

While working on this paper, I came across a little news item that actually makes a perfect “Good-bye, Germany” opening, especially for a paper in which some explicit and implicit comparisons between Germany and the United States as countries of immigration will be made (<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2004/09/23/MNGN78TIL71.DTL>). The story is literally “Good-bye, Germany” In September 2004, the Ninth US Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled that the Afghan-born German citizen Zakia Mashiri was eligible to receive political asylum in the United States since the German government was “more unwilling than unable” (as Mashiri’s lawyer put it) to protect her and her family against threats of Neo-Nazi attacks in Hamburg-Bergedorf — or anywhere else in Germany. Is Germany then the home of xenophobic attacks and a classic country from which one emigrates, and is the United States the prototypical immigrant country, ready to grant universal asylum?

Otto Schily, the German minister of the interior, understandably disagreed with this hardly more than rhetorical opposition; a few days after the decision he wrote a letter to John Ashcroft, calling for a rescinding of the Mashiri sentence. (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 24.10.2004 <http://www.aufenthaltstitel.de/zuwg/0578.html>). Schily had larger reasons to be upset, having just fought through a law he had been advocating for four years.

On July 1 and July 9, 2004, German parliament (both Bundestag and Bundesrat) ended several years of acrimonious debate (that had gone all the way to the Supreme Court) and passed the *Zuwanderungsgesetz* (ZuWG)—the law of in-migration or added migration—which took effect on January 1, 2005 and started a new practice of handling many aspects of immigration in Germany (including a new emphasis on the European Union contexts). As Social Democrat Schily put it, this law marks a historical turning point; according to Schily, with this law Germany finally sheds the illusion that it is *not* a country of immigration.

This has, of course, been a long-lasting illusion in post-World War II Germany, one originally shared by a broad consensus among West German politicians. Bundeskanzler Ludwig Erhard (CDU) warned in his programmatic *Regierungserklärung* of November 10, 1965, that the importation of foreign labor had reached its limit; Willy Brandt (SPD) similarly demanded in his *Regierungserklärung* of January 1973 to consider the point at which “our society’s ability to absorb foreigners is exhausted,” bringing about the halt to luring further guest workers, the *Anwerbestopp*. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (SPD) may have picked up the phrasing from Willy Brandt, when he stated in 1981 that Germany simply was not a classic country of immigration: “Die Bundesrepublik soll und will kein Einwanderungsland werden.” Christian Democrat Alfred Dregger said at the *Ausländer-Tagung* of the CDU in Bonn on October 21, 1982 that it was not unethical to demand that the territory that remained Germany after World War II be reserved primarily for Germans. The slogan “Das Boot ist voll” emerged in those years.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl is often associated with the statement, “Deutschland ist kein Einwanderungsland” (see Garris 5), and he said in his parliamentary budget speech on September 10, 1997 that Germany had an immigration rate in recent years that was higher than that of the classic country of immigration, the United States: “In 1995, for example, 720,000 persons immigrated to the US, whereas 1.1 million came to Germany.” Surprisingly, he expressed pride in this German difference. The official Christian Democratic position, however, remained rather hostile toward *Zuwanderung*. (Sources:

<http://www.deutschlandchronik.de/einwanderung.htm>  
<http://www.br-online.de/alpha/deutschklasse/hintergrund/index.shtml>).

and

<http://www.br-online.de/alpha/deutschklasse/hintergrund/index.shtml>).

In recent years the question of whether Germany was or was not a country of immigration became the bone of party contention, as the governing Gerhard Schröder/Joschka Fischer coalition of Social Democrats and Greens demanded recognition of the changing face of Germany. Chancellor Schröder made a thorough reform of legislation concerning migration to and citizenship in Germany a centerpiece of his political efforts, efforts that began with the new *Staatsangehörigkeitsrecht* in 2000 and that culminated in the consensus embodied by the 2004/2005 *Zuwanderungsgesetz*. In contrast, the Christian Democratic and Christian Socialist position papers and official party platforms stated again and again that Germany was *not* and could never become a classic country of immigration, due to the country's history, geography, and social reality. As recently as the *Bundestagsdebatte* of March 13, 2003, the opposing positions were quite clear. CDU/CSU member of parliament Wolfgang Bosbach accused the government of wanting to make Germany "a multicultural country of immigration. We do not want a multicultural society." He argued close to the party platform text when he said, "Deutschland ist kein klassisches Einwanderungsland. Wir können es aufgrund unserer historischen, geographischen und gesellschaftlichen Gegebenheiten auch nicht werden." (If one "Googles" the phrase "kein klassisches Einwanderungsland," hundreds of entries show up.)

