EUI WORKING PAPERS

IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Multiculturalism and Immigration:
A Comparison of the
United States, Germany, and Britain

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EUI Working Paper SPS No. 95/1

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ABSTRACT

This article compares the linkage between multiculturalism and immigration in three societies: the United States, Germany, and Britain. After briefly presenting some general characteristics of multiculturalism as an intellectual and social movement, I outline the different meanings and expressions that it has acquired in the societies considered here: a quest for minority group rights in the U.S.; a substitute for the nation propagated by the post-national left in Germany; a liberal elite strategy of managing race relations in Britain. These different meanings of multiculturalism are explained by distinct traditions of nationhood, peculiarities of historical context, the immigration regimes in place, and the dispositions and nature of the ethnic immigrant groups themselves.

Multiculturalism and Immigration:

A Comparison of the United States, Germany, and Great Britain[1]

"Multiculturalism", the seeking of equal rights and recognition for ethnic, racial, or sexually

defined groups, is one of the most pervasive and controversial intellectual and social

movements in contemporary Western democracies. In its insistence on equality and

emancipation, multiculturalism is clearly a movement of the left. Yet in its defense of

particularistic, mostly ascriptively defined group identities, multiculturalism also deviates

from the universalist project of the left, and enters a terrain that had previously been held by

the political right. Following Charles Taylor (1992), one may characterize multiculturalism as

a "politics of difference" that fuses egalitarian rhetoric with a stress on authenticity and

rejection of the "colonial" and "homogenizing" Western tradition. Multiculturalism is a

thoroughly modern phenomenon in that it reflects the collapse of social hierarchies and the

precarious nature of identity in an "individualized" social structure where traditional, identity-

providing milieus of class, religion, or region have melted away.[2] The particularistic

identities advocated by multiculturalism are chosen, not received, to be built by means of

"consciousness raising" rather than ready-made. At the same time, multiculturalism's

identities are primordial, ascribed, and totalizing. Ethnic heritage, racial features, or sexual

orientation are elevated into total and unchanging master statuses that completely define who

the individual is and what her interests are. The world of multiculturalism is populated not by

individuals with a multitude of overlapping, and often conflicting, group-affiliations and

interests, but by groups or "communities" that are inert, homogenous and mutually exclusive,

such as gays, Latinos, Blacks, and--on the opposite side--white males. This subordination of

the individual to one exclusive group is fundamentalist and anti-modern: it denies the principles of inclusion and functional differentiation on which modern societies are based. Because, in a kind of "chosen primordialism", multiculturalism obviously combines contradictory principles, it may appear in many forms--as the liberal plea for tolerance and mutual understanding in the multiethnic immigrant societies of today, but also as the militant and separatist quest for "black power" or "Afrocentrism".

As a social movement, multiculturalism is Third World liberation carried into the heart of the First World. Franz Fanon's anti-colonial manifesto *The Wretched of the Earth* is also multiculturalism's undeclared manifesto: a colonizing West is juxtaposed to a colonized ethnoracial periphery, which relate to one another like "two different species" (Fanon, 1963:39f); because the West exerts its power through destroying the culture of the colonized, liberation comes through the reassertion of indigenous cultures and traditions; and because the West is not the best, but mere power in disguise, the direction of liberation cannot be inclusion, but separation, ultimately in a romanticized "purging violence" (ibid.,35). Multiculturalism thus deviates from traditional social movements in the West, which fought for inclusion and citizenship. If traditional social movements sought to abolish the discriminated groups in whose behalf claims are raised, multiculturalism's opposite thrust is to perpetuate the claims-making groups.

Multiculturalism likes to deny that, despite its Third-World sentiment and outlook, it is a distinct creation of the First World. In fact, First and Third World perspectives mutually generate one another. If it is correct to argue, with Edward Said (1978), that the West can find its superior identity only in delimitation from an "orientalized", inferior East, then one must also argue in reverse that the Third World comes into existence only in reaction to the spread of the homogenous "world culture" of Western provenance (see Clifford, 1988).

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Multiculturalism emerges at the meeting-points between First and Third World cultures, of which there are many in the modern age of global and instantaneous communication. And as the very existence of multiculturalism testifies, the result of such magnified culture contacts is not cultural assmilation or entropy, as some had previously thought,[3] but a new syncretism, permutation, and co-existence of cultures.

As an intellectual movement, multiculturalism reflects the West's reduced epistemological status after being confronted with its rebellious oriental "Other". From James Clifford's reflexive ethnology, French poststructuralism, to Niklas Luhmann's "autopoietic" system theory, the Western idea and ideal of standpoint-free observation and objective knowledge has been abandoned. Context-dependence, historicity, and perspectivism are the new catchwords. If there is no objective truth or context-independent validity of cultural expressions, one cultural expression is just as good (or bad) as the other. This new relativism undergirds the current critique of "Eurocentrism" in the humanities and social sciences, which is raised in the name of "diversity". The universalist claims of the Western enlightenment tradition are denounced as particularistic power claims, which have to be countered by the concerted power of the periphery. In Fanon's words (1963:43), "Western values...produce in the native a sort of stiffening or muscular lockjaw", so that liberation means to "mock at these very values, (to) insult them, and (to) vomit them up". But as several critics have pointed out, multiculturalism's epistemological relativism and reduction of truth claims to a Nietzschean "will to power" is ultimately inconsistent. For one, the multiculturalist critique uses the same means of intellectual argument that it seeks to denounce--*The Wretched of the Earth*, after all, is a *book*. But more importantly, if common standards are but marks for the will to power of dominant groups, "why then bother with intellectual life at all, which is not the fastest, surest, or even most satisfying path to political

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power, if it is political power one is really after?" (Gutmann, 1992:19).

If multiculturalism is a form of transplanted Third World liberation, the massive, Third-World-based immigration waves of the postwar period may be assumed to be one of its driving forces. In this regard, multiculturalism reflects the increasing ethnic diversity in the immigrant societies of the West, and it is advanced as a substitute for traditional national identities, which are deemed too narrow and no longer capable of integrating and absorbing ethnic diversity by traditional means of "assmiliation". A closer look, however, reveals the linkage between immigration and multiculturalism a good deal less obvious. The immigrant perspective contradicts the colonialism perspective advocated by multiculturalism: immigration is voluntary, individual, and in its factual attraction to the host society the strongest possible compliment to the latter; colonialism, by contrast, depicts the incorporation of new members as forced and collective, and it calls for a fundamental transformation of the host society's structure and principles. In short, immigrants say 'we are actors', whereas the colonialism perspective tells them 'you are victims'. This is not to deny that both perspectives can move towards one another, especially after the experience of actual discrimination and in view of the benefits that affirmative-action-style minority privileges promise. But the basic dissonance between the immigration and colonialism perspectives forces us to recognize that multiculturalism is first and foremost a movement of intellectuals, who are offering an interpretation of the immigrant experience that is by no means certain to be accepted by the immigrants themselves.

This paper examines the linkage between immigration and multiculturalism in three Western societies that have experienced comparable immigration flows in the postwar period, and where various forms of multiculturalism have emerged as strong intellectual and social currents. But, as I attempt to demonstrate, the concrete meaning of multiculturalism and its

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linkage to immigration differ significantly across these societies. These differences are conditioned by distinct traditions of nationhood, the specific historical contexts in which immigration has taken place, the existing immigration regimes,[4] and the immigrant groups themselves.

In the United States, multiculturalism is only indirectly related to the recent immigration wave of non-European origins. Instead, the direct origin of multiculturalism is America's unresolved race problem. Multiculturalism represents only a weak challenge to the prevailing "civic" concept of nationhood, which allows to be accompanied by a variety of "ethnic" fillings. Emerging in the historical context of America's civil rights revolution, multiculturalism appears as the quest for group rights, that is, as the quest for public status by or on behalf of historically oppressed "minority" groups that claim special compensation and privileges. As we will see, this requires the reinterpretation of the immigrant experience along "colonialist" lines, an often strained endeavour rife with paradoxes, ambivalences, and conflicts, not least with America's premier nonimmigrant minority, the Blacks.

In Britain and Germany, multiculturalism is more directly related to immigration, and it also appears as a more direct challenge to established notions of nationhood. In both cases, multiculturalism is an acknowledgment that to be "British" or "German" has thicker, ethnic connotations that--in liberal societies--cannot be easily imposed on culturally remote immigrant groups. But here the convergence ends. In Germany, the multiculturalism debate is really a debate about the protracted problem of nationhood after Nazism, and it is led in virtual absence of the "foreigners" (*Auslaender*) themselves, who are even denied the very status of immigrants. In Britain, I shall argue, multiculturalism has indigenous roots in the liberal legacy of multi-racial empire. Multiculturalism is even a deliberate state strategy in the provision of social services and public education, offered as a remedy to Britain's lingering,

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entirely immigration-based, race problem. Very much a liberal elite strategy, multiculturalism is challenged by an openly racist right that seeks to remodel British nationhood along isolationist, white "little England" lines, and a radical "loony left" that prefers "anti-racist" militance over "multicultural" accomodation.

The purpose of this comparison is a modest one: to sharpen our sense for the distinct contours and variations of "multiculturalism" debates in three advanced Western societies. Building on Reinhard Bendix's strategy of individualizing comparisons, I am using comparisons less to detect common patterns across cases than to bring out the particular countours of each case in more clarity than a single-case analysis would allow. In practical terms, the demonstration of the national embeddedness of multiculturalist practices and discourses and their different linkages to immigration should caution us against drawing precipitate "lessons" from one case to the others, usually from the American to the European side. In each case, multiculturalism mirrors a distinct national history and immigration experience that set limits to its implantation into different contexts.

The Quest for Group Rights: The U.S. Case.

The American civil rights revolution of the 1960s, which put an end to the dismal post-slavery legacy of denying elementary citizenship rights to the American blacks, may be retold in form of a paradox. What began as the attempt to create a colorblind society turned out as the creation of an increasingly color-conscious society.[5] The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited any form of discrimination or segregation "on the ground of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin" in employment, education, and public life, deliberately failed to specify which particular group would be affected by it--it spoke of "citizens",

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"individuals", or "persons", but not of blacks, native Americans, Hispanics, or Asians. However, its implementation required public institutions to identify employees, clients, or other claimants through their ethnic or racial group membership, and thus to pay more attention to race and ethnicity. This group-emphasis became especially strong once courts and executive agencies, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, went over from a passive registration of actual discriminations to the active mandating of statistical quotas and timetables in the hiring or education of "minorities", which were to be achieved by means of "affirmative action".

More as a matter of expediency and convenience than of explicit legislative *fiat*, four such "minority" groups emerged as the sole beneficiaries of affirmative action privileges: Blacks, American Indians, Asians, and Hispanics. Two of these "minorities", Asians and Hispanics, would also provide the large majority of the huge immigration wave that set in shortly after the immigration reforms of the mid-1960s, which represent the second pillar of the civil rights revolution. Replacing the racially motivated national-origins provisions that had been effective since the 1920s, the Immigration Reform Act of 1965 for the first time opened the doors for non-European immigrants, mostly Asians and Hispanics. The affirmative action framework, however, offered incentives for ethnic leaders to model their constituencies along "minority" lines--thus creating the curious situation that many of the new immigrants automatically qualified for certain benefits that remained foreclosed to most native Americans.

