NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Rethinking Citizenship Education in European Migration Societies

Political Strategies - Social Changes - Educational Concepts

Conference Paper

Introductory Remarks to Workshop 4, Session 1:
Religious Identities and Citizenship

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The topic of our workshop contains three difficult and complex notions: religion – identity – citizenship. In all three fields, the academic and political discourse in Europe is controversial and even polarised. It would be presumptuous to try to reflect those currents of discourse here and to attempt a common definition.

The aims of this workshop are more modest. We certainly should address the problematic relationship between "religious identities" and "citizenship" and engage in what I hope will prove to be a productive and in its own way controversial discussion about four questions which I will put to you now, before repeating them at the end of my Introduction:

1. Are "religious identities", however we define the details, at all relevant to "citizenship"? Why are we concerned with religions in civil society discourse and political education?
2. What structures enable people to live together in societies of increasing ethnic, religious and cultural pluralism in such a manner that, first, the fundamental principles of a liberal, democratic constitutional state (liberty, equality) can be enduringly upheld and, secondly, recognition is granted to the claims of religions, cultures and lifestyles to their own "identity"? This is about managing diversity, the political management of multi-cultural societies seeking to balance universalism and particularism.[1]
3. Do we not have to make distinctions between religions because religions and "religious identities" are at different stages in their development and by no means all compatible at this point in time with human rights and democracy? In other words, do religious identities encourage or hamper the expression of "citizenship"?
4. Do we perhaps need religious identities as basic values in order to breathe life into the role of the citizen and to make democratic institutions viable and sustainable? Are religions essential as motivational and intellectual pillars of democracy? In Germany, for example, we have been

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[1]   Cf. RENÉ CUPERUS/KARL A. DUFFEK/JOHANNES KANDEL (eds.), The Challenge of Diversity. Innbruck//Wien/München/Bozen, 2003.

having a long, controversial debate about this issue. It was triggered by the hypothesis of a well-known scholar and constitutional lawyer who wrote in an essay on the origin of the state: *"The liberal, secularised state lives from assumptions which it cannot guarantee. This is the greatest venture that has ever been entered into for the sake of freedom."*[2]

After all these questions for debate, allow me to contribute some introductory observations on the context of our enquiries.

1. The challenges of religious and cultural pluralism

One of the central challenges for modern European societies has been religious and cultural pluralism, which has been greatly intensified by migration flows, by the "return of religions" in the countries of the Communist Eastern Bloc, and by the ongoing internal differentiations that have affected the traditional established religions. The empirical evidence for the "return of religion" is by now compelling.

Let me just mention some of the trends:

- **Global migration:** Estimates suggest that between 80 and 125 million people on this planet are currently caught up in the migration process. They leave their ancestral homes for all kinds of reasons (war, civil war, poverty, etc.) and migrate to "foreign" parts, or else they return, sometimes only to set off anew.[3] Migration sociology has been observing and describing these processes for some decades now. The findings are clear: the cultures of origin and the religions of the migrants, their customs and lifestyle come into contact with indigenous religions and cultures, leading to encounters, exchange, inevitably to conflicts, but also to transformations, mingling and the emergence of new forms of community.[4]
- **(Global) social trends:** Transnational communication technologies (e.g. the Internet) permit virtual encounters between different cultures and religions on a world-wide basis. Global chat rooms organise an informal cultural exchange. The broad structural and value changes since the 1960s have provoked dramatic processes of individualisation and segmentation in societies, eroding "homogenous" cultures and creating a juxtaposition of highly disparate customs, lifestyles and milieus. *External pluralism* exposed religions and cultures to an *internal pressure towards diversity and differentiation* and reinforced the search for "identity". In this respect, the much-commented "renewal" or "return" of the *old* religions has been accompanied by ongoing internal diversification. In addition there have been *"new"* regions and cults. Various trends have been observed across the world in conjunction with this "return of religion"[5] or "return of the gods"[6], I shall just name a few by way of example:
- the emergence of new **social movements** in the context of Latin American liberation theology and evangelical faiths;
- the return of the **orthodox churches** to the everyday lives of people in Eastern Europe following the collapse of Communism;
- the revitalisation of **Confucian ethics** and the renewal of traditional religions and cults in Asian civilisations;
- the **politicisation of religions and cultures**, e.g. by the proliferation of fundamentalist religious movements within all major religions, the emergence of religious political ideologies within Islam

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[2] ERNST-WOLFGANG BÖCKENFÖRDE, Die Entstehung des Staates als Vorgang der Säkularisation. In: ibid., Recht, Staat, Freiheit. Studien zur Rechtsphilosophie, Staatstheorie und Verfassungsgeschichte. Frankfurt/Main, 2006_, p. 112.

