UC Berkeley
TRANSIT

Title
Pathways of Migrant Incorporation in Germany

Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/90b8w0dh

Journal
TRANSIT, 1(1)

Authors
Glick Schiller, Nina
Nieswand, Boris
Schlee, Günther
et al.

Publication Date
2004-09-16

DOI
10.5070/T711009697

Peer reviewed

In this essay we examine five different pathways by which migrants with whom we have worked are incorporating themselves within Germany. Our approach to incorporation brings into the literature on migration the insight that social integration can take place within a process of social and cultural differentiation, a point that has been developed in work on ethnic identity in Africa and in US studies of multiculturalism and cultural citizenship (Schlee and Horstmann 2001; Flores and Benmayor 2000). However, rather than focusing on cultural and identity processes, we begin with an interest in the context of social relations out of which cultural similarities and differences are defined.

To differentiate our definition from the dominant discourse about migrant integration, we will speak of *pathways of incorporation*. In examining these pathways of incorporation, we note that migrants often live their lives in more than one nation-state at the same time. They are simultaneously here and there, a part of a new land and another land or lands. We call this way of living, a living with and across borders and making daily life decisions with a network of people that includes both local and transnational actors, 'simultaneity' (Glick Schiller, 2004; Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). Incorporation in Germany may be part of a pattern of simultaneity. In four of the five pathways we describe, migrants become connected to Germany through social linkages and various forms of identity that at the same time connect them to organizations, communication systems or identities that extend transnationally.

All five pathways challenge ways in which migrant integration is commonly conceptualized within German discourse and public policy about *Ausländer* (foreigners). Our approach takes exception with three premises that underlie the dominant discourse in Germany on the integration of foreigners. First of all, the connection between cultural competencies and incorporation into social systems is empirically more complex than popular conceptualizations of integration may suggest. Dominant discourses about migration stress that it is only through a form of cultural change that foreigners can become a part of Germany. They focus on the cultural practices of foreigners within Germany, disregarding transnational connections or viewing them as an impediment to integration. From our point of view, incorporation into German society is not necessarily accompanied by cultural assimilation. Secondly, incorporation in one society is neither empirically nor theoretically exclusive. Data from studies of migration indicate that incorporation into more than one nation-state at a time is a frequent phenomenon that must be addressed by theorists of migration. Thirdly, there is little evidence that simultaneous incorporation in more than one nation-state is a liminal condition that will be overcome after successful integration. Rather there may be a direct connection between incorporation in a new state and maintaining cross-border incorporation.

Migration is part of the broader process of global integration that the world has experienced at an accelerated pace over the last few decades. The increased mobility of human beings, information, money, and consumer goods has changed, on the one hand, the way many people perceive their position in the world and, on the other hand, the social structures in which people are embedded. Especially in societies with a high proportion of migrants, personal networks have emerged that connect people in many different places in the world. These "transnational social fields", understood as an "unbounded terrain of interlocking egocentric networks" (Glick Schiller and Fouron 1999: 344), produce new spaces of action and identification. These fields allow for and often facilitate certain types of incorporation within the new land of settlement. The fact

that there are five pathways identified from our research highlights the weakness of past migration studies that tend to cast all patterns of migration settlement into the same mold, arguing for a single model of migrant integration.

The five pathways we identify through our research can be called (1) Christian modernists, (2) local public foreigners, (3) familial networks, (4) vernacular cosmopolitanisms, and (5) regional cosmopolitanism. In describing these five modes of incorporation, we draw from Boris Nieswand's ethnography of Ghanaians[1] in Berlin, Nina Glick Schiller and Evangelos Karagiannis' ethnography of Nigerians and Congolese in Halle/Saale, Günther and Isir Schlee's data on Somali in Germany, Holland, and England, and studies of Russian media in Berlin by Tsypylma Darieva. Lale Yalçın-Heckman contributes comparative points drawn from her research on Muslim labor migrants' families and associations in Germany and France. We are not claiming that each migrant group participates in only one of these pathways, although we will discuss Christian modernism among Ghanaians and Nigerians, regional cosmopolitanism among the Ghanaians, public foreignness among Congolese, familial incorporation among Somalis, and media incorporation among Russians. In all cases, organizations that an observer might initially understand as defensive, closed, ethnic, or communal prove upon ethnographic observation to develop activities, identities and social relationships that integrate participants both into German society and globally. Certainly these observations are not applicable for all migrants across time and space. However, we note that the migrants in these case studies have broader identities, visions, and connections than many, if not most, of their German neighbors.

1. Christian Modernists

Some African migrants who practice a form of born-again modernist Christianity[2] create organizations that make them part of Germany and that articulate a form of identity that links them not only to Germans, but also to the world beyond German borders. This form of Christianity originated in the USA and spread during the 1980s and 1990s to many parts of the world. The movement is connected in West Africa to three social developments that converged at this time: a strong feeling of insecurity and loss that was connected to the decline of the local economy, an ongoing liberalization of the local markets, which led to an increased visibility of consumer goods, at least in the large cities, and the experience of mass emigration. In this context a form of Christianity arose in which believers assert that success, prosperity, and the commodities of consumer capitalism are rewards of their personal relationship to the Holy Spirit (Marshall 1993). Together with other Pentecostal denominations, they stress the literal interpretation of the Bible, believing in the charismata (gifts of the Holy Spirit), and emphasizing signs and wonders. However, born-again modernists use a symbolic code that connects the promise of signs and wonders to a 'global modernity' and its material rewards. Prosperity and

---

[1] It is not a coincidence that Ghanaian migrants are mentioned several times here. They are the biggest group of migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa in Germany. Furthermore, Ghanaian migrants take a leading position in the organizational implementation of Charismatic Christianity among African migrants in Germany.