Whereas the civil rights legislation created a strong institutional incentive for the claiming of ethnoracial group rights, an internal transformation of the civil rights movement provided the language in which separate group claims could be raised. Reflecting the disappointment with the slow progress of underclass Blacks, particularly in the urban ghettos,

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and fuelled by the anti-colonial movements of Africa and Latin America, the separatist, militant creed of "black power" came to replace the civic inclusion gospel of Martin Luther King. This was a significant change, because it set the tone for all the other ethnic identity movements that would become the backbone of multiculturalism. The angry Black Panthers of Oakland, California, not the stoic black reverends of Birmingham, Alabama, provided the model to emulate for the young, impatient student activists that now formed the Asian-American or Chicano movements on America's college campuses.

As in the case of the Asian-American movement, this required a conscious reinterpretation of the ethnic immigrant experience along "colonialist" lines. This was not easy to achieve, because "Asians" do not exist as a homogenous linguistic or ethnic group, and because Asians--America's proverbial "model minority"-- have been extraordinarily successful in occupational and educational terms. The building of an Asian-American "minority" movement thus meant to forge "racial" unity out of "ethnic" diversity and to rewrite a history of success as a history of victimization. Scholar-activist William Wei (1992:9) summarizes this process of movement building: "Gradually, these activists recognized that they belonged to a racial minority subordinated and separated from the dominant society by race-based policies and practices, rejected their previous efforts at assimilating into that society, and reaffirmed their right to an autonomous ethnic identity in a culturally pluralistic society." At the same time, Asian American student activists had to realize that the immigrant and refugee origins of their ethnic target groups proved severe hurdles to such "consciousness raising" (ibid.,136).

In the case of Hispanics, the building of an ethnoracial minority movement along the black model was easier to achieve. The common language, the generally low educational and occupational achievement of Hispanics, and--maybe most importantly--the colonialist legacy

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of the American southwest, which had been Mexican until 1848, provided favourable conditions. The Hispanics have become, to speak with Peter Skerry (1993), America's quintessentially "ambivalent minority", poised between defining themselves as ethnic immigrant group or ethnoracial minority group. But the culture and political opportunities of the civil rights era tilted Hispanic movement building into the latter direction.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965, the third pillar of America's civil rights revolution, was a crucial incentive in this regard. While the Act was originally designed to put an end to the disenfranchisement of Blacks in the South through subjecting local elections to federal supervision, a 1975 amendment extended its provisions to four "language minorities", including Hispanics, who were granted the right to cast ballots printed in their native language. Most importantly, in expanding its coverage to more than 375 jurisdictions outside the South, such as Texas, the new act allowed Hispanics to institute via federal mandate ethnic majority, "single member" electoral districts that virtually guarantee ethnic office-holding. This success, however, was conditional on modeling Hispanics as an oppressed minority group, such as equating the provision of voting material in English only to the infamous literacy tests in the South. This was no easy job, and a Hispanic lobbyist remembered "being on the phone to Texas with members of the Chicano community, saying, find...a Fannie Lou Hamer, find...a really bad little county with ten little stories, find...someone who's convincing to come up here and testify before Congress...to convince the Congress and the administration...to...change the rules of the game so that Texas will get covered" (quoted in Thernstrom, 1987:54). And these bold Hispanic forays into minority territory, which threatened to provoke a conservative backlash against the entire Voting Rights Act, were initially resented by the Blacks, who accused the former of "(taking) us back to the dark days of 1963, with lynchings in Mississippi" (ibid.,50).

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An even more important step in unleashing the group-rights logic of the civil rights revolution was a 1982 amendment to the Voting Rights Act. This amendment allowed minority voters nationwide to challenge any method of election (whenever instituted) on the ground of discriminatory "result" rather than "intention". This seemingly innocent change of words applied the "equality of result" maxim of affirmative action to the electoral process, and mandates the drawing of district lines that maximize safe minority seats. The rationale of this amendment is multiculturalism applied to the political process: representation on the basis of group membership.[6] As a result of this amendment, traditional at-large voting and multimember districts are at the point of disappearing, while the number of ethnic office-holders elected from single-member districts has greatly increased. But at the same time, new problems are generated. As critics have pointed out, the stress on group rights in the electoral process inhibits political integration, freezes rather than thaws racial politics, and undermines the sense of common citizenship. Republicans, for instance, have curiously supported the creation of ethnic single-member districts: the concentration of ethnic voters in a few safe districts "whitens" the other districts, thus making Republican victories more likely. But at the same time, the white representatives may no longer feel compelled to speak for nonwhite minorities (see Chavez, 1991).

Affirmative action, which distributes entitlements to ethnic minority groups according to their population share, also creates the interest of ethnic leaders to increase their power base through new immigration. For instance, Hispanic groups such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) have traditionally been restrictionist, because new immigrants meant increased competition for scarce jobs and benefits. In the affirmative action era, where increased numbers translate into increased quota and population totals at census time, Hispanic groups have turned unabashedly pro-immigration. At the same time, the

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politics of numbers has loosened the links between ethnic constituency and its leadership. As Peter Skerry put it sarcastically, "Hispanic leaders do not require voters, or even protesters-- only bodies."[7] Because the Census, on the basis of which district lines are redrawn, counts "persons" but not eligible voters, even illegal immigrants contribute to the creation of minority districts. The result is "rotten boroughs" with a minimum of eligible voters and elected representatives with a minimum of democratic accountability. For instance, Gloria Molina, the first Hispanic to sit on the powerful Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, was elected from a "safe", yet predominantly immigrant, minority district, where only 88,000 votes were cast out of a population of 1.8 million (which is less than five percent).

Because of loose constituency ties, ethnic leaders often adopt radical positions not shared by the groups for which they claim to speak. The lack of democratic accountability is further increased by the fact that foundations, rather than membership dues, support most ethnic organizations of the post-civil-rights era. The Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) and the National Council of La Raza, founded in the late 1960s and the most potent Hispanic public policy organizations today, where set up with the help of liberal foundation money, most notably Ford and Rockefeller (see Chavez, 1991:ch.3). Their young leaders, trained in the civil rights movement, have learned to exploit the opportunities of affirmative action, with the result of producing and pertuating a quasi-racial "minority" status for groups whose members may not actually perceive themselves in these terms. Polls have shown that Hispanic rank-and-file have consistently held more conservative views than their leadership on typical affirmative action issues such as bussing, employment quota, and bilingual education (Skerry, 1993:ch.9). Another example of this opinion gap is the debate about employer sanctions in the Immigration Regulatory Control Act (IRCA) of 1986. While the Hispanic leadership branded this measure to stop illegal

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immigration unisono as "racist", the majority of the Hispanic rank-and-file supported employer sanctions.[8] These examples indicate that it is not immigration and ethnic diversification per se, but a specific intellectual elite culture in conjunction with the political opportunity structure, which feeds the trend toward group rights and multiculturalism.

An inherent ambiguity of affirmative-action-style group rights is their temporal status: are these rights temporary or permanent? The individual-rights philosophy that undergirds the American polity permits group privileges as only temporary and remedial measures. Accordingly, ethnic leaders tend to insist that their goal has remained the same all along: a colourblind society without discrimination. But once a right has been gained, it is unlikely to be given up again. The creation of an affirmative action industry also creates the motive for its perpetuation. In her study of minority voting rights, Abigail Thernstrom noticed the paradox that despite the rapid improvement of conditions in the South the reach and complexity of the Voting Rights Act increased ever more: "As the emergency subsided, emergency powers paradoxically expanded" (Thernstrom, 1987:49).

A similar dynamics of structural self-perpetuation can be observed in the field of bilingual education, next to voting-rights advocacy the second major focus of Hispanic political action. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 provides federal funding to meet "the special educational needs...of children of limited English-speaking ability" (quoted in Citrin, 1990:98). As further specified in a Supreme Court rule of 1974, this act obliges local school districts to provide native-language education in all school subjects for minority children. While the purpose of bilingual education was originally to provide remedial help in English language acquisition and to improve school performance, its purpose has since broadened toward fostering ethnic identity and group pride--as indicated in the shift of official labelling from "bilingual" to "bilingual/bicultural" education. A poster circulated by the National

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Association of Bilingual Education expresses this fundamental change of purpose: "I have a right to my language and my culture" (in Porter, 1990:160). Federal mandate helped create a bilingual bureaucracy that is well-entrenched at the state level, and staffed with ethnic activists wielding considerable power to suppress alternatives to a teaching method that is increasingly criticized as "segregative" and delaying English-language development. Bilingual education is the most extreme case of publicly guaranteed group rights, and its obvious defiance of the traditional ideal of melting-pot assimilation has provoked a shrill "English Only" counter-movement (see Citrin, 1990).

However, such opposition to the ethnoracial group-rights movement has remained the exception, even though the latter so obviously contradicts the American legacy of Lockean individualism. As Thernstrom (1987:233) notes with regard to the introduction of group rights in voting, "this is controversial policy that has somehow stirred no controversy." Even more than two decades of Republican administration have been unable to stop affirmative action's expansive thrust. Why? One factor is the cumulative momentum of the affirmative action industry, which is well-entrenched in a plethora of assertive agencies, such as the Civil Rights Commission. Second, a high interest on the part of civil rights groups often combines with a low interest on the part of the public and the lack of an organized opposition that 'cares', especially in such arcane matters as voting methods. But most importantly, questions of racial justice and civil rights have acquired an almost protected status in the American political process, which allows civil rights groups to occupy a higher moral ground. The often noisy and inflated denunciations of "institutional racism" notwithstanding, no other society in history has done more to undo its past wrongs. Contemporary America is not so much "racist" as obsessed with guilt about its racist past. This is the unceasing point of entry for the civil rights revolution, and it guarantees that the latter will continue.

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As these examples demonstrates, the political process in the civil rights era provides incentives for ethnic groups to define themselves as "minorities" entitled to special group privileges. But the main battleground of the group-rights movement, and of "multiculturalism" proper, is education. After all, as Fanon outlined, "decolonization" begins by reasserting the culture of the colonized. In the hands of the group-rights movement, education has turned from being the "great equalizer" (Horace Mann) between ethnic groups into an ethnic consciousness-raising instrument. A typical example are the ethnic and racial studies programs that have been instituted at many American universities and colleges since the late 1960s. They are producing and disseminating the colonial view and criticism of assimilation that is typical for multiculturalism. Characteristically, these programs tend to be taught and attended by members of the group that is being studied, and advocacy rather than analysis is their declared purpose. William Wei (1992:136) describes in revealing terms the thrust of the Asian-American Studies Programs, which were instituted in the late 1960s at several west coast universities after a series of Third World Strikes: "They instilled pride in students by informing them of their history without the demeaning distortions of Eurocentric scholarship. They emphasized the similarities in the historical experiences of all Asian groups..., especially their oppression by European American society and their resistance to it."