[3] The Papal Instruction "Erga Migrantes Caritas Christi" takes 200 million as its point of departure, pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. May, 2004.

[4] PETRUS HAN, Soziologie der Migration. Stuttgart, 2000. KARL HUSA/CHRISTOF PARNREITER/IRENE STACHER (eds.) Internationale Migration. Die globale Herausforderung des 21. Jahrhunderts? Frankfurt/Main, 2000.

[5] This was the graphic formulation chosen by Chicago sociologist of religion MARTIN RIESEBRODT, Die Rückkehr der Religionen. Fundamentalismus und der Kampf der Kulturen. München, 2000.

[6] FRIEDRICH-WILHELM GRAF, Die Wiederkehr der Götter. Religion in der Moderne. München, 2004.

(e.g. Islamism and a new variation on "totalitarianism", i.e. "Jihadism")[7]; an increase in the religious connotations of ethnic political conflicts (e.g. in the Balkans, Middle East, Nigeria, Central Asia, India, Indonesia) and the growing importance of religiously motivated terrorism;

- the development of a **spiritual megatrend**, which has meant constant diversification in the "religion market".

Societies that are religiously and culturally diverse may certainly enrich the state and civil society, but they also contain tremendous potential for conflict. Europe is secular in its basic constitutional structures, even though the relationship between the state and its religions (or state and Church) can be organised very differently from one country to the next (from the existence of a traditional Church of state to radical laicism).

The state defines itself as neutral in terms of philosophy and religion and enshrines a commitment to the freedom of religion. Freedom of religion includes the public practice of religion. The equality of religions and the freedom to live in accordance with one's own religious identity are guaranteed. The road to achieving this was a long one, entailing centuries of bloody religious warring. In many cases, freedom *for* religion and freedom *from* religion had to be asserted in the face of a dominant religion. This equality is by no means taken for granted in other parts of the globe.

Although we found Europe's constitutional principles on a "secular" order, citizens of the Union by no means regard Europe as a-religious. Quite the reverse. As we have just seen with the global trends, there is plenty of evidence in the study of religions that processes of "secularisation" have gone hand in hand with processes of "sacralisation". We can say that: *Religion still remains a stable model of orientation for millions of EU citizens.*

According to a survey by the EU Commission, religion plays an important part in the lives of 52% of EU citizens. The island of Malta heads the field: 88% of the people living there consider religion to be important. The Czechs come in last with 28%. Malta is followed by Poland (87%) and Italy (78%). Surprisingly, three countries that have always been seen as bastions of Catholicism finish a long way back: Belgium (41%), France (38%) and Spain (34%). The countries with a Protestant majority are led by the Finns (47%), followed by the United Kingdom (45%). Cyprus leads the Orthodox countries with 86%, before Greece and Romania (82% each).

The states of Europe have responded in different ways to growing religious and cultural pluralism and come up with very different policies, which, with varying degrees of importance, are presented as "migration and integration policies". I cannot dwell here on a comparative analysis, but I should like to mention some of the basic problems that form the background for the development of integration policies and the concept of citizenship.

2.   The Conceptual Snares of "Culture" and the Politics of Multiculturalism

If ethnic, religious and cultural pluralism are an indisputable fact, the question nevertheless remains as to how we assess these developments and seek to deal with them politically. Migration and integration policies are responses to this, and controversial ones at that - if we confine ourselves to Europe.[8] "Intercultural dialogue" is another, key factor in this response. The year 2001 was designated "Year of

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[7]   See BASSAM TIBI; Der neue Totalitarismus. „Heiliger Krieg" und westliche Sicherheit. Darmstadt, 2004.

[8]   Siehe v.a. die Beiträge von Spencer und Thränhardt in CUPERUS/DUFFEK/KANDEL, The Challenge of Diversity, S: 83 ff.