### **A Parliamentary Debate, 2003**

Let me give you a flavor of the debate, during which Bosbach's comments generally met with great applause from the CDU faction. It was only when he complained that the government's proposal, even though it was endorsed by churches, employers, and unions, did not meet the approval of the populace (*Bevölkerung*) that he was twice interrupted by his fellow Christian Democrat Michael Glos, who corrected: "not the populace, but the German people" ("Nicht die Bevölkerung, sondern das deutsche Volk!"). Bosbach had apparently touched upon the sensitive semantic distinction between *Volk* and *Bevölkerung* that had flared up in debates over a work of art in the Reichstag itself—with *Volk* suggesting the romantic ideal of a homogeneous people, and *Bevölkerung* evoking a possibly unrelated, disconnected resident population.

The unruly plenary debate of 2003 included the topics of unemployment, demographic predictions, brain drain, integration, intermarriage—and even abortion. Green Party member Volker Beck and Free Democrat Corinna Werwigk-Hertneck stressed, against the opposition, that demographically speaking, Germany is *de facto* a country of immigration. Marieluise Beck from the interior ministry asked the Christian Democrats what answering the question of whether or not Germany is a classic country of immigration could hope to accomplish: "The reality we have to confront is that since the 1950s there has been much in-migration. There has also been much out-migration. Still, Germany now is a country in which 7.3 million people do not hold a German passport." She pointed to the task of dealing with the changing face of Germany where every eighth marriage is binational and every third high school student has a migratory background.

Hartmut Koschyk took the opposition's hard line and accused the proposed law of bringing about a paradigm shift in Germany, changing it into a multicultural country of

immigration, a change that would exceed Germany's ability to absorb foreigners. Koschyk also invoked anti-immigration demographer Herwig Birg who had supposedly shown that the in-migration rate to Germany was already three times higher than to classic countries of immigration, like the United States, Australia, or Canada. Birg's official 2001 report "Effects and Costs of Zuwanderung to Germany," prepared for the Bavarian ministry of the interior, argued that the deficit in German birthrates could not be completely offset by in-migration, but also weirdly invoked Kant's notion of "duties toward ourselves" out of context, against immigration. Birg asks rhetorically:

How can the migrants who can come to Germany on the basis of the political asylum-granting constitution identify with our order of values—I don't know a better way to render the old-fashioned word *Werteordnung* which inhabits the same metaphoric realm as the embattled term *Leitkultur* (host culture)—of our constitution, if they cannot identify with our history, with which the asylum regulations are justified? <http://www.herwig-birg.de/publikationen/vortraege/>

Green Party member Josef Philip Winkler expressed his pride in his own family background (his mother is Indian) and added that Birg was probably unhappy about the prospect of more people like Winkler getting into parliament. Avoiding the term "foreigners," Winkler spoke of new citizens ("neue Inländer"). Social Democrat Lale Akgün (a psychologist who came to Germany from Istanbul in 1962 at age 9) made the last contribution and accused the opposition of ethnic pigeonholing, and of making the migrants' lives even harder in Germany. Then she returned to the central metaphor: "Germany *is* a country of immigration. That is the reality from which you cannot hide by sticking your heads in the sand." Only the belief that "foreigners always remain foreigners, for generations" could explain the opposition's argument that there were too many "foreigners" in German cities.

After such a debate, accompanied by parallel arguments in the media, it is somewhat amazing that a compromise emerged at all and that the new law was (after some significant changes) passed with a broad majority, even if its name, *Zuwanderung*, may be a semantic concession to the opposition. Edmund Stoiber, as Bavarian minister of the interior, once acknowledged that there was a "ganz erhebliche Zuwanderung, die aber nichts mit Einwanderung zu tun hat" (considerable in-migration which, however, has nothing to do with immigration)—somewhat mystifyingly distinguishing the term most often used to measure in-migration against out-migration (*Zuwanderung/Abwanderung*) from the more general term for immigration, *Einwanderung*—a term he apparently rejects. (For those wishing to consult the complete transcript of the debate, it is posted at <[http://www.bundestag.de/bic/a\\_prot/2003/ap1531.html](http://www.bundestag.de/bic/a_prot/2003/ap1531.html)>.)