The small ethnic study programs are only the tip of the iceberg. The iceberg is the broad cultural left that has come to dominate the humanities and social science departments in many American universities. Henry Gates, director of Harvard's Afro-American studies program, has defined this "American Cultural Left" as a "Rainbow Coalition of feminists, deconstructionists, Althusserians, Foucauldians, people working in ethnic or gay studies, etc." (quoted by Rorty, 1992:233). It is part of the New Left that was socialized in the student and

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antiwar protests of the 1960s, and whose early Port Huron idealism had crashed over Vietnam and then turned into a general attack on the liberal-conservative continuum that has traditionally defined American politics. Continuing Henry Gates' satirical tone, one could characterize the core doctrine of the cultural left as "race, class, genderism" (see Berman, 1992). This doctrine refutes the autonomy of cultural expressions, and reduces the latter to mere reflections and instruments of primordial groups.[9] Each group has its own culture, or would have if the powerful groups in society would not impose their culture as society's common culture. Accordingly, 'race, class, genderism' denounces the "dubious idea of a single common culture" (Herrnstein-Smith, 1992:3), and tries to retrieve the cultures of the less powerful groups that would otherwise remain 'unheard'. Such cultural archaeology is political work: it destroys the false universalism of the powerful and feeds the pride and assertiveness of the dominated. If culture is the medium in which power both operates and disguises itself, a change of culture *is* political change. From here stems the cultural left's marching-order: control the curriculum, dictate the literary canon, clear the language of "fighting words", and a new society without oppression will be born. Only, the inherent relativism of 'race, class, genderism' makes it difficult to imagine such a society without oppression: following its own premises, the cultural left can only envision "the others" (that is, itself) being in charge.

Multiculturalism seeks to rewrite American history from a history of inclusion to a history of victimization. According to the former, the defining feature of American society is the "American Creed" (G.Myrdal) of liberty, equality, and opportunity, which in the end will embrace also those who were previously excluded, such as women or blacks. According to the latter, American society is founded on irredeemable acts of oppression, committed by whites first against Indians and Blacks, and later against other minorities. Robert Blauner

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(1972:52) called it the "third world perspective": "The third world perspective returns us to the origins of the American experience, reminding us that this nation owes its very existence to colonialism, and that along with settlers and immigrants there have always been conquered Indians and black slaves, and later defeated Mexicans...on the national soil."

This "third world perspective", certainly a provocation in the 1960s, is now almost the new orthodoxy. Following the example of Stanford University, many colleges and universities have scrapped their mandatory "Western Culture" courses in favour of courses that stress "diversity" and "cultures" in the plural. Prima facie, there is nothing unusual about revising the canon in light of new historical experience. But peculiar is the mindset from which this revision springs, which is that of a combat against "Eurocentric hegemony" (Asante, 1992:301). Most importantly, the "third world perspective" is not limited to academia's ivory tower, but has trickled down to the level of public schools. California and New York, the two states with the highest ethnic diversity and immigration rates in the country, are the first states to revise their school curricula along multicultural lines. In 1989, a task force created by the New York State Commissioner of Education, Thomas Sobol, released a new "Curriculum of Inclusion" that recommended a general overhaul of the history and social studies curriculum at New York State's public schools. It gave scant attention to reading, mathematics, or scientific skills, but opened with a salvo against the evils of "monocultural" education: "African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Puerto Ricans/Latinos, and Native Americans have all been the victims of an intellectual and educational oppression that has characterized the culture and institutions of the United States and the European American world for centuries" (quoted in Ravitch, 1992:291). A black school activist expressed the rationale of multicultural education in simpler terms: "We want a program that will produce big black men, not little white men" (quoted in Sleeper, 1990:219).

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Reviewing the curriculum battles, Arthur Schlesinger (1992:74) wonders whether the "obsession with difference" will "threaten the idea of an overarching American nationality." Will it? America's concept of nationhood is uniquely resilient, because it is politically rather than ethnically constituted. As Horace Kallen (1924:51) pointed out, the meaning of American is characterized by a "peculiar anonymity": it has no ethnic implications. From this follows that the ethnic recomposition of American society in the era of Third-World immigration is not per se a threat to American nationhood. Multiculturalism is fond to point out that the orthodoxy of "melting-pot" assimilation has always been a myth, and that cultural "pluralism" has been closer to the American experience. Countering the hysterical "Americanization" campaign during World War I, Horace Kallen (1924:124) codified the "pluralistic" interpretation of American nationhood as a "democracy of nationalities": "The spirit of the land is inarticulate, not a voice but a chorus of many voices each singing a rather different tune." Is this any different from a contemporary proponent of multiculturalism, who "seeks to go beyond the model of a nation-state coterminous only with Euro-immigrant America, to one coterminous...with humankind"?[10] Such a model is true to the universalist bent in the American concept of nationhood; but it seems also the point at which the very concept of nation collapses, because the necessity of boundaries is denied.

Despite such similarities, multiculturalism deviates from traditional pluralism in one crucial respect. When Horace Kallen devised his pluralistic conception of American nationhood, the existence of a unifying bond was never put in question. Ethnicity and ethnic organization was the cushion that stood between the uprooted immigrant and "complete wildness", as W.I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (1984:289) put it with reference to the Polish peasant in America. Looking four decades later at ethnic organization and politics in New York City, Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan (1970:xcvii) confirmed that "the point

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about the melting pot…is that it did not happen". However, all these descriptions could take for granted that ethnicity was a matter of private choice; it did not attain public status. This is the novelty of multiculturalism: to claim public status for ethnoracial distinctions. This *does* represent a challenge to American nationhood, because it undermines the color-transcending communality of citizenship. It will not amount to a separatist challenge, because their immigrant origins deny ethnic groups a territorial homeland. But if the idea of a "shared national identity" is denounced as an "evil" that American society can do without,[11] the question arises what will be the common ground that secures the civility of political conflict; where will the group-transcending commitments come from that stand between social organization and "complete wildness", particularly in the Third World metropoles of immigrant America?[12] As Andrew Hacker (1993:22) wrote eighteen months after the most serious race unrest in American history, which happened to occur in the self-styled pioneer city of America's multicultural future, "a multicultural America may seem benign in a classroom syllabus, but we shouldn't be surprised if the result is conflict in the streets."

To forge a nation out of a heap of immigrants has been conditional upon a willingness to rise above the limitations of one's origins, of "beginning over again on the frontier", as Frederick Turner put it in his famous essay *The Frontier in American History* (1893:2). Multiculturalism's obsession with remembering one's origins is curiously at odds with the immigrant creed to "never look back" that has given American society its unique dynamism and resilience. This leads us back to our initial question of the relationship between multiculturalism and immigration. Restrictionists like to argue that "the massive Third World immigration is…the ultimate driving force behind multiculturalism" (Auster, 1992:42). If my analysis is correct, this is at best a half-truth. The origin of American multiculturalism is the unresolved race question. The new immigrants are mere "junior partners in the fight for

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multiculturalism" (Glazer, 1991:19). But, however junior, "partners" in the multiculturalism crusade the new immigrants are nevertheless, because the civil rights revolution has given them the incentive to define themselves as ethnoracial "minorities", and thus to trade in the immigrant for the colonial perspective. There is no doubt that the quest for group rights is about to fundamentally transform the ethnic pattern in America, with results that are as yet undetermined.[13] But then, indeterminacy has always been the truth of the American experience.

A Substitute for the Nation: The German Case

In a stunning breach of the usually circuitous and polite ways of foreign diplomacy, one of the highest U.S. representatives in Germany has recently launched a sweeping attack on Germany's handling of the foreigner issue, chastising the society for intolerance, self-pity, and "compulsive self-analysis", while rebuking its political leader, Helmut Kohl, for stubbornly insisting that "Germany is not a country of immigration."[14] While certainly refreshing, the can-do pragmatism of the American underestimates the difficulty of a European nation to cope with a fact that has helped America into existence, but that is experienced elsewhere as a disturbing novelty: immigration. But more importantly still, it dismisses too easily the added complication of *German* nationhood that has stood in the way of this country's coming to terms with its embarrassing "foreigner problem."

Since it invited the first Italian "guest workers" in 1955 to feed the insatiable labor needs of its "economic miracle", Germany has insisted that the newcomers were just that: "guests" and "workers" who were expected to return when the job was done and once the contract had expired. As long as these premises were in force, the guest workers were

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cherished items. The one-millionst labor migrant to arrive at Cologne's train station on 10 September 1964, Armando Rodriguez of Viseo, Portugal, was greeted by a cheerful crowd that included no less a figure than the Federal Minister for Labor Affairs. After rewarding the celebrated, and not little surprised, new arrival with a shining motorcycle, the Minister intoned a true Ode to the Guest Worker: "These one million persons on the job in Germany help contribute to maintaining production growth while keeping prices stable and maintaining our reputation on world markets. The role of the *Gastarbeiter* will certainly become more significant in the years ahead" (quoted in Herbert, 1990:212). To "keep prices stable", to "maintain production growth", and to "maintain our reputation on world markets" was how the (West) German nation refashioned itself after its total defeat in 1945. As the economic language indicates, West Germany rebuilt itself in an act of national self-denial. The guest-workers were at first welcome in an enterprise whose economic imperatives knew no national markers--and Italy, the home of the first guest workers, was, after all, also the destination of millions of reborn *Wohlstandsbuerger* to spend their annual *Urlaub*. When the big recession of 1973 inflicted a huge blow to West Germany Inc., and the federal government issued its "recruitment stop" (*Anwerbestop*) that is still in force today, the friendly embracement of guest workers gave way to not-so-friendly reminders to the "guests" to honor their part of the deal--and to go home. By then, most guest workers were not Italians, but Turks, and their alien ways reminded the Germans that they were different--but who were they, the "Germans"?

Multiculturalism in Germany is only secondarily about immigrants; primarily it is about the Germans themselves. In insisting, against the official doctrine, that "Germany is an immigration country", the proponents of multiculturalism are trying to bury the dreadful ghost of the *voelkisch* national tradition and to build a postnational community. The first part

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of this practical syllogism, which links multiculturalism and immigration, is expressed in this definition of multicultural society, provided by one of its major proponents, the Green Party: "The 'multicultural society' is not a theory, but a reality. In the Federal Republic immigration has taken place, and immigration will continue to take place" (Greens, 1990:88). The document then points at the second, and decisive, link between multiculturalism and postnationalism: "Our idea of the 'multicultural society' is not based on (the) concept of the nation-state, but on the indivisibility of human rights. Not citizenship should determine the rights of an individual, but where an individual lives (*Lebensmittelpunkt*)" (ibid.,p.90). From this the Greens deduce a "general right to stay" (*allgemeines Bleiberecht*) for all who happen to enter the country and stay there for five years, in an explicit "policy of open borders" that patently denies the reality of a world divided into separate nation-states. Also the German debate on multiculturalism is not without its exotic blossoms. But they do not spring from the problem of race, as in the United States, but from the peculiarities of German nationhood.

From a historical perspective, Germany's ethnocultural legacy of nationhood and citizenship is responsible for its lack of an explicit immigration policy and the official denial that immigration has taken place. In contrast to the "civic" nations of the West, where nationhood became defined by state territory and adherence to the political principles of liberty and equal rights, German nationhood is based on the "ethnic" model of a linguistically and culturally unified group, a "community of destiny" (*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*) transmitting itself from a mystical past into an unknown, sometimes millenarian, sometimes doom-laden future.[15] Because it came second and had to assert itself against a Western environment of already established nation-states, the German concept of nation inhered from the beginning the negative features of *ressentiment* and closure (see Greenfeld, 1992). Whereas the Western nations constituted themselves through intra-state revolutions and their political creeds of

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secularism, freedom, and equality, the German nation came into its own in a succession of inter-state conflicts, especially the wars against France. Not the civic code of equal rights, but the ethnic code of "us" versus "them" became constitutive for the German concept of nation. This was no foregone conclusion but conditioned by the difficulties of state building in the "polycephalic" zone of Europe (Rokkan, 1975), and, most importantly, by the incapability of, first, an anemic bourgeoisie, and, later, the most powerful working-class movement of Europe, to imbue the nation with the universalistic creed of a successful intra-state revolution.

