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Introduction

This article gives a broad overview of the major German debates concerning cultural diversity challenges that have taken place during the last thirty years, and of the most relevant groups and their different labels within these discussions. After summing up historical developments with respect to German national identity, and the politics of naturalisation and citizenship, we present the major debates on issues of immigration and diversity and how they were framed in the different decades, starting with the 1980s, the 1990s, and into the first decade after 2000.

The public debates and political ideas around issues of immigration have long been discussed in the atmosphere of a general rejection of the fact, that Germany has been a de facto country of immigration since the beginning of labour immigration after World War II. The perception, that immigrants would one day return home made it possible to ignore important issues of diversity, the necessity to politically address the social participation of immigrants and their children, as well as the changing demographic structure and national identity of Germany becoming an immigration country.

It was only in the year 2000, when the reform of citizenship laws gradually enabled non-ethnic Germans to become citizens, that politics officially declared Germany as a country of immigration and, at the same time, pointed out the necessity to urgently design integration policies.

Though 'integration' has become the key political term within a wide variety of diversity issues, immigrant groups often perceive the real concept behind the label as rather assimilatory.

Integration, as it is widely used in political rhetoric, is regarded as an attempt by the majority to 'integrate' minorities into the already existing society and 'culture,' also labelled '*Leitkultur*' (leading culture) by mainly conservative politicians. The possibility that the majority culture and society would undergo change through this integration is hardly ever addressed.

The idea of cultural diversity – describing an immigration society that is made up of citizens with different cultural heritages and religions, and is thus also changed and formed by these differences – is hardly used at all in the political sphere. Because of its link to the idea of multiculturalism, diversity has likewise been rejected by politicians throughout the last decade, long before the famous statement of the Federal Chancellor Merkel in October 2010, when she declared that the concept of multiculturalism had absolutely failed (sueddeutsche.de, 2010).

The primary object of public debates about multiculturalism and related issues has been labour migrants from Turkey and descendants. After the terror attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001, the debate began to turn on Muslims, who were to a large extent replacing 'Turks' in the public imaginary. One could say that, more or less, the same group of immigrants was perceived not only as 'culturally' determined, but also religiously so. Public discourse both culturalised and essentialised this group of (former) immigrants as 'Turks' and 'Muslims,' widely portraying them as fixed entities, whose members are hardly differentiated and substantially determined by their cultural/religious belonging. At the same time the debate about asylum seekers grew very strong and incited strong negative feelings in German society, leading even to violent outbreaks and murder in the 1990s.

This article chooses to discuss immigrant groups mainly in the way they are and were labelled within public discourse. Therefore the immigrants from Turkey and their descendants are discussed as 'labour migrants', 'refugees', 'asylum seekers', 'Turks' or 'Muslims', depending on the respective time and issue.

Apart from Turkey, asylum seekers arrived in Germany in the 1990s from very different countries, many of them escaping violent conflicts in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan or the Palestinian territories. Some groups, such as Jews, the Roma, or Vietnamese were discussed in different ways throughout the decades and in relation to different diversity challenges, whereas the labels hardly changed. In the 1990s, however, Jews were often discussed in the frame of 'quota refugees' (*Kontingentflüchtlinge*), a label they shared with ethnic German immigrants from Russia and other countries, but not with the Roma, who until today demand this status in light of the genocide committed against them during the Nazi regime.

After pointing out the different debates and political measures concerning immigration and diversity in Germany over the past thirty years, this article sheds light on the ways in which tolerance is used in public discourse in Germany today and as a normative concept in relation to different groups and issues. It explains the use of a variety of other concepts, like integration or acceptance, which are relevant in this context of dealing with difference.

Germany: State formation, national identity and citizenship

Citizenship outlines the borders of national belonging, of who is allowed to be an integral part of the society and who is not. The rules and regulations of citizenship thus reveal a lot about a country's understanding of its national identity. The German citizenship law has until 1999 been dominated by *ius sanguinis*, that deems ethnic descent the major factor for national belonging. According to the political scientist and historian Werner Ruf, a

specifically ethnic understanding of the nation has been an important factor of German development of national identity since the very beginning of the nation-building process. An understanding of the German nation as ethnically determined has thus supported border-drawing and exclusionary processes, that culminated in extreme degradation of 'non-ethnic Germans,' and finally in the unprecedented genocide of the Holocaust by the National Socialists.

Historical development of the German national identity

The Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years War in 1648, plays an important part in the German historical memory. On the one hand, it ended decades of violent conflict that centred on issues of religious freedom between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations by laying the constitutional basis for mutual tolerance. On the other hand, it strengthened the power of the individual principalities vis-à-vis the German emperor (*Kaiser)*, thus laying the foundation for the strong position of the German federal states in relation to the national government, an arrangement that persists until today. The regional identities have long been more important than a common German identity. Still, a strong national identity developed perhaps precisely because of these strong local ties; there was a necessity to construct and support a strong common, unifying identity for the fragmented territory, which was supposed to comprise one nation since the foundation of the *Deutsche Kaiserreich* in 1871. This, together with the developments to create a common German identity against those of other nations, like France, which were gradually all constructed as inferior in relation to the German one, led to the idea of the *Volk*, a specific concept of community, which developed in close relation to the concept of ethnicity, gaining prominence in relation to the national project until very recently. The concept of the *Volk* especially stressed the factor of a common bloodline of all the members of the nation, which – like one big family – were all perceived as of a common descent, of which the common language is an important constituting factor. Germany thus developed an idea of ethnic origin and common identity, which was far more ideological than the concept of ethnicity and that strongly linked ideology and – perceived – biological factors. This concept was directly related to the devaluation of other nations and ethnic groups, which eventually generated the National Socialists' idea of a superior German 'race', which had to govern all other 'races' and even extinguish other groups and nations.

Among the individual states that were members of the *Deutsche Bund* (German Federation) from 1815 to 1866, the questions of a common German nation and national identity were heavily debated. After the unification of all German-speaking territories (*großdeutsche Lösung*) was found to be unrealisable, the member states of the *Deutsche Bund* united under the Prussian king and without the Austrian territories, which was called the *kleindeutsche Lösung*. A common identity, however, was not yet established, and the question of the unification of all territories in which German was the national language would come up again in between the two world wars, and in the National Socialist regime.

The time of the *Weimarer Republik* is another important landmark in German collective memory, as the young republic, which had a short zenith in the 1920s before the world economic crisis in 1929, in the end was the precursor for the National Socialist dictatorship. The republic,

which had already been under the pressure of reparations for World War I and was extremely weakened by the economic crisis, was finally gradually taken over by right-wing extremist political powers.

The important factor of the downfall of the *Weimarer Republik,* until today is the perception that it had been too open for all political powers – even the enemies of the republic and its constitution – which eventually led to the National Socialists coming into power. The lesson learnt from these historical developments is the enduring conviction that the republic and the constitution may under no circumstances admit its own enemies into power, that no 'tolerance' may be shown to the 'intolerant', as explained in more detail in chapter 4.