### **The Law and One of Its Challenges for Students of Migration and Ethnicity**

The law (<http://www.aufenthaltstitel.de/stichwort/zuwg.html>), however compromised it may be in its final version due to the four-year-long Christian Democratic opposition to it, contains a number of simplifications of current procedures. It regulates labor migration (with a strong preference for skilled migrants), humanitarian and family migration, asylum requests, the German-descended *Aussiedler* movements from the East, as well as new

security measures, including tougher rules for the expulsion of foreigners who have been classified as dangerous.

What makes the new law particularly intriguing for students of ethnicity and migration is that its provisions include broad measures outlining a right (and a *duty* that is in fact compulsory for the unemployed who are already in Germany) of migrants to undertake concrete steps toward linguistic and cultural integration through courses, to be paid for in part by employers, in language instruction and practical matters, but also in German history. These courses can be offered by private as well as public institutions, if I read the law correctly.

The task ahead would then seem to be to provide a form of multicultural crash course that would help adult migrants in practical matters (one thinks of a basic outline of their constitutional rights as well as such skills as letter-writing, dealing with bureaucracies etc.), in communication (mostly elementary German), and in cultural-historical orientation. Hence I wondered whether scholars and students of immigration would not like to develop models for education toward integration and for the handbooks that such courses will have to draw on, keeping the precise contexts and the intended audience in mind, for viable models of integration for today and tomorrow will be much in demand.

The figures released in June 2005 by Marieluise Beck, the Government Deputy for Migration, Refugees, and Integration, suggest the new dimensions of naturalization (“Einbürgerung”) in Germany, for since January 1, 2000, approximately 800,000 foreigners residing in Germany have taken up German citizenship, and four and a half million others are eligible (<http://www.einbuengerung.de> and [http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.de/gra/presse/presse\\_1118.php](http://www.integrationsbeauftragte.de/gra/presse/presse_1118.php); see also “800 000 Ausländer eingebürgert,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22. Juni 2005, p. 1). These impressive figures have so far found little attention in American media.

### **Starting Out from the 1950s**

In the course of my readings for this paper, it became clearer to me that the debate I have just sketched—a debate largely conducted on the plane of demographic data—draws on a German historical memory that typically goes back only to the early years of the Federal Republic. Both proponents and opponents of the notion that Germany is an *Einwanderungsland* have focused only on the past 50 years or so, arguing (correctly) that “since the 1950s there has been much in-migration.” The wish to discuss the presence of “foreigners” in Germany exclusively in the context of the democratic framework of the Federal Republic is as understandable as the wish to present the history of *Gastarbeiter* without any reference to that of the *Fremdarbeiter* or *Zwangsarbeiter*. Still, the 1950s may be a rather atypical period in modern German history, for by 1950 Germany (East and West) had become fairly mono-ethnic, exceptionally so in Germany’s own longer history—including even the Nazi period. As Herrmann Kurthen has reminded us, the Nazis themselves attracted labor migrants from Italy, Austria, Poland, and Czechoslovakia in the 1930s and, once they had started World War II, “despite their racist, ethnocentric, and xenophobic ideology and politics, [they] contributed to a further wave of labor migration” by forcing “8 million free and forced laborers, including 2 million prisoners and concentration camp inmates” to work in the Reich (Kurthen 917).

The unusual state of affairs of the 1950s became, for many contemporary conservatives, the state of nature, the new romantic *Ur*-image of *Volk* and the “oneself” to whom one owes a supposedly Kantian duty (according to Birg). Hence the policies toward *Gastarbeiter* and foreign migrants were cast for many years in such a way as to regard them as a temporary aberration of the ordinary German pattern, filling labor needs for a short while—but not with the intention of changing “Deutschland.” The ideological split today seems to be between politicians who keep adhering to a carefully timed “guest” concept (not letting the guests “outstay their welcome”) and those who say that Germany has, for the first time, become a multicultural society of immigration. For the first time since the 1950s, that is: liberals, too, have tended to date the story of “foreigners” in Germany from the post-World War II period.