The ethnic definition of membership in the German nation became codified in the Wilhelmine Citizenship Law of 1913, which decreed that citizenship was to be conferred via descent (*ius sanguinis*) rather than birth on territory (*ius soli*). Blood-based citizenship was a defensive measure against the huge Slavic and Jewish migrations on the open eastern flank of the Reich. In a Reichstag debate of 1912, a government official outlines the rationale of *ius sanguinis*: "The march of nations (*Zug der Nationen*) goes from East to West, and on this march of nations the (Eastern) masses...meet the German Reich with its rule of law, economic prosperity, and free institutions...(A restrictive citizenship policy) is in the national interest, because it erects a barrier to the stream of foreigners flooding our country from the East" (quoted in Hoffmann, 1990:97). Eight decades later, the West German Minister of the Interior used the exact same rhetoric to defend a restrictive migrant policy that continues to divide the world into "Germans" and "foreigners": "In this time of upheaval and change, it is important that we, as the eastern outpost of the...Western alliance, remain a stable democracy."[16] This is but a small vignette from a debate both formed and deformed by the weight of history.

Multiculturalism is the attempt to break the "us" versus "them" code in which

Germans have traditionally defined themselves. As its multiculturalist critics rightly outline, the *voelkisch* conception of nation as a community of descent, which one cannot become a member of unless one already is one, is anachronistic in the multiethnic immigrant societies of today. But the matter is more complicated still. Multiculturalism in Germany is not so much about *redefining* as about *transcending* nationhood altogether. Why? As a result of National Socialism, a positive national identity became impossible in postwar Germany. The left was henceforth inspired by turning this vice into a virtue, setting out on a wholesale crusade against the "mischief of the nation-state" (Glotz, 1990). Multiculturalism may be understood as the latest round in this crusade.

But the Bonn Republic itself was a curiously postnational republic.[17] Its foreign policy was not driven by hard 'national interest' but by a moralizing quest for peace and European integration (see Garton Ash, 1993). On the domestic side, a prospering economy helped finance a culturally neutralized welfare state that was efficient in maintaining social peace, if spreading a certain complacency and civilisatory ennui. This overall comfortable arrangement was disturbed only by the occasional youth, ecology, or peace protest or a past that would not wither. Habermas's "patriotism of the constitution" came close to be the official doctrine of the Bonn Republic, stipulating a political community kept together by a postnational commitment to abstract constitutional principles.

However, because it failed to engage in a conscious redefinition of German nationhood, the Bonn Republic allowed that, underneath its compulsively postnational facade, the *voelkisch* tradition remained alive and well. In fact, this tradition was further strengthened by the fact that after WWII, like almost always in German history, national and state boundaries did not overlap. The outcome of the war, with the partition of Germany and the existence of a huge and scattered ethnic diaspora in Eastern Europe, reinforced the German

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concept of nation as an ethnocultural community of destiny. The one national fixpoint of the Bonn Republic was its constitutionally enshrined mandate to be the vicarious home of *all* Germans, which amounted to automatic citizenship rights for East or ethnic Germans who managed to escape from Communism. Against this backdrop, the cleverest opponents of immigration argued that only an ethnically homogenous West could maintain its moral and constitutional commitment to the Germans in the East. "What would happen to (German) unity", asks a right-wing advocate of repatriating foreigners in the mid-1980s, with more than a little bit of chuzpe, "if…a multiethnic and multicultural Federal Republic would steal itself out of the nation?" (Schilling, 198?:127).[18] To be sure, such openly nationalist reasoning was anathema to the moderate center, which was nervous not to stir the demons of the past.

When the problem of what to do with the foreigners who would not leave arose with vehemence in the early 1980 (due to the conjunction of the second oil crisis and a first huge wave of asylum-seekers), it met insecure and divided elites that did not dispose of a shared idea of national community from which clear criteria of entry and integration could be derived. Bonn's "foreigner policy" (*Auslaenderpolitik*) is notorious for its lack of consistency and foresight, wavering between impotent attempts to send guest workers home with a cheque and opposite attempts to "integrate" the second generation through half-hearted education and employment offers, sometimes fusing both approaches in the paradoxical concept of "temporary integration", holding firm only to the one commitment that no new recruitment must occur. There is, however, an interesting communality between the multicultural left and the national right: both abhor the "assimilation" of foreigners. The conservative state government of Bavaria, for instance, professed its distaste for "Germanizing integration" (H.Maier), and championed the "Bavarian Model" of bilingual education whose pretention was to "maintain the lingual and cultural identity of the foreign children."[19] However, this

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seemingly "multicultural" policy was premised on the reverse assumption that education in the mother tongue would facilitate the eventual return of the foreigners to their home countries. Similarly, if a government official insisted that the goal of foreigner policy was not "assimilation" but "integration", understood as "respecting the individual cultural identity (of foreigners)" (Schiffer, 1992), he was quick to add that too many of such foreign enclaves would feed the "fears of alienation" (*Ueberfremdungsaengste*) of the native population, and that also *Heimat* was a "collective human right" (ibid.).

On the opposite side, when church activists first introduced the notion of multiculturalism in the early 1980s, it was a similar argument against "massive Germanisation" (which was, in fact, never advocated by anyone, not even the extreme right). However, this rejection of assimilation was couched in vicariously raised claims for "minority group rights".[20] These claims were modeled on the regionalist movements sweeping Western and Southern Europe at the time, which stood in for special language rights and political autonomy for ethnonational minorities. Flawed because immigrant groups could not claim a territorial homeland, such proposals fueled the opposite fear of a rising "nationalities state" (Helmut Schmidt) that had to be countered by further delimiting the number of foreigners in Germany.

What followed was a polarized debate distorted by guilt-driven projections, neurotic fears, and false accusations. "The air is full of poison, a huge abyss has opened up between irreconcilable extremes," noticed an observer of debate over foreigner policy in the early 1980s.[21] And another observer had a weary premonition of things to come, bemoaning the "repression of the pressing, of a reality pregnant with disaster (*schicksalsschwangere Wirklichkeit*)."[22] Alleged *Auslaenderfeinde* (enemies of foreigners) stood against self-declared *Auslaenderfreunde* (friends of foreigners). The latter, particularly the multicultural

Greens, "embraced...all that is foreign...in order to break away from the traditions in the own country," as Thomas Schmid (1989) put it perceptively. Defending an idealized "good foreigner", and comparing her fate to the persecution of Jews in the Third Reich, became a subtle way of escaping from one's "Germanness", which was tainted by Nazism. "Foreigners, don't leave us alone with the Germans!" was a slogan at a protest rally in the early 1990s. The "us" of this statement excludes itself from being "German", while the addressed "foreigners" indicate that "us" are not "foreigners" either--obviously a paradox a la Michel Serres's parasitical "included excluded third" that has characterized Green protest politics from the beginning (see Luhmann, 1989:126-135). Rejecting the reformed Foreigner Law of 1990, a Green member of parliament argued that "this immigration can only help us to overcome...German nationalist thinking." To which a senior member of the Liberal Party correctly replied: "You are using the foreigners as a means for other goals."[23]

A closer look at the long and contested making of the new Foreigner Law of 1990 reveals the polarization between a crypto-*voelkisch* right and a postnational left, with a wavering and pale center in between, which has marred Germany's immigration debate. But in the end, none of the extremes prevailed, in a cautious vindication of Germany's fabled consensus style of policy-making. The debate began with a powerful opening salvo by an notorious *Auslaenderfeind*. In 1984, the Interior Ministry, led by ultra-conservative Bavarian hardliner Friedrich Zimmermann, issued a new plan that would limit to six years the maximum age of foreign children entitled to join their parents in Germany. This was an obvious attempt not just to stabilize, but to actively reduce the number of foreigners living in Germany, and in line with official policy at the time. The plan caused a public outcry, and it had to be quickly withdrawn, helped by a most unusual veto of Foreign Minister Genscher. While a reform of foreigner policy had been a declared key issue of his new administration,

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Chancellor Kohl put it on ice for four more years.

In 1988, the sturdy Bavarian at the helm of the Interior Ministry tried again. Zimmermann's second plan went even further in advocating a rotation system with a maximum stay of eight years. It opened with a solemn, and as it turned out: intolerable, reaffirmation of German ethnic nationhood: "The self-understanding of the Federal Republic of Germany as a German state is at stake. A continuing...migration of foreigners would deeply change the Federal Republic of Germany. It would mean to abandon the homogeneity of society, which is defined by membership of the nation...The Federal Republic of Germany would...develop into a multinational and multicultural society, which would be permanently plagued by minority problems...The national interest commands to stop such a development in its very beginning."[24]

By that time, however, a broad extra-party coalition of churches, unions, charity organizations, and employers' associations had emerged that pushed for a liberalization, rather than a hardening, of the Foreigner Law. Zimmermann's reiteration of ethnic nationalism had to appear to them as a serious provocation. Even within the conservative Christian Democratic Party, a moderately "multicultural" line around the Lord Mayor of Stuttgart, Manfred Rommel, and party manager Heiner Geissler pressed for more generous offers to integrate foreigners instead of throwing sticks at them.[25] Dieter Oberndoerfer (1992), a CDU-friendly political scientist at Freiburg University, pleaded to abandon the current "nationalist" foreigner policy in favour of a more open "republican" one, putting his finger at the fateful German division of nationalism and republicanism. Facing such opposition from within and outside his own party, Zimmermann was forced to resign.

The legislation that was finally passed by the Bundestag in 1990, against the votes of the Social Democrats and the Greens, included some important liberalizing measures, while

basically perpetuating the non-immigration premises of the old policy. On the positive side, legal entitlements replaced governmental discretion in key areas such as naturalization and the granting of residence permits, and family reunification was eased. For instance, young foreigners born or residing at least eight years in Germany are now entitled to naturalize until age 23, while the naturalization fee has been drastically reduced from up to DM 5,000 to only DM 100; after eight years of stay, foreigners are now entitled to file for a permanent residence permit (which is equivalent to US resident alien status); foreign children are allowed to join their parents in Germany until age 16; and foreigners who had temporarily returned to their home countries are granted the right to return to the Federal Republic (German Government, 1991).

This was probably as much liberalization as could be achieved *within* the old framework of foreigner policy. What could *not* be achieved, however, indicates the inherent limitations of this framework: demands for automatic birthright citizenship according to *ius soli*, double citizenship, and the right for foreigners to participate in communal elections.[26] Despite its good intentions, the new Foreigner Law (sic) thus prolonged the previous foreigner-German dualism that remains the enduring legacy of ethnic nationalism.

Accordingly, when the chips were down, the new Foreigner Law reopened the old division between the *voelkisch* right and the postnational left. If Minister Schaeuble characterized the law as a "fair compromise between Germans and foreigners (*auslaendische Mitbuerger*)", this was to the point: a compromise between two separate collectivities whose division the law did not do much to overcome.[27] A speaker for the Social Democrats was therefore also right when she denounced the law as marred by a "spirit of delimitation" (*Geist der Abschottung*): "Suspicion and distrust characterise your law, where tolerance and generosity would have been appropriate." The Greens went predictably further in denouncing

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"this whole *Machwerk*" as a product of "institutionalized racism", and they called for a rather pathetic "minute of silence" in the Bundestag to "commemorate the future victims of this law."