From the very beginning, Hitler's two major goals were the war of aggression and extermination for creating new 'living space in the East' (‚*Lebensraum im Osten'*) and the persecution and extermination of the Jews. This racist worldview of the Nazis and the attempt to create a 'pure' and 'healthy' common and superior 'race', the embodiment of intolerance in its most cruel form, targeted (apart from the Jews) two other minorities considered a 'foreign race' (*Fremdrasse*): the Roma, and members of Slavic ethnic groups, like Poles, Russians or Ukrainians. Other persecuted groups that were not considered a 'foreign race' but as a danger to the 'health and purity of the population' were homosexuals, disabled people and many other weak or minority groups, who were also victims of persecution, violence and murder. In the year 1941, the Nazis began with a systematic murder of Jews in specially constructed extermination camps. In the camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau alone, about one million people died in gas chambers. The unconditional capitulation on the 8th of May, 1945, was circumvented by Hitler and other major responsible politicians and members of the military through suicide. Those major responsible persons that survived were convicted in the Nuremberg Trials (*Nürnberger Prozesse*).

After the allied forces occupied in 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in the three Western zones and the German Democratic Republic in the Soviet zone. The Cold War and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 completely separated the Eastern and Western parts of the German population from each other. It was only in 1991 that Germany was completely reunified and regained its state sovereignty.

An important historical heritage is the collective memory that Germany incited and lost two World Wars. Although considerable parts of the population have long been deeply sceptical towards the militarism that was once the backbone of the state, recent developments seem to bear evidence to a certain change in perspective in this regard. Not only is German military engagement gaining international importance and intensity, but so are very recent debates about German (cultural) identity, especially in contrast to (mainly Muslim) immigrants. The influential book by Thilo Sarrazin (Sarrazin, 2010) – former member of the board of the Federal Bank, about 'Germany doing away with itself' through the demographic rise of certain immigrant groups (namely Muslims), who are qua culture and/or religion less intelligent and economically effective than others – has marked a new German self-perception of superiority. This feeling of superiority is marked not so much biologically but more culturally and first of all economically. It is nevertheless a nationally and culturally determined perception of superiority, where the understanding

of culture is very essentialising, defining cultures as fixed and inflexible entities, and thus to a certain extent takes the place that was formerly inhabited by a similarly fixed and essentialising understanding of 'race'.

Citizenship and access to citizenship

The latest reform of the citizenship law of 1999/2000 adds aspects of *ius soli*, but does not completely abolish the *ius sanguinis*. It is however an important step towards complete equality before the law, which enables the integration of immigrants without the assimilatory demand to give up cultural characteristics. Equality before the law would mean that the acceptance of and respect for the constitution would be the only necessary prerequisites for naturalisation. Significantly, the branch of the German intelligence service concerned with internal security is called the agency for the 'protection of the constitution' (*Verfassungsschutz*), as the constitution and the acceptance of it or even a certain 'patriotism towards the constitution' are perceived as lying at the core of the constitutional state.

However this process has not yet been completed; the citizenship law still contains many aspects of the *ius sanguinis*, and the understanding of national identity based on ethnic origin is still strong within society and politics. Since the reform children of non-German citizens born in Germany have access to German citizenship, subject to fulfilling certain requirements. In part, this signifies recognition of the importance of citizenship for integration, and is partly based on major changes in the national self-understanding. For those born before 2000, however, access to citizenship remains more difficult. In particular, this is because new rules and regulations increasingly stress the economic potential of those aspiring to immigration and naturalisation. For example, the latest change to the naturalisation law of 2004 (enacted in 2007) requires young immigrants less than 23 years of age (mostly children of immigrant parents) to show proof of income sufficient for their own sustenance. This requirement is, however, waived where applicants are able to prove that their missing income is due to the lack of employment trainee and apprenticeship positions.

At first, the introduction of the law led to the naturalisation of large numbers of people (Stahl, 2002). Recent statistics, however, suggest a steady decline in rates of naturalisation, which may originate from a combination of factors. These include: a corollary to the time it has taken to provide access to citizenship; the reluctance of immigrants to apply for citizenship due to the stigma of betraying one's national background; the perception of growing hostility towards Muslims in Germany – who make up the largest part of the immigrant population - and frequent and far-reaching feelings of discrimination.

Apart from the positive changes in the law, especially the shift from an ethnic understanding of the nation towards one based on place of birth, the new citizenship legislation also explicitly forbids dual citizenship. Naturalisation dropped considerably after a number of cases demonstrated that Turks who retook their Turkish citizenship after having received a German passport would lose their German citizenship once and for all. This is one of the major reasons why, despite supportive attitudes from Turkish consulates and legal arrangements that allow former Turkish

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passport holders to keep most of their citizenship rights, many Turks in Germany think twice before giving up their Turkish passports (Mühe, 2010). Another legal change that creates difficulties for those young people who hold dual citizenship is the requirement to choose one of the two passports when they reach the age of 18. Under the citizenship law of 2000, children born in Germany whose parents have lived there for at least eight years receive a German passport, even if they possess another nationality. From the age of 18, however, they have to decide between the two citizenships. In 2008, this regulation affected 3,300 Turkish-Germans. Kerim Arpad, chairman of the European Assembly of Turkish Academics is among those who have criticised the double standards, noting that EU nationals with two passports are not required to make this kind of choice (am Orde, 2008).

Additionally to those regulations, since September 2008 the naturalisation process requires the passing of a national naturalisation test, which demands detailed knowledge about Germany's culture, history and society. The test, which will be applied throughout all of the federal states, is an improvement in comparison to certain tests in Baden-Württemberg and other federal states, which specifically target Muslim immigrants and ask questions about private attitudes in a discriminatory manner. (For a detailed critique of the naturalisation test, see Joppke, 2007.) Some of these are, however, still in use, even after the introduction of the national test. Germany has also introduced language proficiency tests for spouses wishing to join their partners in Germany. The difficulty of obtaining the necessary language skills in rural areas of Turkey, combined with the fact that such requirements were not applicable to citizens from, for example, the USA or Japan, increased perceptions that this was targeted at especially preventing immigration from Turkey. The president of the federal parliament, Norbert Lammert, has recognised lately, that the fact that Germany is home to the highest number of third-country nationals in Europe, yet has one of the lowest naturalisation rates, represents a major barrier to civic participation. "Our problem in Germany is not too high an immigration rate, but rather too little naturalisation," he said (Welt online, 2010a).

Cultural diversity challenges during the last 30 years

Germany has been a de facto country of immigration since it started signing labour recruitment contracts with Italy (1955), Greece and Spain (1960), Turkey (1961), Morocco (1963), Portugal (1964) and Tunisia (1965). Until only a few years ago, however, official national politics denied the fact that Germany had since then been an immigration country. Instead, the idea that the former labour migrants, having come to the country for a limited period of time, would finally go back to their countries of origin – even if they had been in Germany for two and three generations – was held up together with an avoidance of working on real integration programmes focussing on the participation of immigrants and former immigrants in the society. The reform of the citizenship law however marked also a major shift in political rhetoric. Whereas the long-time resistance of the political elites to regard Germany as a country of immigration also included a reluctance to implement or even debate integration measures, the reform of the citizenship laws changed the social reality, and a debate about the necessity to 'integrate' immigrant groups and their descendants gained importance.

