wording of the Preamble to the new European Constitution. The first option would be to avoid any controversy by relinquishing altogether the very project of drafting a self-defining preamble explaining to the world the political rationale and identity of the European Union. But such an option would be self-defeating in so far as the main rationale and purpose of drafting a new European constitution appears to be an extra-legal one, namely to contribute to European social integration, to enhance a common European identity, and to remedy the deficit in democratic legitimacy.<sup>33</sup>

A second alternative would be the mere enumeration of the basic common values that constitute the European "overlapping consensus", either as self-evident truths or as a social fact, without entering into the more controversial attempt to establish the normative foundation or to trace the genealogy of those European values. This was the option chosen by the signatories of the Declaration of American Independence when they proclaimed *"We Hold These Truths To Be Self-Evident"*. But the strong rhetorical effect of this memorable phrase was predicated on the taken-for-granted belief in a Creator God who had endowed humans with inalienable rights, a belief shared by republican deists, Establishmentarian Protestants, and radical-pietist sectarians alike. In our post-Christian and post-modern context, it is not that

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<sup>33</sup> This point was forcefully made by Dieter Grimm at his keynote address, "Integration by Constitution – Juridical and Symbolic Perspectives of the European Constitution", at the Conference "Toward the Union of Europe – Cultural and Legal Ramifications", at New School University, New York, 5 March 2004.

simple to conjure such self-evident "truths" that require no discursive grounding. The 2000 Solemn Proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union attempts to produce a similar effect with its opening paragraph: "Conscious of its spiritual and moral heritage, the Union is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality, and solidarity." But the proclamation of those values as a basic social fact, as the common normative framework shared by most Europeans, could hardly have the desired effect of grounding a common European political identity. It simply reiterates the already existing declarations of most national European constitutions, of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights, and most importantly of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations. Without addressing explicitly the thorny question of Europe's "spiritual and moral heritage" and its disputed role in the genesis of those supposedly "universal values", it is unlikely that such a proclamation can have the desired effect of inscribing those values as uniquely, particularly, or simply poignantly "European".

The final and more responsible option would be to face the difficult and polemical task of defining through open and public debate the political identity of the new European Union: Who are we? Where do we come from? What constitutes our spiritual and moral heritage and the boundaries of our collective identities? How flexible internally and how open externally should those boundaries be? This would be under any circumstance an enormously complex task that would entail addressing and coming to terms with the many problematic and contradictory aspects of the European heritage in its intra-national, inter-European, and global-colonial dimensions. But such a complex task is made the more difficult by secularist prejudices that preclude not only a critical yet honest and reflexive assessment of the Judeo-Christian heritage, but even any public official reference to such a heritage, on the grounds that any reference to religion could be divisive and counterproductive, or simply violates secular postulates.

The purpose of my argument is not to imply that the new European constitution ought to make some reference to either some transcendent reality or to the Christian heritage, but simply to point out that the

quarrels provoked by the possible incorporation of some religious referent in the constitutional text would seem to indicate that secularist assumptions turn religion into a problem, and thus preclude the possibility of dealing with religious issues in a pragmatic sensible manner. Firstly, I fully agree with Bronislaw Geremek that any geneological reconstruction of the idea or social imaginary of Europe that makes reference to Greco-Roman antiquity and the Enlightenment while erasing any memory of the role of Medieval Christendom in the very constitution of Europe as a civilization evinces either historical ignorance or repressive amnesia.<sup>34</sup>

Secondly, the inability to openly recognize Christianity as one of the constitutive components of European cultural and political identity means that a great historical opportunity may be missed to add yet a third important historical reconciliation to the already achieved reconciliation between Protestant and Catholics and between warring European nation-states, by putting an end to the old battles over Enlightenment, religion, and secularism. The perceived threat to secular identities and the biased overreaction to exclude any public reference to Christianity belies the self-serving secularist claims that only secular neutrality can guarantee individual freedoms and cultural pluralism. What the imposed silence signifies is not only the attempt to erase Christianity or any other religion from the public collective memory, but also the exclusion from the public sphere of a central component of the personal identity of many Europeans. To guarantee equal access to the European public sphere and undistorted communication, the European Union would need to become not only post-Christian but also post-secular.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Bronislaw Geremek, "Welche Werte für das neue Europa?", *Transit* 26 (2003/2004).

<sup>35</sup> Even in his new post-secular openness to the religious "other" and in his call for the secular side to remain "sensitive to the force of articulation inherent in religious languages", Jürgen Habermas still implies that religious believers must naturally continue to suffer disabilities in the secular public sphere. "To date, only citizens committed to religious beliefs are required to split up their identities, as it were, into their public and private elements. They are the ones who have to translate their religious beliefs into a secular language before their arguments have any chance of gaining majority support." Jürgen

Finally, the privileging of European secular identities and secularist self-understandings in the genealogical affirmation of the common European values of human dignity, equality, freedom, and solidarity may not only impede the possibility of gaining a full understanding of the genesis of those values and their complex process of societal institutionalization and individual internalization, but also preclude a critical and reflexive self-understanding of those secular identities. David Martin and Danièle Hervieu-Léger have poignantly shown that the religious and the secular are inextricably linked throughout modern European history, that the different versions of the European Enlightenment are inextricably linked with different versions of Christianity, and that cultural matrixes rooted in particular religious traditions and related institutional arrangements still serve to shape and encode, mostly unconsciously, diverse European secular practices.<sup>36</sup> The conscious and reflexive recognition of such a Christian encoding does not mean that one needs to accept the claims of the Pope or of any other ecclesiastical authority to be the sole guardians or legitimate administrators of the European Christian heritage. It only means to accept the right of every European, native and immigrant, to participate in the ongoing task of definition, renovation, and transmission of that heritage. Ironically, as the case of French laïc etatism shows, the more secularist self-understandings attempt to repress this religious heritage from the collective conscience, the more it reproduces itself subconsciously and compulsively in public secular codes.

The four issues analyzed in this paper, the integration of Catholic Poland in post-Christian Europe, the integration of Turkey into the European Union, the incorporation of non-European immigrants as full members of their European host societies and of the European Union, and the task of writing a new European constitution that both reflects the values of the European people and at the same time allows them to

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Habermas, "Faith and Knowledge", in *The Future of Human Nature*, Cambridge 2003, 109. Only by holding to a teleological philosophy of history can Habermas insist that "postsecular society continues the work, for religion itself, that religion did for myth" and that this work of "translation", or rational linguistification of the sacred, is the equivalent of "non-destructive secularization" and enlightenment.

<sup>36</sup> *Transit* 26 (2003/2004).

become a self-constituent European demos, all are problematic issues in themselves. But the paper has tried to show that unreflexive secular identities and secularist self-understandings turn those problematic issues into even more perplexing and seemingly intractable "religious" problems.

*This text emerged from an independent working group named by European Commission President Romano Prodi and chaired by the Rector of Vienna's Institute for Human Sciences, Krzysztof Michalski. The group is charged with identifying the long-term spiritual and cultural perspectives of the enlarged Europe. More information under [www.iwm.at/r-reflec.htm](http://www.iwm.at/r-reflec.htm).*

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