Most interesting to observe are the many mutual allegations and subtle suspicions exchanged between the opponents in this debate, which reveal the dark shadow of history hanging over contemporary foreigner policy. Here one must realize that, when the new Foreigner Law was debated in early 1989/90, Germany was at the point of reunification, while facing the massive inflow of ethnic Germans (*Aussiedler*) from Eastern Europe and an unprecedented wave of asylum-seekers from the Third World and the battle-zones of south-eastern Europe. In a diabolic twist of history, this dramatic new constellation rehardened the lines between the *voelkisch* right and the postnational left, which--for a brief moment--had seemed to mellow a bit.

The postnational Greens, and parts of the Social Democrats, sided with "immigrants and asylum-seekers", while questioning the automatic citizenship and social welfare privileges granted to the ethnic Germans. Conservative Christian-Democrats, in reverse, defended the constitutional and moral commitments to East Germans and ethnic Germans, and thus were driven into openly nationalist positions. For instance, Johannes Gerster, a Christian-Democratic member of parliament who had helped to make the new Foreigner Law a good deal more liberal than initially deemed possible, stressed that in weighing the claims of political asylum seekers against the claims of ethnic Germans "Germans have to be given constitutional and moral-political priority". Evoking the century-old allegation that Social Democrats were nationally unreliable, the CDU-deputy leashed out against the latter: "You are favouring the foreigners and agitating (*hetzen*) against the Germans. This is the reality."[28] On the reverse, a deputy of the postnational Greens found the Social Democrats,

like in July 1914, captive to a "nationalist craze" in which "there were only Germans": "This makes you so half-hearted in foreigner policy."[29]

As these small excerpts indicate, the "multiculturalism" debate in Germany is first and foremost a debate among Germans about the meaning of Germanness. In this regard, our American diplomat's charge of "compulsive self-analysis" is certainly accurate. Compared with the American case, German "multiculturalism" is prone to dwell in rather abstract declarations of, for instance, a "society without cultural center or hegemonic majority" (Leggewie, 1993:xiii). But it has not had any practical impact on college or public school curricula, and it has not led to the establishment of ethnic, race, or women's study programs at the country's universities. In fact, the experience of Nazism--who had also talked about race--has implanted a strong distaste for cultural relativism in German intellectual discourse, which is unabashedly universalistic.[30] From this angle, the multiculturalism of intellectuals is not driven by the animus against "Eurocentrism", "logocentrism", or "false homogeneity", but by their rejection of the flawed particularism of Germanness.

Most notably absent in the multiculturalism debate are the foreigners themselves. Partially, this absence is conditioned by the lack of political rights and citizenship status for foreigners, as a result of which foreigner interests are *vicariously* articulated by domestic groups and organizations, from the Green Party to the churches. But the other part of the coin is often overlooked: the lack of intellectual and political leadership among de-facto immigrants, most of whom express little interest for host society concerns and stick to the illusion of returning home one day. Before matters were complicated by the wave of asylum-seekers in the early 1990s, the foreigner problem in Germany was largely a Turkish problem. In 1991, the 1.8 million Turks living in Germany represented over a third of all foreigners, which made them by far the largest foreign group (German Government, 1992:16). Many of

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them came from rural Anatolia in the backward east of Turkey, where public education rarely exceeded five years of primary school, and whose traditionalist society of village clans was often transported fully intact into the German diaspora.[31]

A 1981 survey of 20,000 Turks living in Nuremberg, hardly an immigrant metropole plagued by ethnic ghettoization, showed this group living in an "imported Turkish world", and unwilling to assimilate.[32] Seventy-eight percent of interviewed Turks had never attended a German language course, even though the great majority of them had lived in Germany since more than ten years; contacts and friendships with Germans were not sought or even avoided, not to mention that marriage outside ethnic-group confines was considered a sacrilege that carried stiff moral sanctions; and only five percent expressed the intention of acquiring German citizenship.[33]

Since the 1970s, the leadership vacuum among Turks in Germany was filled by left-wing, often doctrinary Marxist-Leninist student organizations who fought the homeland battles against the newly installed Turkish military regime from German territory, and showed little interest in the plight of their guest-worker compatriots.[34] In the early 1980s, the segregationist thrust of the Turkish community was fuelled from the opposite direction, by the renaissance of Islam that followed the Iranian Revolution. Prohibited from proselytizing under the fiercely secularist Turkish regime, a host of fundamentalist *Hodschas* and sects found ample recruitment ground among the shunned, isolated and spiritually impoverished Turks in Germany. Particularly in the Ruhr Valley, western Germany's industrial heartland where more than two-third of all Turks in Germany live, Koran schools and mosques spread like wildfire. The Sueleymanci movement, which in the mid-1980s was organized in more than 210 Islamic Culture Centers with some 18,000 members, was propagating an extremely militant creed of religious purity and xenophobia (see Jahn,

1984:137). A flyer by the "Association of Koran-Schools" instructs its members to avoid contacts with non-Muslims, because behind every non-Muslim face was hidden "an ugly communist face, a Christian missionary, or a Jewish agent."[35] But even secular opinion, most importantly of the four big Turkish newspapers that appear in special German editions, is little flattering for "*Onkel Hans*", as Germans are called in Turkey. In fact, the infamous "foreigner hatred" of Germans seems to be exactly mirrored by the "German hatred" of Turks. When family reunification was temporarily restricted in 1981, the liberal-leftist *Milliyet* was quick to draw an unfriendly parallel to the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany. And when the federal government provided so-called "return payments" to induce Turks to go home in 1983, the *Guenaydin* newspaper wondered whether the economic crisis would "produce another Hitler in Germany."[36]

Only recently has a new leadership of second-generation Turkish-Germans emerged, who were born and raised in Germany, and who are separated from their German peers only by their Turkish passports. This new generation tends to be unaffected by political extremism or religious fundamentalism, oriented to improve the condition of Turks in Germany, and ready to play an active part in making Germany a self-conscious immigrant society. A representative of this generation points at the fundamental obstacle for Turks to become Germans, which is also the strongest trump card of multiculturalism in Germany: "How can a Turk identify herself as a German, if the Germans themselves lack a positive national identity?" (Uzun, 1993:62).

Since the collapse of Communism, Germany has taken in close to a million new de facto immigrants, more than any other country in Europe, making it "the nearest thing Europe has to a melting pot."[37] The paradox is that official policy still denies that immigration has taken place. To put the country's chaotic immigration process on a more

rational basis is the single biggest case for the multicultural movement. Its cleverest advocates realize that a multicultural society will not be a postnational utopia, but a society of harsh conflict and inequities, which also will have to accomodate the need of the ethnic majority population for historical continuity and *Heimat* (see especially Cohn-Bendit and Schmid, 1993). Instituting an American-style quota-system of immigration, plans for which are in the drawers of some academic think-tanks and dissident government circles (see Bade and Winkler, 1992; Bade et al., 1994), will require a robust and less neurotic definition of what the "national interest" is. This is the biggest hurdle the multicultural movement, and Germany as a whole, now has to take.

The Legacy of Empire: The British Case

In the wake of the Brixton riots of 1981, the worst urban unrest in British history, Salman Rushdie launched a bitter attack on the "new empire" that had arisen within Britain. Branding the government's liberal "race relations" policy as "the latest token gesture towards Britain's blacks", the Indian-born author announced that the "new colony" would rise up against the "one real problem" that aggrieved its involuntary members: "(the racism of) white people" (Rushdie, 1982:421). A few years later, Rushdie's Satanic Verses were publically burned by an angry Muslim crowd in the city of Bradford, under the approving eyes of the Asian-born lord mayor; at Westminster, young Muslim demonstrators demanded that "Rushdie Must be Chopped Up".[38] The incriminated author had to go in hiding, protected by Thatcher's white police against the anger of his fellow inmates of Britain's "new colony". What became known as the "Rushdie affair" may epitomize more dramatically than elsewhere the seamier side of a multicultural society. But the apparent ethnic assertiveness of parts of Britain's immigrant

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community is also the result of uniquely British conditions.

While the immigrant and colonialism perspectives usually exclude one another, they do closely overlap in Britain. This is because former colonial subjects--Caribbean blacks and Asian Indians--formed the bulk of postwar immigration.[39] The legacy of empire created a unique linkage between immigration and multiculturalism. In contrast to the United States, Britain has a race problem because it had immigration--the two are not separate here. This may explain why Britain has opted for an exceptionally restrictionist immigration policy from early on. In contrast to Germany, Britain complemented its restrictionist immigration policy with an American-style liberal "race relations" management, which stopped short of granting affirmative action privileges to ethnic minorities but saw them as legitimate part of a "multi-racial" society in which "mutual tolerance" should be the norm. The conjunction of a restrictionist immigration policy, which was conditioned by Britain's devolution from multi-racial empire to ethnic nation-state, and liberal race relations management has both fuelled and frustrated the aspirations of Britain's immigrant minorities. Excluded by Britain's national community as "blacks" or "immigrants", even in the second generation, but endowed with equal citizenship status from the beginning, Britain's immigrant minorities have become more militant and ethnicized than elsewhere, as it became evident from Brixton to Bradford.

The first parameter shaping Britain's treatment of immigration is the devolution from empire to ethnic nation-state. This went along with the exclusion of a "coloured" immigrant periphery from an ethnicized British national community. Originally, Britain, with its English nationalist core, had adhered to a "civic" model of nationhood, forged in an inter-state struggle against catholicism and absolute monarchy, with "liberty" as core value (see Kohn, 1940).[40] The acquisition of a vast empire had never been easily to reconcile with the civic nation model, and according to the national mythology it had occurred in a "fit of absent-

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mindedness".[41] In the postimperial period after WW II, when Britain faced the double challenge of economic and geopolitical decline and potentially huge post-colonial immigration, Britain refashioned itself from a "civic" to an "ethnic" nation, in which membership became defined by birth and ancestry.[42] Analyzing the anti-immigrant rhetoric of Enoch Powell, Tom Nairn (1981:269) even finds that "in the obscene form of racism, English nationalism has been re-born."[43]

The flat "racism" charge obscures the very real problem of immigration and national membership in postimperial Britain. At the end of WW II, eight hundred million persons, born outside the UK on a territory that covered twenty-five percent of the land surface of the globe, could claim the equal status of "British subjects", with the concomitant right of settlement in Britain. A shift of membership definition from the feudal-dynastic principle of "allegiance to the crown" to the national principle of territorial citizenship was not only a requirement of political modernization, but also corresponded to the right of a national collectivity to regulate its boundaries.[44] Such a shift of membership definition was necessarily exclusive. Tragically, in the British constellation of a "coloured" colonial periphery and a "white" core nation it was impossible to accomplish without, in effect, to divide the "ins" and "outs" along racial lines.