Table1. Most important inmigrant groups. People with migration background according to origin, migration experience and gender, micro census 2007						
Country/Region of origin	With own migration experience		Without own migration experience		Total	Percentage of women
	absolute	in%	absolute	in%		
EU-27	2,545	69.0	1,141	31.0	3,686	48.9
not included: Greece	240	62.5	144	37.5	384	45.1
Italy	431	56.6	330	43.4	761	41.3
Poland	529	82.9	109	17.1	638	56.7
Rumania	207	86.3	33	13.8	240	55.8
Other Europe	3,327	69.1	1,486	30.9	4,813	49.4
not included: Bosnia and Herzegovina	217	76.7	66	23.3	283	49.5
Kroatia	251	67.3	122	32.7	373	51.7
Russian Federation	510	90.9	51	9.1	561	53.8
Serbia	287	73.4	104	26.6	391	48.3
Turkey	1,511	59.8	1,016	40.2	2,527	47.6
Ukrainia	192	89.3	23	10.7	215	54.9
Europe in total	5,872	69.1	2,627	30.9	8,499	49.2
Africa	342	71.3	138	28.8	480	40.4
America	233	67.3	113	32.7	346	52.6
Asia, Australia and Oceania	1,183	78.8	318	21.2	1,501	49.0
not included: Near und Middle East	584	82.5	124	17.5	708	44.4
Kazakhstan	203	94.4	12	5.6	215	51.2
South- and Southeast Asia	416	74.0	146	26.0	562	52.8
(Late-)Resettlers	2,756		-		2,756	51.6
from Poland	518		-		518	
from the Russian Federation	475		-		475	
from Kazakhstan	320		-		320	
from Romania	173		-		173	
from the former Soviet Union	137		-		137	
Without Information	2,904	63.3	1,682	36.7	4,586	
People with migration background altogether	10,534	68.4	4,877	31.6	15,411	49.3

Source. Statistisches Bundesamt (Federal Agency for Statistics)

The numerically largest immigrant group have always been Turks and/or their children and grandchildren. The public perception of this group has changed throughout the decades in relation to political developments and issues that gained prominence in public discourse. This report traces these different debates since 1980, and the concomitant adjustments to the labels that were given to Turkish immigrants ('guest workers,' 'Turks' or 'Muslims'), as well as to other groups. As the different immigrant and national minorities were labelled very differently depending on the time period and the character of the public discourse – German Roma have for example not always been accepted as a national minority – the article discusses the respective groups in relation to the label they were given at the specific moment and in the specific debate.

Apart from labour migration, refugees from different war torn countries make up another set of important immigrant groups. The Afghan diaspora in Germany is the largest in Europe. There are also significant numbers of Pakistanis and Indonesians in Germany, as well as refugees from the Balkans. The German-Arab population numbered approximately 290,000 in 2002 (Blaschke, 2004). Many Palestinians enter the country

as official refugees from other countries, making it difficult to obtain precise numbers for this immigrant population.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of the borders, the number of ethnic German resettlers increased considerably. (For the different types of immigrant legal statuses, including refugees and asylum seekers, see also Ohliger and Raiser, 2005). The immigration consisted of both inhabitants of the Eastern German territories (*Übersiedler*) and of immigrants of ethnic German origin from the territories of the former Soviet Union (*Aussiedler*), who received the German nationality.

Another minority group is the German Sinti and Roma, who have not immigrated recently, but have in fact resided in Germany for several hundred years. The National Socialists had defined Roma and Sinti as an 'inferior foreign race' (*minderwertige Fremdrasse*) and murdered hundreds of thousands of them systematically with the aim of a complete genocide. The persecution of Roma and Sinti is therefore included in the term Holocaust or named the Roma Holocaust. About 70,000 German Sinti and Roma are living in the country today. Additionally large numbers of Roma are refugees from Kosovo. Since the end of that war, they are no longer accepted as legal refugees, and many are deported each year, or are in danger of being deported.

Jews have been living on the territory of contemporary Germany for about 1700 years. In 1933, about 515,000 Jews were living in the country. After the Holocaust, which killed around 6 million Jews, only 20,000 to 30,000 remained in Western Germany. In the German Democratic Republic, only a few Jews remained, and their communities gradually disappeared. Since 1991, Germany admits Jews and their relatives from the former Soviet Union as so-called *Kontingentflüchtlinge* (quota refugees), which has led to considerable growth of the Jewish community, mainly due to immigration from Russia. As of 2005, the population of Jews in Germany numbered around 105,000, most of whom are immigrants from the former Soviet Union and their descendants. Life in the communities reflects a growing diversity – from orthodox to liberal – of Jewish life in Germany. However, anti-Semitism has been growing again to a threatening extent. In addition, anti-Semitism within certain immigrant communities, especially the Muslim community, has been increasingly discussed in recent years.

The 1980s: End of the Cold War

Since the labour recruitment in the 1960s and early 1970s, the growing amount of immigrants from rural areas of Turkey and other countries has been one of the major sources of cultural and/or religious diversity. In the early years of labour migration the immigrants were mainly seen as workers, who were to remain for a limited time, but who had similar interests with the rest of the working class in Germany and often joined the same worker's unions. At the same time, although in a fragile situation in general, the immigrants were important for the German economy and thus had a certain power to have their basic needs met.

The debate about multiculturalism has to some extent been imported from Anglophone discussions, but never gained the same importance. In 1989, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, member of the Green party, initiated with

the support of his party the *Amt für multikulturelle Angelegenheiten* (Agency for Multicultural Affairs) in Frankfurt/Main, that aimed to mediate between immigrants and the broader German society and mark the beginning of a change in immigrant politics. Supporters of the concept of multiculturalism at this time criticised the Federal Government for its negation of the actual reality of Germany having become an immigration country through the recruitment of labour migrants. With the memory of World War II and the racist ideology of the National Socialists having led to mass killings of Jews and Roma and other ethnic, religious and political groups, the supporters of the multicultural idea wanted to prevent any form of hostility or even pressure to assimilate directed towards immigrants.

During the late-1970s and 1980s, however, the economic boom in Germany ended and with growing refugee-immigration from war-torn countries and inner-German migration from East to West the attitude towards the immigrants changed and political measures were taken to encourage immigrants to return to their home countries.

Labour migrants

The official end of labour recruitment in 1973, however, restricted the former labour migrants from travelling freely back and forth. Many responded by having their families – most of them from rural areas in Turkey – join them in Germany. Even if both German politicians and the labour immigrants expected the situation to be temporary, only half of the four million migrants actually left Germany. The labour migrants were usually concentrated in certain districts with low rent prices. This phenomenon was encouraged by official policies and supported by public opinion at the time; however today it is widely criticised in public debate as a manifestation of 'parallel societies' (*Parallelgesellschaften*). Due to the change in the character of migration, the so-called 'guest-workers' moved out of the workers' accommodations and rented their own apartments, usually in run-down, inner-city areas (Schiffauer, 2005).

In East Germany, the recruitment of foreign workers (from then-socialist states such as Algeria, Hungary or Vietnam) was on a far smaller scale than in West Germany. This might explain why few people with an Italian, Greek or Turkish immigration history live in the eastern parts of the country today (Ohliger and Raiser, 2005: 12).

Refugees

Another wave of immigration from Turkey was initiated by the second *coup d' état* in 1980 and the civil war in South East Turkey (Schiffauer, 2005). Around 125,000 Turks and Kurds – mainly critics of the regime – came to Germany as asylum seekers. One major group were the Yezidis, a religious group in its own right, whose members are Kurdish-speaking and originate from Turkey, as well as from Iraq and Syria, with small numbers also from Iran. The Yezidis were granted collective asylum on grounds of religious persecution. Kurdish asylum seekers also arrived from the Kurdish areas in Iraq, Iran and Syria. Compared to other Western countries, Germany has the highest share of Kurds amongst its immigrant population.