Dialogue" by the United Nations in the hope of achieving *"a new paradigm in international relations"* by means of *"respectful communication and mutual understanding"* to promote recognition that cultural diversity was not a threat and that there are common universal values.[9] By the end of that year we had been somewhat sobered as to the potential of global dialogue in helping to avoid conflict.

What do we mean by "culture" and "cultures"? How do we relate these to the political management of diversity? What political problems does this concept of culture connote?

"The Clash of Civilizations", that now legendary work by the American political scientist Samuel Huntington, who has just turned 80, did not exactly trigger global debate about cultures, religions and the theoretical concepts and practical policies implied by "multiculturalism", but it certainly added new momentum and drama to it.[10] Some of the criticism levelled at Huntington far exceeded the mark. He was in some ways stylised as the politological Cassandra of a looming Apocalypse between the cultures, although he had by no means pointed the finger at culture as the only source of conflict and did not utter a deterministic prophesy about the inevitability of this clash. At the end of his book he actually discusses some highly pertinent political solutions to conflict. He poignantly describes how socio-economic conflicts over the distribution of meagre resources assume the form of cultural value conflicts in international politics, and how they can acquire explosive, dynamic character as a result. The criticism focused on his admittedly simplified *"essentialist", hermetic concept of civilisation*. At macrolevel he sees them as something like billiard balls: firm, round, multi-coloured, smooth and hard and likely, once set in motion, to collide with other billiard balls and cause a "clash" which, to stick with the metaphor, leaves behind a winner and a loser. Huntington's civilisations are a modern version of a "sphere theory" of cultures, which draws above all on the thinking of *Johann Gottfried Herder* (1744-1803), whose Enlightenment reflections in the intrinsic value of historical eras and cultures evidently encouraged the emergence of a concept that sees cultures as self-contained entities.[11] We would be better advised, however, to see cultures as open, dynamic, internally differentiated and constantly changing systems, as "constructs" and "spaces for discourse".[12]

Since the end of the East-West conflict and the collapse of the last great systemic ideology, Communism, *"culture"* and *"identity"* seem to have become the pillars of a **new ideology**. Cultures are naturalised, stylised as more or less biological conditions. "Cultures" take on their own independent lives as dynamic "beings" that "do something", i.e. communicate with each other, enter into "dialogue" or threaten to bounce off or collide into one another.

There is a danger here of **essentialising** and **politicising** religious and cultural differences because religions and civilisations are regarded simply as opposite and unbridgeable principles and stylised as springboards for conflicts of social values. This tendency to politicise has been gaining ground both in intellectual discourse and in practical policies, both domestic and foreign. The global rise of **fundamentalist movements** and thinking since the late 1980s, which extends far beyond religion, is drastic evidence of this.[13]

The essentialisation of culture and politicisation of cultural differences is taking place in two formats. In an idealised typology we might call them the **"conservative"** and **"left-liberal"** versions.

The **"conservative"** version, as an extension of the Huntingtonian "clash" hypothesis, evokes an unavoidable clash between "Western values" and "alien" religions and cultures, with the focus frequently

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[9] Brücken in die Zukunft. Ein Manifest für den Dialog der Kulturen. Eine Initiative von Kofi Annan. Frankfurt/Main, 2001_, S. 36 ff.

[10] SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON, Der Kampf der Kulturen. The Clash of Civilizations. Die Neugestaltung der Weltpolitik im 21. Jahrhundert. München/Wien, 1997_

[11] See HANS-JOACHIM ROTH, Kultur und Kommunikation. Systematische und theoriegeschichtliche Umrisse Interkultureller Pädagogik. Opladen, 2002, p. 265 ff.

[12] Cf. above all the work of the cultural anthropologist WERNER SCHIFFAUER

[13] See in particular THOMAS MEYER, Fundamentalismus. Aufstand gegen die Moderne. Hamburg, 1989.

on "Islam" (or what people consider to be Islam). [14] The Manichean justification for US foreign policy as a "crusade" and a war on the "axis of evil", which could refer not only to specific states but also to religions and cultures, is an example how the clash thesis works in a context governed almost exclusively by security policy reasoning. In Europe, too, since 11 September there has been an increasing tendency in many quarters to regard "multiculturalism" as a "threat" rather than an "enrichment" of democratic societies and to favour a blueprint for society that is founded on a homogeneous national (or European) "Leitkultur". However, the precise nature of the elements and contours of this "dominant" culture remain obscure. We will find no clear answer here to the question: Does a "dominant" culture mean the totality of basic universally applicable democratic principles (human rights, democracy, rule of law) or should it entail "more", i.e. adaptation to a culturally definable "European identity" (a kind of "European metaculture") which would still have to be defined.