[2] The form of Christianity to which we refer stresses the living presence of Jesus as evidenced by present-day miracles and the necessity of combating demonic forces.

success are perceived as proof of a "righteous" Christian life and a personal relationship to the Holy Spirit. For West African migrants to Germany, modernity in the form of life in Germany is religiously purged of its ambivalences.

Migrants settling in Germany who organize or join these churches participate in organizations that they see as part of a broader movement to bring real Christianity to Germany and to the world. The churches founded by the migrants are not, in their view, African churches but true Christian churches. A global social field of Christian Modernism has emerged in the last decades that includes the transnational networks of the pastors and some of the congregants. The frequent use of media such as videotapes, books and audiotapes provides, for many charismatic Christians all over the world, access to a broader discursive universe which appears universalistic and global. At the same time, organizational networks in Germany link churches made up primarily of Germans, churches made up primarily of migrants, and Christian modernists in other locations in Europe and beyond. Our ethnographic data provide us with two examples of the Christian modernist form of incorporation: the charismatic churches founded by Ghanaian migrants in Berlin and a similar church founded primarily by Nigerians in Halle/Saale.

Boris Nieswand's research among Ghanaian migrants in Berlin has shown that charismatic churches seem to be the most successful migrant organizations in terms of quantitative mobilization and in terms of the degree of organizational structure. The churches are also incorporated in German organizational structures. At least four pastors in Berlin are approved by the largest German umbrella organization of Pentecostal churches in Germany (*Bundesverband freikirchlicher Pfingstgemeinden*). This gives them a particular kind of authority in dealing with German officials in Berlin. In interviews the pastors stated that it was particularly important for them to become integrated in Germany and be formally recognized as 'real Christians' by German pastors. Furthermore most of the African-initiated churches in Berlin are part of an ecumenical organization initiated by the German Evangelical Protestant Church. Two of the Ghanaian-initiated churches were offshoots of a church that is predominantly German and they still have a close relationship with it. These churches never identify themselves as Ghanaian or German but rather as international, an identity they emphasize by speaking of the fact that their members come from many nations, even though most are in fact Ghanaian. Some of the members of these churches are German women.

Members have a belief system as well as transnational organizational connections that make them global actors. During his field research in Berlin, Nieswand attended a religious conference of one of the Ghanaian-founded churches in Berlin. At this conference five pastors were present; a Ghanaian, who has lived for more than ten years in Germany, a US-American with half-Nigerian and half-Austrian family background, a German, who had lived for several years in Great Britain, a British woman with a Chinese family background who is married to the German pastor, and her brother. This event made the global scale of the church visible to all members of the parish. One week after this conference a young Namibian woman testified publicly that the conference had strengthened her faith. She also announced the reward that was the evidence of God's presence in her life: she had just received a scholarship from a college in the United States. This incident was celebrated as a success of the whole church. The discursive and the structural integration of the church into a global framework became evident in this

incident. The woman's testimony symbolized the role of divine power in a globalizing world.

In their ethnographic research with English-speaking migrants in Halle/Saale, most of whom come from Nigeria, Glick Schiller and Karagiannis also have located a Christian modernist Church that in several important respects resembles the Ghanaian-initiated churches of Berlin studied by Nieswand. The leadership of the church and the pastor, most of whom are Nigerian publicly identify the church as representing true Christians whose mission is to bring Christianity to Halle. Unlike the Berlin Ghanaian-initiated churches, this church in Halle is organizationally discrete from other local churches. However, it is hardly an isolated ethnic enclave. The pastor, who meets frequently with Christian missions in Halle and with German colleagues in nearby Leipzig, is married to a German, and has attended Pentecostal conferences in different German cities. The church has been formally registered in Germany, as is legally necessary, for more than five years. In addition, recently the church worked with a white German Pentecostal church in Magdeburg to become a formal member of a German Pentecostal organization. The pastor and the members of the church committee, which leads the church, desired this level of official recognition, even though it meant changing some of their internal organizational procedures.

However, as in the example from Berlin, this primarily Nigerian church is connected not only within Germany but also transnationally. Among its visiting preachers was an Indian pastor who was part of a global Pentecostal network of pastors and who resided in Kaiserslautern, Germany. This Indian pastor has visited more than once and has convinced the church to support his missionary work in India by sending funds on a regular basis. Through another global Christian ministry, this one located in the United States, the church sends funds to Christianize Israel. To encourage his congregants to contribute money for local and global church work the pastor cites a Nigerian pastor who has developed a congregation of thousands in the Ukraine.[3] Several members of the church attended a pan-European Pentecostal conference in Berlin in June 2003 that was called to establish a European-wide organization of Pentecostal churches.

In a narrative similar to the one provided by the Namibian member of the Ghanaian-initiated church, one of the core members of the Halle church returned from the Berlin conference saying that the presence of people from all over the world at the conference was, for her, evidence of the power of God and the veracity of her beliefs. The notion of evidence can be said to reflect part of the ideology of Christianity as a reflection of true modernism. The modern world is one of scientific evidence. Believers maintain that God's presence in the world today is proved by his constant miracles. Because believers trust in scientific evidence, the church emphasizes healing. The purpose of God performing this healing is not just to respond to individual faith, but to provide testimony to Halle and to the world of the power of God.