About 35,000 Assyrians, a Christian minority in Turkey and other countries, fled from Turkey and from Iraq to Germany, where today they have communities mainly in Berlin and Wiesbaden/Mainz (Kleff, 1984).

Another religious minority that has been persecuted in Turkey are Alevis, some of whom regard themselves as Muslims while others, like the secretary-general of the Alevi Community in Germany (*Alevitische Gemeinde Deutschland*) Ali Ertan Toprak, claim acceptance in Germany as a religious community in its own right instead of being regarded as merely a liberal branch of Islam (Facius, 2007).

Apart from the large Turkish community, there is a considerable Afghan diaspora in Germany, constituting the largest in Europe. While between the 1950s and the 1970s Afghan immigrants were mainly students and business people, the second wave of immigration consisted of asylum seekers fleeing the Soviet invasion and communist regime after 1979.

At the same time, Vietnamese came to East Germany as labour migrants, having been recruited to substitute for the large numbers of emigrating Germans, and came to make up about two-thirds of its immigrants. They arrived in West Germany mainly as so-called 'boat people' – refugees who had reached Germany by boat. By 1985, they made up the biggest part of the 30,000 quota refugees[1] (*Kontingentflüchtlinge*) who lived in Germany.

However, up to 1989, refugees were not very large in number and caused no major public debate in Germany.

Roma and Sinti

Apart from Roma labour migrants, who arrived when labour recruitment was at its peak, about 60,000 to 70,000 Roma have been living in German territories for several hundred years. According to the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg, 'Sinti' names that part of the minority that has been living in Western Europe since the late Middle Ages, while 'Roma' refers to those of south European descent. This distinction is only made in the German-speaking countries.

The Documentation Centre together with nine federal state and local associations form the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, which was founded in 1982 and played an important role in generating recognition of the minority as victims of the Holocaust, in which around 500,000 Sinti and Roma were killed in concentration camps, aiming at their complete extermination. They also advocate for compensation and antidiscrimination.

Jews

During the Holocaust the Hitler regime killed between 5.6 (Pohl, 2003:109) and 6.3 (Benz, 1996) million people from many different countries, all of whom the National Socialist regime defined as Jews. This historically unique genocide aimed at exterminating all European Jews.

In the 1950s and 1960s, about 20,000 to 30,000 Jews lived in the Federal Republic of Germany, most of them old and sick people, unable to emigrate to the US or Palestine.

[1]. A quota refugee is someone who has already been granted a form of refugee status by the destination country before leaving the country of origin.

Those who stayed in Germany or came back after the war were under considerable pressure from within the community to justify their decision to stay in the country of the perpetrators after surviving the Holocaust (Schoeps 1991). Especially in Eastern Germany the small number of Jews constantly diminished from 3,500 in 1945 to 350 at the end of the GDR. The Jewish community was also quite elderly. After the fall of the Eastern regimes and the German border since 1989, and after the reunification in 1989, about 28,000 Jews were members of the state-recognized Jewish communities, and another 20,000 to 30,000 Jews were non-members.

An open debate about anti-Semitism, the so-called historians' dispute (*Historikerstreit*), was initiated by the historian Ernst Nolte in 1986 with his assumption that the German concentration camps had been a reaction to the mass destructive Gulags of Stalin. The philosopher Jürgen Habermas countered these assumptions, which he called "apologetic tendencies within German historiography" (Habermas, 1986). Habermas concluded from this debate that, "the only patriotism that does not alienate us from the Western world is a constitutional patriotism (*Verfassungspatriotismus*)" (Habermas, 1987).

Eastern Germans and ethnic German resettlers

Even if emigration to Western Germany was not easy and the application for it could take 10 years and deteriorate the social situation of the person willing to leave the GDR, between 1961 and 1988 around 383,000 people managed to migrate to the Western parts of Germany, most of them through the exchange of prisoners – mostly for financial contribution from the FRG – or through the refusal to return from a legal visit to the FRG. In 1989, the year of the German reunification, around the same number of people – 344,000 – left the GDR for West Germany (Schroeder, 1988).

Also, descendants of ethnic Germans who lived in Eastern European countries – most of them through migration and displacement during the course of World War II – have had the right since 1950 to immigrate to Germany as members of the German nation (*Volkszugehörige*) and are directly given German citizenship. Between 1950 and the mid-1980s about 1.5 million resettlers came to Western Germany, mainly from the former Soviet Union. At the end of the 1980s the numbers of resettlers, together with inner-German migrants and asylum seekers, grew strongly (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2005). This process of large immigration, and the quite successful integration of large numbers of resettlers, could be percceived as a positive example for dealing with challenges of diversity. The growing economy after the war probably contributed to this positive integration to a large extent.

The 1990s: German reunification process, anti-immigrant rhetoric and violence

With the opening of the borders between Eastern and Western Germany, as well as the countries of the former Soviet Union, much immigration into the former Western parts of Germany happened in a very short time and challenged the quite unprepared society and its political leaders. Between 1950 and 1999 the population of the former Western parts of Germany grew by

13.5 million inhabitants, while the former Eastern parts lost almost 5 million inhabitants (Münz, Seifert & Ulrich, 1999). As this new immigration was no longer accompanied by a growing economy in Western Germany, the integration of the new immigrants became more challenging then in the years before. Both 1990 and 1991 witnessed the immigration of 1 million people each, most of them inner-German migrants and ethnic German resettlers. The immigration of the latter has however been reduced by administrative restrictions (Andersen & Woyke, 2003).

In light of this large immigration from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Germany as well as refugees and asylum seekers from different war-torn countries, the supporters of multiculturalism became weaker and anti-immigrant rhetoric became stronger in public discourse. The perception of the former 'guest-workers' (*Gastarbeiter*) turned into a 'foreigner' problem, most of these foreigners being Turks. Even the German resettlers – mainly called 'Russian Germans' (*Russlanddeutsche*), many of whom did not speak German – were less welcomed by the existing population than some years before, and were perceived as strangers, too.

The public debate thus focussed mainly around Turks who remained in the country and whose 'foreign culture' became more and more problematised, as well as around asylum seekers from different countries, who were often portrayed as an uncontrollable flood overwhelming Germany. In 1991, the weekly magazine *der Spiegel* presented a cover that showed Germany as a full boat about to drown in the sea of immigrants and refugees (der Spiegel, 1991) - the 'full boat' became a trope of increasing prominence, invariably reproduced within public discourse at this time.

Asylum seekers

Applications for asylum peaked in 1991 with more than 430,000. Due to the wars and conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and the Balkans, many refugees arrived in Germany during the 1990s from Albania, Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and predominantly from Bosnia and Herzegovina, most of them Muslims. There were also many refugees from Afghanistan, who fled the civil war and the take over of the Taliban in the mid-1990s. Other refugees from Asia – with different rights and statuses – were Tamils from Sri Lanka, Ahmadiyas from Pakistan and Sikhs from India.

Additionally - beyond the group of labour migrants from Morocco and Tunisia - most of the Arab immigrants to Germany had arrived as refugees and asylum seekers (Schmidt-Fink 2001).The rhetoric and violence wielded against immigrants in the early 1990s did not focus especially on Muslims or Turks, but concentrated on asylum seekers and repeatedly challenged their right to asylum by questioning the real necessity of their asylum and supposing mere economic reasons for seeking refuge in Germany.

