

MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME: THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY'S
ATTEMPTS TO INTEGRATE ITS MUSLIM POPULATION

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ABSTRACT

Integration problems among Europe's Muslims have led to alienation and resentment, leading some Muslims to turn to extremist groups and terrorist violence. Muslims living in Germany are among the least integrated Muslims of the major European countries, with some of the highest unemployment rates and lowest levels of education. The problem is likely to get worse in the near future due to changing demographics in which the German birth rate is declining and the Muslim birth rate is increasing. This paper contends that Germany's Muslim integration problem was caused by the political situation in divided Germany during the Cold War. After reunification the German government became somewhat 'normalized', and has tried to correct the problem through changes to its laws on immigration, citizenship and political asylum, as well as new integration policies. The government is making the legal changes necessary for successful integration however the wider social changes that are necessary for integration have been slow to change. These changes must be made or Germany and the rest of the world may be subject to more terrorist threats and violence. It is an important issue for Germany as well as for global security.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1. THE ORIGINS OF MUSLIMS IN GERMANY	11
CHAPTER 2. GERMANY'S ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL IMMIGRATION AND PROMOTE INTEGRATION FROM 1998 TO THE PRESENT	37
CHAPTER 3. THE EFFECTS OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT'S INTEGRATION EFFORTS	51
CONCLUSION	67
REFERENCE LIST	70

LIST OF TABLES

1. A comparison of the unemployment rates of German citizens in Rhineland Westphalia in 2009.....	3
2. A comparison of high school drop-out rates in Germany in 2009.....	3
3. A comparison of the percentage of Muslim immigrants in German and France with a desire to assimilate into the population.....	4
4. A comparison of percentages of positive opinions in European countries in regards to immigration from the Middle East and Africa.....	5

INTRODUCTION

In the late summer of 2006, Germany was rattled with the news that home-made suitcase bombs failed to ignite on two regional trains in the cities of Koblenz and Dortmund. “The planned attack here stunned Germans who thought the country’s vehement opposition to the Iraq war insulated it from becoming a terror target almost five years after the attacks on Washington and New York” (Associated Press 2006). Following the arrest of several of the suspected conspirators, it was discovered that at least one suspect had several contacts in Hamburg, “the latest link to the northern port city where three of the September 11 suicide pilots prepared for their attack“ (Associated Press 2006).

German authorities concluded that the rustic bombs of the failed train bombing were ‘amateur’ and that the failed bombers were poorly trained radicals. Counterterrorism experts have noted that a number of terrorism threats have occurred against Germany since the 2006 failed train bombing, including the following events:

--A German court convicted a Syrian and two Palestinian brothers of support of and/or membership in al-Qa’ida and attempted procurement of enriched uranium for a “dirty bomb” In December 2007.

--Three “Homegrown Terrorists” - a Turkish national and two German converts known as the “Sauerland Cell” were arrested in September 2007 for plotting a major attack against US bases in Germany.

--Al-Qa’ida released a video threatening Germany with terrorist attacks if it did not withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. It was published on January 16, 2009, the same day that an assault in Kabul targeted the German Embassy and killed five people.

All of the attacks have in common that the religion of the perpetrators was ‘Muslim’. What is motivating these perpetrators to carry out such violent acts? What

is it about the European nations, such as Germany, that prevents Muslims from integrating and turning to extremism? Many counterterrorism analysts have observed that Muslims living in Germany and Europe are alienated and marginalized. Germany and many other European countries such as Great Britain, Spain and France have had difficulties integrating their Muslim populations. The impoverished conditions and low unemployment of Muslim communities have been seen by some experts as evidence of a lack of appropriate social integration. Muslims in Germany have a much higher rate of unemployment than ethnic Germans, and a much higher rate of school dropouts. According to an unemployment poll taken by the European Study Initiative, in North Rhine-Westphalia region (the largest in Germany, with 18 million inhabitants) the German-by-birth unemployment rate was 8.5 while the Turkish-by-birth citizens' unemployment rate was 26.5. (European Stability Initiative 2009):



Figure 1. A comparison of the unemployment rates of German citizens in Rhineland Westphalia in 2009.

As many as 30% of the Muslim population drop out of high school before graduation, compared to 8% of the ethnic German population. (German Ministry of Interior Report – The German Conference on Islam 2006):

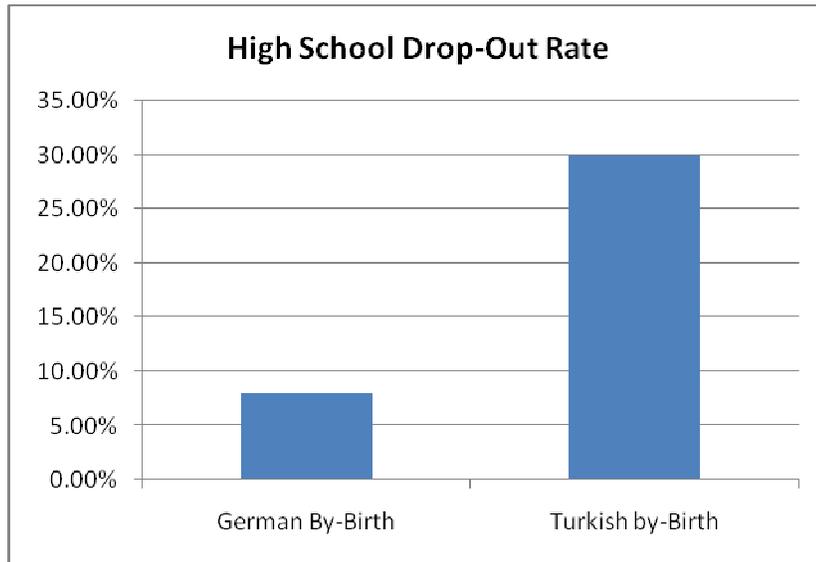


Figure 2. A comparison of high school drop-out rates in Germany in 2009.

On top of these troubling figures, rising birth rates among Muslims in Germany and declining birth rates among ethnic Germans are causing a change in demographics. In 1990 Germany was approximately 1% Muslim, in 2006 it was 3%, and some estimates predict that by 2025 Germany will be 25% Muslim. (German Ministry of Interior Report – The German Conference on Islam 2006) Germany is changing, and its attitudes and policies will be forced to change with it.

A recent opinion poll from Pew Research shows that Germany’s Muslims are less integrated than in other major European countries: Only 30% of German Muslims think Muslims coming into that country today want to assimilate by adopting the

customs and way of life, while 78% of French Muslims in France want to assimilate.

(Pew Global Attitudes Project 2009):

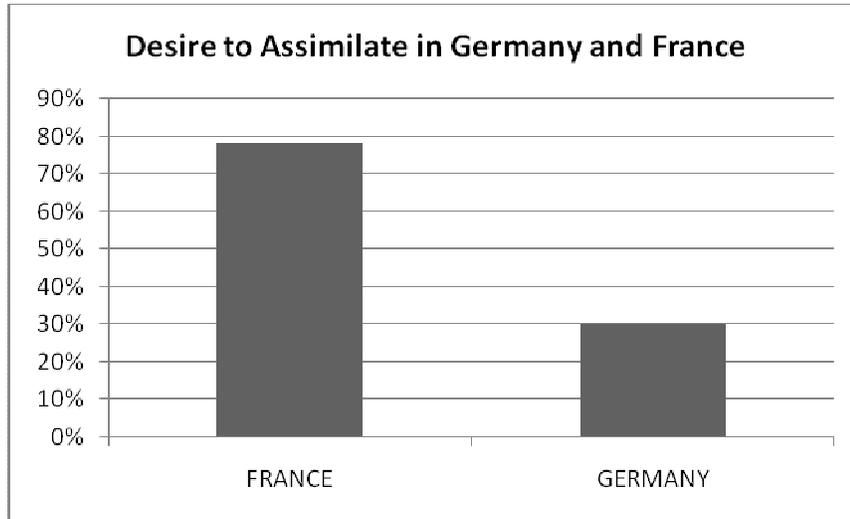


Figure 3. A comparison of the percentage of Muslim immigrants in German and France with a desire to assimilate into the population.

Germans also had the highest percentage of opinion against immigration compared to other European countries: According to a Pew Research Poll, only 34% of Germans called immigration from the Middle East and North Africa a good. In comparison, in France 58% called it a good thing, which was similar to Great Britain where 57% called it a good thing (Pew Global Attitudes Project 2009):

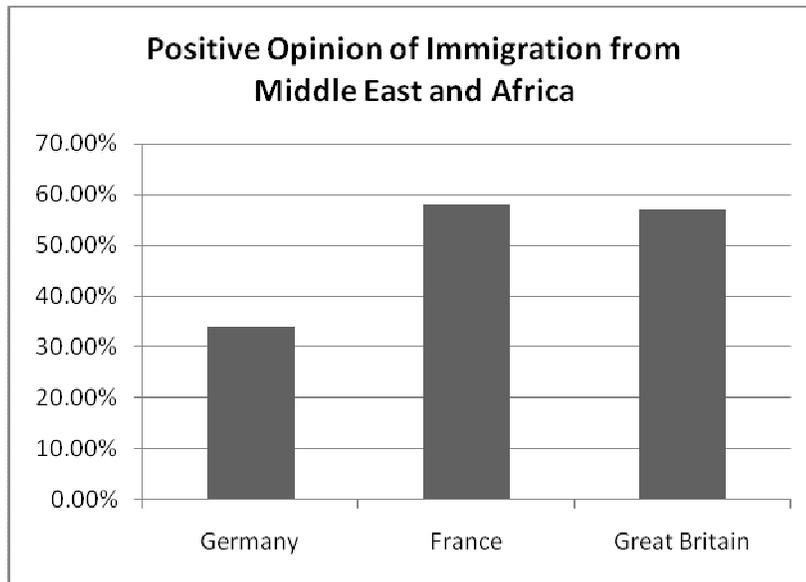


Figure 4. A comparison of percentages of positive opinions in European countries in regards to immigration from the Middle East and Africa.

Concerning Muslims in Germany, most are Turkish *Gastarbeiter* (Guest Workers), or descendants of *Gastarbeiter*, who were invited by Germany in the 1960s and 1970s to fill labor shortages during the post World War Two “Economic Miracle”. Approximately 80% of the Muslims in Germany are a result of the *Gastarbeiter* program. Currently Germany’s Muslim population consists of approximately 1.8 million Turks, 160,000 Bosnians, 70,000 Moroccans, 60,000 Iranians, 55,000 Afghans, and 1 million naturalized German citizens (mostly former Turkish nationals). Also, there is a variety of Muslim religious groups; there are approximately 2.5 million Sunnis, 500,000 Alewites and about 200,000 Shiites in Germany (Federal Ministry of the Interior – The German Conference on Islam 2006).