In 1950, about 50 million people lived in the Federal Republic and another 18.5 million people in the German Democratic Republic, yet fewer than 100,000 foreigners were residents in both parts of the country. Of course, Germany had just recently and rapidly absorbed an enormous number of German ethnic expellees from East Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia, the Sudeten, and other parts of Central Europe—as many as 9 million in the West and 4 million in the East—making every fifth German a forced migrant in 1950. Integration in the labor and housing market was undoubtedly a difficult task, even though the 13 million refugees were, ethnically speaking, overwhelmingly German. It should be noted that Andrea Lynn Smith has called attention to perhaps as many as one million non-German displaced persons who were also integrated into the German populace in the years immediately following World War II (Smith 48-51). Still, there was perceived to be so few resident “foreigners” on German soil (apart from the allied armies of occupation) that a notion of an all-German Germany began to take hold. As the number of foreign workers grew—in the FRG from 72,000 in 1950 to 329,000 in 1960, and accelerating after the wall was built—one could hear more and more voices articulating the line about Germany *not* being a country of immigration (see Rainer Münz and Ralf E. Ulrich, [http://migration.ucdavis.edu/rs/more.php?id=69\\_0\\_3\\_0](http://migration.ucdavis.edu/rs/more.php?id=69_0_3_0), “Changing Patterns of Immigration to Germany, 1945-1997”). This seemed plausible as long as the 1950s remained the agreed-upon reference point.

This German self-understanding was the concept of citizenship was further nurtured by *ius sanguinis* (as opposed to the French system of *ius soli*); though *ius sanguinis* was never universal, it still dominated the post-World War II discussions—as the well-known and frequently-drawn contrasts between a 10<sup>th</sup>-generation descendant of a German *Aussiedler* from Russia (who was automatically German by fiat of the constitution) and a German-born, third-generation German Turk (who, before 2000, still faced great hurdles in becoming a German citizen) illustrate.

Yet, as Andreas Fahrmeir has argued, the French-German contrast that Rogers Brubaker drew so sharply may have been less a matter of principle than the result of the dispute about Alsace-Lorraine. Despite the German nationalist stress on descent, Fahrmeir argues, there have always been cases in which the *ius sanguinis*—of which nineteenth-century jurists seem to have been “as unaware ... as the members of German parliaments debating citizenship bills” (Fahrmeir 20)—was tempered with other ways of imagining citizenship. There is also no absolute *ius sanguinis*, just as there is no absolute *ius solis*, and the question has always been that of which elements from each concept would enter a given theory of citizenship. As Charles Robert Garris summarizes: “the predominant mode

of discussing nationality and immigration in Germany before 1914 was one that assumed national identities to be highly ‘mold-able’ and in a constant state of flux” (Garris 18).

Departures from the *ius sanguinis* also occurred in the period after World War II when the US Army proposed a practical solution to settle the issue of the citizenship of parentless or abandoned children in the American zone. After the war, there were 500,000 displaced persons stranded in the American zone alone, and the OMGUS authorities who had taken on the task of repatriation were seeking a simplification in citizenship ascription in at least some cases. They proposed a ruling that let all persons born of “stateless” and of unknown parentage become citizens of the country of birth (OMGUS, Prisoners of War and Displaced Persons Division, National Archives 260/390/41/6/Box 19, 4 February 1946). In fact, many stateless persons became Germans in the years immediately following World War II (Smith).

Basing Germany’s self-consciousness on the state of affairs of approximately 1950 is inadequate for an understanding of the developments leading to the present; developments from such a point of view must appear as an aberration. However, the demographic data cited were certainly true: by the year 2000, German immigration figures had indeed approached those of the United States. In 2000, the United States had a total of approximately 28 million foreign-born inhabitants among its total population of 285 million, and 850,000 legal immigrants arrived in the year 2000. In Germany, out of a total population of 82 million, 7.3 million were foreigners, and in 2000 187,000 were naturalized (“eingebürgert”). These are roughly equivalent percentages.

For the conservatives, these data seemed to support the argument that, unlike traditional countries of immigration, Germany was completely unprepared to absorb so many foreigners. The mantra became that there are simply too many foreigners in Germany, all the more so in a time of high unemployment rates. Against this position, the Social Democrats and Greens have insisted that Germany has now become a country of immigrants, which calls for a reorientation from the legacy of the homogeneous nation state with its endogamous German, *ius sanguinis* citizenry. The new procedures of issuing green cards and simplifying naturalization as well as the brand-new ZuWG are therefore landmarks in the process of recognizing the status quo, and of adjusting to it, at least in part. But again, both sides of this debate seem to date their conflicting historical narratives from the 1950s.

Perhaps because of the comparisons with classic countries of immigration and the sharply drawn contrast between modes of acquiring citizenship, the debate has largely taken place around the question of citizenship, passports, and residence permits, as several observers have also pointed out. However, as Ulrich Preuß reminded us, the real cultural work ahead will lie in the negotiation between forms of cultural pluralism and social integration. And it seems that neither the American nor the German authorities have worked out precisely how a non-assimilationist—or post-assimilationist—pluralist-but-not-balkanizing integration of indigenous and foreign-born minorities should proceed at this point.