Probably as a result of this anti-immigrant and especially anti-asylum atmosphere, the early 1990s witnesses several violent attacks and even murders of asylum seekers and other immigrants. A year after the first attacks on foreign workers and asylum seekers in 1991 in Hoyerswerda, the city of Rostock witnessed the worst attacks against foreigners in Germany since the war, when several hundred right-wing extremists attacked the homes of asylum seekers under the eyes and with the

applause of around 2,000 citizens altogether. Most of the people living there were Vietnamese, but also Roma and other asylum seekers from different countries. At the end of 1992, the houses of Turkish citizens were attacked by neo-Nazis, and two girls and their grandmother were killed. Another attack in 1993 against the homes of people of Turkish origin in Solingen killed five people.

Not long after these outbreaks of violence, the Federal Government tightened the immigration laws and restricted the right to asylum in 1993, which led to a substantial reduction of asylum seekers and other immigrants. In 1997/98 net immigration rates were approaching zero because of the return of the refugees from war-torn Bosnia.

At the same time that Germany saw the abolishment of the right to asylum in 1993, however, the reform of immigration law also recognised a right to naturalisation for the first time (Hagedorn, 2001).

Roma and Sinti

Apart from the Sinti, who have been living in Germany for several hundred years, and those who immigrated during labour recruitment, a third group of 15,000 to 20,000 people came in the 1990s as refugees from war-torn Yugoslavia. In 1995, the German Sinti and Roma gained legal recognition as a national minority, the Charta of the European Council recognized German *Romanes* as a minority language. Their status as a national minority guarantees the continuous support of the Central Council as well as the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma.

This protection as a national minority, however, only includes Roma with German citizenship and of German descent. German Roma with origins from South Eastern Europe or Spain are thus not included in the status of national minority and its protective function.

Other national minorities that have been recognised in Germany since the late 1990s are Danes, Friesians, and Sorbs.

Jews

In 1991 the law mandating a refugee quota (*Kontingentflüchtlingsgesetz*) was passed, which, among other rights, guaranteed certain groups of immigrants the status as refugees, among them Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Within a span of 20 years, around 220,000 people came into Germany through Jewish immigration. Only about half of these were seen as Jews in the religious sense by the German Jewish community, while the others were people with Jewish families, but without a Jewish mother. Still, the latter had often been victims of anti-Semitism in the former Soviet Union, mainly because of their Jewish names. Their non-acceptance as parts of the Jewish community in Germany led to some inner conflicts (Bodemann&Bagno, 2010). Through this immigration of Jews and their families from Russia, the German Jewish community has grown to four time its 1989 size, numbering around 120,000 members today. In many cities new communities have been founded and new synagogues have been built.

Turks

Apart from the deterioration of public opinion about 'foreigners' in the face of massive immigration in the early 1990s, anti-immigrant rhetoric and violent attacks, Turks and other labour migrants, some of whom had been living in the country for around 10 years at the time of German reunification, mainly suffered from a setback in rights and social participation through the systematic preference for ethnic Germans. Although the resettlers from the former Soviet Union came into Germany as new immigrants and to a large extent spoke no German, they were treated as part of the German '*Staatsvolk*' – the people who were ethnically assigned to the German nation – and preferred in rights and status to the labour migrants, who were seen as foreigners, even if they had been living and working in the country for many years. Unlike refugees and former labour migrants, the resettlers, often called Russian Germans (*Russlanddeutsche*), were granted integrative support, German citizenship and language courses.

This ethnic understanding of nationality and ethnic determination of belonging formed a great barrier to integration and participation for large segments of those immigrants who had come into the country as labour migrants or refugees and could not claim any ethnic German descent.

EU-foreigners

Immigrants from EU countries – like the Poles, who, after people of Turkish origin, make up the second largest group of immigrants in Germany today – practically disappeared from the public debate and consciousness as soon as their countries joined the European Union, like Poland did in 2004. One might conclude that a corollary of disappearing from the lists of illegal immigrants is vanishing from public attention. This leads to the interesting question, if a future joining of Turkey to the EU could have a similar affect on Turks in European countries, especially Germany.

Since 2000: Reform of citizenship laws, anti-Islamic rhetoric after 9/11

The citizenship reform of 2000 had far-reaching implications in terms of the self-perception of German society. Even if many regulations still created barriers to naturalisation for many immigrants - among them the non-acceptance of dual citizenship – the change in perception from ius sanguinis to ius soli, which went along with the Federal Government finally calling Germany an immigration country, marked an important turning point for society and politics.

It was against this backdrop that a public and to a certain degree populist debate about a common German 'leading culture' (*Leitkultur*) was initiated at the end of 2000 by the conservative politician Friedrich Merz, who demanded an adaptation of immigrants to the German culture, if they wanted to stay in Germany for good. This debate – which discredited any debate about multiculturalism and tried to replace it – can be perceived as an expression of a certain fear of losing cultural hegemony within the newly declared immigration country and an attempt to sustain a vanishing homogeneity.

The other turning point for public perception of immigrants was – as in many other countries - the 2001 terror attack on the World Trade Center. The public perception of the former labour migrants – earlier referred to mainly as 'Turks' – transformed into 'Muslims' and the two markers of difference – often deployed in an exclusionary way – became interchangeable and also partially reinforced one another. With the concentration on the religious background of the former immigrants, the problems became more and more culturalised and essentialised. The factor of class – which plays an important role in the analysis, as the former labour migrants were almost exclusively recruited from working classes – was almost completely blended out in the public discourse after 9/11.

As this culturalising of social problems went on with every new issue attributed to the Muslim community – arranged/forced marriages, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and others – the stigmatisation and exclusion of this group became less and less socially vexed. The concept of multiculturalism – although never really strongly influencing German politics – was harshly criticised as too tolerant towards cultural groups, equating this tolerance with naïve indifference.

At the same time, a major shift in the use of 'tolerance' regarding Muslim groups and individuals can be observed: intolerance towards Muslims and other immigrant groups – especially in light of the early nineties' violent attacks and murders of immigrants – had always been stigmatised and easily connected to right-wing extremism and National Socialism, with Muslims and other immigrants as their potential victim. However, after 9/11, Muslims were increasingly perceived as the perpetrators instead of the victims of intolerance. While in the 1990s mainly right-wing extremists represented the intolerable in society, in the years after 2001 Muslims came to occupy this position more and more.

This positioning of Muslims as the intolerant other can be seen as fulfilling diverse functions in German society, among them a certain relief for ethnic Germans of a kind of post-war burden. Muslims became the locus of different negative aspects in society, which had been attributed to certain non-Muslim Germans before. This disburdening capacity even went so far as to equate Muslims with fascism, as the word-construction Islamo-Fascism indicates, which is widely used by anti-Islamic populism and even within mainstream media. With the widely held conviction that Muslims represent intolerance, issues of their exclusion and discrimination got blurred and the acceptance of their individual and group rights became a point of major debate. Also, essentialising discourses blurred the real reasons for social problems, while tolerance towards the Muslim minority generally diminished.

Jews

Although Jewish immigration was encouraged after World War II, most of the immigration advantages for Jews were abolished with the EU-membership of the Baltic countries from the 1st of January 2005. The new regulations practically stopped Jewish immigration. In 2009, only 1,088 immigrants came to Germany, again 24 percent less than the year before.