Personal Background

Originally I became interested in the subject of Muslim integration in Germany as a counterterrorism study. I first read about the connection between European extremist groups and the lack of Muslim integration in Marc Sageman's book "Leaderless Jihad" (Sageman 2008). Sageman's thesis was that the latest type of extremists consisted of individuals who lacked a sense of belonging in society:

The threat from al-Qa'ida and its local affiliates is rapidly changing: The Islamist terror networks of the twenty-first century are becoming more fluid, independent, and unpredictable entities than their more structured forebears, who carried out the atrocities of 9/11. The present threat has evolved from a structured group of al-Qa'ida masterminds, controlling vast resources and issuing commands, to a multitude of informal local groups trying to emulate their predecessors by conceiving and executing operations from the bottom up. These "homegrown" wannabes form a scattered global network, a leaderless jihad. Although physically unconnected, these terrorist hopefuls form a virtual yet violent social movement as they drift to Internet chat rooms that connect them and provide them with inspiration and guidance. (Sageman 2008, VII)

Sageman compared American Muslims with European Muslims, saying that there were more extremists in Europe because of the different immigration situations: In the United States, Muslims generally immigrated because they had the desire and means to immigrate, which meant that most of them were middle class and integrated relatively well into new environments. In comparison, European Muslims were often from the lower classes that came to Europe to work with the intention of eventually moving back to their home countries, or Muslims immigrated to Europe against their will through family ties. Sageman wrote as follows:

Differences in life experiences distinguish American from European Muslims. Historical differences generated very different classes of population in the two continents. Differences in labor markets show that the American Dream is

alive and well in American but constrained in Europe...The allure and thrill of participating in fashionable and clandestine work seems too much to resist. In Europe, top-down integration policies have failed, while in the United States, the lack of a federal policy in a culture welcoming foreigners allowed society to integrate the grandchildren of newcomers from the bottom up...All these factors promote a higher rate of radicalization in Europe as compared to the United States. (Sageman 2008, 106)

I completely agreed with Sageman, based on my personal experiences living in Germany, mostly from my time living there as a student in 1990 and again in 1992 when I held a few temporary jobs. In both years I lived in a small town near Stuttgart called Reutlingen, in the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg. In my interactions with Germans and Muslims it was obvious that integration was a problem. I thought it was ridiculous that someone could be in Germany for three generations and still be considered a “foreigner”. I also came to the conclusion that there was a wide spectrum of German opinions towards foreigners: There were plenty of Germans who would have preferred a limited number of foreigners or immigrants, particularly immigrants from less developed countries. But there were plenty of young German students who welcomed people of all races, and these students showed a high curiosity towards and knowledge about other cultures. Their knowledge may have been in part due to their high exposure towards other cultures and languages.

In the early 1990s everyone in Germany was excited about reunification, but also anxious about the costs. Most Germans wondered where the *Aussiedler* (“resettlers” – ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe and parts of the Soviet Union who were welcomed back to Germany and granted automatic citizenship) were going to live, when the country was already filling up with large numbers of political asylum

applicants. A total of 500,000 political asylum applicants, *Aussiedler* and immigrants immigrated to Germany between 1990 and 1995. The large influx of foreigners all at once, and the government's lack of action towards the problem, caused extreme right-wing politicians to sprout up and grow increasingly popular as the immigration problems grew.

I personally witnessed the resentment felt by Germans against immigrants and political asylum refugees while working with a stucco construction company in Reutlingen. In the summer of 1992, I worked at a stucco construction job (*stukkaturer*) in Germany with an owner/manager who occasionally complained about political asylum refugees. After finishing a plastering job I asked him to check my work, since it was the first real work he allowed me to do (as opposed to just cleanup and support). He responded with "it's good enough; it's just for refugee housing anyway. I have nothing against you as a foreigner, Yosef, since you work. I just do not like it when these refugees come in and do not have to work, yet they're driving around in Mercedes from our welfare system. It's these types of policies that are going to bring back the Nazis".

Another occurrence while I was working at the same construction company demonstrated the German view of Turkish "foreigners": "Willi" was in his 50s or 60s with a great sense of humor, a thick Swabian accent, and apparently a bad temper. One day a large Turkish-looking man drove onto our work site and started yelling and pointing fingers about something. I never found out what he was yelling about. Willi snapped, yelling back "you can't come onto our site and start telling us what to do!

You're not from Germany (*du kommst nicht aus Deutschland!*)!" Then Willi picked up a nearby rock and threw it in the man's general direction, missing him by about ten feet. The Turkish looking man picked up an even bigger rock and threw it at Willi's head, which Willi was able to dodge. I did not realize how big the Turkish looking man was until that moment, and apparently Willi realized it too and ducked away behind a vehicle. The Turkish looking man drove away. Apparently what bothered Willi most was that someone who did not "come from Germany" was telling him what to do.

After reading Sageman's book in 2008 and looking into the current situation of Muslims in Germany, I realized that a lot has changed in Germany since I was there in 1992. The amount of people allowed into Germany through political asylum and resettlement have been scaled back, and non-ethnic Germans are allowed to become German citizens for the first time in German history. So I decided to do a research project on why Germany changed so much in regards to immigration, citizenship and political asylum laws in such a comparatively short period of time, what the changes were, and the effects that the changes have had on integrating Germany's Muslim minority. I hope that my paper will shed light on Germany's integration problems, and what Germany can do about them. In a shrinking world of globalization, terrorism is not just Germany's problem but also a problem for the United States, Europe and the rest of the world.

This thesis is divided into three chapters: The first chapter will cover the basic history of how and why Muslims came to Germany and the integration problems that

were caused by the government's policies. Chapter two will examine the German government's attempts to integrate its Muslim population through policy changes, integration programs and conferences. Chapter three will measure how much of an effect the government's changes in policy have made on the lives of Muslims in Germany.

CHAPTER 1

THE ORIGINS OF MUSLIMS IN GERMANY

Post World War II Germany to the Construction of the Berlin Wall

Germany was at its lowest point in history after giving an unconditional surrender to Allied Powers that ended the World War II. The economy was ruined. The world's perception of Germany was not positive. Internal interest in politics was minimal; Germany's citizens were disillusioned by politics and wanted to put the Nazi regime behind them. They had followed the leadership of Adolf Hitler, a madman who led the nation into a war to "increase German living space" and create a racially "untainted" society. With revelations of the holocaust and the realization that a former enemy was now occupying their country, Germany's internal social morale was at an all time low.

The victorious Allies, which included the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and France, divided Germany and Berlin into four zones with each country occupying a separate zone. According to a prominent Cold War historian, John Lewis Gaddis, each zone was greatly influenced greatly by the country that occupied it; the philosophical bases of the occupying governments were different from each other. Looking back at the coalition of the "big three" that defeated Germany in World War II--the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain--it is surprising that they were able to work together long enough to win the war. The 'big three' were so fundamentally different and had such opposing interests that only the threat of German victory and dominance could have brought them together. The United States

and Great Britain were and still are democratic societies, each having democratically elected leaders and free market economies. The Soviet Union was formed on Communist principles where power was concentrated in the hands of a few individuals in order to create a classless society and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat. The Soviet Union at the end of WWII was often considered “the most authoritarian society anywhere on the face of the earth” (Gaddis 2005, 8).

The Soviet Union’s occupation philosophy was based on expanding communism and extracting revenge for the death and destruction caused by Germany. In the immediate post-war years the countries that occupied the western zones; the United States, Great Britain and France, ruled Germany with a philosophy of revenge and a desire to keep Germany from being able to start another war. However, by 1947 the United States decided to occupy Germany under a different philosophy; the Marshall plan was intended to restore Germany’s economy through monetary aid. In addition, many political leaders in the United States and Great Britain began to see the Soviet Union and communism as the new threat and they saw Germany as a future partner against this powerful new foe.

In the first two decades after World War II, most West Germans were content to work hard, to reach out for material well-being and prosperity. They were glad that the burden of political power had been lifted from them and contented themselves with passivity and prosperity. A new “Americanized” society emerged: more open compared with the Nazi or Soviet regimes and less class-ridden than anytime in Germany’s autocratic history (autocratic except during the Weimar Republic era). At

last, the obstacles to democracy seemed breached or diminished. Germans indulged in a “release from greatness”: The lure of power that had led Germany to two world wars had disappeared (Stern 1987, 16).

In May of 1949, the German Parliamentary Council finished the new constitution, called the Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*). The United States, Great Britain and France approved the Basic Law and the resulting turnover to German politicians.

Secretary Acheson said in his “Current Situation in Germany” speech:

The Germans were authorized to establish a provisional government, democratic and federal in character, based upon a constitution of German inception. It would be subject, in accordance with an occupation statute, to minimum supervision by the occupation authorities in the interest of the general security and of broad Allied purposes for Germany. Coordinated three-power control was to be established, with the virtual abolition of the zonal boundaries. (Harper 1994, 65)

On May 12, 1949, the Three Military Governors of the United States, Great Britain and France wrote a letter stating their approval of the Basic Law to the President of the Parliamentary Council, Konrad Adenauer, as stated below:

The Basic Law passed on 8 May by the Parliamentary Council has received our careful and interested attention. In our opinion it happily combines German democratic tradition with the concepts of representative government and a rule of law which the world has come to recognize as requisite to the life of a free people. (Harper 1994, 66)

The Basic Law was characterized by a concentration of executive authority in the Chancellor and cabinet members, a limitation of the Federal President to a largely ceremonial role, full parliamentary accountability of the government, and stability in government institutions and leadership personnel. Bonn was chosen as a provisional capital, and the former military governors became high commissioners.

West Germany's Demand for Cheap Labor

In the 1950s the western zone evolved, and blossomed economically, while the Eastern zone, under Communist influence, lagged behind. The resulting economic inequality allowed Germans from the eastern zones to become a source of cheap labor for the western zones. A steady stream of Germans from the East migrated permanently to the West or, in urban areas such as Berlin, commuted daily from the East to Western zones. This labor situation lasted until 1961, when the Soviet Union decided to stop the flood of emigration to the West by sealing the borders and building a wall between the east and the western occupied zones. One of the significant effects of the construction of the Berlin Wall was that it cut off the cheap East German labor sources to West Germany. West Germany was forced to look for other sources of cheap labor. Ultimately, West Germany invited temporary Guest Workers, (*Gastarbeiter*), from neighboring countries such as Greece, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Italy and Turkey.

Ruth Mandel, who wrote about her experiences with Turkish *Gastarbeiter* in a book titled *Cosmopolitan Anxieties*, pointed out that “the term Guest Worker carries a specific connotation; guests are, by definition, temporary and expected to return home. Guests are bound to the rules and regulations of the host. Whatever the intentions, guests rarely feel ‘at home’ in foreign environs” (Mandel 2008, 55). West Germans overwhelmingly assumed in the 1960s that the migrant workers would return to their homelands (Nathans 2004, 243). Many *Gastarbeiter* did return as expected. However many more *Gastarbeiter* preferred to stay and later brought their families to join them.

For approximately 30 years, from 1962 to the 1990s, the German government acted as if there were no immigrants in Germany. With only very rare exceptions, immigrants who were not ethnically German were not allowed to become citizens. The government's national guidelines stated flatly that "the Federal Republic of Germany is not a land of immigration." (Nathans 2004, 245) The phrase "Germany is not an immigrant country" became something of a government mantra and the justification for many of Germany's anti-integration policies.

Germany's immigration policy was mainly to deny or ignore that immigrants existed. The policy alternated between laws that made it easy for foreign nationals to become *Gastarbeiter* and laws that were designed to encourage *Gastarbeiter* to voluntarily leave Germany, such as during times of high unemployment. From 1973-1982 Germany stopped further recruitment (Nathans 2004, 243) of foreign guest workers. And in the 1980s, when the German economy was stagnating and unemployment was high, the government tried to encourage migrants to return to their native countries through various laws and payment; however most did not leave (Nathans 2004, 244).

The Basic Law

The authors wrote the Basic Law with three important things in mind concerning immigration: First, the separation of the eastern and western zones was considered temporary; so they did not exclude the eastern Germans from citizenship or the Laws and they included the Germans that were spread throughout parts of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The Basic Law Article 116 defines Germans as not only

the nominal holders of German citizenship, but, in combination with the Federal Expellee Law (*Bundesvertreibungsgesetz*), descendants of German settlers in East Europe and Russia who are German not by citizenship but by ethnicity. (Joppke 2001, 44) Second, the Basic Law authors did not foresee immigrants moving to their own war-torn and depressed country, so they did not develop well-planned immigration policies. Finally, they included a clause that stated Germany would be receptive to accepting political asylum refugees. The political asylum clause was due to guilt about the Nazi past, since the clause stated that they would be welcoming because Germany had caused so much strife and refugees in the world. These three factors are important because they were the root cause of the immigration, citizenship and political asylum problems that came later.