The German situation is further complicated by the progress of the European Union, which challenges notions of German “belonging” from yet another direction. A Greek, Italian, Spanish, or Irish citizen now has more or less that same rights as a German: she does not need to request a residence permit, but simply registers with the police just like a German citizen, and she can vote in European elections in the country of residence.

A Moroccan, Serbian, or Montenegrin, Turk, or Kurd, however, has to overcome a formidable arsenal of hurdles before being granted similar rights. The figures show that of Germany's 7.3 million foreigners, 1.87 million come from Turkey, but 1.85 million (nearly the same number) come from old EU countries (600,000 from Italy, 350,000 from Greece, and 900,000 from all other old EU countries). Now that the EU has expanded in 2004, a plurality of non-Germans in Germany comes from EU countries; with Turkey in the European Union, it would be the absolute majority.

Preuß has argued convincingly that we must transform the “merely physical presence of foreigners into a self-evident status of belonging to our society. That is the core of the integration problem.” And, in moving toward developing a “Zugehörigkeitsgefühl,” he stresses that this is much more than a question of passports. “[W]e see in the foreigner not much more than the holder of a foreigner's passport,” for no matter whether or not he holds a German (or an EU) passport, “he is a representative of an ethnic minority living here. In other words, the concept of the foreigner has [been] transformed from a state legal category to a socio-cultural one.” What Preuß demands, then, is to overcome the “outmoded state- and human rights concept of the foreign. This concept still derives from the golden age ideal of a homogeneous polity. In those days, those who belonged to other states switched sovereign territories only in small numbers, and mostly only temporarily” (Preuß in Göktürk et al. *Germany in Transit*, Ch. 7, forthcoming). It is interesting that in this laudable intervention Preuß may also be thinking more of the 1950s than of the *longue durée* of German history when he speaks of the golden age of homogeneity and small numbers.

It seems possible, however, that a broader historical reconsideration—overcoming what Andrea Lynn Smith called “amnesia in popular German discourse” (Smith 15)—might ultimately strengthen Preuß's position and his demand for more reflection on both the nature of the process of “integration” and successful models of “multiculturalism.” For, if Germany's demography begins to resemble that of classic immigration countries today, it also shared some polyethnic features with the United States around the year 1900. Germany ca. 1950 may have been exceptional not only when one looks back on it from the year 2000 when the German population included 9% foreign-born inhabitants, but also when one looks even further back in German history to the census data of 1900.

### **Ethnic Germany around 1900**

In the year 1900, the German empire was a nation-state with a single *Volk* and a single language, right? Wrong—although some Prussian bureaucrats might have liked to see it that way. In fact, Imperial Germany shared certain features with prototypical immigrant countries like the United States.

To be sure, there is no comparison between the pressure of immigrant arrivals in the United States (3,000 per day in the year 1908) and the fact that Germans were still emigrating in not insignificant numbers around 1900. Nor is citizenship a good index, for only 779,000 legal foreigners show up in the 1900 German census in a population of 56 million. And even though this was the mid-point of the tripling of that number from 430,000 in 1890 to more than 1.25 million in 1910, this figure pales when compared with the United States of 1900, which, in a population of 76 million, included 11 million non-native-born whites. Yet Imperial Germany can still be called a polyethnic country. That is

the case not only because of the impressive number of migrant workers, approximately 200,000 to 300,000 (the so-called “Sachsengänger” und “Preußengänger”), bringing the total of foreigners to over a million in 1900 and up to 1.3 million in 1910. The ethnic diversity of Wilhelminian Germany shows up most clearly when one ignores the citizen/foreigner dichotomy and considers, instead, the language question in the 1900 German census. How many Prussian citizens and *Reichsbürger* would you guess spoke a language other than German in 1900? It is at least to me surprising that a total of four-and-a-half million (8%) had a non-German mother tongue, and only 252,000 of them also spoke German. (In the United States the figure of people with a mother tongue other than English is much higher, 13.3 million, but it is not clear whether they also spoke English.)