Like in other European countries, anti-Semitic violence in Germany grew after 2001. Anti-Semitism debates have centred on the one hand around

the demand to put an end to the debate about the past and German guilt (*Kollektivschulddebatte*)[2], and on the other around the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Also, anti-Semitism of the immigrant – in particular the Muslim – community has been strongly debated in recent years, and various conferences have been organised on this issue.

The two minorities have on the one hand problematic relations towards each other, because of mutual prejudices and conflicting views about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On the other hand, they share certain interests and issues as two non-Christian minority religious communities, especially as far as religious freedom and religious group rights are concerned.

Especially Muslim representatives increasingly point towards similarities in the manner of discrimination of the two minorities, partially to give their demands for minority rights and anti-discrimination more weight and attention. This new solidarity is taken up by Jewish representatives in different ways. Even if certain parts of the Jewish community reject this approach of Muslim representatives as instrumentalising, others try to establish new bonds of solidarity. (see also Yurdakul, 2010).

The heightened debate about Muslim anti-Semitism – which has to a certain degree been more prominent than the debates on the anti-Semitism of ethnic Germans - can be regarded as part of the transformation of Muslims from victims of discrimination to perpetrators and thus from the ones to be tolerated to the intolerant ones, almost unable to claim tolerance for themselves.

Roma and Sinti

The law about the Federal Budget (*Bundeshaushalt*) states that since the year 2002, the law about the protection of national minorities and the European Charta for regional and minority languages ensures protection and support for the German Sinti and Roma. The declared aim is to provide for their equal participation in the political and cultural life of Germany, which is in part ensured by governmental support for the Central Council and the Documentation and Cultural Centre of the German Sinti and Roma.

Parts of the Roma population in Germany are thus under specific protection as a national minority. Although even this group has to struggle with discrimination in society and difficulties with equal participation in the labour market, the Roma are hardly ever openly problematised in public discourse as certain other groups are. The history of mass murder and genocide of Sinti and Roma by the National Socialists might prevent strongly negative portrayal of this minority group in the media and the open and public repatriation and mistreatment that the Roma are currently suffering in France is also unthinkable in Germany.

However, only one part of the Roma community in Germany is protected by its status as a national minority. Those not included in this status are the refugees from Kosovo, who fled the wars in the early 1990s and in 1998/99 and a third group of migrants from the EU-member states Bulgaria and Romania.

2. Critics of Daniel Goldhagen's book "Hitler's Willing Executioners" (*Hitlers willige Vollstrecker)* said that the author pleaded for a collective German guilt for the crimes of the Nazi regime, which the author denied.

While the latter have freedom of movement within the EU, the former refugees have never had an unlimited right to stay and have always lived in danger of repatriation.

In April 2010 the Federal Government signed an agreement with the government of Kosovo, regulating the repatriation of refugees from Kosovo, about 12,000 of whom are Roma and Ashkali- and Kosovo-Egyptians. Based on a UNICEF survey, the families in danger of repatriation have been living in Germany for an average of 14 years, and although almost half of the 12,000 people are children, the well-being of the children played no role in the agreement.

Critics of this agreement, including politicians like the senator of the interior of Berlin, argue, that the Roma refugees were well-integrated, working, and that their children were socialised in Germany. It would be a great hardship for them to be repatriated to Kosovo, where they could not speak the language and were still highly stigmatised and discriminated against. The UNICEF survey also stated that about 75% of the repatriated Roma children abandoned their school education in Kosovo.

One day after the public commemoration of the Holocaust on the 29th of January 2010, the NGO *Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker* (Association for Endangered Peoples) pointed to the difficult situation of Roma from Kosovo and their children (many of them raised in Germany) who had only been granted exceptional permission to remain in Germany for a limited time and were now in danger of being repatriated to Kosovo. The organisation asked for a residence permit quota for the 10,000 persons concerned, which had also been given to immigrated Jews in light of the crimes committed against them during the Holocaust.

The German government is however determined to repatriate around 2,500 Roma each year, thereby avoiding the public attention that a mass repatriation like the one in France could attract, but nevertheless gradually carrying out the planned repatriation of Roma families, long resident in Germany.

Vietnamese

The reality of Vietnamese in Germany is mainly that of two classes: those who arrived in the former GDR and who often had higher educational degrees, many of whom managed to make a living in Germany in spite of difficult conditions, and those who have been coming as asylum seekers since the fall of the communist regimes and who are often living as non-accepted asylum seekers or undocumented migrants.

While the former are portrayed as hard-working, education-oriented and well-integrated immigrants – thus positioning them on the opposite side of Turkish migrants on a scale of successful integration and educational achievement and through this contradicting the criticism against failures of German integration policies – the latter are portrayed as cigarette smugglers and petty criminals, misusing the asylum laws, who are rightly deported. There are only very few Vietnamese asylum seekers whose reasons for applying for asylum are accepted by federal agencies, and so the large majority of them are repatriated again. (Gräßler, 2009) In 2008, almost 1,300 Vietnamese applied for asylum, while the quota of acceptance was 0.1 percent, which means that 99.9 percent must anticipate

repatriation, although amnesty international reports that torture, political imprisonment and capital punishment are widely practiced in Vietnam. In June 2009, more than 100 Vietnamese from 12 federal states and Poland were deported to Hanoi, which, according to the federal police, was the first mass repatriation since the mid-1990s.

Inner-German migration

The inner-German migration from the five new federal states to the old federal states in the former West also produced debates and tensions. The pejorative naming of Germans from the former Eastern parts as '*Ossis,*' along with a certain negative stereotyping, can be seen as indications of a culturalisation of the German reunification process. Shortly after the reunification of Germany, socio-economic differences between the former Western and Eastern parts were perceived more and more in socio-cultural terms and mutual stereotyping took place. This culturalisation process remains salient: a German woman who had been denied a job with the (unintentionally uncovered) remark on her application that she was an '*Ossi,*' sued for discriminatory hiring practices. In order to be regarded before the law as 'discrimination,' she had to appeal to the court to accept the category '*Ossi*' as an ethnicity – a claim that the court ultimately rejected. Thus, socio-economic differences and difficulties are in some cases portrayed and perceived as fundamentally cultural or – in the case of Muslims – religious. This so-called culturalisation of social relations and challenges can be frequently observed in German public discourses, not only concerning immigrants from other ethnic backgrounds, but even so-called ethnic Germans who have historically belonged to different nations and political systems.

Ethnic German resettlers

The total numbers of immigrants, that balance immigration with emigration, were only 176,000 in the year 2000 and 275,000 in 2001 and ethnic Germans made up the biggest part, being 85,000 in 2001.

In spite of their many legal advantages in comparison to other immigrants, the resettlers were also confronted with high rates of unemployment – especially in the field of unskilled work – and with the non-acceptance of many of their professional and academic certificates.

A 2007 analysis from the Institute for Research about the Labour Market and Professions of the Federal Agency for Employment (*Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung der Bundesagentur für Arbeit*) showed that the integration of resettlers into the labour market had to a certain degree been even less successful than that of other immigrants, especially among people with higher education.

Even if for a long time the public discussion about resettlers has been one of successful integration, in recent years the so-called 'Russian Germans' have repeatedly been debated as problematic, and as overrepresented in unemployment and criminality.