The **"left-liberal"** version is often encountered in discourse around the concept of **"multiculturalism"**. This is in itself a multi-faceted and multivalent concept, and there are significant differences between the Anglo-American and the European discourse.[15] The term "multiculturalism" is sometimes used as an *analytical* and sometimes as a *normative* tool. I cannot go into detail here, and will confine myself to a brief *normative* definition of multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism means a policy that seeks to preserve ethnic, religious and cultural identities and at the same time to institutionalise an overarching political identity (or political base culture) with implicit obligations for all members of society. This overarching political identity is expressed in the concept of "citizenship" and the concomitant universally valid rights (human rights and democracy) and duties. If tensions and conflicts arise between existing identities and "citizenship", these must be dealt with according to the democratic principles of equal liberty (= justice) and in a search for "practical concordance". But conflicts do not have to be resolved by way of "negation", which would undermine the universal core of "citizenship".

Multiculturalism can, in a "progressive liberal version", also become an *ideology* if cultures – as in the right-wing, conservative version – become independent entities entitled to particular recognition and promotion. Some vehement champions of accepting cultural difference and a "policy of recognition" owe allegiance to a schematic, "essentialist" concept of culture. "Culture" acquires an independent force and life of its own, "culture" becomes a "being", with a "soul", a "mind", an "identity", a "being" that enters into relationships and "dialogues" (the "dialogue of cultures") and needs to "assert" itself against others. A cultural concept like this incurs two fundamental social and political dangers: *anti-individualism* and *cultural relativism.* Culture becomes a collective straitjacket for the individual. What counts is not a person's dignity – in the spirit of the liberal principle of equality – but the "culture" ascribed to that person, which becomes his or her defining feature: *"If the belief that cultures have an unchangeable character is combined with the assumption that ever individual is assigned by destiny to his or her culture, the result is a culturalism hostile to the principles of Enlightenment which, in the extreme, can even culminate in new forms of apartheid or racism."*[16] The egalitarian rallying call on the Enlightened Republic "Liberty – Equality – Fraternity (Solidarity)" yields to a new trinity: *"Liberty – Equality – Cultural identity"*.[17] Culture acquires a totalitarian tendency because the individual is not granted an active role in the process of appropriating and modifying culture, but understood as a personification and product of culture. Alain Finkielkraut is apposite when he writes: "*Two things are anathema to cultural identity: individualism and cosmopolitanism."* And he goes on to observe that *"one could easily reduce personal identity to*

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[14]   ORIANA FALLACI, Die Wut und der Stolz. München, 2002. ORIANA FALLACI, Die Kraft der Vernunft. Berlin, 2004. TONY BLANKLEY, The West's Last Chance. Will We Win the Clash of Civilzations? Washington D.C, 2005. BRUCE BAWER, While Europe Slept. How Radical Islam Is Destroying The West From Within. New York/London, 2006.

[15]   For a resumé of the various approaches and a critical evaluation see STEFAN NEUBERT/HANS-JOACHIM ROTH/EROL YILDIZ, Multikulturalismus – ein umstrittenes Konzept. In: same authors (eds.) Multikulturalität in der Diskussion. Neuere Beiträge zu einem umstrittenen Konzept. Opladen, 2002, p. 9 ff.

[16]   HEINER BIELFELDT, Philosophie der Menschenrechte. Grundlagen eines weltweiten Freiheitsethos. Darmstadt, 1989. 17 f.