Immigration from the East

Ethnic Germans living in parts of the Soviet Bloc were officially known as resettlers (*Aussiedler*), which meant that they were always considered German citizens by the German government. The ethnic German *Aussiedler* problem helped cause integration problems for Muslims in Germany because the government was focused on immigration and integration of the *Aussiedler*, and they neglected the other immigrants in Germany, such as the Turks.

Why did Germany allow ‘ethnic Germans’, who were living in a foreign country, to be considered German citizens? It was mainly due to Europe’s changing borders and Germany’s expansion and contraction of territory. And it was based on the assumption that the ethnic Germans were subject to persecution and discrimination

by the former communist regimes of the region. In the 1700s and 1800s Prussia extended its borders hundreds of miles east of Berlin, mostly into what was once Poland. As Prussia continued to move its borders eastward, many ethnic Germans settled in those lands. After Germany lost both World War One and World War Two, the territories became part of Poland once again. In many cases Germans who had never left their towns were suddenly residents of a different country. The city once known as Breslau became Wroclaw, as happened to hundreds of cities in modern Poland. The West German government wanted to allow the hundreds of thousands of Germans living in parts of the Soviet Bloc to be able to choose to live and be a citizen of Germany. Germans who immigrated to West Germany from Soviet occupied territories were never officially considered immigrants. Rather, they were treated as *Aussiedler* who acted on their constitutional right to return to their country of origin (Joppke 2001, 44).

This right of return was extended to include all ethnic Germans in various parts of the Soviet Bloc, as long as they could prove that they were “ethnically German” through a series of culture and language tests. The ethnic Germans were the only foreign nationals whom postwar Germany accepted as “immigrants”, that is, as entrants set on a path for permanent settlement and citizenship (Joppke 2001, 44). Other migrants, such as the *Gastarbeiter*, were left out of Germany’s immigration and integration plans, one of the root causes of Muslim integration problems.

Soon after reunification, the German government changed the *Aussiedler* rules to decrease the number of ethnic German immigrants from the former Soviet Bloc,

mainly due to the strain on resources such as housing and taxes, but also because the public started questioning how many of the *Aussiedler* were actually persecuted in their home countries. At the time Germans felt that there would not be enough housing, jobs and government money for everyone. Germans asked themselves whether the *Aussiedler* were immigrating due to persecution or economic refugees looking for better economic opportunities. Furthermore, the German population began to question how “ethnically German” the *Aussiedler* were. The open-door *Aussiedler* policy made sense in the post World War II years, and during the Cold War, when a scattered German population actually was persecuted and they needed to immigrate somewhere to survive. But this situation changed drastically when the Cold War ended.

The *Aussiedler* system was tightened up with the “Ethnic German Reception Law” of January 1, 1991 which ended the choice by ethnic Germans of their place of residence within Germany (Marshall 2000, 42). And beginning in 1993 Germany adopted a series of measures that restricted the ability of ethnic Germans living in Russia and Eastern Europe to claim German citizenship (Nathans 2004, 5). As part of the “asylum compromise” of 1992/93 further legislation restricted the access of ethnic Germans to Germany and an upper limit of an annual intake of 200,000 was introduced (Marshall 2000, 34). In exchange for concessions (to political asylum laws), the Social Democrats won agreements to place an annual limit of 200,000 on the immigration of ethnic Germans eligible for automatic German citizenship and to ease the terms of citizenship for longtime foreign residents of Germany (Solsten 1995).

Despite the new restrictions, in both 1994 and 1995 Germany had by far the highest inflow (in Europe) with the arrival of 800,000 foreigners (Marshall 2000, 21).

Political Asylum

Similar to the *Aussiedler* problem, the Basic Law was the root of the problem in integrating Germany's Muslims decades later. Article 16 of the Basic Law stated Germany would be receptive to accepting political asylum refugees. In doing so, the authors had sought to distance their newly formed government from Nazi crimes (Nathans 2004,235). The opening article of the constitution of 23 May 1949 proclaimed that 'the dignity of man is inviolable'. Article three provided that 'all men are equal before the law' and that 'no one may be disadvantaged or privileged as a result of his gender, origin, race, language, home or background, beliefs, or religious or political views. Article 16 made a general offer of asylum to individuals appealing on political grounds (Nathans 2004, 235). The asylum provision was to be proof of the new Federal Republic's commitment to humanitarian values (Marshall 2000, 15), and it was seen as 'an act of generosity' (Marshall 2000, 56).

At the time when the Basic Law was drafted, the authors could not foresee Germany being a country to where people would want to migrate, and at the time only very small numbers of migrants actually came to Germany. The situation lasted approximately until the 1980s, when thousands of political asylum refugees started coming into Germany and political asylum began to be a highly debated issue in Germany that tore at the fabric of German society. Between 1980 and 2000, a total of

2,663,058 persons sought asylum; more than half of this total arrived between 1990 and 1995 (Nathans 2004, 236).

There were several problems with Germany's political asylum policies in the 1980s and 1990s. One of the main problems was that refugees were allowed into the country before their case was heard. Sometimes it took years to decide on a case, and although only 10 % obtained asylum, many rejected ones remained (Nathans 2004, 236). It has been estimated that by the end of 1995 125,000 (7 %) were recognized as political refugees; 130,000 were deported (7 %) and another 130,000 left voluntarily, 83,000 applications were still pending in the Federal Administration for Recognizing Foreign Refugees (*Bundesamt Fuer die Anerkennung auslaendischer Fluechtlinge*); and 277,000 had not been decided by the courts. This left approximately 1.1 million asylum seekers whose whereabouts were not known (Marshall 2000, 40).

The political asylum problem was made worse by the government's ban on employment for the refugees. The employment ban policy was created during a time of high unemployment during the 1970s so that the refugees would not take jobs from German citizens. However, the policy created a situation in which the refugees could not win. They fell victim to the "damned if they do and damned if they don't" syndrome. They were seen as a threat if they worked (taking jobs from Germans) but were labeled 'scroungers of the German benefit system' if they were not employed (Marshall 2000, 50).

Germany's policies appear to have been designed to prevent political asylum refugees from integrating into German society, perhaps with the hopes that the

refugees were not permanent. In the 1980s asylum seekers lost financial support for language classes; this was seen as ‘preventing integration’, in line with the new policy of deterring refugees” (Marshall 2000, 16). Conditions for asylum seekers in Germany deteriorated to such an extent that UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) in an internal report of early August 1983 concluded that Germany had “created deterrence mechanisms against asylum seekers which were unique in Europe” (Marshall 2000, 17).

The net result of Germany’s political asylum policies was that the government did not implement a policy of integration for the refugees. Many government policies appear to have been attempts by conservatives to get the refugees to leave the country, without changing the political asylum laws. Perhaps it was a way for the conservative elements in the government to avoid the political battle of changing the laws.

Despite the government’s attempts to reduce political asylum in the 1980s, the numbers increased dramatically in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In 1992 a total of 438,191 asylum-seekers streamed into Germany--up from 256,112 in 1991. Many Germans complained that the German law permitted many people who were not political refugees, but rather economic migrants, to take advantage of the country's generous welfare system and compete with Germans for scarce housing (Solsten 1995).

In the early 1990s, the German population was at a fever pitch about the political asylum issue. Political asylum became a politically divisive issue, similar to the abortion issue in the United States, in which neither side would budge from its

stand. Conservatives mainly resented the generous benefits given to the asylum seekers such as stipends, housing, medical coverage and education – all free. On the other side of the political spectrum, liberal Germans appeared to be sensitive to the world's opinion on Germany, and felt that they still needed to make up for Nazi atrocities. The left demonstrated with angry and sometimes violent protests against any change to the asylum laws in the 1980s and early 1990s presented by the government.

The early 1990s did in fact see a rise in popularity for extreme right wing parties. Extreme right-wing parties capitalized on this widespread resentment against asylum-seekers in April 1992 elections in two western *Laender* (states), and right-wing extremist parties held seats in three of sixteen Land parliaments in 1992 (Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bremen, and Schleswig-Holstein). The most significant of these parties, the *Republikaner*, with about 23,000 members, attracted support principally by criticizing a government policy that allowed hundreds of thousands of asylum-seekers into Germany (Solsten 1995).

Post Reunification Policies on Political Asylum

As mentioned above, after reunification, Germany began restricting the number of political asylum refugees allowed in the country. On December 6, 1992, CDU (Christian Democratic Union) Chancellor Helmut Kohl's governing coalition and the opposition Social Democrats agreed on a constitutional amendment to limit the right to asylum. The asylum compromise between the government and the opposition included several important changes that persist to this day. First, asylum-seekers from

European Community states or states that accept the Geneva Convention on Refugees and the European Human Rights Convention have no right to asylum in Germany. Second, any refugee passing through "safe third countries," which include all of Germany's neighbors, is ineligible for asylum. An individual may appeal this decision but may not stay in Germany during the course of that appeal. Parliament approved the new asylum law in late May 1993, and it took effect on July 1. The number of foreigners seeking asylum in Germany has fallen substantially since the new law went into effect (Solsten 1995).

The FRG changed the laws on political asylum even further on 1 November 1993 with the new *Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz* (Asylum Seeker Benefits Law) which for the first time separated benefits paid to asylum seekers. From now on, benefits to asylum seekers in their first year in Germany differed from those to which the rest of the population and immigrants with more than one year's residence were entitled (Marshall 2000, 57). It still took a few years before the new restrictions took effect and limited the number of refugees. Despite the new restrictions, in 1994 and 1995 Germany allowed approximately 130,000 asylum seekers per year (Marshall 2000, 21).

Even so, the changes made to the Basic Law that restricted the number of political asylum numbers to Germany seemed to calm the public's fears about the issue, and the far right lost most of its appeal. As of mid-1995, the far right parties appeared to be fading from the German political landscape (Solsten 1995).

Citizenship Laws

One of the biggest obstacles for integrating Germany's minorities was that Germany's citizenship laws were based on ethnicity. The laws meant that immigrants, such as the Turkish Muslim *Gastarbeiter*, not only faced personal discrimination within German society, but also legal discrimination by the government. These citizenship policies were based on a law from 1913, which in turn was based on a Prussian law from 1842. The 1842 Prussian law gave power to local districts to decide on immigration control and was formed to help expel unwanted immigrants (Nathans 2004, 4).

To understand Germany's citizenship laws, we should cover the basic types of citizenship. Generally and historically, there are two criteria on which nations have based citizenship laws: The first criterion is ethnicity, also referred to as 'blood' or *jus sanguinis*, and means that an individual has to prove he is an ethnic national to attain citizenship. The second type of criteria is location of birth, also referred to as *jus soli*, and means citizenship is based on whether the individual was born in the country. Most European countries have based their citizenship laws on *jus soli*, or some mixture of *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*. For example France changed to *jus soli* approximately 100 years earlier. But Germany is not the only country with ethnic priority immigration; other countries that have had ethnic based citizenship laws include Great Britain (until 1981), Greece, Israel, Portugal, Spain and Russia (Joppke 2000, 44).

Why did it take Germany so long to change its citizenship laws? There are two basic schools of thought concerning why Germany based its citizenship laws on

ethnicity for so much longer than other countries: The first school of thought is that Germany's citizenship laws reflect Germany's national character, often described as exclusivist or xenophobic. The second school of thought is that it was Germany's unique history, from its development into a nation-state to the fall of the Soviet Union that caused Germany to base its laws on citizenship for much longer than most European countries.