Churches like these challenge the assumptions of those migration studies that portray migrants' religions as defensive, restrictive, and closed ideologies that stabilize the migrants against the background of their traumatic experiences of migration. Christian modernism is a transnational social field that, through modernistic discourse and global organizations, enables migrants to experience themselves as part of a larger

---

[3] A Nigerian pastor in Manchester, New Hampshire often cites the same example for the same purpose.

project of 'divine modernization', which is spreading throughout the world. Within this framework, the ambiguities and paradoxes of migration are made invisible. The churches emphasize integration and optimism, aiming at overcoming the hardships of migration rather than reflecting the traumatic aspects of migration. For some members of the churches in Berlin, incorporation takes the form of joining a range of professions from medicine to shopkeeping. Other members are students or laborers, or they are unemployed. In contrast, few congregants in Halle are employed and many are still asylum seekers. Their acquisition of permanent residency in Germany is often obtained through marriages to Germans. They seek divine assistance in their efforts to obtain legal residence by being granted asylum or finding a German spouse. People often pray for 'passports'. The persistence of unemployment after obtaining legal status or of other barriers to legal status is attributed to the work of the devil and demons. These forces are dealt with by prayer and pastoral intervention that provides believers with access to divine deliverance from evil forces and subsequent redemption and prosperity. In both Berlin and Halle, believers are sustained by the promise of prosperity that follows from their acceptance of Christian belief. This system of belief, as well as the churches' organizational structure, serves to incorporate the migrants into their new locality and social position in Germany.

The identification of Christian modernism as a pathway of incorporation cannot be facilely extended to all types and degrees of religious organizations in Germany that claim some form of global narrative of belonging and entitlement. Yalçın-Heckman's work shows that Muslim organizations are subject to much closer public scrutiny and at times even state surveillance by authorities because of their transnational links. Even the state-supported Turkish mosque organization DİTİB (*Diyanet İşleri Türk İslam Birliği*) is not immune from public and state surveillance in Germany. The openness to incorporating Christian churches introduced by Africans into the German society and the African migrants' quest for being accepted as 'real Christians' (and not necessarily and primarily as migrants from Africa) must be seen within the wider context of the established social, political and economic relationships between church and state in Germany.

Muslim organizations in Germany are under close scrutiny, not only by the general public and their German neighbors but also by the German administration and bureaucracy. Consequently, they are particularly sensitive to this public attention and concerned about self-presentation. The pressure in part leads them to becoming 'Protestant' in the sense of adopting the organizational structures of churches in Germany; it also leads them to distance themselves from and portray as 'the other' rival Muslim organizations.[4] It may be that despite their dramatic differences in practice, Christian modernist churches formed by African migrants can still be encompassed as familiar and manageable because they are Christian. Islamic organizations can more readily be portrayed as alternative and secret because Islam has historically been defined as different and not included in modernity or in Europe.

---

[4] Thus the Alevis portray themselves and have come to be accepted as the representatives of 'modern Islam' in comparison to the more conservative Sunni Islamic organizations such as the *Milli Görüş* (see Kehl-Bodrogi 2001). Alevis are certainly more easily incorporated into German society than their Sunni fellow-migrants.

2. Public Foreigners

A second pathway of incorporation into Germany is built around the development of a persona of cultural difference. Persons who follow this pathway participate in a series of public events organized to portray foreigners as culturally different from Germans even as they welcome participants in a particular locality. Through performing their difference, the persons who adopt this pathway find themselves integrated into Germany but as foreigners. All ideologies of multiculturalism contain this tension. Belonging and integration come through recourse to differentiation. While ideologies of multiculturalism refer to groups, it is individuals as they become public actors in various ceremonies, rituals, and public programs who most clearly experience this form of incorporation.

Only a few studies in Germany have succeeded in conceptually disentangling incorporation from assimilation and provided ethnographic documentation of a pathway of public foreignness in which cultural difference becomes an aspect of incorporation. Among them are Yalçın-Heckman's study on migrants' associations in Bamberg in southern Germany and Colmar in France. These migrant associations have changed in ways that reflect the transformation of migrant society's structure and demography (such as higher differentiation in occupational structure and increased access to better educational facilities). By functioning within German associational structures and imitating their activities, e.g., having *Tag der offenen Tür* (open houses), Turkish labor migrants' associations have moved in the direction of becoming local public foreigners' associations. This is especially visible in the organization of religious associations, of Sunni mosques and of Alevi communal houses (*cem evi*).[5] The contents of their activities too have changed from being Turkey-oriented to being oriented toward German society, as a way of being 'publicly Turkish' in Germany.

At the same time, their incorporation into Germany has not terminated, but rather reoriented their transnational ties and changed the direction of these ties. Although the religious factions among the Sunni and Alevi associations are operating in transnational fields and in relationship to the ideological positions of groups and politics in Turkey, their transnational ties have become increasingly European within the last fifteen years.

Glick Schiller and Karagiannis' ethnography in Halle provides another example of pathways of incorporation as public foreigners in a form that does not preclude transnational incorporation either into other countries in Europe or to a homeland.[6] Here we draw from the ethnography of Congolese and Angolan asylum seekers in Halle, focusing on a gospel choir to which we give the pseudonym 'Praise God'. As asylum seekers, five of the six members of the choir had a specific legal status. However, they were not provided with German lessons (in fact, only limited categories of persons such as *Aussiedler*[7] with 'German origins' were in 2003 eligible for state-supported language

---

[5] *Cem evi* is a meeting place for Alevis for performing their religious rituals as well as for social occasion; these meeting places differ in size and structure.

[6] This research is part of a study "The Simultaneous Incorporation of Immigrants" comparing migrants in Germany and the United States. The MacArthur Foundation component of this research (2003-4) was initiated by Nina Glick Schiller and Thaddeus Guldbrandsen who, together with Peter Buchannan, conducted the ethnography in the United States. Ayşe Çağlar, Evangelos Karagiannis, and Nina Glick Schiller have been focusing on Halle.