In some debates it can be observed that 'German resettlers' turn into 'Russian Germans' as soon as problematic aspects are being discussed. One example of this identity labelling in media coverage could be observed in

2009 after the murder of the young Egyptian woman in a courtroom, killed by a young German resettler with right-wing extremist political views. Not only was the Islamophobic motivation of the murderer not mentioned in the media until about a week after the killing, but also, the perpetrator was very quickly named a 'Russian German.' In the aftermath of the murder, the criminality and right-wing views of Russian Germans were heavily discussed in the media, while the growing Islamophobia in mainstream society was – in an evidently dis-burdening manner – almost entirely blended out.

Tolerance discourses in Germany

The concept of tolerance is increasingly used in German public discourse about immigrants and integration. By far, the most heavily discussed issues concerning diversity challenges in contemporary German society concern Muslims and Muslim religious practices. The most widely used concept within this discourse is the concept of integration. Government figures mainly talk about integration as the key concept to solving problems in society, which are portrayed as the result of cultural and/or religious pluralism, mainly that of Muslims. Indeed, most issues surrounding the Muslim community in Germany are discoursively connected to their cultural and/or religious difference, even if socio-economic and other factors would in many cases be the most relevant frames of reference.

As was made evident when the Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel recently declared that attempts at multiculturalism had failed, and at the same time demanded that immigrants expend more effort towards education and integration, minorities are often portrayed as most responsible for their own integration. The slogan 'supporting and demanding' ('*Fördern und Fordern'*) is at the core of integration politics of Merkel's party, the CDU, but in practice the demanding part seems to be more emphasised. Against this backdrop, we observe increased use of the concept of tolerance in the discourse on Muslims and/or integration.

There is generally a wide variety of interpretations and ways to use the concept of tolerance. It can, for example, be seen as the opposite of discrimination. Recent discourse and politics show, however, that it is more and more concerned with the limits of tolerance and with drawing lines within society between those who are to be tolerated, and those who should not be tolerated.

The slogan 'no tolerance for intolerance' is widely used in public debates around Muslims. One striking example is an extensive dossier by Ulrich Greiner in the prestigious weekly *Die Zeit* in January 2010. Under the heading *"Islamismus: Toleranz für die Intoleranz?"* (Islamism: Tolerance for Intolerance?) the author reminds us of a recent controversial media debate about Islam, Islamism and Islamophobia, where different journalists had issued conflicting views on how to frame the debate on Muslims and Islam in the media. The author also takes a stand within this debate, arguing for a deep cultural conflict between Islam and the West and cautioning the reader against too much tolerance in the face of violent Islamist threats (Greiner, 2010). This emphasis on the limits of tolerance is intended to call for a vigilant awareness of the dangers for society, dangers that could be overlooked by too much tolerance. Even the defenders of the concept of multiculturalism, like Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the founder of the *Amt für multikulturelle Angelegenheiten* in Frankfurt, caution against

"naïve" forms of multiculturalism that could lower human rights standards in society. Heiko Henkel explains how Cohn-Bendit and also Habermas draw a line of tolerance against what they call 'fundamentalism' or 'fundamentalist immigrant cultures' (Henkel, 2008). This association of a society putting itself in danger by tolerating the intolerant is a strong image within German discourse, because it recalls an important part of national history; it was precisely the Weimar Republic's tolerance even towards its own enemies that boosted the rise of the Nazi regime. For this reason too much tolerance is seen as a danger to democracy. The Weimar Republic was perceived as too weak because of its openness, and the lesson learnt from this is often summed up in the slogan "no tolerance for intolerance".

For analysing the political function of the use of tolerance, Wendy Brown has provided a very useful concept, which regards tolerance as a "political discourse and practice of governmentality", rather than a "transcendent or universal concept, principle, doctrine or virtue." (Brown, 2006:4) In the German context, the increased use of the concept of tolerance works hand-in-hand with the general political approach towards the inclusion of others, framed as integration. Rather than discussing structural inequalities and discrimination against certain immigrant groups as a major barrier to participation and inclusion, the integration debate positions the minorities vis-á-vis the majority and the state in a situation of 'the others', who are to be supported, and also challenged, but who are not framed as an integral part of the society. The otherness of non-ethnic Germans, mainly Muslims, is thus reproduced and reaffirmed through the discourse on integration. The concept of tolerance supports this process of othering, at the same time that it positions the tolerating side above those who are to be tolerated or not tolerated – constructing both borders and hierarchies between in- and out-groups.

How are claims of toleration made and by whom? Under which conditions is toleration granted or withheld? In which cases is something more than tolerance – namely, respect or recognition -- demanded for specific groups? Most of the debates turn on a variety of claims by Muslim groups for recognition and acceptance of specific religious practices.

The demands made by Muslim individuals and groups themselves are generally not framed in terms of toleration, but in terms of granting equal rights, especially the right of freedom of religious expression, which is perceived as both a fundamental right of the German constitution, the *Grundgesetz*, as well as a fundamental human right. The claims are thus not made as demanding tolerance towards something alien to German society and culture but as the granting of basic rights, which is perceived as an integral part of Europe's basic values. Muslim groups often especially refer to the German *Grundgesetz*, which they perceive as a guarantor of their freedom of religious expression. When Aygül Özkan was nominated Minister of Social and Integration Issues of the federal state Lower Saxony in April 2010 by the conservative party CDU, it was widely presented as the first nomination of a Muslim as Minister of a German federal state, and in this context as an act of tolerance. One of the major Muslim organisations, however, spoke about the nomination as "a sign of increasing normality and acceptance that all offices and positions of this country are also open for Muslims, just as for all other religious communities (…)" (Koordinierungsrat der Muslim in Deutschland - KRM, April 2010, translation by author).

But even if the minorities themselves are not arguing from outside but from inside the society and its legal institutions, public figures and media perennially refer to these claims as issues of toleration or non-toleration. After Özkan incited a controversy within her own party and beyond by stating in an interview with the weekly *Focus* that, herself following a secular rather than a religious view, she would prefer public schools to be free of all religious symbols, including headscarves but also crucifixes, a local newspaper printed a story titled *"Aygül Özkan – Der schwierige Start einer Muslima"* (Aygül Özkan – The difficult start of a Muslim woman). The paper argued that the nomination of Özkan, which had been intended as a sign of tolerance and cosmopolitanism, was quickly putting these same values to the test.

This can be seen as a clear example of what Wendy Brown calls a discourse of depoliticization, in which "tolerance can function as a substitute for or as a supplement to formal liberal equality or liberty; it can also overtly block the pursuit of substantive equality and freedom" (Brown, 2006:9). By using the concept of tolerance in the context of Muslim individuals or groups being granted rights, that are anyway guaranteed to them by the constitution, the issue is taken out of the realm of liberal equality or liberty and into the area of what Rainer Forst calls "allowance tolerance", which – in contrast to his perception of "respect tolerance" - marks the relation between a powerful entity, in this case the political and social majority, and a less powerful minority, which is granted tolerance, but can also lose it by the will of the tolerant group (Forst, 2003:42). The precondition for the granted tolerance in this conception is generally the fact that the tolerated group does not challenge the given distribution of power.

In this sense it can be suggested that tolerance talk undermines the 'pursuit of equality and freedom' that Muslim groups and activists aim for, and reaffirms unequal distributions of power between different (ethnoreligious) groups in society.

The discourses on tolerance and integration help not only to draw borders between an ethnic German in-group and out-groups with immigrant backgrounds, but also to differentiate between those parts of the perceived immigrant population that are more easily tolerated, and those towards whom tolerance has to be limited. The effect of border drawing of tolerance talk is thus both differentiating between in- and out-groups, but also within out-groups between those who are (more) easily tolerated and those who are grudgingly tolerated, or who should not be tolerated at all.