A prominent example of the 'national character' school is Rogers Brubaker, who wrote a comparison of France's citizenship laws to Germany's in *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*. Brubaker believed that an "assimilationist citizenship law" in Germany was "unimaginable" because Germany lacked a tradition of assimilating those who were not ethnic Germans (Aleinikoff 2000, 177). He also wrote that "there is no chance that the French system of *jus soli* will be adopted; the automatic transformation of immigrants into citizens remains unthinkable in Germany" (Brubaker 1992, 185). Brubaker wrote as follows:

For the distinctive and deeply rooted French and German understandings of nationhood have remained surprisingly robust. Nowhere is this more striking than in the policies and politics of citizenship vis-à-vis immigrants. Even as Western Europe moves toward closer economic union, and perhaps towards political union, citizenship remains a bastion of national sovereignty. Even as the European Community, anticipating great migratory waves from the south and the east, seeks to establish a common immigration policy, definitions of citizenship continue to reflect deeply rooted understandings of nationhood. The state-centered, assimilationist understanding of nationhood in France is embodied and expressed in an expansive definition of citizenship, one that automatically transforms second-generation immigrants into citizens, assimilating them-legally-to other French men and women. [Germany has had] an ethno-cultural, differentialist understanding of citizenship that is remarkably open to ethnic German immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, but remarkably closed to non-German immigrants. (Brubaker 1992, 3)

The second school of thought believed that Germany's citizenship laws were due to the unusual situation of Germany's ethnic population being divided between East and West Germany. As stated in the section above about *Aussiedler*, the ethnic based citizenship laws were maintained after 1949 as a way of maintaining legal ties with East Germans and the millions of "ethnic Germans" expelled from the Soviet-occupied territories in Central and Eastern Europe (Aleinikoff 2000, 31). In this second school of thought, Germany's citizenship laws were comparable to France's at the end of the 19th century, during which the shift to *jus soli* could only occur with the co-existence of three factors: stable borders that included the majority of nationals; immigrants who had acquired the right of permanent settlement; and the consolidation of democratic values. Since the beginning of the 1970s Germany has become a country of permanent immigration, and since 1990 most Germans are reunited within the same borders and form a democratic citizenry. Conditions were therefore fulfilled after reunification for a convergence of European nationality laws (Weil 2000, 31).

In this second school of thought, Germany was "a nation in search of a state" (Brubaker 1992, 4-5). In which case the German special path (*Sonderweg*) can be explained by viewing Germany as a 'belated' and hence insecure nation where citizenship based on ethnicity served as a special tie. After 1945 the traditional ethnically based citizenship laws served the purpose of keeping the nation together, this time by granting German citizenship to inhabitants of former German territories in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Bloc. After national unification was achieved in 1990,

Germany renounced any future claim to territorial expansion in the east by abolishing Article 23 of the Basic Law (which had allowed Germany to gain further territories). Germany had achieved its definite borders. With this the old justification for maintaining citizenship based exclusively on ethnicity had disappeared (Marshall 2000, 139).

Germany's citizenship laws have gone through a period of 'normalization' since reunification, as stated in a 1999 article from The Economist titled "The Burden of Normality". In becoming ever more ordinary, and less guilt-ridden, Germany is discovering new, ordinary, problems:

Germany is unambiguously, eminently respectable. More to the point, it is even becoming normal... This may seem a trivial claim, or one that could have been made years ago. Yet normality, when it fully arrives, will be something quite new for Germans, and will surely affect their behaviour both at home and abroad. Moreover, it would be wrong to confuse the old familiar West Germany, despite its many reassuring characteristics, with a common-or-garden nation-state. What passed for normal in West Germany's first decades as a western democracy—the Federal Republic was founded 50 years ago—was really very strange... From the start, after all, West Germany was a country shorn of its eastern flank, with an exclave, West Berlin, deep in enemy territory. And just as the Soviet Union was the occupying power in East Germany, so supreme authority in the west lay with the Allied occupying powers, America, Britain and France. In several important respects, therefore, West Germany was not a sovereign state. (The Economist, 7 April 1999)

Conditions were right for a shift to *jus soli* because German society met criteria the criteria as outlined by Patrick Weil above: The majority of its population was together in one nation-state with stable borders, immigrants were permanently living in Germany, and Germany was a democratic society.

If reunification created the conditions that allowed Germany to change its citizenship laws, then why did it take 10 years after reunification to change them? After all, the reason for the “ethnic based” citizenship laws disappeared in 1990 but the new citizenship laws did not take effect until the year 2000. For the answer we must look at who was in power at that time – a conservative CDU/CSU coalition led by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, whose political style was to ‘sit on problems’ (Marshall 2000, 162).

During the 1990s there was growing pressure to finally acknowledge the immigrants in Germany, and to allow more of them to become citizens and to take further steps towards integrating them. The Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, which is affiliated with the Social Democratic Party, carried out a series of seminars, which from 1992 onwards resulted in a number of publications in which the reality of immigration was acknowledged and problems of integration were addressed. However, the German government did not act to make changes when the nation was confronted with the phenomenon of large-scale immigration. This led sixty academics in the field to publish the *Manifest of the 60: Germany and Immigration (Manifest der 60: Deutschland und die Einwanderung)* (Marshall 2000, 153). The academics were brought together by the lack of new political policy on migration and its consequences in Germany (Marshall 2000, 153). The academics wrote that what was necessary were comprehensive concepts of immigration, integration, immigration-legislation and migration policy. Refugee and asylum policies should be left aside. The manifesto

was intended to be a 'push for a public debate, which was overdue in Germany (Marshall 2000, 153).

A research project at the German Society for Foreign Policy (*Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer auslaendische Politik*) came to similar conclusions (Marshall 2000, 153). The liberal press such as the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Die Zeit* gave a great deal of space to the matter. However, no clear results emerged at that time (Marshall 2000, 153). It was only after the horrific arson attack on Turks in Solingen that Chancellor Kohl, on June 16, 1993, announced the government's intention of changing the laws to allow non-ethnic Germans to become citizens. Although the latter provision was contained in the 1994 Coalition Agreement between the CDU/CSU and the FDP it had not materialized by the time of the September 1998 elections (Marshall 2000, 144).

Why did Kohl 'sit on' this problem? While pressure mounted to change the citizenship laws, the citizenship laws were not changed until a different party was voted into power in 1998. One cause may be the CDU/CSU's interest in not giving those votes away to its opposition. The conservative CDU party must have realized that giving citizenship rights, and the voting rights that came with it, to a group of immigrants would take votes away from the conservative party.

In the late 1990s, most of the population seemed to be in favor of changes in the citizenship laws. The only politicians that were against it appeared to be those who stood to lose votes as a result of the new laws, namely the conservative CSU/CDU parties. The Free Democratic Party (FDP), a conservative party that aims for smaller

government and lower taxes, advocated an Immigration Law that would have reduced the number of Immigrants but not necessarily expel the “foreigners” already in Germany. One could argue that conservative politicians used the ‘race card’ to stir up fears and prejudices among the German population in order to prevent more “foreigners” from having a vote. In January of 1999 The Economist wrote the following:

The new government of Gerhard Schroeder sensibly wants to reform the law. But it is being opposed by the country’s two mainstream conservative parties on spurious grounds and in a manner that shamelessly panders to populism and racism.” (The Economist, 7 January 1999)

Before the change in citizenship policy that would allow non-ethnic Germans to become citizens, the CDU/CSU put out a media campaign against the new laws. They made it seem as if the new laws would open up a floodgate of more immigrants, even though the laws were directed at integrating the immigrants that were already in the country. Neither party argued for allowing more immigrants into Germany, but that is how the CDU/CSU portrayed the issue.

The same types of arguments were made more recently, when the issue of giving voting rights to non-citizen immigrants in 2007. The SPD (Social Democratic Party) called for foreigners from non-EU states who are long term residents of Germany to be enfranchised to vote in local elections. An SPD representative, the chair of the *Bundestag*’s Internal Affairs Committee Sebastian Edathy, said that it was “indispensable for us to improve immigrants’ political participation, by granting the

vote in local elections to long-term foreign residents of Germany”. CDU internal policy specialist Clemens Binninger warned in an interview:

Such enfranchisement “would be the wrong signal.” Such a measure “would so strongly increase the scope for political influence that many foreigners would lose the incentive to really integrate, and to strive to obtain German citizenship,” Binninger continued. Foreigners would then receive “at least at local level the same rights as Germans, and would be able to implement their interests without themselves taking any steps toward integration. The result, he argued, would be “not to foster integration, but to make it even harder. (*Die Welt*, 14 July 2007)

The Economist scolded the CDU/CSU politicians at the time:

Germany’s Christian Democrats took a terrible beating in the country’s general election last September. They badly need an issue on which they can plausibly campaign. Race should not be that issue. By going on to the streets with their petition, they may steal some votes from right-wing extremists, the sort of people who attack Turks and set fire to their hostels, but they will do themselves no good with the vast majority of decent Germans. Above all, they will inflame a situation that the new government is belatedly trying to improve. The conservatives have chosen the wrong issue on which to make a stand, and are doing it in the wrong way, bringing nothing but ignominy upon hitherto honourable parties. (The Economist, 7 January 1999)

The point is not to discredit the CDU and CSU parties, but only to show that the conservative campaigns against granting citizenship to the “foreigners” in Germany were based on electoral considerations. The conservative parties must have known that most immigrants would not vote for the conservative parties, so they did everything possible to keep the vote from immigrants. This campaign lasted from the Kohl era after reunification, into the citizenship reform debates of 1998, and even came up again during the 2007 debate about giving votes to non-citizens. In this case, the CSU/CSU put the interests of the party before the interests of the State. But of course ‘it takes two to tango’; most likely, the liberal parties had an agenda of their

own to gather more votes which helped them push for giving more votes to immigrants, knowing that they would most likely vote for the more liberal SPD or Green Parties.

Change in Citizenship Law

In September 1998, the more liberal SPD/Green Party coalition was voted into power, and one of their first moves was to change the citizenship law to allow non-ethnic Germans to become naturalized citizens. They changed the basis of German citizenship from *jus sanguinis* to *jus soli*. A law adopted in 1999 granted German citizenship at birth to aliens born in Germany to non-German parents, if at least one of the parents had been a legal resident of Germany for 8 years and possessed a long-term residence permit. Under its provisions children who acquire German citizenship in this fashion will forfeit it if they do not declare in writing, after reaching maturity but before their 24th birthday, that they have surrendered all other citizenships. The 1999 law also gives long-term residents a right to naturalization, assuming that they surrender other passports (Nathans 2004, 5). The new laws had an immediate effect on the Turkish population in Germany. In '89 there were 1,713 Turks naturalized into being German citizens; in '99 there were 103,900 (Nathans 2004, 248). By 2007 the total number of Turkish citizens who had received German citizenship was 755,139 (European Study Initiative 2009).

One of the main reasons for changing the laws was to integrate the “foreigners” living in Germany. German politicians finally admitted that the *Gastarbeiter* were not leaving. The argument presented on the *Bundestag* floor was that it was time to

acknowledge reality – that Germany does contain immigrants, and that it would be in both groups' interest to integrate them into society. In the Coalition Agreement of October 1998 (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 January 1999) a German government for the first time publicly accepted that an irreversible process of immigration into the country had taken place. The objective of the new government was, therefore, to base its policy on the integration of those foreigners who lived permanently in Germany and had committed themselves to Germany's *Verfassungswerte* (constitutional values) (Marshall 2000, 150).

Schily's remarks in his inaugural address of November 1998 focused on the need to face 'reality', meaning that recent immigrants were not likely to leave. (Nathans 2004, 254) "Fear of conflict within German society was another ground for the change in the law". Schily also mentioned the need to preserve "domestic peace". He hoped that the law would both prevent the growth of resentment on the part of the aliens in Germany, and, by furthering their integration into German society, curb [right wing forces] (Nathans 2004, 253).