[7] *Aussiedler* is a category of migrants classified as ethnically German in particular from the former Soviet countries, Poland and Romania, who are legally privileged by the German law.

courses). They were not allowed to work, and they were not even allowed to leave their locality of residence without permission. The money they received barely covered rent and food, making even the cost of transportation within the city prohibitive. The welfare authority paid their rent, and the total amount of money received by asylum seekers was less than the usual social welfare.

Yet members of the choir assumed the role of public foreigners in Halle. Members of a French-speaking church initiated by Congolese, they began to sing as a church choir but soon were invited to engagements outside the church. While they retained their church membership, they distinguished themselves from the church choir so that they could assume a more public performance role. The choir performed at various events in Halle where the presence of foreigners is acknowledged and celebrated. These included the opening ceremonies of the yearly celebration of the 'Week of Foreigners' held in the centre of the city and attended by the mayor and various public dignitaries. When, during 'African Week' in Halle, the vice-mayor laid a wreath at the statue of Anton Wilhelm Amo, an 18th century resident of Halle who was the first African to study and teach in Germany, the choir sang. They also sang at various summer festivals held to celebrate cultural integration, and they officially represented Halle at Sachsen-Anhalt-Day, a festival where the *Land*[8] Sachsen-Anhalt celebrates itself. In these performances the choir sang gospel music in German, English, French, and Lingalla. The songs that received the most enthusiastic public response were the ones sung in Lingalla with accompanying rhythmic dance steps. With the assistance of funds from a German foundation they have recorded a compact disc, a format that made it possible for them to disseminate their message and their identity as public foreigners far beyond Halle.

In this way the members of the choir gained a sense of themselves as both Africans and as part of Halle and Germany. Their performances provide them with some money for personal expenses at least in the summer time. The performances were often arranged by Herr Pierre, an African employee of a large academic foundation and the president of a smaller political foundation. A very experienced public foreigner, Herr Pierre was adept at orchestrating these appearances and transmitted his expertise to the members of the choir.

The choir members also appear in another guise that brought them into public view as foreigners. They act as a soccer team in special tournaments organized to show unity between Germans and foreigners. The choir soccer team won the 2003 anti-racism tournament of 'African Week' in which teams of Germans and foreigners participated in friendly competition. As a reward they were presented with a cup during a gala at the conclusion of 'African Week' that was attended by a range of local Germans who over the years have participated in various activities organized to integrate foreigners.

Although this form of incorporation may seem to be merely local, rather than simultaneously transnational, it may actually facilitate transnational incorporation. Herr Pierre began a development program in his home country with funds raised through his connections in Halle. Two of the choir members, who were brothers, communicated regularly with family members living in France and Belgium. Our ongoing research will teach us more about the possibilities of these connections and whether any of the funds earned locally through performances assist in maintaining transnational ties that facilitate transnational family or political incorporation. Certainly research in the United States

---

[8] The *Bundesland* or *Land* is a German administrative unit that is comparable to the federal state in the US.

contains numerous examples of local public foreigners who simultaneously are long distance nationalists and use their local activities as public foreigners as a base from which to participate in nation-state building projects in their homeland (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc 1994; Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001).

3. Transnational Family Networks

It would be possible to say that Somalis live in Germany, but not as part of Germany. Many Somalis live within dense family networks that link them to other Somalis in Germany, transnationally to others settled in Europe, and finally back to Somalia or Somaliland. However, the situation is more complex than this summation would allow. In terms of their degree and kind of incorporation in Germany and transnationally, Somalis display variation by generation, by the period in which and the means by which they came to Germany, and by their relationship to the political situation in their homeland. Moreover, as people settle in Germany and establish families, they face the tasks of social reproduction, including the raising and educating of children within a German context. Consequently, family life, however it may be organized to maintain transnational ties, is still shaped by the daily tasks of child rearing within Germany.

Clan identity structure predominates within family networks. Telephones, including mobile phones, serve as a constant means of communication. Visits among Somalis within Germany are very frequent. Videotapes of marriages are exchanged among members of family networks. Audiotapes of music recorded in the US and Canada circulate through Somali networks within Germany and transnationally. This use of audiotapes allows people to maintain their sense of oral culture. Often the tapes contain a sketch or joke or scene performed on tape. These kinds of interchanges develop and maintain a sense of a Somali life in Germany that extends to a diaspora settled in Europe and the Americas. Simultaneously, migrants organize themselves to send financial remittances homeward. When many siblings send small sums home to parents, the parents in Somalia can have a sizeable monthly income. Consequently, the Somali transnational family and its home ties depend on some kind of financial incorporation within Germany.

There are other forms of incorporation as well that are indicators of possible simultaneous incorporation. Some Somali establish a public presence through Somali organizations. It is only insiders who recognize that these organizations have a clan or regional focus and may be intimately linked to transnational family dynamics. Somalis who arrived before 1991 came as students, acquired education and often married German women. Members of these families participate in networks that incorporate them into German family and social life. However, these Somalis often maintain dense networks of transnational ties including links to political processes in what they still consider to be their homeland.

Those who came after 1991 came as political refugees and became involved in transnational networks that have increasingly popularized Muslim ideas about the protection of women from outside influences. They have initiated a more restrictive set of practices in Germany than had been followed at home. To the extent that this is true, their more restrictive Islam is a product of their experience in Germany, where Islam and Somalis are challenged and marked as being different. Interest in Islam brings some

Somali into mosques that pull in Muslims of many nationalities. However, we can hypothesize that, if the Somali were to become visibly involved in the politics of European Islam or in transnational Islamic organizations in Europe, the question of their organizational integration or incorporation into the German society would become more difficult.