The British political elites were initially unwilling to perform the shift from dynastic "subjectship" to national "citizenship", and it took the British Nationality Act of 1981 to accomplish it.[45] After WW II, the negative example of "racist" Nazi Germany and a certain nostalgic clinging to Britain's past Great Power status prevented Tories and Labourites alike from questioning the status quo. The British Nationality Act of 1948 solemnly affirmed the existence of a single Commonwealth citizenship in Britain and (post)colonies, with the equal right to enter Britain freely, work and settle. The non-nationalism of the center was

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deliberately held against the nationalistic strivings of the decolonizing periphery. In a

Westminister debate over immigration policy, a Conservative Minister expressed the

Commonwealth ideal then prevalent among the British elite: "In a world in which restrictions

on personal movement and immigration have increased we can still take pride in the fact that

a man can say *civis Britannicus sum* whatever his colour may be, and we take pride in the

fact that he wants and can come to the Mother Country."[46]

The reality of a country in decline undermined the noble Commonwealth idealism of

the political elite. The Suez Crisis, where Britain was not followed by its coloured

Commonwealth allies, exposed the hollowness of the Commonwealth rhetoric. The snubbing

of Britain's hesitant application to enter the European Community reinforced its isolationist

and inward-looking leanings. Long-term economic stagnation soured the mood of the

public.[47] In the 1950s, "no blacks, no dogs" signs were no rare sight in houses and shop

windows across Britain. The Notting Hill riots of 1958, instigated by whites against blacks,

convinced the elites of the ugly mood of the public. The following restrictions on New

Commonwealth immigration reinstated a "fundamental congruence between public attitudes

and public policy," as Gary Freeman (1979:277) dryly comments. The Commonwealth

Immigrants Act of 1962 restricted entry to people holding work permits, and to the close

families of residents and permit holders. In 1968, when British Asians faced expulsion from

newly independent Kenya, a new Commonwealth Immigrants Act was ramped through

parliament in just three days, to deny these people entry to Britain, in clear violation of

earlier promised protection. The Immigration Act of 1971 introduced the infamous "patrial"

clause, which tied the right of residency to the existence of at least one British grandparent--

an indirect way of saying that "Britain preferred white immigrants", as *The Economist*

wrote.[48]. Finally, the British Nationality Act of 1981 adjusted nationality law to the

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restrictive immigration regime already in place, establishing a three-tier system of British, dependent territory, and overseas citizenship, with the right of entry and residence for "British citizens" only.[49]

Since it was fused with the creation of boundaries to define and encompass the British nation, immigration policy was necessarily restrictive and discriminating vis a vis members of its former colonies. With the exception of the 1968 Immigration Act, which was passed by a Labour government, all major legislation was passed by Conservative governments. But immigration policy was carried by a remarkable consensus among the major political parties, and there was a general attempt to keep the topic out of partisan politics.[50] The two exceptions to this: Enoch Powell's notorious "river of blood" speech in 1968,[51] and Mrs. Thatcher's no less notorious "swamping" statement in 1978,[52] only confirmed the general pattern. Tellingly, Powell was thereafter removed from the Conservative shadow cabinet, and, once elected as Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher largely abstained from addressing race relations and immigration matters.

Yet Mrs. Thatcher coined the phrase that best characterizes the general thrust of British immigration policy: "firm but fair". British immigration policy, which emerged more as a result of ad-hoc adjustments than of a grand design, has at least two distinct characteristics: the complete absence of considering economic and labour market needs, and an obsession with control and "detect(ing) or keep(ing) out that one extra black."[53] The absence, if not explicit denial,[54] of economic considerations reflects the general climate of decline and uncertainty about Britain's place in the world, in which immigration policy has been crafted.[55] The obsession with border controls has deep roots in geography and history, i.e., the concentration of entry controls at a few port cities in conjunction with the absence of an internal passport system.[56] But the antics of preventing illegal entry, often in breach of

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international human rights conventions,[57] from denying visa to visiting family members, fingerprinting, and "virginity tests" to rabid acts of detention, which mostly happen to be directed against coloured persons of New Commonwealth origins, carry a clear message: that blacks are unwanted. While it has been a declared government principle that "good race relations" are dependent on "strict immigration control,"[58] critics have repeatedly pointed at the inconsistency of a policy that "discriminates against ethnic minorities at the point of entry while seeking to remove discrimination against them internally" (Spencer, 1994b:319).

In a curious counterpoint to a rigid system of immigration control, which has effectively brought new immigration to a halt by the early 1970s, Britain has instituted an exceptionally generous and elaborate regime of harmonizing "race relations". In fact, an official multiculturalism advanced as enlightened elite strategy to smoothen the relationship between the races (whose separation was by the same token left intact). Home Secretary Roy Jenkins has famously expressed this strategy in May 1966: "Integration is perhaps rather a loose word. I do not regard it as meaning the loss, by immigrants, of their own national characteristics and culture. I do not think that we need in this country a 'melting pot', which will turn everybody out in a common mould, as one of a series of carbon copies of someone's misplaced vision of the stereotypical Englishman...I define integration, therefore, not as a flattening process of assmilation but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance" (quoted in Patterson, 1969:112f).

Earlier than any other immigrant-receiving country in the West, including the United States, Britain rejected the idea of "assimilating" immigrants.[59] Not by accident, because this rejection could feed upon the legacy of multi-racial empire. In contrast to France, Britain has never tried to "assimilate" its colonial subjects. According to the system of "indirect rule", the native chiefs were left in charge at the top of native institutions. Sir Ernest Barker

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(1951:155) has characterized this approach as "trustee imperialism", in which "the African native...had better be left an African, but aided to become a better African." Certainly, the civilizing paternalism of this enterprise is evident, and the postimperial race relations regime in Britain could never quite free itself of it--"uneasy paternalism on the one side, a quiet hostility on the other", as David Kirp (1979:29) aptly described the reality of British race relations in the late 1970s. But rather than simply implanting the system of indirect colonial rule into Britain, as Ira Katznelsen (1973) cynically suggests, the emergent race relations regime also inherited the consensual tenet of British culture, and it was carried by the genuine impulse to eradicate racial discrimination and to spread "equal opportunities" to disadvantaged ethnic minorities.[60]

As if driven by bad conscience, the major steps in erecting the British race relations regime were all taken by Labour governments in the wake of restrictive new immigration laws. In addition, the civil rights explosion in the United States provided a negative, ever present example that was to be avoided in Britain.[61] The first Race Relations Act of 1965 set up a statutory board, with quite modest legal powers, to work against racially motivated discrimination in public facilities like pubs, shops, and the like. While limited in range and effectiveness, the law laid the foundation for what has become known as "race relations industry"--professionals paid from public funds to promote better race relations. A second Race Relations Act in 1968 strengthened the powers of the board to conduct investigations on discriminations in employment, housing, and the provision of goods and services. Finally, the third Race Relations Act of 1976 outlawed also "indirect" forms of discrimination, and established the Commission for Racial Equality to conduct formal investigations and advise the government on policy. Parallel to this, a dense network of local Race Relations Councils (RRC) was set up to provide social welfare and monitor racial discrimination at the local

level--by 1991, there were over 80 of them all over Britain, employing over 600 staff (Central Office of Information, 1991:32).

British race relations policy has stopped short of instituting American-style "affirmative action" provisions. Faithful to the universalistic thrust of the British welfare and health care system, the distribution of public housing, jobs, and services to ethnic minorities is to occur "colour-blind".[62] The 1976 Act explicitly rejects "reverse discrimination", while permitting certain forms of "positive action" in "certain circumstances" (ibid., 42)--such as special employment training for members of ethnic groups that are underrepresented in certain sectors of the economy, or preferred hiring when a specific need can be shown (e.g., Hindu social workers in a Hindu neighbourhood). However, the Brixton riots 1981 have moved particularly some local governments in impoverished urban areas to push "positive action" beyond the limits of "colour blindness". Even the national government obliged itself to the "ethnic monitoring" of the civil service, in order to remedy the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities.

Official multiculturalism has expressed itself in a multitude of legal provisions, such as partially exempting Hindus and Muslims from Britain's strict marriage rules, allowing Sikh boys to wear turbans and Asian girls to wear *shalwar* (trousers) at school, or--curiously-- excusing Sikhs from wearing crash helmets on motorcycles provided they are wearing turbans (see Poulter, 1990). A short walk along East London's Brick Lane or Southall's South Road conveys authentic images of Islamabad or the Punjab, with Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh men, women, and children in their traditional dresses, the sight of Mosques, and exotic smells and oriental music from the bazaars and tea houses. Clearly, there is no presumption for these ethnic groups to become "British" in any other sense than ownership of a British passport.

The main site of official multiculturalism has been the educational system, where it

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became enshrined in a government report entitled <u>Education for All</u> (Swann, 1985). It tackled the notorious underachievement of black pupils of West Indian descent, and identified "institutional racism" and widespread negative attitudes of teachers toward black pupils as responsible for this. In its opening lines, the so-called Swann Report (named after its principal author, Lord Swann) reiterates the official Government view of Britain as "both multi-racial and culturally diverse". But it goes somewhat further in defining individuals through their membership in different "groups", and in finding the government responsible for "assisting the ethnic minority communities in maintaining their distinct ethnic identities within (a) common framework (of commonly accepted values)" (Swann, 1985:5). At the same time, "colour blindness" is rejected because it "(denies) the validity of an important aspect of a person's identity" (ibid., p.26f). While the report provoked no small controversy,[63] it had important ramifications. In response to it, worried immigrant parents sought to establish schools outside the state sector; local education authorities went over to hire more Asian and black teachers, and increased the ethnic component of curricula in order to bolster the positive self-image of immigrant children; following the report's thrust that multicultural education should be "for all", also white children were urged to learn the history of blacks and Indians, even to speak Uru, Creole, or Gujarati;[64] finally, "race awareness training" was made a required component in the education of teachers.

In his "Myrdal for Britain", E.J.B. Rose (1969:5) suggested that, because they had come as immigrants, "the descendents of Britain's slaves...would not be on the conscience of the country in the way that the Negro had for generations been on the conscience of Americans." While this may adequately reflect the complacent disposition of Britain's white majority, ethnic immigrant politics has quickly adopted a colonialism perspective. This implied to negate the voluntary aspect of this immigration, and to make it a result of

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colonialist victimization. "Why did black people come to Britain?" asks a small schoolboy in a cartoon book produced by London's radical Institute for Race Relations, Roots of Racism (1982). To which this answer is provided: "(Because) white people went over to their countries, robbed them of their land and riches, enslaved their people and taught their children to be more loyal to this country than to their own". The ready acceptance of the colonialism perspective is the result of the contradictory impulses of exclusion from an ethnicized British national community and a non-assimilationist race relations approach. It has fuelled an assertive style of ethnic politics, which has gone beyond accomodative "multiculturalism" toward militant "anti-racism".

In assessing the politics of ethnic minorities in Britain, one must differentiate between generations and origins of immigrants. While it could equally rest on the firm basis of citizenship, British ethnic politics has never found American-style organizational stability and clout--in fact, the early emergence of a state-sponsored race relations industry may have worked against this possibility.[65] With regard to *generations*, first-generation ethnic immigrant politics tended to be moderate and oriented toward welfare and pragmatic self-help, and it was easily integrated by the official race relations institutions. Second-generation politics articulated the frustrations of the young and unemployed in the urban ghettos, and it deliberately avoided to be "bought off" by the "tokenist" race relations institutions. Only this second generation of immigrants has eagerly embraced the colonialism perspective. With regard to the *origins* of immigrants, Caribbean Blacks, who were educated to be British and came with the expectation to be integrated in the culture and society of the "mother country", went through a painful experience of attraction and repulsion.[66] They have been behind the ghetto riots of the 1980s, and are now spearheading the "anti-racist movement" that is directed against the white society that has rebuffed them. Asian Indians, by contrast, were

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never couched in British language and culture, and have taken a segregationist, inward-looking direction from early on.[67] Their mobilization during the Rushdie affair was only secondarily directed against a British society that did not respect their religious sentiments; primarily it targeted a heretic within their own ranks. Asian Indian leaders have always shown reservation to lose their ethnicity behind an "Alabama"-style black-white confrontation (see Modood, 1992).