In 1999, The Economist ran an article praising Germany's new citizenship laws:

All in all, it is hard to see Germany's Turks being truly and peacefully integrated for many years. But the new citizenship law, whatever its shortcomings, is at least a move in the right direction, and opens the way to reducing one unnecessary division in German society. (The Economist, 4 February 1999)

German media also largely praised the changes, with even the conservative papers realizing the need for change, and being satisfied overall with the new policy.

On January 13th, 1999, the Munich *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, a national left-of-center newspaper, contained the following editorial about the new citizenship law:

The new law represents the abandonment of an antiquated principle of the German citizenship law (*Staatsbuergerschaftsrechts*). The pure *jus sanguinis* is being abandoned; children of foreign parents born in Germany will be born as Germans (if one parent was born here or arrived in Germany before the age of 14.) To win support for this historical new orientation, to convince skeptics, and to dispel fears of the new law, the stipulations have been worded quite carefully and cautiously. This means that there will be no sellout of German citizenship.” ...the “law on the facilitation of the acquisition of German citizenship,” which Interior Minister Otto Shily wants to present in Bonn today as a “working draft,” does not read as though the whole text had been formulated by the foreigners’ lobby in Germany. Quite the contrary: it consists primarily of restrictive clauses and tough demands.” (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 13 January 1999)

A few weeks later, *The Economist* contained an article about the monumental changes in Germany:

The new era will certainly be judged to have started on October 3rd 1990, when the two Germanies were unified as a single, fully sovereign state, free of the four former occupying powers. But it is really only in the past four months, since September 27th 1998, that the new normality has become strikingly evident. On that day, 68-year-old Chancellor Kohl and his coalition of Christian and Free Democrats were voted out of office. In came 54-year-old Gerhard Schroeder and a coalition of Social Democrats and Greens...It is within Germany itself that the new normality may prove testing...Now that it is no longer the West’s showpiece on the front line of the cold war and therefore a welcoming recipient of refugees, Germany is having to rethink its attitude to immigration, asylum and nationality...The burden of history, it seems, is being replaced by a burden of normality. Are the new, more normal, politicians capable of shouldering it?” (*The Economist*, 7 April 1999)

Are Germans Xenophobic?

Do Germany’s citizenship and immigration laws indicate that Germans are xenophobic and exclusivist, as suggested by Brubaker and many other authors? It is easy to make the connection between Germany’s racist Nazi past, as well as

Germany's policies from the post WWII period until the 1990s about citizenship and immigration, as proof that Germans were more xenophobic than other European countries. The change in the citizenship law arguably indicates that Germany's citizenship laws can no longer be used as proof that Germans are xenophobic.

Undoubtedly there is plenty of xenophobia among the German population, as there is in any country, but Germany's policies on citizenship cannot be used as an indicator any longer. In the 1990s most authors, including German authors, pointed to Germany ethnic-based citizenship laws as proof that German society as a whole was xenophobic. However, the changes in citizenship policy that took effect in the year 2000 and their current policies show that Germany has changed a lot in the past decade, which may indicate that they may not be more xenophobic than other European countries. And the fact that Germany had ethnic based citizenship laws in the first place may have been due to factors other than xenophobia, such as the unusual political situation in Germany during the Cold War. This is not to say that German is void of all xenophobia, just that the government no longer supports xenophobic laws. And the reason for the xenophobic laws was the unusual political situation during the Cold War.

By the mid-1990s most polls showed that Germans did not differ much from other European peoples in their attitudes to foreigners. According to a Eurobarometer Survey in 1994, all EU countries harbored considerable xenophobia. Belgium had the highest percentage of individuals with marked xenophobic attitudes, followed by France, Greece, Denmark and then Germany. Germans therefore did not apparently

possess a special gene predisposing them to excessive xenophobia, nor did their ethnicity – based nationality laws necessarily produce higher xenophobia than, say ‘republican’ France (Marshall 2000, 70).

CHAPTER 2

GERMANY'S ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL IMMIGRATION AND PROMOTE INTEGRATION FROM 1998 TO THE PRESENT

In the late 1990s German politicians seemed to realize that Muslim integration was a problem. The process of government action started off slowly in the early 1990s with local politicians in areas with high immigrant population and finally made its way up to the national debate level by 1998. Both liberal and conservative politicians recognized the need for integration; however, each side had different plans for promoting integration. Liberals thought citizenship was the main way to integrate minorities, followed by an immigration law that would put a limit on national immigration and encourage skilled workers to immigrate to Germany. Conservatives wanted increased security and stressed the need for limitations on further immigration and were vehemently against naturalized citizens to be allowed to have dual citizenship.

Controlling Immigration

In mid 1996 the SPD party congress approved a proposal for a new immigration law, which was presented to the SPD *Bundestag* group. The law stipulated that the Federal Government, with the approval of the *Bundesrat* (Federal Council), was to establish federal maximum quotas. Until that time, it was up to the states to decide on immigration. From this maximum figure established by the government was to be subtracted the number of politically persecuted, incoming family members, asylum seekers, and war and civil war refugees. SPD Interior

Minister Schily commented that due to the high number of immigrants into Germany, the immigration quota would be set to “zero” if the law passed (*Berlin Die Tageszeitung*, November 1998). Schily’s statement meant that the immigration law that he and the SPD had in mind would not have allowed more immigrants into Germany, but it would have regulated and controlled immigration. It was intended to make Germany’s immigration process more transparent and federally-regulated instead of state-regulated.

The Green Party also presented an immigration bill in 1997. One of the initiators of the bill, Cem Uezdemir, who was working on the Green Party’s domestic policies at the time, told the newspaper *Die Welt* that “Immigration must be controlled on the basis of annual quotas”. The article in *Die Welt* went on to say “Like the SPD, the Greens also want to “promote integration and control and shape immigration politically. This intention, to make Germany a country of immigration with immigration quotas established annually, encounters the energetic opposition of the Union parties (CDU/CSU)” (*Die Welt*, 16 July 1998). The Union Parties argued that an immigration law would send out false signals and actually encourage the very immigration it was created to control, no matter how low the quotas (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 4 December 1998).

Just before the 1998 elections, a number of CDU and CSU politicians took up the cause against dual citizenship. They collected 2 million signatures in their petition against allowing naturalized citizens to be citizens of both Germany and another country. CSU Bavarian Interior Minister Beckstein argued that the integration of

foreigners is possible only if the number of people who must be integrated is limited, which he stated in Munich at the presentation of the Land government's report on the situation of foreigners in Bavaria. The minister affirmed his criticism of the new citizenship law, saying that "dual citizenship is hostile to integration" (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 30 December 1999). Eventually the conservative parties won the debate and the possibility of dual citizenship was taken out of the 1998 citizenship law. The cause taken up by the Union parties may have been based on a bias against "foreigners", or Turks. At the time, *The Economist* observed in an article that other nation's dual citizenship had been allowed for years: "That the conservatives' worries are synthetic can be judged from their failure to rant about dual citizenship when the other nationality is French or Dutch or American, a common enough occurrence in Germany" (*The Economist*, 7 January 1999).

From 1998-2004, Schroeder's appointed Interior Minister Otto Schily worked on passing an immigration law. Schily is an interesting character in German politics: Schily became famous in the 1970s for being the defense lawyer of members of the terrorist group The Red Army Faction. While many people lauded him for remaining with his principles, others criticized that he was sympathetic to the Red Army cause. In 1980 he was one of the founding members of the Green Party, although he later left the party to join the SPD. While Interior Minister, Schily gave numerous speeches to the *Bundestag* that promoted cultural diversity and highlighted the problems of having an exclusivist mindset. In one of his early speeches, he contrasted the destructive principle of "ethnocracy" with a modern Europe that brings together individuals of

various biographical and cultural traits. Another SPD politician said in the same debate “the way toward Europe demands from us, politically and socially, to permit multiplicity, change, and difference, to accept it gladly, as something positive and fruitful (Nathans 2004, 256). Schily also famously told the *Bundestag* in May 1999 that integration problems have caused the formation of “parallel societies” (Nathans 2004, 254). “Parallel societies” is a reference to the areas where immigrants congregated, usually in the larger cities with heavy industries, in which minorities can live without ever coming into contact with ethnic Germans. The phrase “parallel societies” became a common phrase among politicians and is generally accepted as something German society must avoid.

Schily addressed the immigration debate in the beginning of 2000 in connection with introducing a green card for recruiting foreign computer specialists. By mid-year, Schily had appointed a non-partisan commission, under the chairmanship of CDU politician, Rita Suessmuth, a former President of the *Bundestag*, to develop proposals and recommendations for a comprehensive revision of German policy concerning foreigners and immigrants. A final report was presented in July 2001 (Deutsch 2009). Schily’s proposed immigration law focused on bringing highly qualified foreign workers into Germany with a point system borrowed from Canada (The Economist, 9 August 2001). Cem Oezdemir, at that time in charge of the Green Party’s internal affairs policy, agreed with Schily’s efforts, saying in a 2001 interview “We need to make ourselves more attractive to immigrants” (The Economist, 9 August 2001).

The immigration law proposed by Schily also included integration plans with publicly financed courses on language and basic citizenship knowledge. In spite of numerous concessions, the Union parties rejected the SPD/Green proposal and quashed the bill through a lawsuit brought before the Constitutional Court on the grounds of a procedural error committed during the *Bundesrat* vote in December 2002 (Deutsch 2009).

Legislative action then dragged on one and a half years before Chancellor Schroeder reached a majority compromise with the chairmen of the ruling parties and the opposition (Deutsch 2009). In July 2004, the Immigration Law was adopted in the *Bundestag* and in the *Bundesrat*, and went into effect 1 January 2005. According to a German government statement: The law “went into force following a long and difficult legislative process and intense discussions in public and in the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat*” (Federal Ministry of the Interior - The Immigration Act 2005). The Act serves “the purpose of controlling and limiting the influx of foreigners in the Federal Republic of Germany”, declares unmistakably the first paragraph of the “Act for the Control and Limitation of Immigration and for Regulation of the Residency and Integration of Citizens of the European Union and Foreigners” (German Federal Ministry of the Interior - The Immigration Act 2005). “It enables and organizes immigration with a view to the capacity for inclusion and integration and to economic and labor market interests” (Deutsch 2009).

Merkel's National Integration Plan

Soon after the Immigration Act went into effect January 1, 2005, a new grand coalition of CDU/CSU and SPD came into power under the leadership of Federal Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel in November 2005. The new coalition immediately started work on the newly passed Immigration Act, which they amended with the "Immigration Revision Act". Merkel's coalition was more security-minded than her predecessor's and the amendment focused on integrating Foreigners in Germany and on reinforcing security. The amendment, called the "Act to Control and Restrict Immigration and to regulate the Residence and Integration of EU Citizens and Foreigners", was passed by the parliament on June 14, 2007 and went into effect on August 28, 2007. The Act also gave further details about the requirements for immigrants to participate in integration courses and show knowledge of the German constitution and legal system, as signs of their willingness to be integrated and naturalized. In addition, they must not have a criminal record or connections with extremist or terrorist organizations in order to qualify for naturalization (Deutsch 2009).

Merkel opened the Integration Summit in the Federal Chancellery in 2007. The Summit was attended by 86 participants from the federal and state governments, municipal associations, the economy, the areas of culture and sports, religious communities, migrants' organizations, social welfare associations, migrants as well as selected individuals related to the subject of integration. According to BAMF (*Bundesamt Fuer Migration und Fluechtlinge* - The Federal Office for Migration and

Refugees), the Integration Summit was meant to mark the beginning of an ongoing process of dialogue with the migrants in Germany (Hecht 2006). According to a government report from BAMF, the Integration Summit focused on the following points:

--The Federal Government considers the integration of immigrants as one of the big political and social challenges and as a political key task to be addressed.