At the same time, a few Somali have become incorporated into German institutions as public foreigners. As in the case of other public foreigners, incorporation into German institutions may reinforce homeland ties. For example, a Somali former student of Schlee is an official of the *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ – German Technical Cooperation). As an official of this organization, he travels to Somalia. In this case, incorporation within German institutions increases a migrant's contact with his homeland.

For most Somalis, however, it is family rather than religion or the path of public foreigners that form the medium of both their transnational connections and their incorporation in Germany. It is the Somali children who show the greatest degree of incorporation, and it is through their children that parents find themselves on a pathway of incorporation. Children's intense commitments to Germany expose their parents to the consumption desires of German youth. The oldest children of the first generation are generally still teenagers, immersed in German teen consumption and rebellious towards their parents who try to interest them in the homeland. Trips to visit relatives back home result in teens trying to distance themselves from the Somali realities. It remains to be seen whether Somali youth will follow the pattern reported for second generation youth of other nationalities, who, in significant numbers, only become interested in homeland identities and political activities when they reach adulthood. It may be that the absence of a viable state in Somalia and the continuing clan divisions will keep second generation youth from any form of simultaneous incorporation that links them to a Somali homeland. It may also be that the racial and religious exclusion that these young people experience as they become adults will send them on transnational quests for identity, belonging, and political or religious engagement, similar to that reported for Croatian, Indian, and Haitian second generation members (Fouron and Glick Schiller 2001; Marr Maira 2002; Skrbiŝ 1999).

4. Vernacular Cosmopolitanism through Mediascapes

The communications sector developed by migrants provides another pathway of incorporation. In a seminal work on the immigrant press in the United States at the beginning of the 20th century, Robert Park (1971 [1922]) portrayed foreign language media as a mode of eventual assimilation, despite their transnational connections and their use of the migrant's mother tongue. In contrast, in political debates about immigrant incorporation in Germany and elsewhere, the immigrant media is often portrayed as evidence of the failure of integration. Because German is not the dominant language of this media, it is assumed that these media create a closed moral community and perpetuate only identification with the ancestral land. In German official discourses, consumption of foreign language media by migrants is still associated with 'cultural ghettoization'. Language plays an important role in the ethno-cultural model of membership in Germany. The debates and the new regulations about language

competency tests in the 2002 version of the 'Immigration Law' (*Zuwanderungsgesetz*) in Germany[9] and the fact that knowledge of German has served as an important criterion in allowing the *Aussiedler* to come to Germany, all indicate the importance of German language in the national imaginary in German society.

Ayşe Çağlar (2003; 2005), in her examination of German Turkish media in Berlin has developed an alternative analysis of the issue of language and migrant settlement, one she calls "vernacular cosmopolitanism."[10] This form of migrant settlement provides another example of a pathway of simultaneous transnational incorporation. Those who participate in vernacular cosmopolitanism as a mode of incorporation maintain forms of identification and an outlook that extends beyond their immediate locality of settlement but is inclusive of its particularities; they retain "multiple, uneven and non-exclusive affiliations that challenge the conventional notions of locality and belonging" (Çağlar 2003:20). Çağlar (2003:20) has argued that "once cosmopolitanism is conceptualized in this way it can be extended to transnational experiences" (Robbins 1998:3). However, while transnational connections can foster a vernacular cosmopolitanism, they can also "hinder its development if the attachments forged within transnationalism fail to go beyond the topos of the ethno-cultural" (Çağlar 2003:20).

The media examined in Çağlar's study facilitate the creation of new forms of membership and identity among German Turks, embedding them in new localities and new urban affiliations. These localities and affiliations must be distinguished from more universal forms of cosmopolitanism (Robbins 1998). Structurally, these media are transnational. On the one hand, they exceed and transcend the borders of the Turkish and the German nation-state in respect to their organization, their content, their effects on the respective national political publics, and their self-understanding in terms of identity; on the other hand, the nation-states of origin and settlement are both important points of orientation for the consumers and the producers of the media. Çağlar's full-length study (2003) examines the political economy of media directed at Turks in Germany, as well as of a new form of Turkish media. She provides an innovative approach to the debate about the incorporation of migrants in European societies and the potential effects of transnational media on the cosmopolitan transformation of political communities in Europe.[11]

The emergence of digital technologies and international deregulation in the communications sector are changing the marginalized character of ethnic media. In the age of audience segmentation, more and more broadcasters are targeting ethnic communities across national borders. These media are not only taking an

---

[9] Although the political parties disagreed on various clauses of these laws, there was consensus among the politicians and different segments of the population about the requirement that migrants must attend language courses and master the German language in order to acquire German citizenship.

[10] Çağlar's work is described in greater detail in the original version of this paper in the MPI 2003 report. The text of her section of that report was incorporated into Çağlar (2005). We use the term "German Turk" since this has become a common form of self-reference for Turkish immigrants since the 1980s. Through this identification, people of Turkish origin in Germany emphasize their incorporation and belonging in both societies without erasing their difference. This form of self address is also used by Turkish immigrants in other European countries, e.g., the Belgian Turks in Belgium.

[11] See also Çağlar 1998. The following text has been abstracted from Çağlar 2003.

increasingly large share of the global communication flow; they are also becoming an important target for global media conglomerates (Çağlar 2003:23).

As Çağlar has argued, vernacular cosmopolitanism should not be interpreted as a form of multiculturalism. It is not an isolated and self-contained sphere of discourse but a social and cultural means whereby German Turks actively participating in life in Berlin – as well as in Germany. The term vernacular is particularly apt because German Turkish media have developed a spoken and written German-influenced idiomatic Turkish that challenges the conception of national community even as it utilizes linguistic constructions that reflect "the boundary-drawing role of language in the conception of the political community in these societies" (Çağlar 2003:28).