Despite these internal differences, there are some communalities of contemporary ethnic politics in Britain. Most peculiar is the forced assembly of the various ethnic groups under the racial fighting-label "black", and the concomitant attempt to outflank moderate "multiculturalism" by militant "anti-racism". A pamphlet on "anti-racist" education by the Institute for Race Relation, whose cynical, race-couched post-Marxism symptomizes the British left-wing intellectual scene today, explains the shortcomings of multiculturalism: "We feel...that an ethnic or cultural approach to the educational needs and attainments of racial minorities evades the fundamental reasons for their disabilities--which are the racialist attitudes and the racist practices in the larger society and in the educational system itself" (IRR, 1980:82). Applying this thinking to the sphere of politics, A. Sivanandan, the fiery leader of IRR, chastizes "ethnic pluralism" for "(undermining) the underlying class aspect of black struggle and black politics."[68] In short, the ethnic caleidoscop of multiculturalism is attacked for obscuring the underlying black-white dualism and the fact that whites only are to be kept at fault for the problems of Britain's blacks. In general, the outside observer cannot but be struck by the inflated use of "racial" language in British intellectual discourse and ethnic politics alike. Particularly for the post-Marxist intellectuals of the Institute for Race Relations and the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, "race" seems to have joined, if not replaced, "class" as epistomological master concept and eschatological

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fighting creed, which allows to denounce British (and Western) society as rotten to the core.

Militant "anti-racism" has pushed aside the liberal center that has long dominated British race relations, and provoked an equally militant conservative backlash. A good example for this polarization is a short but flamboyant episode of "municipal socialism" during the early 1980s. In fact, local government has been a major institutional outlet of the anti-racist movement. Just about the same time when Mrs. Thatcher arrived at 10 Downing Street, the British "class of '68" entered the Labour town halls, particularly the Greater London Council and several London borough councils such as Brent or Lambeth. As Ken Livingstone, the charismatic chief of the Greater London Council from 1981 to its abolition in 1986, put it, the new movement was "into all the things she (Mrs. Thatcher) didn't like-- lesbian and gay rights, black people and feminism".[69] Until the Local Government Act of 1988 and the Poll Tax put an end to it all, local government in Britain had enjoyed, since Elizabethian times, autonomy in fixing budgets and rates for the provision of housing, education, and social services (see Stoker, 1991). The new left's entering of town halls and local councils turned them into bastions against, and obvious targets of, Thatcher's crusade to make Britain "safe from socialism".

"Anti-racism" was a major plank of the new left's local agenda. As in the case of the Greater London Council (GLC), the flagship of municipal socialism, a well-staffed "ethnic minorities committee" was established with broad powers to reverse the under-representation of blacks in county hall jobs and services (see Lansley, Gross, and Wolmar, 1989:ch.4). The GLC declared the Greater London area to be an "Anti-Apartheid Zone" and 1984 as "anti-racist year", with festivals, free concerts, and lavish funding for organizations and campaigns engaged in the "combat" against racism, including Rastafaris.[70] As the tabloids eagerly exploited, the local "anti-racist" regime, with professional race advisors, compulsory race

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awareness training, and the cleansing of schools and public services from everything that smacked even remotely of "racism", produced a climate of fear and witch-hunts. Topping even "political correctness" *a l'Americaine*, popular headteachers were fired for allegedly "racist" remarks, the nursery rhyme "Baa Baa Black Sheep" was banned as racially offensive, and Brockwell Park in South London was renamed Zephania Mothopeng Park (after the imprisoned anti-Apartheid activist). A 1986 report of Brent council, according to the tabloid *Sun* the "looniest council of the year", found the whole district "permeated with racism overt and covert," with politicians, teachers, and administrators all "outright racists, patronizing, biased, ethnocentric or simply naively ignorant of the racist context in which they work."[71] In the end, the "equal opportunities" to be provided by municipal socialism were reaped by a small core of professional activists,[72] and fight over resources split up the "rainbow" into its components: blacks, Asians, women, gays, the disabled, and so on (see Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992:ch.6; Ouseley, 1990).

In response to this "racialized" style of ethnic politics, Tories coined the famous notion "Labour calls him Black, we call him British." In fact, "anti-racism" helped produce the demon that it had made its business to exorcise: a broad "anti-anti-racist" coalition of populist tabloids, conservative intellectuals around the <u>Salisbury Review</u>, and back-bench Tories who mobilized a flag-waving notion of "Britishness" with little identification offers to the country's immigrant minorities.[73] In this polarized confrontation between "anti-racists" and white majority defenders the liberal center became almost invisible, which thus payed the price for its neglect to tie racial pluralism with an insistence to become "British" in more than mere passport ownership. In fact, by rejecting the "assimilation" endeavour from early on, the liberal center kept both core and periphery equally "ethnic", and thus apart from one another.

The unintended consequences of official multiculturalism became even more dramatically revealed during the Rushdie affair. Roy Jenkins himself, the architect of Britain's liberal race relations regime, felt obliged to reconsider the "assumptions of the Sixties", admonishing the protesting Muslims that "acceptance of British law and of British liberties is expected by all who wish to live in this country."[74] Muslims, in turn, complained that "when it comes to the test, a great deal that is spoken about Britain being a multicultural society is only words."[75] As if to make up for years of neglect, the Home Office Minister of State, John Patten, addressed British Muslim leaders in an unprecedented letter about "what it means to be British."[76] In moderate language that does by no means revoke the previous pluralism in race relations,[77] the minister draws the picture of a "Britain where Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs and others can all work and live together, each retaining proudly their own faith and identity, but each sharing in common the bond of being, by birth or choice, British." Unfortunately, it is exactly the "proud" retention of "own faith and identity" that seems to stand in the way of being "British". The rejection of their demand to reactivate and amend an outdated "blasphemy law" for their purposes has deeply embittered the British Muslim community, which has taken a sharp separatist turn toward setting up own schools and even founding an own Muslim "parliament". As Tariq Modood (1990:144) put it sarcastically, Muslims are "the group that British society is currently being forced to adjust to or defeat." The call has been heard. At the height of the Rushdie affair, a conservative columnist of the *Times* threatened that "the white tribes of Britain can be every bit as stubborn and intransigent, and no less forceful in defence of their beliefs, as the brown tribes."[78]

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Conclusion

In a defense of his Satanic Verses, Salman Rushdie has eloquently outlined the "great

possibility that mass migration gives the world": to "(celebrate) hybridity, impurity,

intermingling, the transformation that comes from new and unexpected combinations of

human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs", the migrant condition as a "metaphor

for all humanity".[79] Contradicting this effusive scenario, our three country comparison

suggests that multiculturalism freezes rather than melts the boundaries between groups and

cultures in the immigrant societies of the West. In the celebration of ethnicity and group

identity the communality of citizenship gets lost. Multiculturalism appears everywhere as a

more or less serious challenge to established meanings of national membership. But the

concrete nature of the new "post-national" arrangements has been left notoriously unclear.

"Too small" for solving the global problems of ecology or economic internationalization, "too

big" to be an object of loyalty and identity, is a popular formula to throw the nation-state to

the dustbin of history (e.g., Glotz, 1990). But if it comes to turning Turks in Berlin,

Mexicans in Los Angeles, or Pakistanis in Britain into "citizens" with a shared sense of rights

and obligations, the nation-state may, after all, just have the right size. Also the "nation" is a

uniquely modern form of membership that reconciles universalism and particularism, equality

of rights and the need for identity. An unintended consequence of the multiculturalist

challenge may well be that it is found wanting in light of the nation.

We saw that underneath a common stress on cultural pluralism and identity politics

"multiculturalism" means different things in the societies considered here: quest for minority

group rights in the United States; substitute for the nation propagated by the postnational left

in Germany; liberal elite strategy of managing race relations in Great Britain. These different

meanings reflect distinct traditions of nationhood, peculiarities of historical context, the immigration regimes in place, and the nature and dispositions of the ethnic immigrant groups themselves. In each case, these factors are interwoven in unique, complex, and interactive ways. Accordingly, it would be futile to dissect them as independent variables for the purpose of a more rigid causal analysis. Immigration regimes, for instance, are themselves conditioned by traditions of nationhood; the strategies of ethnic immigrant groups are partially molded by the opportunities provided, or foreclosed, by the immigration regimes and the larger political process; and "historical context" (such as Britain's retreat from empire, the American civil rights revolution, and Germany's brooding on its past) can in principle be only narrated.

Because of different immigration-multiculturalism linkages, alleged lessons to be drawn from one country for the others, usually from the American to the European side, are quite limited indeed. But one cannot help conclude that, because it alone has made the immigrant experience part of its national mythology, the United States are uniquely prepared to face the migratory challenges of our day. In a mighty counterpoint to ethnic studies and all that, the bonds of the American "new nation" are recreated by every single immigrant who is turned into a citizen in the solemn ritual of "naturalization". Even in the age of postmodern cynicism, the picture of brown, black, yellow, red, and white faces from all corners of the globe jointly declaring their loyalty to a document that allows them to pursue their dream of happiness in liberty and equality, never fails to move. A young lawyer and ethnic activist of the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund in Los Angeles, the daughter of illegal Mexican migrant workers who has gone on to Harvard's John F. Kennedy School and Berkeley's Boalt Hall, says what a second-generation immigrant in Berlin or London could never say: "You see, I also strongly feel American."[80] If the next century will be a century of immigration,

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Walter Cronkite's much-ridiculed word of the "American Century" may have life in it yet.

ENDNOTES

1. A first version of this paper was presented at the Georgetown/Bonn University Symposion on Multiculturalism, 20 June 1994, Bonn. I would like to thank Samuel Barnes and Gregory Flynn of the Center for German and European Studies at Georgetown University for inviting me to this stimulating workshop.

2. See the discussion of "individualization" in Beck (1986:II).

3. Most notably Claude Levi-Strauss in his Tristes Tropiques (1976), that "great narrative of entropy and loss" (Clifford, 1988:14). But see also Robert Park's theory of the race relations cycle, which moves from contact, conflict, and accomodation to eventual assimilation (Park, 1950).

4. I define "immigration regime" as the set of policies, actors, and institutions that regulate both the admission and the integration of foreign migrants into the host society. It thus comprises "immigration policy" proper and the modes of acculturating or assimilating immigrants.

5. This paradox is brilliantly scrutinized by Nathan Glazer (1975, 1983).

6. In a Congressional hearing preceding this amendment, an opponent exclaimed: "This is not India. There is no right to be represented on the basis of group membership" (in Thernstrom, 1987:132).

7. Peter Skerry, "Keeping Immigrants in the Political Sweatshop," Wall Street Journal, 6 November 1989, p.16.

8. "Black and Hispanic Opinion on Immigration Reform," Immigration Report (Federation of Americans for Immigration Reform, Washington D.C.). 4(11), August 1983.

9. Because of its implicit universalism, 'class' does not fit into the 'race, class, gender' triad, and its common use in the above formula seems to be more ritualistic than with analytic intent.