[17]   On this idea see ULRICH K, pREUSS, Die Belagerung des liberalen Verfassungsstaates durch die multikulturelle Gesellschaft. In: Leviathan H.1/1998, p. 71.

collective identity or regard individuals as prisoners of their group of origin, without any recourse to the laws of heredity."[18]

The fact that we can only discuss religions and cultures as constructs is often ignored. As ethnology research also demonstrates, however, religions and cultures are *"open spaces for discourse"* and incomplete *"fields of dispute"*[19]. Cultures have a symbolic character and one of their hallmarks is that they provide orientation. They interpret social life and endow it with meanings. In the familiar definition drawn from the cultural studies approach, they are regarded as *"maps of meaning"* and the American ethnologist Clifford Geertz defines culture as *"patterns of meaning the individual uses to give form to experience and point to action."*[20] This "pattern of relationships" is fluid and dynamic, with new meanings constantly being added, combining with other meaning and creating new maps or frames.

The consequences that can derive from an essentialist concept of culture when it is embraced, consciously or unconsciously, by (left-liberal) multicultural integration policies have been movingly described by the Norwegian anthropologist Unni Wikan in her marvellous book "Generous Betrayal". She concludes from the unintended effects of Norwegian integration policy that *"sacrifices on the altar of culture are made time and again, every day, openly and in concealed ways".*[21] Unni Wikan knows what she is talking about; for example, several cases of young migrant girls who had fled their ethnic families. Although they thrived in their Norwegian foster families, they were sent back to their families of origin after these protested and sought the legal remedies available to them. The justification for this evident violation of individual liberties was that ultimately the girls' "cultural identity" had to be preserved. The consequences for the girls were dramatic: immediate departure for an Islamic country, forced marriage and oppression in a religiously motivated patriarchal order.

There is also a risk of value-blind *cultural relativism*. "All cats are black at night." A cultural concept based on the idea that all cultures are "entities" will not develop any overarching criteria for a normative evaluation of culture. All cultures are equal and have equal rights. Cultural diversity is a good thing in itself and desirable even without subjecting the norms, traditions and practices inherent in a particular culture to any critical review. A review of this kind would, for example, examine the compatibility of cultures with universal human rights.

We now find ourselves at the heart of a heated debate concerning the "collective, religious and cultural identities" of minorities. The political question here is whether the state should pursue a "recognition policy" that, in the ultimate analysis, could even define **"collective cultural rights"** for religious cultural groups and incorporate these into a broader legal order.

The debate is by no means merely academic. We are talking here, for example, about concrete political rules and procedures with regard to particular religious or cultural practices, as multicultural policies in the United States, Canada, Australia and some European countries have shown.[22] Critics fear – and rightly in my opinion – that the general legal order could be punctured and subjected to creeping relativisation for the sake of rights of minorities to the detriment of individual liberty and equality.[23] We

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[18]   ALAIN FINKIELKRAUT, Die Niederlage des Denkens. Hamburg, 1989, p. 82 and 96.

[19]   Cf. the research by cultural anthropologist Werner Schiffauer, including Migration und kulturelle Differenz. Studie für das Büro der Ausländerbeauftragten des Senats von Berlin. Berlin, 2002. This contains a bibliography of Schiffauer's work.

[20]   CLIFFORD GEERTZ, Dichte Beschreibung. Beiträge zum Verstehen kultureller Systeme. Frankfurt/Main, 1983. S. 99. J.CLARKE/ST. HALL, Subkulturen, Kulturen, Klasse. In: Dieselben, Jugendkultur als Widerstand. Frankfurt/Main, 1981_, S.41.

[21]   UNNI WIKAN, Generous Betrayal. Politics of Culture in the New Europe. Chicago/London, 2002, p. 26.

[22]   In the political discourse of research there are substantial differences of opinion about what "cultural rights" are and what the implications fot society would be if the state were to recognise the cultural rights of minorities. JAKOB T: LEVY, The Multiculturalism of Fear. Oxford, 2000, p. 127 ff. devises a useful categorisation of "cultural rights claims".