Tsypylma Darieva's study of migrants from the former Soviet Union to Berlin traces a similar trajectory of belonging. It becomes clear from her examination of the practices and the intended audiences of Russian newspapers in Germany that the term 'ethnic press' is inappropriate. Rather the Russian language press in Germany offers another example of modern communication networks that provide a vernacular cosmopolitan form of incorporation into Germany. Migrants from Russia in Germany who speak and read Russian constitute a new and significant group. Members of this linguistic group have different ethnic identifications and are officially recognized as *Kontingentflüchtlinge* of Jewish and *Spätaussiedler* of German descent. These two categories have a 'privileged' status in Germany in comparison to most other migrants. While the German government sees *Spätaussiedler* as historical co-ethnics who 'return' to their homeland, the acceptance of Russian Jews represents a kind of moral reparation for the murder of millions of Jews during the Third Reich.

In this context, German integration programs developed by ethnic-confessional institutions such as the *Jüdische Gemeinde* claim that new migrants should integrate and ultimately identify as German Jews. The ties to the Russian language and culture are generally perceived by these institutions as barriers for successful integration into German society. Russian speakers who are ethnically mixed have the duty to become members of the receiving society as religious Jews or cultural Germans, and in either case demonstrate full competence in the modern German way of life.[12] *Aussiedler* are expected to understand themselves as fully German, denying their experience of several centuries of participation in and intermarriage into Russian and then Soviet society and its vast regional differentiation.

In her recent research on Russian language mass media and identity in Berlin, Darieva has analyzed how Russian newspapers produced by migrants facilitate their social and cultural adaptation into Germany without giving up their connection to Russia. Two weeklies, numerous journals, two TV programs and internet web sites in Russian offer information and practical help for newcomers in the land of settlement, regardless of their ethnic and residence status. Through developing their 'own' channels of communication, for example, newspapers such as *Russkij Berlin* and *Evropa-Express*, the migrants from Russia create new public spheres and present social fields which provide at least two types of incorporations in Germany: intra-incorporation and trans-incorporation.[13] These media typically formulate a broadly conceptualized, inclusive

---

[12] See Darieva, 2002.

[13] With a circulation of 50,000 and 70,000 respectively, these two weeklies are the most successful newspapers among the Russian-speaking minority in Germany. Launched as a local Berlin newspaper in

definition of a 'we-group' that identifies the audience by language and alludes to specific geographical and symbolic linkages between two lands–the territory of the former Soviet Union and the territory of modern Germany. The post-Soviet immigrants' media voice contains what can be considered a cosmopolitan attitude towards ethnicity, for example, through the newspaper's symbolic motto "Our homeland is the Russian language". The incorporation of different ethnic and social ways of belonging can be observed in statements like this; not only Russian Jews and Russian Germans participate in the medial exchange, but also Latvians and Uzbeks who live in Germany.

Yet this incorporation can also be transnational. The weekly *Russkij Berlin* utilizes transnational links that connect Berlin to the rest of Germany and to the territories of the former Soviet Union. In conceptualizing its flow of news, this newspaper projects a new vision of location organized in three spatial dimensions: the land of settlement, Germany, is called 'Our land'; the land which was left is called '1/6 of the world' – the territory of the former Soviet Union; and the third zone has a local character connected to city life and the life of Russian speaking migrants in Berlin.

Through this social organization of migrant media connections, and through its narrative and imaging of space, Russian-speaking migrants are connected simultaneously to contemporary Russia and their lost homeland, the 'USSR'. Crucially, this specific cartography of the world contains no classical hierarchical mode of center and periphery relationships, which is typical for any structure of news. Looking not only at Russia but also at Germany, Modern diasporic Russian media position themselves, with a strong local urban identification, in a space in-between. The growing number of minority and migrant media in Europe provide a new media world that extends beyond the construction of 'national imaginaries' and contains multiple connections of in-between mediascapes.

5. Regional Cosmopolitanism

The pathway of regional cosmopolitanism refers more to incorporation through the use of imagination than to a structural mode based on social relations. However, since discourse and social action are often related in a complex process of causality, we include regional cosmopolitanism in this overview of the pathways of incorporation that emerge from our ethnography and that challenge the dominant conceptualizations of migrant integration in Germany. In Berlin, the division of West and East Germany was very salient to Ghanaian migrants. The racist violence which spread over Germany in the 1990s was interpreted by the Ghanaians in terms of East and West. The West was perceived as a relatively peaceful and cosmopolitan area, the East as an area of violence and racism. Although this discursive distinction became blurred in everyday practice, it functions as a dominant scheme of interpretation, which has also produced certain kinds of action. It manifested itself, for instance, in housing patterns. More than 90% of the Ghanaians live in districts that were part of West Berlin before 1990.

For many Ghanaians the regional division between East and West Germany corresponds to the regional division between northern and southern Ghana. Northern Ghana is the peripheral region within the national framework. The stereotype about

the summer of 1996, *Russkij Berlin* expanded quickly all over Germany and, as a supplement to the most popular Moscow weekly, *Argumenty i Fakty*, even into Russia.

people from northern Ghana is that they are rural, 'uncivilized', and 'uneducated', which is expressed through their lack of English language skills. Furthermore, the northern part of Ghana is less Christianized than the southern part and relatively weak economically. Most of the natural resources and important cash crops are in the South. Because, economically, the North is less integrated in the world market, people from the North are less likely to travel abroad. And finally, because the most recognized incidents of ethnic violence have happened there, northern Ghana is associated with ethnic violence. These attributes solidify in the emic[14] concept of being 'bushy'. Although being 'bushy' is not exclusively used to describe Northerners, the stereotypical Northerner is the prototype of a 'bushy person'. A 'bushy' person comes from a rural place, has not traveled abroad, is poor, does not speak proper English, is not Christian, thinks only in ethnic categories, and as a result of all this tends to be violent.