--The families need to be strengthened in their function as driving force behind integration.

--The demographic change and the growing worldwide competition for the best brains needs to be addressed and immigration needs to be used in a targeted manner to support the economic and social interests of the country.

--Integration deficits among the second and the third generation need to be identified and linked to the need of taking measures to counter the formation of a “lost generation”.

--Integration needs to be defined as identification, participation and responsibility, whose success depends on common efforts to be taken by the state, society and the migrants, and which needs to be realized on the basis of the values, the cultural identity and the free democratic basis order of the Federal Republic of Germany.

--The Residence Act (*Aufenthaltsgesetz*) (part of the Immigration Act) is acknowledged as a means for undertaking the first important step towards the systematic promotion of the integration of migrants living lawfully and on a permanent basis in Germany; it underscores the responsibility of the Federal Government regarding the provision of language support measures for immigrants and their familiarization with the law, culture, history and the political structure of Germany.

--The Residence Act defines the coordination and bundling of integration measures on all levels of state and society as a goal to be achieved. (Hecht 2006)

Merkel also led a second Integration Summit in 2007, during which she introduced the National Integration Plan. The national newspaper *Die Welt* ran the following story after Merkel introduced the National Integration Plan:

A stubborn display of goodwill was provided by the Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Integration Minister Maria Boehmer (both CDU) at yesterday's (12 July) presentation of the National Integration Plan (NIP) in the Federal Chancellery. Despite the boycott by several Turkish organizations, the plan was described by Mrs Merkel as a "milestone in the history of the integration process." Of a total 357 representatives of the federal, regional state and local governments, and of various non-governmental organizations, more than 400 "self-commitments" to integration were devised, extending from wider ranges of language courses to women's soccer, (*Die Welt*, 13 July 2007)

Merkel commented that "many of Germany's 15 million immigrants are very well integrated," though "there are still problems with others who needed further assistance". She also mentioned that the agreed measures were "subject to review", and that "the summit will reconvene in 2008 to assess the progress made" (*Die Welt*, 13 July 2007). Merkel also stressed that integration took effort from both sides - Germans and immigrants - stating: "We should be open to the people who live in our country, but immigrants should also be willing to understand the German society." (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 7 November 2008).

Schaeuble and the German Islamic Conference

The most tireless proponent of integration since 2005 is Merkel's appointee for Federal Minister of the Interior, Dr Wolfgang Schaeuble. Schaeuble has had an interesting political career that dates back to 1972 when he ran for a seat in the *Bundestag* for the first time. In 1990 Schaeuble was wounded by a madman who shot at him and a policeman. The bullets hit Schaeuble in his jaw and back and he has been

in a wheelchair since then (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 March 2007).

However, the wheelchair has not slowed his career down, and he is able to joke about his situation occasionally; someone once told him “you read quite a lot”; Schaeuble answered with “Well, yes, I am not on the tennis court very often” (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 10 March 2007).

Schaeuble has held many offices: He was parliamentary group executive, head of the Chancellor’s Office, Interior Minister, Parliamentary Group Chairman, CDU party leader, and candidate for German President. Appointed by Merkel as Interior Minister, at a time when Merkel said integration would be a cornerstone of her immigration policy, Schaeuble has made integration one of his highest priorities, and has done more for Muslim integration than any other German politician. His most famous contribution is the German-Islam Conference, which he led in 2007 and 2008.

Schaeuble opened the first German Conference on Islam in Berlin with the intention “to improve religious and social integration of the Muslim population in Germany. The conference is based on an understanding of integration which recognizes cultural and religious differences while requiring the complete acceptance of Germany’s liberal democracy” (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – German Islam Conference 2006).

Schaeuble’s goal for the conference was to integrate Islam into Germany so that “Muslims in Germany would become German Muslims”. Schaeuble wanted to create a “contact point” where issues like teaching Islam in schools, training for Imams (the Muslim mosque leaders), and building mosques could be negotiated (*Die Welt*, 3

January 2009). Schaeuble even hoped that a “European Islam” could emerge that was no longer associated with the fundamentalism coming from Saudi Arabia and would be able to coexist with democracy. Another goal of the conference was to create a place where Muslims could argue with Muslims: For example, the traditionalist Islam Council, which was dominated by *Milli Gorus*, sat across from secular women’s right advocates (*Die Welt*, 3 January 2009).

The German Conference on Islam had 30 permanent participants, 15 of whom were representatives of the German government and 15 of whom were representatives of Muslims living in Germany. The latter includes the Turkish-Islamic Union (DITIB), the Central Council of Muslims in Germany (ZMD), the Islamic Council, the Association of Islamic Cultural Centers (VIKZ) and the Alewites Community in Germany. However, since only 10-15% of the Muslim population in Germany belongs to any Islamic organization at all, representatives of a modern, secular Islam from the private sector, society, academia and the cultural scene were also invited to take part. Schaeuble said, "We want all those Muslims living in Germany to be involved in the negotiation process to appropriately reflect their diversity." (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – Integration 2006)

Schaeuble started off the German Islamic Conference with his perception of Germany’s integration problems:

So, back then we thought that integration would happen of its own accord. And that is why we didn't do much to help it along. And another thing: Not all those with an immigrant background have a problem integrating, that only applies to some immigrants, including, for example, some from Turkey. And trade and industry in Germany needs to know and to admit that back then it was not only

interested in highly-specialized experts, but above all in cheap labor. That was one reason why companies decided to invite Turkish guest workers to come here. And that was why the invitation was not extended to people from Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir, but to those in Anatolia. They would, presumably, also have had problems integrating in Istanbul, not only in Berlin or some other big German city. (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – German Islam Conference 2006)

Schaeuble went on to state his reasons why specifically Muslim integration was so important:

Now, in addition to the social integration problems, over the past 15 years we have also been seeing the Islamic world increasingly rejecting the modern, globalised world. That is a much bigger issue on the world political stage than immigration and integration problems, but it is also becoming a increasingly bigger issue when it comes to tackling integration problems at home... That is why I am working to establish a permanent dialogue with Islam. That is why I want to initiate an institutionalized dialogue between the state and Muslims, to get the Islamic population in our country to organize itself, so that we have a partner to talk to. Because if we want to improve integration, we must somehow make sure that Muslims living in Germany feel at home here. Islam will become one of the most important religions in our country, alongside Christianity. The number of Muslims will grow on account of demographic change. That is why we need this dialogue. (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – German Islam Conference 2006)

Most media outlets appear to have considered the German Islamic Conference a success. The center-left *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* (12 July 2008) wrote:

One should be quite pleased with what is going on in Berlin: Germans and Turks are arguing with each other, as are Muslims and Christians, and conservative Muslims with secular Muslims. No longer is it ignored when someone claims that men and women have the same constitutional rights but nevertheless has a problem with Turkish girls attending swimming lessons. It is the Islam Conference brought into being by Interior Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble that triggered this debate. It is a liberating argument -- one that finally confronts the problems that exist.... That's why the debate needs to continue. (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 July 2008)

The left-leaning *Die Tageszeitung* was skeptical of the results of the Islam

Conference but agreed that it was necessary:

Despite disagreements among the Muslim participants in the Islam Conference, it still makes sense for the dialogue to continue. Such a recognition of Islam as a self-evident part of German society is overdue. So is an agreement on how Muslim integration should look in everyday life.

But one still should not expect binding, practical solutions from the conference. Not only will it take time to build trust after decades spent ignoring Germany's Muslims. But imposing Islam instruction in German schools will be difficult due to the fact that state governments are responsible for education. The conference will likewise be unable to provide a single point of contact within the Muslim community, one that the German state would so like to have. The conservative groups only represent a small portion of Muslims in Germany and the secular Muslims usually represent only themselves. It is unlikely that they will come together to speak with a single voice. (*Die Tageszeitung*, 12 July 2008)

As stated in the earlier chapters, reunification allowed Germany to go through normalization (or be normalized), which had positive effects on their policies on minorities, immigration, and integration. Schroeder's 1998 SPD-Green coalition showed the beginnings of normalization, but it was CDU Chancellor Merkel's 2005 coalition that particularly showed signs of normalization. Despite that Merkel and her Interior Minister Schaeuble were from the conservative CDU party, they put forth great efforts to integrate Germany's minority groups and include the minorities in German society. Before normalization, the conservative parties made it obvious that they harbored hopes that non-ethnic Germans would return to their homelands – a hope that was highly unlikely. Conservative politicians were happy to allow Muslim minorities to live in 'parallel societies.'

Two other factors that allowed for the change in attitude towards minorities were the decrease in overall immigration to Germany and the increase of terrorist threats. The decrease in overall immigration – less *Aussiedler*, political asylum refugees – meant that the government had more resources to devote towards new immigrants and towards those in Germany already. Also, the public did not feel overwhelmed by immigrants, as they understandably felt in the 1990s, which had caused an increase in support for extremist right-wing parties.

Furthermore, the events of 9/11, as well as the other attacks, threats and attempted attacks from Islamic extremists in Europe and Germany, encouraged politicians to face their discontented Muslim population. Both liberal and conservative politicians could agree on the need to face the terrorist threat and they believed that integration was one of the main solutions. This consensus was shown by Merkel's Integration Summit and by Schaeuble's German Muslim Conference. Conservatives could no longer try to solve Germany's problems by bashing immigrants and 'foreigners'. Increased positive dialogue with representatives of the Muslim community was the approach accepted by Germany's leaders.

As we will see in the next chapter, the fact that Germany was 'normalized' and had a more positive approach to solving Germany's integration problems did not automatically make a change in German society. There are still plenty of barriers to successful integration. The problem – inviting immigrants to Germany and then hoping that they would leave - went unsolved for too long, and became too entrenched

for it to disappear overnight. The next chapter will examine the barriers as well as some of the successes of Germany's new integration policies.

CHAPTER 3

THE EFFECTS OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT'S INTEGRATION EFFORTS

Integration Polls

A recent study from a 2008 Bertelsmann study “Religion Monitor 2008: Muslim Religiosity in Germany” attempted to measure whether integration is taking place by comparing Germany’s immigrant groups. Of all the immigrant groups in Germany, the southern Europeans from Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece, who made up the first wave of *Gastarbeiter* who came to Germany after World War II, have done best in terms of integrating themselves. The *Aussiedler* are the biggest single group of immigrants, and they have also done relatively well. Their children are making good use of the education system and the proportion of them with higher education degrees is greater than that of the general German population.

But immigrants from Turkey, the second biggest immigrant group in Germany making up almost 3 million people, are very poorly integrated. They come last in the Berlin Institute's integration ranking, and the difference between them and the Germans is greatest. According to the study, they are worse educated, worse paid and have a higher rate of unemployment, and it doesn't make much difference how long they've been living in Germany. Approximately 30 percent of Turkish immigrants and their children do not have a high school degree, and only 14 percent do their *Abitur* (*Abitur* is the high school diploma from Germany's top-level high schools. 14 percent is half the average of the German population (Poetzl 2008, 28).

According to the same 2008 Bertelsmann study “Religion Monitor 2008: Muslim religiosity in Germany” mentioned above, 90 percent of the Muslims who live in Germany consider themselves religious, and of that group 41 percent consider themselves as highly religious. However, the level of religiosity differs markedly between members of the various Muslim denominations and according to national origin as well as ethnic and cultural background. As for the practical effects of religiosity on everyday life, there are striking differences in the degree to which religious precepts are followed. Eighty-six percent of respondents report that they comply with the ban on eating pork. Fifty-eight percent never drink alcohol (Bertelsmann Stiftung - Religion Monitor 2008, 8).