[23]   See the debate on "affirmative action" in the United States. Its most eminent critic is the British philosopher BRIAN BARRY, Culture and Equality. Cambridge, 2002.

must, indeed, consider the consequences that a policy of recognition within an integration strategy could have for society as a whole, because group rights, to quote the sociologist Claus Offe, incur *"a major risk … of fragmenting rather than uniting the political community"*.[24]

Why should "group rights" exist at all? Are the democratic rights and participatory procedures to which all individuals are entitled not adequate for the representation of their cultural belonging? In whom might the power to define the "authentic identity" of a group be invested? Who defines the group's internal rules? And what happens if these rules jeopardise the individual liberties of members, and these members do not dare, because of pressure from the group, to turn to the representatives of the broader legal order? Does this promote better understanding, communication and social intercourse between citizens, or do such "special rights" serve rather to encourage processes of segregation, discrimination and animosity? Does recognising "group rights" not foster a gradual proliferation of applications for similar "special rights" and an expansion of special conditions – for example, from extra language teaching to pockets of education in a particular language, and from there to concessions for running an autonomous education system? From arbitration committees dealing with matters of private law to an extension of that role into other legal fields, and ultimately to an independent jurisdiction. The final outcome would be a parallel society. In the light of what has been happening in some European countries, I believe these questions are justified. There is a very serious discussion, for example, about whether sharia should be applied by Moslem minorities in the diaspora, alongside the universally valid legal order of the secular state. Would that not open the door to an endless legislative dilemma? Why deny one group what another has been granted? Will we not exacerbate the rivalry between minorities as they compete for legal status, watching over their ethnic, religious and cultural "identities" with particular zeal? Is there not a danger here of increasing segregation that culminates in the formation of parallel societies?

To complete this line of thought, let me say quite clearly once again that I regard the preservation of ethnic, religious and cultural identities as an essential task for the democratic constitutional state because we are committed to religious and cultural pluralism. Nevertheless, the expression and representation of religious and cultural group identities must be attached to *three basic conditions*:

1. All ethnic, religious and cultural groups and lifestyle-oriented collectives must be treated equally.

2. Every individual must have the right and freedom to join an ethnic and/or religious-cultural collective, but also to leave it. The individual liberties he or she has under general law must not be curtailed by reference to a group's supposedly superior "religious and/or cultural identity". The freedom to choose "identities" must be guaranteed.[25]

3. Membership of a cultural or religious group must not be the *precondition* for granting political social and cultural human rights.

3.   The Political Concept of Integration: Citizenship, Civil Society and Cultural Difference

In Europe the debate about how "migrants" and "indigenous" populations, minorities and majorities or religions and cultures should live together focuses around the concept of **integration**. Integration is the fundamental notion shared by all democratic political forces in Europe.

We understand integration as a **political category** based on the needs of a political system. We see integration as an observable political process and we sometimes also try to define "integration" in terms of essence and to prescribe steps towards achieving a particular "quality" of integration.

Let me take a **political concept of integration** as my starting point and try to sum up what the

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[24]   OFFE, Homogenität, p. 44.

[25]   Cf.: AMARTYA SEN, Die Identitätsfalle. Warum es keinen Krieg der Kulturen gibt. München, 2007, p. 46 ff.

citizenship debate should be about, which is agreeing on some **criteria for a political base culture** that everyone can subscribe to, whatever religion and culture they might feel they belong to as individuals. Both *citizenship theory* and *empirical political cultural studies* have made major contributions to drawing up criteria of this kind in the discourse of political studies.

Integration is a certain type of interrelationship between a host society and its migrants **"which not only permits the equal participation of all in all subsets of the social system, but where a shared political culture has taken shape within the democratic rule of law".**[26]

So two principles need highlighting here:

- **equal rights to participate** (in society's pivotal functions: employment, economic life, education, social services, politics)
- the **shared political culture**, which might be called the "base culture" or "dominant culture", if the latter had not acquired such pejorative connotations from the debate about "Leitkultur" in recent years.

"Integration" is an open, dynamic process. There is no "final state" of integration; integration is a permanent task. This is about hard facts, interests, structures of power and rule, conflicts and searches for social consensus. Integration relates to all fields of social life. Integration has political, economic, social and cultural dimensions and integration policy can only be applied by mainstreaming it right across the policy spectrum. Integration policy should be characterised by a wise balance of encouragement (for the minority by the majority) and making demands (of the minority by the majority).

If we are thinking about and discussing **integration,** we need to ask two basic questions. Let me formulate them in the words of the Christian Lebanese novelist *Amin Maalouf*, a French citizen now living in France. The first question is addressed to the host society: *"What constitutes the rudiments of a country's culture that everyone can be expected to feel committed to, and what can rightly be criticised or rejected?"* The second question has to be put to the culture of origin of the migrant: *"What components of this culture deserve to be taken to the host country as a valuable 'dowry', and what habits and practices are best stored away in the attic?"* [27]

Question 1: What are the rudiments of a European national culture?