This scheme of interpretation can easily be used by southern Ghanaians to explain the racist violence in eastern Germany and the differences between the West and the East. Eastern Germany is the economically weak part, the proportion of Christians (as defined through church membership) is low, and many people do not speak English and are less experienced in traveling abroad. Because former East Germans are expected to have a 'confined worldview', Ghanaians expect them to think in ethnic categories, which lead, they believe, to a higher degree of ethnically motivated violence. They connect the media discourse on the higher degree of racist violence in eastern Germany to their folk theory about the perceived violence in northern Ghana. Interestingly, this parallel results in a new space of identification. Cosmopolitan migrants from southern Ghana, who are in fact the great majority of Ghanaians in Berlin, identify with cosmopolitan Germans from western Germany and western Berlin. In this discourse, East Germans and northern Ghanaians are becoming the 'uncivilized' and 'violent' other from which one's own identity is distinguished. Interestingly, migrants, who are normally expected to feel marginalized and radicalized, are able to imagine themselves as part of a cosmopolitanism, by means of which they can emancipate themselves from the role of the possible victim of racist violence. By defining the East Germans as 'bushy' and consequently latently violent, an alliance between southern Ghanaians and western Germans is imagined. This identification works also the other way round, at least partly.

In the quarters with a high proportion of migrants such as Kreuzberg or Wedding, many Germans feel committed to the discourse of multiculturalism. The migrants, especially 'black' African migrants, become symbols of the cosmopolitanism of the city of Berlin. Eastern Berlin, with its low proportion of migrants, becomes, in this discourse, the symbol of the confined and racist Germany. Therefore, the imaginary of cosmopolitanism opens up new spaces of integration and identification, which temporarily transcend the distinction between the 'developed' and 'undeveloped world', or racial stereotypes like the 'uncivilized African' and the 'civilized European'. Through transnational networks and global integration, migrants create new imaginaries of

---

[14] The distinction between etic and emic goes back to Kenneth C. Pike's analogy of the linguistic distinction between phonetic vs. phonemic. In anthropology it refers to the differentiation between internal and external perspectives with respect to scientific knowledge about culture. While the *emic* perspective claims to represent the explicit and/or implicit meaning of discourses and practices for the actors in a cultural field, the *etic* perspective describes analytical or structural scientific models that go beyond the potential interpretative scope of the actors (cf. Barnard 1996).

integration such as a regional cosmopolitanism, and use these to reposition themselves actively, becoming agents in their multiple modes of incorporation into Germany and the world.

Conclusion

The research summarized in this essay makes it clear that there are many different pathways of incorporation being followed by migrants in Germany. In all cases these pathways discard dichotomies of cultural difference and articulate new ways of being German. In some cases, such as regional cosmopolitanism, being German begins in the realm of the imagination as migrants rework home dichotomies of difference to position themselves as moderns within both German and global domains. This reworking empowers migrants as they establish social relationships in Germany and abroad. Other pathways such as 'Christian Modernists', 'Public Foreigners', and 'Vernacular Cosmopolitanism' offer sets of organized practices as well as identities which situate migrants within Germany without confronting the issue of becoming exactly like the Germans. These pathways of incorporation into Germany include organized sets of practices, social relationships, institutions, as well as claims to belonging and membership. An array of German public and private interests and institutions participate in these various forms of incorporation. Public, commercial, and philanthropic actors and institutions situated across national borders also play a role. Even the Somali clan networks, where family connections would seem to keep migrants encapsulated in their own world, contain transnational connections, generational differentiation, and connections to German institutions. In all cases, what might appear on first examination to be ethnic, particular, linguistically bounded practices and identities were revealed through ethnographic investigation to contain pathways of incorporation that confront standard notions of membership and belonging within the boundaries of a single nation-state. These developments highlight pathways of incorporation that cannot be understood as simple integration into the 'political community'; instead, new forms of 'belonging' and membership in Germany, Europe, and elsewhere are established by these pathways.

Some elements of the pathways of incorporation have heuristic power in other research settings beyond Germany and even beyond migration studies. Christian modernism appears to be a widespread strategy of incorporation for marginalized people. For example, ongoing field research carried out by László Fosztó in Transylvania shows that the Roma have adopted charismatic Christianity as a strategy of inclusion into Central European societies. Roma convert in significant numbers to Pentecostal denominations both in Romania and Hungary (see for example Lange 2003), where Fosztó is doing comparative research. Though Roma could not be considered immigrants (at least not recent immigrants) in Central Europe, they have been historically marginalized. By adopting Pentecostal Christianity they align themselves with a narrative that makes them, as born-again Christians, central actors in the future of their societies.

Specifying these pathways opens up many further questions such as that of the significance of locality, including the type and size of the city and community. Yalçın-Heckman's research on labor migrants in the cities of Bamberg and Nuremberg shows that the size of the city in which a migrant community lives, and the available cultural and financial resources, affect their organizational structures and complexity. In a small

city like Bamberg for example, the labor migrants from Turkey who maintained face-to-face relationships with one another initially formed associations which reflected the regional identities of Turkish migrants. These associations changed their character with time. They became more diverse in terms of the members' backgrounds and responded to the expectations of the younger generation of migrants. In contrast, in the metropolitan city of Berlin, almost all social groups and all kinds of identities (i.e. those of gay migrants, those based on regional associations, or religious identities) could be accommodated simply by forming another association. Glick Schiller and Çağlar~~, and Karagiannis~~ hope to further explore the significance of the scale of the city on pathways of incorporation in future research.