Who were these non-German-speaking people of Germany? The largest language group was Polish (3 million), followed by French (211,000), Masurian, Danish, Lithuanian, Cassubian, Wendic (Sorbian), Dutch, Italian, Moravian, and Czech, with a range from 140,000 to 65,000 speakers each; many other languages were spoken by 40,000 or fewer inhabitants of Wilhelminian Germany. The bulk of this group was not made up of in-migrants or immigrants for, as Charles Robert Garris put it: “These Poles, French, and Danes had not come to Germany, Germany had come to them” (Garris 29). It is telling that Garris’s 1998 dissertation uses the same resonant phrasing that Luis Valdez had used in the introduction to the manifesto-like Chicano anthology *Aztlan* (1972): “We did not . . . come to the United States at all. The United States came to us” (Valdez xxxiii). This would seem to invite comparison of the German situation in 1900 with the incorporation by annexation of an estimated 75,000-100,000 Mexicans by the United States (Gutiérrez, 13, 45) where between 381,000 and 562,000 native-born and foreign-born Mexican Americans lived in 1900. The Prussian East, like the American Southwest, was “borderlands,” an area in which borders had migrated and people would migrate as well, whether as seasonal workers, job seekers, people uniting with their families, or permanent emigrants.

From the Polish divisions at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/1871, Prussia had annexed vast territories, its residents receiving Prussian or Reich citizenship. Imperial Germany had only a slightly lower percentage of non-German speakers in 1900 (about 8%) as modern Germany had foreigners in the year 2000 (about 9%)—and a higher percentage than contemporary Germany’s foreign-language speakers (5.8 million, or 7%—and the 1990 estimates posted at Ethnologue.com, [http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_country.asp?name=Germany](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=Germany), do not tell us who among them also spoke German). As Garris has emphasized, when the German Reichstag passed the new citizenship law with a greater emphasis on *ius sanguinis* in 1913, “more than ten percent of Prussian citizens were not ethnically German” (Garris 7), yet they conferred citizenship upon their descendants. Prussian Poles could settle in other areas of the Reich, and they did. Max Weber commented on their integration in the Ruhr area in his reflections on ethnic groups in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, and the 1900 census shows numerous Polish speakers in such cities as Bochum (9%), Dortmund (7%), and Gelsenkirchen (5%).

Among the other language groups, several were clustered in annexed and border territories: the French speakers in Lorraine, the Dutch speakers along the borders to Holland and Belgium, the Danish and Frisian speakers in Slesvig, the Lithuanian speakers in East Prussia, the Czech speakers in Silesia, and so forth. But there were also 65,000 speakers of Italian spread throughout Germany (though with a certain concentration in

Lorraine—Italian emigrants had found industrial occupation there when Lorraine was French—and in Berlin, where Italian stone masons embellished many a *Gründerzeit* façade).

Also worth emphasizing is an old Slavic-language community within old Prussia, the indigenous Wends or Sorbs of Brandenburg and Saxony, with nearly 100,000 speakers in 1900, down to 69,000 in the year 1990, and less than half of those fluent in the language. This group invites comparison with American Indians.

In addition to these groups defined by language, there were numerous other minorities living in Imperial Germany, among them 587,000 Jews (a briskly growing number, of whom the majority lived in Prussia, over 100,000 in Berlin alone); similarly, there were 680,000 Jews living in the US at the same time—inviting another transnational ethnic comparison.

Some areas in Berlin had a high concentration of ethnic populations—Polish, Jewish, Italian (less so), and so forth in 1900—and scholars have drawn ethnic maps of the area around the Schlesischer Bahnhof, the Scheunenviertel, or Moabit (see Steinert 308-309). In 1900 Berlin was the largest Polish city in Prussia (and Prussia then included a third of Poland) as well as the largest Jewish city in Germany (Garris 28-29). It also deserves attention that about 1,100 Turks lived in Berlin alone in 1910, most of them either working in the cigarette industry, studying, or receiving professional training (Emre 94).

What did this mean for everyday life? There were all the features familiar to American immigrant historians: ethnic businesses and generational conflicts, self-help and mutual aid societies (62 Jewish ones were listed in 1896—Richarz 82), ethnic newspapers (three Polish papers in Berlin alone, the *Dziennik Berlinski*, *Niedziela*, and *Robotnik Polski*), growing intermarriage rates and complex relationships between, for example, German Poles and Polish newcomers from Poland, high rates of surname changes, cases testing the “host” society’s tolerance, and so forth.