One of the rudiments of a "European national culture" is to accept a **political base culture**. What is that? It consists of historical experience in Europe that has been crystallised and compressed into basic political values and rights in the member states of the European Union. Rudiments are an indispensable core, not negotiable, and they include fundamental constitutional principles such as those enshrined in Germany's Basic Law (Art. 1 and 20, human dignity, democracy and rule of law), shored up by an "eternal guarantee" such as in Art. 79, 3 of that Law. In other words, they cannot be modified legally by a majority. The Federal Constitutional Court uses the term **"*Rechtstreue*"**, or loyalty to the law, to express acceptance of these constitutional principles. These fundamental constitutional principles are not negotiable. They apply not only in Germany, but throughout Europe, if we consider the principles articulated in the draft EU Constitution.

The question which follows from this is: Does "citizenship" call for *more* than accepting the fundamental constitutional principles of the democratic, pluralistic rule of law? Philosopher Jürgen Habermas applies the term **"constitutional patriotism"** to the requirements of "citizenship". He is referring to the motivation and ethical framework for those fundamental constitutional principles with regard to both the rules of democracy, at procedural level, and the level of basic values, because even the "father of discourse ethics" realises that a procedural understanding of democracy will not be devoid of content; its

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[26]   THOMAS MEYER, Identitätspolitik. Vom Missbrauch kultureller Unterschiede. Frankfurt/Main, 2002, p. 199.
[27]   AMIN MAALOUF, Mörderische Identitäten. Frankfurt am Main, 2000, p.41.

preconditions are, of course, convictions from which actions can be derived.[28] Habermas speaks in this context of the *"ethical impregnation of the rule of law"*.[29] Recognising a corpus of principles and rules in democratic societies assumes basic ideas about human dignity and justice.

The democratic, pluralist rule of law does not, however, prescribe a model of the "good life" that is applicable to all, but accepts a pluralism of lifestyles inspired by religion or a world view. But it does – and this is its key function – permit a political and legal framework in which a communicative society of free citizens can coexist peacefully with different cultural lifestyles in a framework that allows them to compete productively with one another. The crucial point is that these different cultural lifestyles must accept a political base culture.

Empirical political cultural research clearly shows that without democratic motivation and pointers for action, the institutional arrangements of democracy cannot function, i.e. integration will not be successful. Evidently we need a common political culture which can breathe life into democratic institutions. The common political objective of all citizens, whether or not they have a "background in migration", should be to shape and enduringly secure a *democratic civil society*, in which those pointers for action which democracy needs can take shape and consolidate over the long term. It is not primarily *moral or ethical appeals to civic virtues* which contribute to the emergence of a democratic political culture, however important these might be. From political studies we are familiar with large-scale attempts to formulate lists and criteria of such "civic values" which are no doubt useful.[30] What is more decisive here is the concrete social and political practice of shaping civil society together and participating in political institutions.

Info Box:

Political Base Culture

A **political base culture** must be founded on a concept of **democracy** that consists of **norms** and **institutions**[31]:

1. Democracy is founded on recognition of *equal dignity* for all individuals, regardless of race, gender, religion, views, culture and sexual orientation.
2. Recognition of equal dignity is achieved by applying and guaranteeing *human rights* and *basic rights* by *protecting them with the rule of law.*
3. Democracy ensures political *rights of participation and opportunities for participation* on the part of citizens by means of universal, free, equal suffrage, equal opportunities for defending one's interests and freedom to take part in public life, notably through the freedoms of opinion, speech as association and freedom for the media. The core elements of the democratic ethos are *protection, participation and inclusion.*
4. Democracy calls for *checks and balances* based on a *division of powers* (legislative, executive, judiciary), not in the sense of total segregation but of autonomy and mutual supervision combined with *effective governance*. Effective governance by democratically elected rulers must not be curtailed by the armed forces, police, secret service or warlords.

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[28]   JÜRGEN HABERMAS, Staatsbürgerschaft und nationale Identität (1990) In: same author, Faktizität und Geltung. Beiträge zur Diskurstheorie des Rechts und des demokratischen Rechtsstaates. Frankfurt/Main, 1992, p. 642 f.