The cases presented in this article demonstrate that migrants manage to become incorporated in different local, national, transnational, regional, and global contexts at the same time. Being included in one national or transnational context is neither the precondition for nor precludes inclusion in another context. In the examples we have presented, migrants engaged in these various pathways of incorporation become part of Germany and other states and localities and make claims as members of these societies but not in the ways in which integration has previously been understood (Favell 1999).

The concepts of pathways of incorporation and simultaneity provide a framework for studying the complex interplay of being part of different local and social settings in different political and geographic locations in the course of migrants' everyday practices. This perspective contributes, in our opinion, not only to a more adequate representation of the migration phenomena in particular but also provides a more flexible conceptualization of the relationship between the nation-state, social structures and individual ways of living and belonging. Looking both within and beyond the borders of the nation-sate at the same time may contribute to a better understanding of the social processes that shape the structures of contemporary societies. Such developments challenge our very concept of society.

Acknowledgements

References

Barnard, A. 1996. "Emic and Etic," in *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. Edited by A. Barndard and J. Spencer, pp. 180-182. London: Routledge.

Basch, L., N. Glick Schiller, and C. Szanton Blanc. 1994. *Nations Unbound: transnational projects, postcolonial predicaments, and deterritorialized nation-states.* Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach.

Bauböck, R. 2000. Political Community beyond the Sovereign State, Supranational Federalism and Transnational Minorities. Paper presented to the Conference "Conceiving Cosmopolitanism" University of Warwick, 27-29 April.

Benhabib, S. 1992. *Situating the Self. Gender, community and postmodernism in contemporary ethics.* Cornwall: Polity Press.

Çağlar, A. 1998. Popular Culture, Marginality and Institutional Incorporation. *Cultural Dynamics* 10,3:243-261.

—. 2003. Mediascapes, Advertisement Industries and Cosmopolitan Transformations, Turkish immigrants in Europe. Unpublished paper.

—. 2005. Mediascapes, advertisement industries: Turkish Immigrants in Europe and the European Union. *New German Critique* 92: 39-62.

Darieva, T. 2002. "Von 'anderen' Deutschen und 'anderen' Juden. Zur kulturellen Integration russischsprachiger Zuwanderer in Berlin," in *Inspecting Germany*. Edited by T. Hauschild and B. J. Warneken, pp. 405-420. Münster: LIT-Verlag.

—. 2004. *"Russkij Berlin" Migranten und Medien in Berlin und London.* Münster: LIT Verlag.

Favell, A. 1999. "To Belong or not to Belong, the Postnational Question" in *The Politics of Belonging, Migrants and Minorities in Contemporary Europe*. Edited by A. Geddes and A. Favell, pp. 209-227. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Flores, W. V., and R. Benmayor. Editors. 2000. *Latino Cultural Citizenship: claiming identity, space, and rights.* Tempe, AZ: Bilingual Review Press.

Fouron, G., and N. Glick Schiller. 2001. "The Generation of Identity: redefining the second generation within a transnational social field," in *Migration, Transnationalism, and the Political Economy of New York.* Edited by H. Cordero-Guzman, R. Grosfoguel, and R. Smith, pp. 58-86. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Glick Schiller, N. 2004. "Transnationality," in *A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics.* Edited by D. Nugent and J. Vincent. Malden, MA: Blackwell. pp. 448-467.

Glick Schiller, N., and G. Fouron. 1999. Terrains of Blood and Nation: Haitian transnational social fields. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(2): 340-66.

—. 2001. *Georges Woke Up Laughing: long distance nationalism and the apparent state.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Guarnizo, L. E. 2001. The Economics of Transnational Migration. Paper presented at the Conference on 'Transnational Migration, Comparative Perspectives,' Princeton University, June 30.

Karim, H. K. 1998. *From Ethnic Media to Global Media, Transnational Communication Networks among Diasporic Communities.* Report prepared for the Strategic Research and Analysis Strategic Planning and Policy Co-ordination Department of Canadian Heritage, Canada.

Kehl-Bodrogi, K. 2001. Alevis in Germany: on the way to public recognition? *ISIM Newsletter* 8:9.

Lange, B. R. 2003. *Holy Brotherhood: Romani music in a Hungarian Pentecostal Church.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Levitt, P. and N. Glick Schiller 2004 'Transnational Perspectives on Migration: Conceptualizing Simultaneity', International Migration Review 38(3): 1002-39.

Marr Maira, S. 2002. *Desis in the House: Indian American Youth Culture in New York City.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Marshall, R. 1993. "Power in the name of Jesus. Social Transformation and Pentecostalism in Western Nigeria," in *Legitimacy and State in the 20th Century Africa.* Edited by T. Ranger, and O. Vaughan, pp. 213-246. London: Macmillan.

Park, R. 1971 [c1922]. *The Immigrant Press and Its Control.* Montclair, N.J.: Patterson Smith.

Robbins, B. 1998. "Introduction Part I, Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism", in *Cosmopolitics. Thinking and feeling beyond the nation.* Edited by P. Cheah, and B. Robbins, pp. 1-19. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Schlee, G., and A. Horstmann. Editors. 2001. *Integration durch Verschiedenheit: Lokale und globale Formen interkultureller Kommunikation.* Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.

Skrbiŝ, Z. 1999. *Long Distance Nationalism: diasporas, homelands and identities.* Brookfield, VT: Ashgate Publishing.