Other studies indicate that Turks are integrating, albeit slowly. A study by Dirk Halm, from the Centre for Turkish Studies at the University of Essen-Duisberg, showed that 43 percent of Turks over 60 are "segregated" into "parallel communities", compared to only 16 percent of under-30s. Halm predicts that as the younger generation takes over, Turks will become better integrated into German society but warns it will not happen overnight. "I'm convinced this will occur, but beware: it will be a slow process," he said (Halm 2009).

The Turkish Dilemma

In a January 2008 speech near Cologne given to a crowd of 20,000 mostly Turkish immigrants, the visiting Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that “assimilation is a crime against humanity”. Many people in the crowd were probably still Turkish citizens who could still vote in Turkey. So it is understandable

why Erdogan would make such speeches. However, statements like that put Turkish immigrants living in Germany in a dilemma. Should they be loyal to the country of their roots and family or to the country where they currently live and in which their children will be raised? Erdogan answered this question in an interview with a German newspaper after his speech:

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ): Mister PM, in your Cologne speech of 10 February you said: “Assimilation is a crime against humanity.” Why?

Erdogan: The personal preferences of the people are none of our business. However, if there are attempts to shift from a policy of integration to a policy of assimilation, that is, a policy that is connected with coercion, then it does concern us. By assimilation, I mean a situation where the people are deprived of the possibility to live their own cultural values and their religion. This is what I called a crime against humanity. Let them live their religion, learn their language, practice their customs.

FAZ: And in this way, they should integrate?

Erdogan: In so doing, they should integrate into the society in which they live, and they need to harmonize with it. For this they must have a very good command of German. My view is based on the principle of unity in diversity. Societies that are afraid of the strange and unfamiliar are societies that are at odds with their own values.

FAZ: in Cologne, you said that 800,000 of the 3 million Turks living in Germany hold German citizenship. To whom should they be loyal – to Germany or to Turkey?

Erdogan: Basically, they should be loyal to both. (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 March 2008)

What do German Muslims Want from the German Government?

There are a variety of different opinions from Muslim groups about how the German government can fix integration. However, the following press release from one of Germany’s Muslim groups can be a good representative example of what Muslims in Germany want from the government. According to the press release from

the “*Türkische Gemeinde Berlin*” (Turkish Community of Berlin), the politicians are discussing “integration” and holding a lot of conferences and discussion, but they are not facing the real problems. Their statement from January 26, 2009 includes their eight suggestions for solving the integration problem:

In the last few days, studies about the “integration deficit” have intensified in the media and politics. And once again the lack of integration is everyone’s fault. This time it is the state of the economy....The first Turkish *Gastarbeiter* came in 1961 to Germany and after all these years the politicians still do not want to speak about the origins of integration problems. Instead they try now to solidify the “integration” dilemma over the next few years, through conferences and discussions. In this way they can keep the problem around without actually solving the real problem.

As long as there are no equal opportunities to take part in society, immigrant children who are intelligent but have no chance for education, particularly in public service, and academics with immigrant backgrounds are unemployed, then we will not succeed in integration advancements and eventually solving the actual problems.

The discussion must not be only about integration; the following points must not be overlooked:

1. Communal right to vote
2. Turkish as a second language in the schools
3. Islamic religion courses in the schools
4. Investment in education establishments
5. More teachers with immigrant background in the schools
6. Education opportunities for immigrants in public service
7. Quotas for immigrants in public service
8. Special employment politics for immigrants

Through the political changes listed above, we can improve everyone’s future in Germany. Bekir Yilmaz, President. (Yilmaz 2009)

Cem Oezdemir

One of Germany's only minority politicians is an ethnic Turk from Bad Urach (*Kreis Reutlingen*) in the southern state of Baden-Wuerttemberg (which happens to be the same area where I, the author, lived in the early 1990s). By all accounts he is well integrated and has done well in German society; he has been involved in national politics since the 1994 through the Green Party, which he has led since 2008. The Economist recently called him “Europe’s most likely next Barack Obama” (The Economist, November 20, 2008), although they stopped short of saying that he would ever be Germany’s Chancellor since it is unlikely for a Green Party candidate to ever hold the top job. Despite Oezdemir’s success, he remains critical of German society’s treatment of its minorities and has written and spoken extensively on the subject. In a 2003 interview with Berlin’s *Die Tageszeitung*, he said that despite advances, German society still needs many improvements in its treatment of minorities:

In Germany, immigration is always linked to social problems and almost insuperable stereotypes. People of different ethnic origins find it enormously difficult to gain access to German majority society. Germans regard themselves as tolerant – but there is a grotesque mismatch between this perceived and the actual tolerance. For it is apparently not enough to have a job, pay taxes, speak the language, acquire citizenship, if one wishes to become a German.... Regardless of what you do, you are never accepted as a citizen. (This is not a new feeling) I just have to recall how often I used to be followed around by store detectives. This is a daily experience of immigrants in Germany. It has not changed during the past 20, 30 years....

In Germany you can open any newspaper you like, and be sure to find expressions that would be deemed outrageous in the United States. Getuerkt (“faked, fiddled, made up” – literally “to Turk”) is just the least of these. Even though I may seem to lack a sense of humor, I don’t consider it right to associate a culture with deceit. Language is not random. Language is a

giveaway. There is a term for people such as myself: “Passport Germans” (Passdeutscher) – another expression of a kind that does not exist in other languages. (*Die Tageszeitung*, 10 November 2003)

Moving forward, Oezdemir said in the interview with *Die Tageszeitung* that the best thing the German Government could do is pass an anti-discrimination law:

(Interviewer) What would you drive forward in the Bundestag, following the reformed citizenship law?

(Oezdemir) An anti-discrimination law; though I do not believe that legislation can put an end to racism, it can nevertheless serve as a model. And it can ensure that in future there will be no advertisements for apartments with the abbreviation K.A., meaning “no foreigners (keine Auslaender), and no insurance firms openly refusing to insure Turks. (*Die Tageszeitung*, 10 November 2003)

Muslim Diversity and Lack of Leadership

Another barrier to Muslim integration is that the German government does not provide a Muslim group with official religious group status. This status would give certain benefits to Muslims, such as tax breaks, the right to levy a religion tax, legal protection for religious titles, and consideration of religious interest in local development plans. A religious community has to fulfill three major requirements to gain the status of a public body: it has to have a sufficient number of followers, and it must be evident that the community has permanently settled in Germany. Also, and this is the most critical condition for the Muslim community, it has to have a committee or body that represents the community to the Germany government (Heufers 2006). Germany currently gives this status to representatives for Catholics, Jews and Protestant groups but not to any Muslim groups. Schaeuble has said that there have not yet been any Muslim groups recognized as a public-law entity due to

practical reasons, and that Islam must demonstrate that it wants to become a part of Germany and Europe (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 May 2007).

One problem appears to be a lack of Muslim leadership; there are no Muslim leaders who can act as a spokesperson for Muslims in Germany. There is so far no single representative serving as an official contact for government agencies at federal, state and local level (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – German Islam Conference 2006). Part of the lack of leadership may be due to the wide ethnic and religious varieties of Muslims in Germany. Currently there are 1.8 million Turkish, around 160,000 Bosnian, 70,000 Moroccan, 60,000 Iranian, 55,000 Afghan, and roughly 1 million naturalized German citizens (mostly former Turkish nationals). Also, all Muslims do not belong to the same religious variety; besides the approximately 2.5 million Sunnis, there are also more than 500,000 Alewites and about 200,000 Shiites in Germany (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – German Islam Conference 2006). These differences make it difficult for Muslims to unite behind one leader. For example, it is unlikely that a Shiite would stand behind a Sunni Muslim spokesperson, or that the Bosnian Muslim community would unite behind a Turkish nationalist group.

Furthermore, most Muslims in Germany do not belong to a Muslim organization. Few of the Muslims living in Germany belong to religious groups. Only about 10 to 15 % are members of a mosque association or other officially recognized organization (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – German Islam Conference 2006). In 2007, four of the major associations joined to form the Coordination Council

of Muslims in Germany, although naturally they cannot claim the exclusive right to represent all Muslims (German Federal Ministry of the Interior – German Islam Conference 2006).

Another problem with Muslim leaders is that they are often associated with people or groups that are suspected of Islamist agendas or support terrorism. The German government draws the line against accepting Muslim groups when they support Islamist ideologies; for example if they appear to question the liberal multi-party system as described in the Basic Law. Schaeuble said before one of the German Islam Conferences: “The Muslims must know that as they come closer to our society they must also assume responsibility. Whoever does not want general suspicion – for which there is no reason – simply must assume this responsibility that arises from the proximity to potentially violent people” (*Die Welt*, 30 October 2006). The problem for the German government then, is to decide who has Islamist agendas or violent ones.

One possible leader for a large number of Muslims in Germany is Ali Kizilkaya, who was the spokesman for the Coordination Council of Muslims from March through September 2008. According to an article in *Die Welt*, he could be a prime example of successful integration; however his proximity to certain Islamic groups makes him vulnerable to criticism (*Die Welt*, 13 March 2008). Ali Kizilkaya speaks a refined German and calls Germany his homeland, although he does not always get the impression “that my homeland loves me.” In addition, as a political scientist he knows German laws extremely well, and he does “not want to question secularism” (*Die Welt*, 13 March 2008).

There are many people in Germany who do not trust Kizilkaya because the organization that he leads, the Islamic Community in the Federal Republic of Germany, has ties to another organization that is widely considered to have an Islamist agenda – the Milli Gorus, of which Kizilkaya was once its general secretary. According to the findings of the BVT (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz und Terrorismusbekämpfung* - Germany's Counterterrorism Service) Milli Gorus, whose logo is a white half moon that embraces the map of Europe in a hopeful Islamic green, is accused of having Islamist tendencies, a specific Turkish nationalism and an unclear position on violence as a means of implementing its political and ideological goals. In 1999, a secret working paper of the organization suggested that the Islamization of Germany was one of its aims (Marshall 2000, 64).

The group also has on its executive board Ibrahim Faruk al-Zayad, the current head of the Islamic Community of Germany (IGD – *Islamische Gemein Deutschland*), which the BVT considers the largest organization of the Muslim Brotherhood in Germany (*Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 13 March 2008). The Muslim Brotherhood (originally an Egyptian group that has become global) is considered by most countries, including the U.S., to be a terrorist organization and they have carried out numerous terrorist acts in the past. However, they are also heavily involved throughout the world in humanitarian aid, such as for the poor or for orphans which has helped to legitimize the group and be accepted by many people and governments.

Kizilkaya defended *Milli Gorus*, saying that “the young leadership has nothing to do with the hardliners of the first generation anymore”, and that “the extremist or

anti-Semitic statements are isolated cases.” Kizilkaya says that *Milli Gorus* is neither anti-constitutional nor does the organization advocate violence. That the BVT monitors the organization therefore hurts integration. Furthermore, he says that every mosque that is being built in Germany is a sign of integration for him because it means “saying farewell to the temporary arrangement” (*Die Welt*, 13 March 2008). Kizilkaya apparently meant that Muslims are in Germany permanently, as opposed to the previous perception that Muslims would someday return to their original homelands.

A German Islamic scholar, Claudia Dantschke, questioned the truth of Kizilkaya’s statements about *Milli Gorus*, saying “There are young, open, and educated people in *Milli Gorus*, but there is no distancing themselves from [General Secretary Mehmet] Erbakan’s ideology and no separation from the mother party in Turkey.” The financial and property relationships of the organization also remain unclear, and a number of the young members are especially radical. Some have even died in Chechnya waging jihad, she noted (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 March 2008).