[29]   JÜRGEN HABERMAS, Anerkennungskämpfe im demokratischen Rechtsstaat. In: CHARLES TAYLOR, Multikulturalismus und die Politik der Anerkennung. Frankfurt/Main, 1997, p. 164 ff.

[30]   See for example WILLIAM A. GALSTON; Liberal Purposes: Goods, Virtues and Diversity in the Liberal State. Cambridge, 1991. p. 221 ff. Galston calls for the following kinds of civil virtues: general virtues such as courage, compliance with the law, loyalty; social virtues such as independence and openness; economic virtues such as a work ethic and an ability to adapt to economic and technological change; political values, such as recognising and respecting the rights of others, political realism (restricting demands to the affordable limit), an ability to judge the record of people in office and elected representatives and a willingness to engage in public discourse.

[31]   Quoted in WOLFGANG MERKEL, Demokratie in Asien. Bonn, 2003, p. 18 ff.

5. Democracy requires a *civil society*, in which a minimum of *shared basic values* can be lived in a democratic political culture.

The political scientist Thomas Meyer, whose argument I would like to adopt here, has drawn on the findings of empirical political cultural research to define the following *"minima for civic orientation"*:

> *"Trust in fellow citizens; adequate knowledge of and emotional and value-driven consent for the overall political system... active tolerance; emotionally stable ability to combine conflicts on technical issues with agreement about basic democratic convictions; emotional ability to distinguish between political differences and acknowledgement of fellow humans."*[32]

These are ambitious demands that pose a great challenge to all religious and cultural lifestyles, because accepting these minima for civic orientation may well be at odds with the claims of religions to know the truth and the traditional loyalties inspired by cultures. The **fundamentalist movements demonstrate** that their representatives are not prepared to offer this acceptance, but demand from their supporters an unconditional loyalty towards basic predefined social objectives and turn their "identity policy" destructively against other religions and cultures.

Intercultural understanding is basically possible if we accept that in every culture there is a basic store of values that can be fostered and mobilised for a political base culture, which serves democracy and civil society.

This is where Amin Maalouf's second question kicks in: What components of migrant culture might be regarded as a valuable "dowry"?

There is empirical evidence that all cultures have basic values of this kind and the potential to develop. This is where, at least in part, we will find those "valuable dowries" that Maalouf refers to in migrant cultures and which are echoed in, for example, the UN's Manifesto for the Dialogue of Cultures under the heading "Common Values": so-called "Western values", such as the trinity of liberty, equality and solidarity, can be complemented by peace, responsibility, duty and community, all of which is crowned by the "Golden Rule": **"Do as you would be done by"** or, to put it in negative terms: **"Don't do unto others what you don't want done unto you!"** The Manifesto poignantly comments: *"So the Golden Rule, in its negative formulation, permits creative engagement; if it is positively put, it prevents passive indifference to the suffering of others. In both its positive and negative versions, the Golden Rule builds trust between people."*[33]

As citizens of the European Union, committed to the fundamental constitutional principles of democratic and pluralist rule of law, we have no reason to shy away from stating bluntly what religious and cultural practices are not acceptable, or – to paraphrase Maalouf – should be stored away in the attic. A few examples: honour killings, the burning of widows, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, the reduction of women to sexual functions and a rigorous patriarchal programme for dividing men and women and treating them unequally in the family, society and politics. It would not be difficult to extend the list.[34]

I firmly believe that there is potential for development in all religions and cultures and that this can be used to establish and sustain human rights, democracy and the protection of cultural diversity. There will be no "inevitable" "clash" between the cultures or civilisations, as some claimed during the heated debate about the famous "Huntington theorem".

We must create and secure the political conditions which will enable this positive potential in religious and cultural identities to bear fruit. There are real opportunities for all citizens of the Union to live side by

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[32]   THOMAS MEYER, Identitätspolitik, p. 177.
[33]   Brücken zur Zukunft, p. 82. [Translation from the German text.]
[34]   See examples in BARRY, Culture and Equality, p. 155 ff.

side in a peaceful community of religious and cultural diversity. We should seize this opportunity to shape the political framework.