10. Quoted in Robert Reinhold, "Class Struggle", New York Times Magazine, 29 September 1991, p.47.

11. Richard Sennett, "The Identity Myth", New York Times, 30 January 1994, p.E17. See the critical response by Richard Rorty, "Why Can't America's Left Be Patriotic?", International Herald Tribune, 15 February 1994, p.6.

12. See David Rieff's depiction of Los Angeles as the "Capital of the Third World" (1991).

13. In their classic study <u>Beyond the Melting Pot</u>, Glazer and Moynihan distinguished between a "northern" and a "southern" ethnic pattern. In the northern pattern, a multitude of ethnic groups compete for power, status, and benefits, while non of them is granted a special "minority" status. The southern pattern consists of two races, black and white, either in a "separate but equal" relationship, or, after Jim Crow, the blacks endowed with "protected class" status. The new Third World immigration is about to institute a new "western" (or "southwestern") pattern, in which several ethnic groups clamor for special "minority" privileges (see Glazer, 1983:ch.16).

14. "U.S. Envoy Rebukes Germans and Kohl on Foreigner Issue," <u>International Herald Tribune</u>, 16/17 April 1994, p.2.

15. Good comparisons of "ethnic" and "civic" models of nationhood are Smith (1986) and Brubaker (1992).

16. "Sind wir ein Einwanderungsland?" <u>Das Parlament</u> (Bonn), No.9-10, 1990, p.11.

17. This is why, after 1989, this republic is now defended by some of its staunchest previous critics. See, for instance, Juergen Habermas "Meine Jahre mit Helmut Kohl," <u>Die Zeit</u> (overseas edition), 18 March 1994, p.15.

18. See also Edmund Stoiber, now Minister President of Bavaria: "With the introduction of a multicultural society we would once and for all bid farewell to the idea of German unity and German self-determination" (<u>Die Welt</u>, 25 Februar 1989, p.17).

19. Hans Maier, "Bildungspolitische Integration 'Modell Bayern'," <u>Das Parlament</u>, 29 August/5 September 1981, p.13.

20. Herbert Leuninger, "Assimilation oder eigenstaendige Entwicklung?", <u>Das Parlament</u>, 29 August/5 September 1981, p.2.

21. Horst Schloetelburg, "Sagen wir doch ruhig einmal danke," <u>Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung</u> (Bilder und Zeiten), 13 March 1982, p.2.

22. Bruno Dechamps, "Die Sache mit den Tuerken," <u>Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung</u> (Bilder und Zeiten), 1983.

23. The exchange is reprinted in "Neues Auslaenderrecht vom Bundestag verabschiedet," <u>Das Parlament</u>, 18 May 1990, p.9.

24. Quoted in Christian Schneider, "Aus Fremden werden Mitbuerger und Landsleute," <u>Sueddeutsche Zeitung</u>, 10/11 September 1988, p.9.

25. See Geissler's (1990) programmatic statement on the "multicultural society", which was part of his undoing as CDU party manager.

26. The CDU-FDP government coalition's rejection of the right for foreigners to participate in communal elections was confirmed by a Constitutional Court rule in November 1990. Arguing that the "*Volk*," from which--according to Article 20 of the Basic Law--"all state

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power derives," could only be the "*deutsche Volk*", this Court rule reconfirmed the *voelkisch* tradition, stirring much criticism. See the discussion by Friedrich Karl Fromme, "Was ist das Volk?" Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 28 June 1990, p.14.

27. This and the following statements are reprinted in "Neues Auslaenderrecht vom Bundestag verabschiedet," Das Parlament, 18 May 1990, p.8.

28. "Sind wir ein Einwanderungsland?" Das Parlament, 23 February/2 March 1990, p.13.

29. Ibid., p.12.

30. The best example is the work and politics of Juergen Habermas, Germany's first and foremost intellectual.

31. See the case study of Turks in Berlin by Gitmez and Wilpert (1987).

32. The survey, based on the diploma thesis by a Turkish student, is reported in "Genug verdient," Der Spiegel, No.46, 1981, pp.108-110.

33. The Statistical Federal Office reported that between 1976 and 1983 only 2130 Turks had acquired German citizenship, which is 0.2.% of those who fulfilled the resident requirement of ten years ("Nicht viele wollen Deutsche werden," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 6 September 1983, p.12).

34. Very often a huge gap of culture and class separated the privileged students from the rural, uneducated guest workers (Interview with Uelkue Schneider-Guerkan, Turkish People's House [FIDEF], 23 February 1994, Frankfurt).

35. Quoted in Erich Wiedemann, "Wenn die Muftis kommen, gibt's Zoff im Puett," Der Spiegel, No.15, 1983, p.98.

36. The quotes are from a Turkish newspaper survey by Cordt Schnibben, "Warum sind alle gegen uns?" Die Zeit, 31 January 1986, p.63.

37. "A Survey of Germany," The Economist, 21 May 1994, p.6.

38. "March ends in battle at Westminster," The Guardian, 29 May 1989, p.2.

39. According to the U.K. Labour Force Survey of 1988, the total ethnic minority population of Great Britain was about 2.58 million (4.7 per cent of the total population). Of these some 500,000 were Afro-Caribbean, while well above 1.3 million were Indian, Pakistani, or Bangladeshi. Afro-Caribbean immigration started in the early 1950s and peaked in the 1960s, followed a little later by immigration from the Indian subcontinent, which peaked in the late 1960s. See Central Office of Information (1991:4-9).

40. "Liberty was the hallmark of Englishness" (Colley, 1992:111). At the same time, Colley (1992) argues that "Britons" were forged out of the English, Scotch, and Welsh people by "war" and "religion", which posited the British against the French, thus incorporating elements of the "ethnic" model of nationhood. In a sparkling (if somewhat overdrawn)

polemic, Tom Nairn (1994:11) stresses the "a-national nationalism" of a "Ukania" kept together only by the Crown.

41. See Sir Ernest Barker (1951:7) telling characterization of the empire as "something outside ourselves which is yet a part of ourselves."

42. Tellingly, the British Nationality Act of 1981, which concluded this redefinition of membership, incorporated a strong component of ius sanguinis, which had been previously absent in British nationality law. The general shift from a "civic" to an "ethnic" conception of national membership, along with its implications for ethnic immigrant groups, is analyzed by Goulbourne (1991).

43. The "racism"-charge is a common topos in the British race-relations literature. See, for instance, Cohen and Bains (1988:63): "Racism...is constitutive of what has come to be known as the 'British way of life'".

44. See the normative discussion by Walzer (1983:ch.3).

45. See the angry recollections by Enoch Powell (1988).

46. Quoted in Layton-Henry (1986:86f).

47. During the "long boom" of 1950 to 1973, when Germany and Japan boosted ahead with average growth rates of 6 and 9.7 per cent, respectively, Britain lagged behind with only 3 per cent. "There is no record of any other power falling behind at such startling speed", writes Peter Jenkins (1987:31).

48. "Welcome to stay away," The Economist, 24 April 1982, p.45.

49. See the overviews by Layton-Henry (1985, 1992).

50. This is the theme of Anthony Messina's (1989) fine study on race and party competition in Britain. For the importance of "consensus" in British politics see Kavanagh and Morris (1989).

51. "It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre...As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'" (E.Powell, quoted in Messina, 1989:40).

52. In an interview during her campaign to become Conservative frontrunner in the 1979 elections, Mrs. Thatcher stated to be "really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture", continuing that "if you want good race relations you have got to allay peoples' fears on numbers" (quoted in Layton-Henry, 1992:184). In articulating the populist anti-immigrant mood of the time, Mrs. Thatcher has mightily contributed to destroying the electoral prospect of the right-wing National Front that was very active then.

53. As a representative of the British "Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants", an immigrant rights organization, put it (John Plummer, "Racism--Built into Immigration Control," Searchlight No.45, 1979, p.8).

54. Susan Spencer of the Institute for Public Policy Research in London, who has recently edited a remarkable volume on British immigration and refugee policy (Spencer, 1994), reports that high civil servants in the Home Office have politely but firmly rejected her and other experts' pleas to consider the economic benefits of migration (Personal interview, 18 August 1994, London).

55. In an off-the-record remark to the author, an American immigration expert of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace characterized British immigration officials as "afraid of their own shadow". About German officials he had this to say: "They are so full of themselves" (Personal interview, 20 April 1994, Washington, D.C.).

56. This control system may be outdated today (see "No Land is an Island," The Economist, 1 August 1992, 49f).

57. The European Court of Human Rights ruled in May 1985 that the existing immigration rules discriminated against women who wished to bring their husbands to the UK. In a characteristic move, the government responded with new rules that made it equally difficult for men and women to bring in their spouses.

58. Roy Hattersley first formulated this principle in a 1965 Labour government White Paper, Immigration from the Commonwealth: "Without integration, limitation is inexcusable; without limitation, integration is impossible" (quoted in Banton, 1985:45).

59. Including the Tories. Edward Heath, for instance, saw "no reason why cultural diversity should not be combined with loyalty to this country" (quoted in Layton-Henry, 1986:74).

60. This partial break with colonialism is stressed by Freeman (1979:148).

61. Characteristically, the first (and largest) survey undertaken on the situation of New Commonwealth immigrants in Britain, Colour and Citizenship, was framed as "a Myrdal for Britain while there is still time" (Rose, 1969:XIX).

62. See the case study on education by David Kirp (1979).

63. Particularly in the pages of the conservative Salisbury Review. See, for instance, Ray Honeyford, "The Swann Fiasco," Salisbury Review, April 1987, pp.54-56.

64. Even John Rex (1989:23), no conservative bigot he, mused about "the strange form of arguing that all children must learn about minority cultures."

65. The one exception to this, the "Campaign Against Racial Discrimination" of the 1960s, quickly dissolved over internal disagreements between moderates and radicals (see Heineman, 1972).

66. <u>Shattering Illusions</u> is the characteristic title of Trevor Carter's (1986) history of West Indians in British politics.

67. See Sheila Patterson's (1969:6) observation that West Indians were "potentially assimilating", while Asians were "least assimilating".

68. A. Sivanandan, "Challenging Racism," <u>Searchlight</u> No.95, May 1983, p.17.

69. Quoted by Lewis (1988:132).

70. See Greater London Council (1984:1)

71. Quoted in Lansley et al. (1989:135).

72. Two friendly observers describe a "Race Day" organized by the local "Race Unit" in a south-east London borough: "Few among those who came for the day were not active participants or workers in one or more of the organizations which participated in organizing the day" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992:175).

73. See, for instance, Palmer (1987) and Lewis (1988).

74. Roy Jenkins, "On Race Relations and the Rushdie Affair," <u>The Independent</u>, 4 March 1989.

75. So said a Muslim member of Bradford City Council Labour group, quoted in <u>Financial Times</u>, 24 June 1989, p.5.

76. The letter is reprinted as "The Muslim Community in Britain" in <u>Times</u>, 5 July 1989, p.13.

77. But see the interpretation by Talal Asad (1990:457), who detects in Patten's letter "the atavistic voice of an English colonial governor responding kindly to the injured sensibilities of his native subjects."

78. Clifford Longley, "A very British lesson Muslims must learn," <u>Times</u>, 8 July 1989.

79. Quoted in Amin and Richardson (1992:47).

80. <u>Personal interview</u>, 27 July 1994, Los Angeles.

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