Another possible Muslim leader in Germany is German-Egyptian Ibrahim El-Zayat, who is the general manager of the European Mosque Construction and Support Society from which he manages approximately 300 *Milli Gorus* mosques in Germany. According to an article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, he wants to increase the density of mosques in Germany, and he would like to succeed in having more representative mosques built there. “I do not want a young Muslim to have to be ashamed of the unsightly rooms if he invites his teacher or his class into the mosque,”

he says. His project is to make Islam in Germany visible, to help young Muslims be more self-confident about their faith, and to give older people a religious and emotional homeland that no one can take from them, for example by canceling a lease (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 May 2007). However, like Ali Kizilkaya, Zayat has close ties to *Milli Gorus*, and Zayat also has ties to other extremists, as well as the Muslim Brotherhood. Past statements by Zayat and people close to him cast further suspicion on him: At the annual conference of the Islamic Community of Germany in Berlin, organized by al-Zayat, the Egyptian preacher Omar Abdel Kafi was clear: “Integration must not go too far. Our most important task is to spread Islam. We must colonize the entire world and convert people to Islam” (*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 May 2007).

Groups such as *Milli Gorus* and the Muslim Brotherhood bring up an important question about Islam. If Islam is not separable from politics, then will Muslims be able to integrate? The German government understandably stresses that all Muslims in Germany must accept the democratic system of multiple parties, and will only work with Islamic groups that accept the presence of non-Muslims in government. And they seem to hope that Muslims will separate religion from politics, as Europe has learned to do after centuries of religious wars. Schaeuble, for example, said that he hopes Muslims in Europe will create a new, European Islam, presumably one that separates religion from politics. However, there are many Muslims who believe Islam cannot be separated from politics. There are groups that insist that “Islam is, according to its

own definition, *Din, Dounia, wa-Dawla*, (religion, world, and state) and thus there is no such thing as an apolitical Islam” (Halevi 2008).

The belief that “politics and religion cannot be separated in Islam” is supported by Milli Gorus General Secretary, Mehmet Erbakan. This difference in viewpoints; the German insistence upon separating religion from politics and the view of many Muslims that Islam is not separable from politics, may be a source of continuing problems in the future.

Neukoelln Impressions

In February 2009, I went to Berlin for a few days to conduct research for this thesis. Before going, I read about some of Germany's more famous Muslim “ghettos” or “parallel societies”. One of the most famous ghettos is Neukoelln, a poor immigrant district in Berlin that has one of the highest concentrations of Muslims in Germany. Mandel wrote in her book *Cosmopolitan Anxieties* that Neukoelln and its neighboring town Kreuzberg became a feared, mystical place in German imagination:

(Neukoelln is a place) where the unthinkable might occur. Turks might slaughter sheep in their bathtubs, without a butcher’s license: girls might be kidnapped, forced into arranged marriages against their will; daughters and sisters could be beaten, even killed for violation of the sexual mores of their brother and father; Islamic fundamentalist rage could shock this ostensibly secular society; sectarian violence could erupt, transposed from eastern Anatolian civil wars. (Mandel 2008, 90)

While in Berlin, one of my first planned destinations was Neukoelln. I heard and read about Neukoelln – that you should not be there, especially at night. But I wanted to see what it was like and visit its Museum. Leaving my bag and non-essentials at the hotel and putting money and passport in various hiding places on my

person, I got off the U-Bahn at the Rathaus Neukoelln stop and walked along Karl-Marx Strasse toward the Neukoelln museum. However, as I walked I did not feel threatened at all. Half of the people looked Middle Eastern and the other half German. Approximately one out of four women wore head-scarves. On the surface it seemed only slightly poorer and dirtier than the average Berlin neighborhood. No one looked at me as if I didn't belong there on the main street. Overall Neukoelln did not live up to its hype as a ghetto. Chicago has at least a dozen neighborhoods that appear worse off than this one. And there are districts in Chicago where immigrants were obviously less integrated – such as certain Polish or Latino neighborhoods where the shop signs were no longer in English. However, admittedly I did not venture into Neukoelln at night.

A lot of Muslim integration problems stem from recent immigrants. As stated by the following quote, taken from the wall of the Neukoelln museum, it gives one opinion about how new immigrants had the most trouble integrating. Second and third generation immigrants were much better adjusted:

The Turkish community has been here about 10-15 years longer than the Arab. For example there are a lot more Turkish than Arab soccer clubs. You can see that when you play with the kids. Most Turkish youths that I've trained go to some sort of soccer club, not the Arabs. The structure is different with the Turks. There is much more self-organization in the Turkish population. One sees that with shops also. For example in Emser Stasse there are Turkish ice cream shops and hair stylists. At both shops you'd think you were in a German shop at first. They function like a typical shop in the Kiez (a slang term comparable to the English term "the hood") that everyone talks about. In comparison, the Arab shop had its blinds closed. Their signs are often only in Arabic. No stranger would go to these stores. (Saad 2009)

Another posting showed the difficulties in integrating newly arrived immigrants:

Take a house here in Rollberg, Germans and immigrant families live there. How is the relationship between them? They interact less each day. The German families are moving out. The problem comes from both sides: With the immigrants and with the society. The immigrants must understand that they came to a new society, a society that has a certain political order and values, culture, democracy, freedom. The immigrants must prepare themselves for the system: psychologically, spiritually and morally. On the other side, the society must have a lot of patience. People are coming from a variety of cultures, with different education opportunities. Not all of these people came here willingly; many of them were forced to come here because they had no other way out. If we're speaking about Palestinians or Iraqis, then we must know that 90% of these people are not here of their own accord. For them it is not obvious that they should fit into the new society or integrate. Their perspective is to return to their homeland. (Mahmud 2009)

I had two interesting conversations in Neukoelln that showed me how far apart the mindset was between the ethnic German and the minority population. On Saturday I spoke with a German man, Gerhard, approximately 30 years old who was working at the museum. He said that he lived in the next town over from Neukoelln, in what used to be East Berlin, where he grew up, and that he was only working at the museum for the day to help out a sick friend. He mentioned how dangerous the area was, because of the cycle of unemployment and drugs. I heard that most Germans blame everything on the Turks, and I was curious if he would confirm what I'd heard. I asked him how many people living in Neukoelln are Turkish." He replied, "All of them." (Actual figures put the Turkish population at approximately 30 %.)

The next day I went to the museum again, in the hopes of going on a tour I had read about: "The Oriental Tour of Discovery" (Poetzl 2008). It turned out they only

gave the tours once a month. I ended up talking with an Indian lady who worked there, Shadi, who was approximately in her mid 40s. She told me the following story: A few years ago we moved to a neighborhood about 50 KM outside of Berlin. We never felt comfortable there, and “skinheads” would often yell at us. One day on the bus a group of skinheads came up to me and my three year old daughter and said we should move out – go back home. Luckily one of the skinheads was nice and told the others to leave us alone, and they moved on. I was so scared. We only stayed out there for about a month and then we moved back to Neukoelln.

I tried to tell her that Neukoelln was famous for being dangerous, but she did not seem to understand. She told me Neukoelln was famous for being diverse and was home to “150 different ethnic groups.”

While in Berlin, I also noticed some newspaper articles that showed the mystique that Neukoelln held in the ethnic German imagination. At my hotel they laid out copies of the local paper, the *Berlin Zeitung*. It is the kind of newspaper with large, emotional headlines and always a topless girl on the back page. During my first two days in Berlin the front pages were dedicated to violence in Neukoelln – Berlin’s immigrant district. The first day’s article (*Berlin Zeitung*, 6 February 2009), titled “The New Fear in Neukoelln”, was about a government worker who was beaten in front of her workplace. It contained a quote from the Deputy Mayor Stefanie Vogelsang, “I would also reconsider whether as a woman I would go at night alone on Karl-Marx-Strasse in the dark”. The second day’s headlines “Two Kiez Thugs Tell All” were about two street-toughs named Salar (19) and Amir (24) who rob people in

the street when they need money for 'beer or grass'. The words "The Perpetrators" (die Taeter) were under their photo. Underneath the article were the following four interviews, each with a photo of the individual (who each looked like ethnic Germans) and the words "The Victims" underneath:

Large man with mustache and flannel shirt. "Luckily I can defend myself."
Newspaper salesman Detlev Guenther (50 years old): "There's always violence in Neukoelln, especially at night. They haven't been brave enough to take me on yet."

Pretty blond girl. "A blonde girl gets a lot of advances." Denise Walther (19 years old): "I'm afraid when I have to go to the subway alone. I get a lot of advances because I'm female and blonde."

Elderly woman. "Even we elderly have difficulties." Gisela Mueller (84 years old): "Life is not comfortable here anymore. Youths come up to me on the street and yell at me. It makes me afraid."

Man pushing baby carriage. "In a few years we're going to move." Michael Grund (34 years old): "Youths fight in the open streets. When my daughter grows up we're moving away. She shouldn't grow up like this." (*Berlin Zeitung*, 7 February 2009)

CONCLUSION

The integration efforts from the government began, albeit slowly, after reunification and resulted in changes to the *Aussiedler*, political asylum, and citizenship laws as outlined above. German policies on these three issues, policies that were outlined in the Basic Law, were part of the root cause of the problems with Muslim integration. Therefore, the unusual situation Germany experienced – being occupied and divided with a large number of its ethnic population, or its ‘nation’, still outside of its borders, helped to cause the government’s lack of integration efforts. Before reunification, the German government largely ignored immigration problems, other than immigration of the ethnic Germans from Soviet Bloc countries. Integration problems were finally recognized by the government sometime after reunification. The government attitude of denial, saying ‘we are not an immigrant nation’, made Germany’s integration efforts that much more difficult. As stated by Patrick Weil in his thesis about Germany’s citizenship laws: “Only after reunification was it possible for Germany to seriously examine the issue of the integration of the children of immigrants, which was an issue that had long been absent from the political agenda” (Weil 2000, 33).

After reunification each administration, first Schroeder’s and then Merkel’s, has worked hard to integrate Germany’s Muslim population. Together they have established the legal foundations for integrating Germany’s Muslim minority. While the legal structure has changed, the social problems still exist.

The German government's "top down" approach will only partially fix the problem. Marc Sageman wrote that another reason integration efforts are failing is specifically that they were top-down approaches.

The success of integration depends on whether your host neighbor will greet you in the morning, invite you over for a cookout, or offer your child a job. Integration is a "bottom-up" process and American grass-roots voluntarism, equal opportunity, and melting pot succeed when "top-down" policies fail. (Sageman 2008, 104)

My thesis mostly supports Sageman's with an examination of the German situation; the government has tried hard to integrate its Muslims yet the situation seems to be getting worse in a lot of ways. As seen with my experiences in Neukoelln, many Germans are out of touch with their neighbors. The ethnic German public still harbors prejudices against "foreigners", particularly Muslims after 9/11. Unemployment among Muslims is still higher than the rest of the population, the school dropout rate has not decreased, and many polls show that Muslims in Germany either do not want to integrate or do not feel like they are given the chance.

However I do not want to portray too bleak of a picture. As I also wrote in the Introduction, I knew plenty of students from southern Germany who were very welcoming of foreign cultures. Cem Oezdemir is critical of the problems facing Turks in Germany, but his career in itself shows the progress that has been made. It was only a few years prior that he would have not been allowed to be a citizen and certainly would not have been elected as a politician in the Bundestag. Both Muslims and Germans must have patience with each other: Germans must have patience with Muslims integrating, and Muslims must have patience with German prejudices.

In comparison, the United States went through the civil rights movement in the 1960s that gave blacks legal equality. Forty years later the United States still has racial problems, but it has at least come to the point where a black person was elected president. Germany gave Muslims equal rights when they allowed them to become citizens in the year 1999. Only 9 years have passed since then, so there is still hope that social equality will follow the legal equality.

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