Garris gives an excellent account of some representative tensions within the Polish community of Berlin (which was under surveillance by the Prussian police so that there are numerous transcripts of meetings and translations of newspaper articles in the Prussian government archives). He cites a public call for action formulated at a meeting of an Instructional Self-Aid Society for Young Polish Women in a Berlin bar in 1911:

How embarrassing it is, when at a Polish party, one hears young Polish men and women speaking to each other in German or speaking brokenly in their mother tongue. Young Polish women! Do you not have a spare moment for education? What your father’s house has failed to provide you, you have to provide yourselves, namely a national upbringing. It is necessary if we are to serve the community, which is our holy duty. (Garris 39)

There were conflicts around the question of whether first communion could be administered to children in Polish and around the issue of naming, especially since German Catholic clergy refused to baptize Polish Prussian children with such names as Zbigniew or Wanda (Garris 124-125). A Prussian Polish women’s social organization named “Wanda” was founded, in which a crisis had to be managed when one of its members married a German Catholic man, a crisis in which another member intervened and argued that since the Wanda of Polish legend had “leapt to her death to escape a forced marriage to a

heathen,” this particular case was “no insult to the memory of Wanda,” because the German man in question was a Catholic (Garris 176-177).

To be sure, as Garris rightly stresses, Berliners around 1900 did not “celebrate diversity” (34), and the paradigm that was prevalent in Germany (as it was then in the United States) militated toward policies of at times violent linguistic and cultural assimilation, “Germanisierung.” The fear of *Überfremdung* could easily be mobilized; thus a settlement policy intended to stop the “Polonization” of the Prussian East was put in place, called “Innere Kolonisation.” Ferdinand Toennies, of *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* fame, published a monograph under that title in which he explained that internal colonization was not much different from the external kind, namely “occupying conquered land with people who are to live there and are to defend the soil” (Toennies 5). Toennies also discusses a law of 1886, which, in the course of deliberations, became a German defense against a rapidly advancing Polish nationality (“Abwehrgesetz gegen die zu stark vordringende polnische Nationalität”—Toennies 8). Bismarck’s *Kulturkampf* was initially directed not just against Catholics, but specifically against Polish Catholics.

### **Conclusion: Land ohne Sprachenmord**

In the United States, Ellis Island has become an accepted symbol of a national historical memory that specifically includes immigrants and other minorities. The US thus fits Peter O’Brien’s definition of a prototypical immigrant society, it is one that is based on settler populations and a firm history of previous arrivals. But let us remember that in the United States this “firm history” of previous arrivals is a relatively new achievement of the past few decades. Eisenhower still wanted to sell Ellis Island for commercial development; the official meaning of the Statue of Liberty changed from a symbol of Franco-American friendship (a meaning that could profitably be rekindled today) to the embodiment of welcome to immigrants only half a century after the Statue was built, and the story of the United States as country of immigrants was launched by only a few intellectuals (Mary Antin, Randolph Bourne, Louis Adamic) before becoming more general in our own time.

Germany has yet to build up a historical consciousness of its polyethnic past and create a broader understanding of the suggestive symbolic meaning of arrival points like Schlesischer Bahnhof. I suspect that in the debates about ethnic diversity in Wilhelminian Germany can be found some building blocks with which contemporary scholars could develop an outline of a polyethnic and cosmopolitan tradition. Such a tradition might be helpful to draw upon today, though whether or not it would help make Zakia Mashiri feel less threatened would probably also depend on other factors.

In conclusion, let me offer you one example of the many fascinating things I read for this occasion. In my reading I came across anthologies of Sorbian-language poetry, with some poems going back three hundred years, and Tetzner’s wonderfully positivistic survey of *Die Slawen in Deutschland* published in 1902, in which each group is discussed with samples of folklore, songs, and sometimes bilingually printed examples of writing—all languages are represented with their version of the “Our Father.” The traces of early Turkish life in Berlin that Esme collected were as interesting as books about the Danish minority in Imperial Germany, again, with some poetic excerpts.

However, I thought I’d give a brief sketch of a figure I had never heard of before, Hannover-born Georg Julius Justus Sauerwein (1831-1904), who was apparently a

linguistic genius and who made it his lifetime task to devote much of his attention to the small, beleaguered languages of the world, some of which he learned from linguistic minorities in Germany, and learned them so well that he wrote and published poems in them. A scholar of classical and oriental languages at Göttingen, he was said to have mastered more than fifty modern languages, among them Sorbian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Finnish, Welsh, and Turkish. In the town where he was buried it was joked that he was learning some new language even after his death (Masalskis 10). At age 24, he published *A Pocket Dictionary of the English and Turkish Languages*. A pacifist, he hated the triumphalism of the new German Reich, advised developing a durable friendship with France and abandoning the notion of the “Erbfeind.” Thus he wrote a bilingual poem addressed to the peace congress in Paris, 1871:

La terre sans guerre	Die Welt ohne Krieg
C'est le paradis	ist da Paradies
Que le monde s'unisse	Wenn die Welt sich einigt,
Que le ciel te bénisse	So wird der Himmel dich segnen
Congrès de Paris	Kongreß von Paris (Masalskis 13)

Sauerwein was one scholar who certainly did “celebrate diversity” in Wilhelminian Germany. He vigorously opposed the Germanization policies of the German government toward its linguistic minorities and wrote songs in the Sorbian and the Lithuanian languages, using the Sorbian pen name Surowin and the Lithuanian pseudonym Girėnas. Here is a stanza of a bilingual Lithuanian-German spring poem he authored:

<b>Lietuvinku pavasario giesmele</b>	<b>Der Litauer Frühlingslied</b>
Su sena kalba	Mit der Sprache Laut
Musu Lietuva	Gleichst du einer Braut
Ju graziaus atžėls,	Schöner stets geschmückt,
Lyg marti jau prisikėls	Froher stets beglückt.
Viz graziaus,	Grām dich nicht,
Vis linksmaus.	Zage nicht! (Masalskis 52, 54)

He condemned the strategies of prohibiting the use of minority languages even in religious instruction in grade school, of making minorities ashamed of their difference and of charging a double fee for a wedding in the Lithuanian language. In a long German poem entitled “Nationalität und Menschheit” he specifically defined himself in terms of cosmopolitanism and warned that the insistence on German chauvinism would only provoke the hatred of other peoples like dark clouds gathering before a thunderstorm.

“Deutsch” drum heißt ja bei andern, wer binnen der Grenzen geboren,  
 Wem, für gebrochenes Deutsch, der Mutterlaut hastig vertauscht ward,  
 Oder wer selbst dies tut, für Geld seine Sprache verleugnet  
 Und zum Deutschen sich lügt, seine Herkunft selber verdeckend,  
 Ja, bestochen, auch andern den Mutterlaut abharanguieret,  
 Und der “Germania” der Phrasen ein tägliches Rauchopfer darbringt –

Wertvoll, oft auch teuer genug, als Mehrer der “Deutschheit”!  
 Doch noch sind nicht fort, die in Deutschland Edleres kannten,  
 Als Germania zu ehren mit dunstigem Rauchwerk.  
 Ja, noch leben auch die, die man jetzt als “Idealisten”,  
 Ja, mit sinnlosem Wort, als “Kosmopoliten”, verketzert. . . .  
 Aber das geistge verschrumpft im chauvinistischen Sturmdrang,  
 Immer die Deutschheit nur, statt der Menschheit, jetzt zu betonen. . . .  
 Jetzt ists Mittag – dumpf wie Samûm umhaucht uns die Schwüle,  
 Und der Haß der Völker, von Tage zu Tage sich steigernd,  
 Droht mit düsteren Wolken, die wie zum Gewitter sich sammeln. (Zwahr 285-286)

Sauerwein lived in Norway for many years, lecturing at the University of Oslo, and there he wrote more bilingual poems and songs. One of them opens with his central concern:

E’ elska de’ evigt, du høge Nor’, e’ elska de’  
 Ich liebe Dich ewig, Du hoher Nord, ich liebe Dich

evigt, du frie Jor’: Folk skraala aa skryte taa fremondt  
 Du Land ohne Sprachenmord. Man prahlet und rühmet vom fremden

Lann, e’ elska, der Friheite bur, den Strann—e’ elska de’  
 Land; ich liebe, wo Freiheit mir winkt, Dein’ Strand—ich liebe Dich

Evigt, du høge Nor’, e’ elska de; evigt, du høge Nor’.  
 Ewig, Du hoher Nord, ich liebe Dich ewig, Du hoher Nord. (Vistdal 528)

Norway was his land without linguistic violence. Sauerwein’s declared dream was to be the translator of peace for the whole world, a world still entrapped by hatred (“Friedensdolmetsch aller Welt, Die der Haß gefangen hält”—Masalskis 35), lines he published under the name “Pacificus.” Georg Sauerwein, who also wrote an essay on Kant in respect to the appropriate treatment and instruction of a foreign-language people, may well present an oppositional point, a minority of one in Imperial Germany, whose political interventions, multilingual publications, and transnational perspective may gain a new significance in our own time.

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