As the granting or denial of tolerance, and with it the granting or denial of certain legal rights, is within the discourse often linked to the (in-)tolerance of the respective group, the perception of a group as (in-)tolerant has substantive effects. Within this discourse, a certain tendency can be observed to regard secular Muslims and immigrants as more tolerant than religious ones, and at the same time to favour individuals over groups. This is quite symbolically reflected within the German Islam Conference, where the Minister of the Interior invites certain religious Muslim organisations, but limits their weight within the discussions through an even higher amount of participants, who are not organised and many of whom are not religious or are even outspoken critics of Islam.

However, not all religious groups are perceived as equally tolerant or intolerant. While the major Sunni organisations are portrayed with criticism and often viewed as backward and patriarchal, other communities, such as the Alevi organisations, are often perceived as tolerant and liberal. The Alevi claims for specific religious instruction at public schools have thus caused far less resistance by public officials in different federal states than Sunni-Muslim instruction at schools has been causing for many years.

Certain other ethno-religious minorities like the Jews or the Roma are today generally not discussed as receivers of tolerance, as tolerance talk would be viewed as absolutely inappropriate towards groups who have been major victims of the Nazi regime and the Holocaust. There have, however, been recent debates about Jews as victims of a rising anti-Semitism, which has lately mainly been portrayed as a phenomenon amongst Muslims, as described above in more detail. Another recent debate, in which prominent Jews, too, have raised their voices, is the debate about rising Islamophobia. There have been different public representatives who attempted to counter this perceived social development. For example the general secretary of the Central Council of Jews in Germany Stephan Kramer has together with Ayman Mazyaek, then general secretary of the Central Council of Muslims in Germany visited the family of the murdered Marwa El Sherbini in 2009 in Dresden and cautioned about rising Ilsamophobia in German society. ANother prominent member of the Jewish community, the former vice president of the Central Council of Jew, Michel Friedman, recently demanded 'no tolerance for intolerance' pointing at the debate around the anti Muslim arguments of the then board member of the Federal German Bank, Thilo Sarrazin, and called the latter a 'hate preacher'.

The positioning of representative Jews is of specific importance within the debate about Islamophobia, because of the unparalleled German history of persecution and extermination of Jews during the Holocaust.

As the authors Bodemann and Yurdakul argue, tolerance was a term that in Germany "invariably evoke(d) the Jewish question and anti-Semitism" (Bodemann, 2008; 76). In the view of Bodemann and Yurdakul "the ideological labour of Jews in German society today encompasses the role of 'guardians of memory', not merely on their own behalf but also on the behalf of their German surroundings" and their mere presence in contemporary Germany was "'proof' that Nazism has been overcome and that German society is now truly democratic and tolerant of outsiders". (Bodemann, 2008; 78) As can be seen from this quotation, however, Jews are still always in danger of being perceived as outsiders; such adjustments are made more rhetorically than in practice, made evident by the frequent reference by German politicians to a 'Christian-Jewish' heritage of Germany and Europe. In their article *Learning Diaspora: German Turks and the Jewish Narrative* Bodemann and Yurdakul also describe how Turks and other Muslim groups in Germany increasingly refer to the Jewish history in Germany as well as to the handling of Jewish religious issues today – like the slaughtering of animals - in order to have their own claims for acceptance of religious difference met as well as their fear of Islamophobic developments better heard in German society.

Other immigrant groups like the Poles, or even more the ethnic German resettlers, have largely disappeared from public debates. It can be suggested that they are more and more becoming part of the 'we-group',

maybe in line with the development of the stronger integrative character of the EU towards EU-citizens, which would have to be further investigated. It can, however, be observed that Poles are no longer debated in the context of tolerance or integration. The best example for the different debates is the German soccer team. The majority of the players in the team have an immigration background. While players with Polish background are, for example, not seen as 'others' any more, players with Arab or Turkish origin are heavily debated in regard to integration. In the positive sense, the team was portrayed around the World Cup in South Africa as a sign of an inclusive and multicultural Germany, while in the negative sense a politician of the far right called the national player with a Turkish background, Mesut Özil, a 'passport-German'.

However even mainstream media made a difference between the players with different ethnic backgrounds by according Özil a prize for integration at the Bambi award 2010 in Potsdam, which was perceived by some as a sign of exclusion, as it expressly marked the Turkish background of the German player.

Here, we see an example of the general effect that the focus on the concept of integration, and the way in which it is perceived often as mainly a duty of the immigrants or their descendants, has an exclusionary rather than an integrative effect. Especially German citizens, raised in the country but whose parents or grandparents had once immigrated to Germany, perceive the strong political and discursive focus on integration, which they have actually been living all their lives, as marking them as outsiders. A young Muslim woman is quoted in the survey of the Open Society Foundation on Muslims in Berlin as stating that the integration debate made her feel "being pushed into a corner" (Mühe, 2010: 51).

Concluding remarks

Similar to other neighbouring countries, like France, the Netherlands or Denmark, German society is struggling today with the transformation of its population, a transformation that has become more visible and more accelerated in recent decades. The most important factor for this development has been immigration, which mainly started during the 1960s as workers were recruited from different countries – mainly from Turkey – in order to help build up the destroyed country after World War II, and continued with refugees and asylum seekers from war torn countries mainly during the 1990s. Unlike countries like France or the UK, Germany had hardly had any experience with immigration from formerly colonised countries.

Another difference in relation to some neighbouring European countries lies in the national identity and national self-perception of German society. Until very recently, the close coupling of national identity and ethnic origin stood largely unchallenged, and until today the idea that a non-ethnic German could not be a 'real' German is still widespread.

In this national atmosphere it is still difficult today for young people, whose parents or grandparents were immigrants, to feel as an equal part of the society and to identify positively with the country, especially as unequal treatment of non-ethnic Germans is widespread in various areas of life. The situation has become additionally difficult for people of

the Muslim religion or with a Muslim cultural background, since hostility against Islam has risen in many European countries. Different surveys show that Germany is especially affected by it. In the recently published survey "At Home In Europe" of the Open Society Foundations on Muslims in European Cities for example the German cities Hamburg (22%) and Berlin (25%) had the lowest percentage of Muslims who perceived themselves as German (resp. British, French…) and even lower percentages of those who thought others would perceive them as such. (Mühe, 2010: 58; Hieronymus, 2010: 55).

At the same time, the diversity in the country keeps growing, and the necessity for social and structural change becomes evident and is especially felt on the local level, as in certain regions and cities the diversity is higher than on the overall national level. Projects and reforms that aim towards more inclusion are therefore especially to be found on the local level.

It is in this context that the discourse on tolerance becomes especially strong. It is, however, used not primarily in order to demand tolerance towards Muslim cultural and religious practices, but more as a discourse of border drawing between tolerant and intolerant minority groups, both within and between Muslim and other subgroups in German society. Naming certain minority groups – especially Muslim ones – as intolerant is within this discourse often used as an argument for not tolerating certain Muslim practices in return or creating stricter laws against religious practices, like the Muslim headscarf in certain public services or accommodations for prayer at public schools. Tolerance is thus used more and more often as a discourse that draws lines between in- and out-groups, between the ones to be tolerated and those who are only grudgingly or not at all to be tolerated.

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